

The Daily News

BREAKING NEWS**Boil alert issued for Quinnesec water system**

Jet car driver dies at Norway Speedway

NORWAY — Friday night racing at Norway Speedway came to a halt when a pre-race event ended in a fatal crash.

The Green Mamba, a jet-powered exhibition dragster driven by Douglas Rose of Ring Town, Penn., sped down the straightaway of the third-mile oval and into the dirt when it turned over and ejected the driver.

Rose was pronounced dead at the scene, according to a Michigan State Police press release.

All races were postponed to 6 p.m. Saturday.

Joey Pontbriand, a Norway native and driver in the super late model series, was one of the first people to the wreckage.

“When something like that happens, it’s so tragic that the only thing that’s right to do is ... it wouldn’t have been right,” Pontbriand said of postponing the races. “I wouldn’t have ran. I would’ve put the car on the trailer either way.

“I’ll tell you this, I’ve gained a huge respect for emergency personnel because what they do voluntarily goes unnoticed.”

Rose drove the 3,318-pound Green Mamba for more than 35 years. The car, powered by a J46 jet engine from a Navy F7U Cutlass fighter plane, had a top speed of more than 300 miles per hour.

Pontbriand said he grew up going to Norway Speedway and saw Rose drive the Green Mamba when he was younger. Then Pontbriand got to know him more when he got more involved at the race track.

“I knew him on a business-personal level,” Pontbriand said. “He’s one of those guys you’d ask about the car and he told you all about the car. It’s just too bad it ended the way it did.”

The MSP press release said Norway Speedway personnel, Norway Fire Department and Beacon Ambulance assisted at the scene.

Witnesses speculated that a medical issue contributed to the crash.