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## **#33e, Mikey Avila Climbs Steps For First Podium Finish In Rookie Year**

*Mikey Avila, #33e impresses the crowd at his home GNC race at Calistoga, CA, first leading and then challenging for the win, ultimately earning a third place finish.*

**Calistoga, CA. Saturday, July 31, 2010**

Hello Everyone,

What a sweet feeling to be back home again, leaving the mosquitoes and humidity behind for a couple of weeks. Everything felt so comfortable leading into this race weekend with my local tuner (Dad) and my friends all providing me so much support.

We arrived at the track early on Saturday, wondering just what we were in for on this new track. Well, we took one look and saw a beautiful half mile surface and it was right in the middle of town! It was obvious that the promoter Bob Bellino had put extra effort into building a good track.

We quickly got down to business. I took to the track and it took to me. I qualified a solid third place behind Brad Baker and local rider Ryan Foster. Ryan just smoked the pack with his qualifying – hats off to you, Ryan.

In my heat race I had a bad start and got held up in a Calistoga traffic jam. However I moved into the commuter lane and ended up finishing second behind Brad. So, I had nailed my front row start. Job done.

The bike felt really strong but my tuner Bud Riddle and Dad put their heads together to do some fine tuning to get us a bit of an edge. The talent at the top in Pro Sports this year is major and when you come to the line, you better be at the top of your game.

I rolled up to the main feeling confident, knowing that this was my home race, my friends behind me and I racing on the type of track that I love. At the start, I got the holeshot and led into turn one. I kept that lead for five laps when Brad Baker finally edged around me. On lap six, the red flag came out and we rolled back to the start line while they attended the downed rider.

On the re-start, Brad took the lead and I was right on his tail. Unfortunately, there was a bad crash in turn two after two laps and we had another red flag. We waited for 30 minutes before they lined us up again for the last re-start. The bike, tires and I got cold. It's a very uncomfortable feeling, waiting like that.

Finally we got the green flag and I got a bit of a bad start and Jeff Carver got down low in turn one and passed me. From that point on, Brad, Jeff and I had our heads down as we all smelled the scent of victory.

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When the checkered flag fell, I realized I had earned my first Pro Sports podium finish and was right there challenging the number one spot. Being in my rookie year of professional racing, it was a special moment, one I'll cherish forever.

I'm so thankful for the tremendous effort from my long-time mentor and tuner Bud Riddle and my father Jerry. My Dad worked his butt off this past two weeks (and the last 12 years for that matter) to give me the best ride possible.

As one of the new kids on the professional racing circuit, it's tough out there, being away from home, going to new tracks every weekend. Coming home knowing my NorCal Racing Family was behind me made all the difference in the world. I look forward to Hagerstown...again my kinda track!

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**NEXT RACE:** As I write this, I'm on my way across the country – we'll be at the Hagerstown Half Mile race this coming Saturday. We are now in the thick of racing season and I'm pumped.

**CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS:**

1	Jeffrey Carver Jr.	172
2	Brad Baker	148
3	James Rispoli	115
4	Michael Avila	104

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