

NASCAR 2013

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

JOHNSON COMPLETES DAYTONA SWEEP

Jimmie Johnson won Saturday night's Sprint Cup race in a green-white-checkered finish. He became the first driver to sweep both NASCAR events at Daytona in one season, since Bobby Allison in 1982.

On the way to his fourth win of the season, Johnson led 94 laps of the 161-lap race.

"I had a great horse," said Johnson. "It was an amazing car all night. Been in some very close battles at the end and have surged by to win. But from a laps led standpoint, this has to be the most dominant performance we've had on a plate track."

As Johnson neared the finish line, two multi-car accidents happened behind him. The second, third and fourth-place cars were able to avoid them.

"I didn't get as good a restart as I wanted," said second-place finisher, Tony Stewart. "But I think it kind of worked to our favor. It got Clint (Bowyer) a little bit ahead of me and it got Kevin (Harvick) a little bit ahead of Jimmie (Johnson). That let Jimmie and me both tuck down to those two guys and get going. Kurt Busch gave us a really good push from behind there and that got us back to getting Jimmie the shove he needed. It got us far enough ahead to where we could worry about racing him."

The second-place finish was Stewart's fourth top-five finish this season, and vaulted him six spots to 10th in the championship standings.

"It was definitely a good points night," Stewart said. "If you can't win, you always want to run second. With these things being as crazy as they are, you're pretty happy if you can end up with a top-two, because normally if you leave here in the top-two, you've got a straight race car too."

Kevin Harvick was third, but it was a bittersweet finish for him.

"Yeah, we didn't win," he said. "That was our expectation coming here. I'm kind of disappointed just for the fact that I felt like we were in the right position."

Clint Bowyer, Michael Waltrip, Kurt Busch, Jamie McMurray, Dale Earnhardt Jr., Casey Mears, and Ryan Newman were the remaining top-10 finishers.

Top-12 leaders after 18 of 36: 1. Johnson-658, 2. Bowyer-609, 3. Edwards-587, 4. Harvick-585, 5. Earnhardt-548, 6. Kenseth-540, 7. Kyle Busch-533, 8. Biffle-516, 9. Kurt Busch-501, 10. Stewart-499, 11. Truex-493, 12. Kahne-490.

KENSETH GETS DAYTONA NATIONWIDE RACE

Matt Kenseth won Friday night's Nationwide Series race



Jimmie Johnson completes Daytona Sweep

in a green-white-checkered finish. Kenseth received a push from James Buescher for the remaining two laps to get his first Nationwide win of the year.

Buescher was second, followed by Elliott Sadler, Kurt Busch, Austin Dillon, Kyle Larson, Sam Hornish, Regan Smith, Joey Logano, and Trevor Bayne.

Top-10 leaders after 16 of 33: 1. Smith-558, 2. Hornish-552, 3. Sadler-544, 4. Allgaier-543, 5. A. Dillon-541, 6. Larson-516, 7. Vickers-505, 8. Kligerman-501, 9. Scott-494, 10. Bayne-488.

LESS NASCAR SEATS, HIGHER PRICES

Are you on a tight budget? Is it a struggle to find money for a NASCAR race weekend?

If the answer is yes, you are in trouble.

Ticket prices at 13 different tracks are going up.

Daytona Speedway announced earlier in the year they would be removing some spectator seats. Last week in a teleconference call to Wall Street bond analysts, John Saunders, Pres. of International Speedway Corporation, which owns Daytona Speedway and 12 other tracks said, "Too many empty seats are keeping the lid on ticket prices. We're looking at removing more seats at all our tracks."

Saunders admission of empty seats was an acknowledgment that "the NASCAR Experience" is losing steam.

From my own experience of attending races, I can tell there are more empty seats now than four or five years ago. Taking out or covering up some seats might make it appear to the television audience that the track is full of fans, but would it help those fans attending races?

"Removing seats also would enhance the race experience for the remaining spectators and help encourage patrons to return," continued Saunders.

Exactly what does that mean? Will there be additional entertainment of some type? Does it mean each individual seat will be widened and padded? If there are fewer fans, will there be shorter bathroom lines? What about concession prices? Fewer people means less beer and hot dogs will be

sold, so those prices must go up also.

If you can buy into Saunders' statement, stay away from men in white coats from the "funny farm."

A race fan would have to suffer from delusions if he/she believe ticket prices, and all associated costs of attending races aren't going up.

It isn't just track prices, but transportation and lodging as well.

With the cost of a race weekend escalating, it doesn't bode well for the average fan.

Tracks really shouldn't consider raising ticket prices, because they receive most of their revenue from television. The TV contract is set up where tracks get 65 per cent; teams-25 per cent, and NASCAR-10 per cent.

Although ISC is controlled by the France family, it is separate from NASCAR. About 35 per cent of the stock in ISC is owned by the France family and the remainder is owned by shareholders.

ISC is working to replace the current Daytona complex with a development called "Daytona Live!" which will include a movie theater, restaurants, and hotel.

The Daytona renovation also includes reducing the track's seating capacity from 146,000, down to 100,000.

In addition to Daytona, ISC owns: Auto Club Speedway, Chicagoland, Darlington, Homestead-Miami, Kansas, Martinsville, Michigan, Phoenix, Richmond, Talladega, Watkins Glen, and Route 66.

If you are an average working person reading this column, and hoping to attend future NASCAR races, you might want to consider a second job.

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Nationwide teams are at the 1-mile New Hampshire Speedway, while the trucks race at the 7/8-mile Iowa Speedway.

Sat., July 13, Nationwide Series race 17 of 33; Starting time: 3:30 p.m. ET; TV: ABC.

Sat., July 13, Camping World Truck Series, race 9 of 22; Starting time: 8:30 p.m. ET; TV: SPEED.

Sun., July 14, Sprint Cup race 19 of 36; Starting time: 1 p.m. ET; TV: TNT.

Racing Trivia Question: Terry Labonte, former NASCAR Cup champion is in negotiations to buy James Finch's No. 51 Cup team. How many Cup championships did Labonte win?

Last Week's Question: What old-time driver had three stints in NASCAR—1950-'54, 1971-'78, 1980-93, and didn't retire from racing until 2001? Answer: It was Herschel McGriff.

You may e-mail the Racing Reporter at: hodges@race500.com. NTJul10Z14gg



July 16th - 18th

Tuesday - Thursday

Ages 7 to 13

Early Registration \$50

Day of Registration \$60

CONTACT: Coach Allison (770) 639-7331 | Coach McCombs (706) 781-9893

Time: 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Location: Union County High School Football Field

Info: Water and Gatorade will be provided. Please bring Water bottle with name. Wear shorts, t-shirts, and cleats. Each child will receive a Football camp T-shirt

Please Return with Payment

Name: _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt Size: _____

Parent: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

*Please make checks payable to Union County QB Club, 153 Panther Circle, Blairsville, GA 30512

This is an offensive position oriented camp.

Please Circle Campers Offensive Position: Quarterback | Line | Receiver/Running Back

UCRD 14&U baseball thank sponsors



The 14&U baseball team and coaches would like to thank the following sponsors. Blairsville Realty, Amerigas, Heritage Propane, United Community Bank, Appalachian Water, Brett Owenby Grading, Hemphill Trucking, Nelson's Tractor, El Manzanillo Mexican Restaurant, Builders First Source, Walmart of Blairsville, and Ingles of Blairsville.

10&U suffer from bad luck at State



The Union County 10&U baseball team participated in last weekend's State Tournament where Mother Nature rained out the first two days of the tournament forcing the tournament directors to switch to a single-elimination format minutes before the first pitch. Union fell to host Whitfield County on Sunday - eliminating the Panthers from the State Tournament.

Local student James "Tiger" Grubbs makes history



Left to right: Tyler Marcoux, James Grubbs, & D. J. Tunnell.

Local Union County Middle School student James "Tiger" Grubbs made history Saturday night along with W. Virginian Noah "Precious" Pyatt, by being the youngest fighters to step into the cage in a sanctioned MMA match in North Carolina.

The two 14-year olds fought an exhibition match on The Primus II MMA card in Havelock, NC, June 29th. They fought a hard battle to a draw and set the pace for the grown ups to follow. James is the youngest Georgian to fight in a sanctioned MMA event to date. Both fighters showed a lot of heart and hard train-

ing can get you places in the MMA world. James trains at Premier Martial Arts Blairsville and is a black belt in karate, while holding a white belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. It was an awesome match and you can expect to see more news and stories on both these fighters as they continue to train and improve their skills. Two other local fighters fought as well. Tyler Marcoux of Hayesville, NC, finished his opponent in 15 seconds of the first round while making his MMA debut, and Sensei DJ Tunnell of Young Harris fought a hard battle to help close out the card in Havelock. All 3 fight-

ers represent PMA Blairsville and The Ghost Squad Jiu Jitsu Team. NTJul10A2JSH

Annual Free Clogging session at BSod

For the fifth consecutive year, Blairsville School of Dance will be hosting a free 2 week clogging session. Designed for the beginner, new students will be introduced to basic clogging by members of the BSod Force competition clogging team.

"We are so excited to be able to offer this for the fifth year," said Angela Puleo, Studio Director. "We usually get a great turnout not only from Blairsville, but also from the surrounding communities."

The classes will be open to anyone ages 4 and up and will take place on Thursdays, July 18 and 25 at 6:30 p.m. Participants should plan on attending both classes.

The BSod Force competition clogging teams are well equipped to lead the session. With its regular participation in the regional and national competition circuit, the group is on the cutting edge of contemporary clogging. In

Ribbon cutting ceremony for Blairsville Athletics



Blairsville Athletics ribbon cutting

On Friday, June 28, 2013, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony for Blairsville Athletics, Union County's newest fitness facility. Owners Emilia and Rafael Paredes are excited to offer a new approach to fitness training.

Blairsville Athletics is a strength training facility that provides a variety of classes to its members including spin

classes. Personal fitness instructors are available for one-on-one training ranging from a very intense physical training program for experts to a lighter alternative for beginners. Athletes of all ages are welcome. Blairsville Athletics currently offers a selection of supplements and apparel for their members and a juice bar will soon be opening on the premises.

Blairsville Athletics

is located at 102 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, GA, a location that formerly housed The Book Nook. The gym will be open Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. To inquire about membership call (706) 745-7771. You can also visit their website at www.blairvilleathletics.com. The fitness team at Blairsville Athletics invites you to come in and join their healthy community! NJul10Z5CA

Jessi's Gift

A "Pay it Forward" 5K Run and 2 Mile Walk

Jessi Patrick was an 8th Grade student at Towns County Middle School when she was diagnosed with AML (Acute Myeloid Leukemia) on June 26, 2010. During treatment at Childrens Healthcare of Atlanta she became friends with Lily Anderson who is also fighting cancer. Lily introduced Jessi to Kingdom Kids which is an organization that grants wishes to children facing challenging circumstances and health issues. Jessi was granted her wish through Lily's Run. After becoming part of the Kingdom Kids family Jessi was looking forward to "paying it forward" when she finished treatment and was excited about organizing a run to help grant more wishes to children. With great sadness, Jessi succumbed to side effects from treatment so we are continuing to carry on her wish to help other children. Please come join us and help a child "Have a Happily Better After".

Benefiting: Kingdom Kids
 \$15 pre-registered, \$20 Race day
 Student - \$10 pre-registered, \$15 Race day
 T-shirts guaranteed to all 5k runners or walkers who pre-register by June 27th
 Awards to: Overall Male and Female 10 and under then 5 year age brackets
 All runners and walkers are also entered in a raffle to win prizes donated from our generous sponsors: Golfopia, The Ridges, Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa, Brothers, Body Sense & The Rustic Rose.

3rd Annual 5K Race and 2 Mile Walk
 Saturday, July 13, 2013
 Race Time 8:00 AM

Clay County Recreational Park
 Myers Chapel Road
 Hayesville, NC 28904

Register at active.com
 Contact Kathi Patrick at 706.994.3857 / kathipatrick3@gmail.com
 or Merri Murphy at 407.451.1102 / merriandmichaelmurphy@gmail.com
 PO Box 314, Young Harris, GA 30582

Thanks to all our sponsors for making this event possible: Jacky Jones Automotive Group, Nantahala Bank, Mountain Graphics, Absolute Dental Lab, United Community Bank, Scrubs & More, Ingles Hayesville