

ALL MAJOR SERIES  
SPRINTS AND MIDGETS  
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MARKETPLACE



# NATIONAL SPEED SPORT NEWS



**Champ Car Returns To Historic Long Beach**

NSSN previews the Toyota Grand Prix and the 2007 Champ Car Season

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**NEXTEL ALL-STAR CHALLENGE COMING IN MAY**

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# The Power Of Will

## First-Time Winner In Vegas Champ Car Go



CHAMP CAR PAGES **3, 18-19**

FROM THE POLE: Will Power takes the checkered flag Sunday to capture the season-opening Las Vegas Grand Prix.

CHAMP CAR PHOTOS



PADRAIC MAJOR/NASCAR PHOTO

PICKIN' AND GRINNIN': Carl Edwards shows off his Gibson guitar Saturday in victory lane at Nashville Superspeedway.

## Same Song, New Verse

### Edwards Says 'Play It Again' In Nashville

# The Dude Chills Paducah

WORLD OF OUTLAWS

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NASCAR BUSCH SERIES

PAGE **6**





# Sorenson Tops Charts In Two-Day CoT Test

*Team Red Bull Mechanic Fatally Shot On North Carolina Farm*

RICHMOND — **Reed Sorenson** led the second and final day of NASCAR Nextel Cup Series testing for the Car of Tomorrow at Richmond Int'l Raceway April 4.

Fifty-one drivers turned laps around the three-quarter-mile tri-oval in preparation for the Crown Royal presents the Jim Stewart 400 May 5.

Sorenson turned a lap of 123.215 miles per hour in his **Chip Ganassi** Racing Dodge, nearly one mph faster than **Kenny Wallace's** best speed of 122.416 mph the previous day.

Also topping 123 mph on the second day of testing were **Kurt Busch** and **Johnny Benson**, who drove the No. 46 for **Jeff Wyler** Racing.

■ After the two days of testing at RIR, NASCAR officials told teams they will be allowed to reshape the blocks of foam installed in the driver's side door of the CoT, which have created melting problems for several teams, including those of **Kevin Harvick** and **Matt Kenseth**.

Teams will be able to cut away an eight-by-23-inch section of the block which runs through the area where exhaust pipes exit the car. AS well, teams will be required to add an additional heat shield.

■ Truck Series regular **Johnny Benson** debuted the Wyler Racing Toyota during the test at Richmond and was third quick for the fledgling team.

"This is something new for this team and for myself. We feel good with what we've accomplished here at the test," Benson said. "We're not ahead of any of these other teams by any means. There's still a lot of work to be done, but I think we'll be OK. I hope we get the opportunity to come back and try to qualify for this race and run it. I would be pretty excited about that, and I think the guys would also be pretty excited. These guys have done a tremendous amount of work in the past day and a half. They've gotten the car to where it drives really good, and I've been really happy with it."

Many have said that the Car of Tomorrow looks similar to a Craftsman Truck on the track, but Benson said the car does not drive like one.

"You have to drive it different, and a lot of people have asked me how it drives compared to a truck. They are different," he said. "This does not drive like a truck at all, like people think it does, but it drives different from the cars. I don't think it's halfway between them; it's still more toward a Cup car than it is a truck."

■ Team Red Bull mechanic **Jimmy Sprinkle**, 44, was shot and killed on his farm March 31. Sprinkle, who worked for the No. 83 team, went outside to investigate an intruder on his property and was shot once in the chest. He died later that night.

"We are shocked and deeply saddened by the unfortunate loss of Jimmy Sprinkle's life," said Team Red Bull General Manager **Marty Gaunt**. "We extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to Jimmy's family and friends."

# Cold Weather Puts Damper On Weekend Racing Action

HARRISBURG, N.C. — The unseasonably cold weather which plagued much of the country during the Easter weekend did a number on auto racing as well.

More than 50 short-track programs were cancelled or postponed because of the weather. Among the most

notable events stopped by the weather were Saturday night's World of Outlaws event at I-55 Raceway in Pevely, Mo.; the USAC National Midget Series race at Thunder Hill Raceway in Texas; and the All Star Circuit of Champions sprint cars at Ohio's Attica Raceway Park.

*"You don't have as much money to spend on souvenirs and other items at the track because of the high gas prices you pay throughout the year."*

**CHUCK ACKER**, BYERS, COLO.



JOHN CLOSE PHOTOS

**LINED UP:** Fans wait in traffic outside of Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway in March.

# Gas & Go

## Rising Fuel Prices Aren't Keeping Spectators Away

Recent drops in gasoline and heating oil inventories in the United States and political tensions in the Middle East have caused a spike in crude oil prices. Over one two-day period in early March, crude oil prices jumped five percent and oil futures for April have soared as high as \$68 a barrel.

**BY JOHN CLOSE**  
**INSIDE LOOK**

Meanwhile, the national average for a gallon of regular unleaded gas saw a 5.6-cent increase over the same two-day period in March, zooming to nearly \$2.30 a gallon. By the end of month, the average price per gallon of regular unleaded fuel nationally was more than \$2.50 — higher than the \$2.46-per-gallon price estimated by the United States Energy Information Administration.



JOHN CLOSE PHOTO

**SIGHTS AND SOUNDS:** Spectators walk through the Nextel FANZONE at Daytona Int'l Speedway in February.

That increase hits everyone right in the wallet. Most studies indicate that as filling up the family vehicle gets more expensive, disposable income shrinks. In short, higher gas prices

affect everything, right? If comments recently gathered at a number of NASCAR events are any

**GAS:** CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

# NSSN RACING LINE

The Week In Motorsports For April 11

## Alonso Ends McLaren's Losing Streak At Sepang

SEPANG, Malaysia — Fernando Alonso brought an end to McLaren's second-longest losing streak (20 races), as he and teammate Lewis Hamilton outfoxed and outperformed the Ferrari duo of Kimi Raikkonen and Felipe Massa in Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix at the Sepang circuit.

FORMULA ONE  
PAGE 20



STEVE ETHERINGTON PHOTO

## Matos Takes Caution-Filled Inaugural Vegas Grand Prix

LAS VEGAS — It might not have been pretty, but the champagne in victory lane tasted just as sweet Sunday for second-year Champ Car Atlantic Championship racer Raphael Matos. Taking advantage of a strong late-race restart in the No. 6 ProWorks machine, Matos claimed his second-career series victory.

ATLANTIC  
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# Aussie Makes Power Play

## Power Scores First Victory In Inaugural Vegas Grand Prix

By JOHN OREOVICZ  
NSSN CORRESPONDENT

LAS VEGAS — The inaugural Vegas Grand Prix wasn't an artistic success as a car race. But as an important first-time event in a key market for the Champ Car World Series, the downtown street race was a solid hit.

Team Australia's Will Power dominated the first race for Champ Car's Panoz DP01-Cosworth spec car, winning by 16.787 seconds over rookie Robert Doornbos of Minardi Team USA. Las Vegas resident Paul Tracy was third, more than 27 seconds behind after 68 laps of racing.

One thing is for certain: there was nothing fluky about Power's first-career Champ Car race victory. The 26-year-old from Toowoomba made his series debut at Surfers Paradise, Australia, in 2005 and exactly a year later earned his first-career pole at his home race. Power then completed

the 2006 season with a podium finish at Mexico City and established himself in the minds of many as a dark horse championship contender this year.

"I've been looking forward to this since Surfers Paradise last year when we got taken out while running in the lead, and it feels really good," said Power, who averaged 94.607 miles per hour for the timed race. "After Paul dropped back, I was pretty much alone out there.

"I had plenty in hand if anyone wanted to challenge me," added the Australian. "I think a pole and a win is a pretty good birthday present for (Team Australia co-owner) Derrick Walker."

Power led 38 of the 68 laps on the way to the checkered flag. His job was made easier because Tracy and several other competitors suffered problems refueling the new Panoz during routine pit stops.

POWER: CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

**POWER MOVE:** Will Power leads the way during Sunday's inaugural Vegas Grand Prix. The 26-year-old Australian scored his first victory in the Champ Car season opener.

## Champ Car's Vegas Vacation Takes Off Without A Hitch

By JOHN OREOVICZ  
NSSN CORRESPONDENT

LAS VEGAS — Given all that the Champ Car World Series has been through in the last decade, it's amazing that the beleaguered open-wheel formula won the race to stage the first street contest in Las Vegas.

The inaugural Vegas Grand Prix was one of the most trouble-free new events in series history. The temporary track was completed on time and received rave reviews from driv-

ers, while complaints from spectators were minor and relatively few.

The 2.44-mile track designed by Chris Kneifel was wide and smooth and featured a number of interesting corners that differentiate it from a typical street course. The small grandstand erected near the chicane before the cars dip down into a free-way overpass provided one of the most dramatic views in any form of motorsport.

"This thing turned out to be over the top of what I had considered acceptable for the first year," remarked promoter Dale Janzen, the majority

owner of the Arizona Diamondbacks baseball team. "We had very few issues to deal with, and the ones we had we dealt with in a robust way. I can't tell you how ecstatic I am."

The only physical problem with the track was a bump that was quickly removed on Friday night by contractor South Nevada Paving.

The event essentially took over the Fremont Street downtown area, and the circuit encompassed some 14,800 hotel rooms. Technically, the race was a free event, because spectators were

VEGAS: CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

**STREET SCAPE:** The Champ Car field passes through the streets of downtown Las Vegas during Sunday's season opener.

### OPINIONS

**ECONOMAKI:** Show reveals plethora of Canadian race machines. **PAGE 4**  
**Schatz:** Despite WoO changes, 2007 has been enjoyable so far. **PAGE 4**  
**FLOWERS:** Dick May's going to the hall of fame. **PAGE 5**

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

#### McCumbee Scores First ARCA Triumph With Late-Race Move

LEBANON, Tenn. — Chad McCumbee knew he had a good car and proved it in winning Saturday's ARCA RE/MAX Series 150 at Nashville Superspeedway.

ARCA RE/MAX **PAGE 10**  
McCumbee, in Jennifer Belmont's Nortrax-Holland Pump Chevrolet, powered inside of Cale Gale on the final restart with three laps remaining and held on for his first ARCA triumph in his 31st start.

### WINNER'S LIST

Series	Winner	Where	Page
Busch Series	Carl Edwards	Lebanon, Tenn.	6
World of Outlaws	Danny Lasoski	Paducah, Ky.	8
ASCS Gulf South	Jason Johnson	Beaumont, Texas	8
GSC Sprints	Brent Kaeding	Antioch, Calif.	8
USAC-CRA	Scotty Weir	Tucson, Ariz.	10
USCS Sprints	Terry Gray	Milton, Fla.	14
USA Sprints	R.C. Roper	Punta Gorda, Fla.	17
TBARA	Steven Darvalics	Bradenton, Fla.	17

### THE FINISH

*A "career move" would have been listening to mom and paying attention in college so that a real career could have been an option.*

**ANDY STAPP**  
INDUSTRY INSIDERS, PAGE 10





## ► PUBLIC FORUM

Let your voice be heard

### Not Enough IRL

I have been an *NSSN* subscriber for many years. I have been discouraged with your becoming a NASCAR-only newspaper. I find it hard to believe that there are weeks when no information is present in the paper regarding the IRL, the only true racing.

I will give *NSSN* one more year and then decide if it is a truly representative newspaper or only one interested in catering to the biggest audience.

Edward Glowacki  
Philadelphia, Pa.

### Holier Than Thou

Once again, Jeff Gordon seems to think everyone (especially teammates) should let him by so he can win the race. "He was racing me too hard; I don't understand why he was blocking me," he says. No wonder we hear more boos than cheers at driver introductions. Give me a break. His holier-than-thou attitude kind of reminds me of Michael Jackson and his arrogance.

Norman Fullerton  
Greenville, Ohio

### Need To Succeed

As I write this, Michael Waltrip (the cheater) has failed to qualify for another race. I'm certain that the folks at Toyota are wondering if they picked the wrong horse to ride in the NASCAR arena. Given so many good teams, Michael must perform instead of his usual coast-and-collect style. Toyota, are you listening?

John Julis  
Riverside, Calif.

### Safety Observer

Having attended many types of races at all types of tracks, I have an observation about the safety aspect of the Martinsville race. NASCAR was extremely slow to wave the yellow flag. On Sunday at the Cup race,

FORUM: CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



## Share Your Opinion

Letters intended for publication in *National Speed Sport News* should be brief and must be signed and include the author's complete mailing address and business hours phone number. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Mail to 6509 Hudspeth Rd., P.O. Box 1210, Harrisburg, NC 28075. E-mail to publicforum@nationalspeedsportnews.com.



# No Shoehorn!

## A Niggling Disappointment At Canada's Pearson Int'l Airport

TORONTO

Struggling at this city's posh Pearson Int'l Airport to get into my super-snug new slip-on loafers in order to board my flight was the only unpleasant memory of my two-day visit to the Canadian Motorsports Expo at Toronto's Congress Centre. The racing trade show, a first for organizer **Glenn Butts** and Ontario's capital city as well, got off to a good start Friday with more than 40 exhibitors and a small but enthusiastic group of ticket buyers. For statesiders, Canada takes a bit of learning. There are no miles and no gallons, just kilometers and liters, and the Canadian dollar can be bought for 84 cents U.S. Gasoline goes for \$1.04 per liter here. You do the math. The show revealed the great variety of cars that see action on Canadian short tracks, and the total is surprising.

### EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



CHRIS ECONOMAKI

Karting is exceptionally popular, and there are dozens of four-wheeled racing car classes seeking prominence on tracks in the Dominion. Too many, agree many Canadian old-timers. To help combat this, three rival Ontario short tracks — Sunset, Kawartha and Peterborough — have combined their promotional efforts. A highlight for this reporter was a rare sit-down with Indy Pro Series team owner **Brian Stewart**. He revealed, among many things, his disenchantment with recent IPS stewards' actions (too many black flags) and offered his unique method of dealing with "paying drivers," which, like sponsors, are far too few these days. Voicing pleasure with the significant prize-money boost announced for Indy Lights this season, Stewart then developed his own formula for would-be paying drivers who have no money. He takes 100 percent of the first \$150,000 or so in prize money the car wins, before the driver is cut in. As to the appeal of the trade show, organizer Butts, a former P/R chieftain at Mosport, provided daily on-stage events which got favorable reviews from those in the gallery: A Friday autograph session with Canadian drivers was headlined by **Ron Fellows**, who revealed he has "some unfinished business in Nextel Cup." The next day's attraction was an hour-long Q&A with a panel of top racing newspapermen and radio reporters. Give this show a few years and it should be a biggie.

After a long day at the second of the two press preview days at the New York Int'l Auto Show, two things stood out. One, the prevalence of oriental nameplates; in no special order Kia, Honda, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Toyota, Infiniti, Nanjing, Hyundai, Mazda, Subaru, Suzuki. Two, an epidemic of high-horsepower



DANA GARRETT/IMS PHOTO

**AT INDY:** Indy Pro Series team owner Brian Stewart, shown last May at Indianapolis, chatted with Chris Economaki at the Canadian Motorsports Expo in Toronto.

engines. Many manufacturers employed special stands to show off their latest all-powerful engines accompanied by laudatory signage. With the exception of Toyota and Dodge, auto racing got short shrift in Gotham. Dodge dealers — with help from Siemens — offered a popular "NASCAR Super Speedway" ride where two side-by-side Evernham team cars with special adjustable (up and down side to side rocking) chassis could be ridden for three minutes while drivers viewed racing TV through the windshield, steering wheel in hand. Toyota Racing University, in addition to its "We're Here to Race" pamphlet showing its seven NASCAR drivers, displayed a skeleton Car of Tomorrow chassis, extolling its safety, low cost, better inside locations for TV cameras, improved manufacturing techniques and identity virtues. In addition, a duplicate of **David Reutimann's** double zero Camry was close by to admire while (at a different Toyota location) there was a gaily painted No. 36 Camry. Most everywhere one looked XM Satellite Radio signage was visible. Of the many motor press types I encountered wandering the gigantic Javits Center, most were from the West Coast! The midday break included huge (and I mean huge) corned beef on rye (and) turkey sandwiches from Gotham's

ECONOMAKI: CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

## First-Quarter Report On The Business Of Racing

FARGO, N.D.

Racing is a business in every aspect, so it's probably important that we turn in our first-quarter report.

We knew defending the World of Outlaws title was going to be a big challenge, and we feel like our team is off to pretty good start.

Right out of the box things have changed since winning the championship. It's always been about showing up at a race and giving it all you can. Now we are disappointed with anything but a win. Even sometimes after a win you feel like you should have been better. I guess it's just part of racing at that level. You always shoot for the stars, and you're not happy unless you get them.

You always try to push as hard as you can at every race, but now there is a sense of been there and done that, so the 800-pound gorilla isn't weighing you down. There are a lot of guys that you race against that haven't been there, and you can see a change in their tempo.

It's about being the hunted instead of the hunter. The good part for me is that I don't go to the track racing one guy. I go there to try and win.

This has been an enjoyable couple of months dealing with a

SNAP SCHATZ



DONNY SCHATZ

lot of changes. It's been fun working with new people and adapting to different guys. You never know how different people react until the heat is on.

Seeing how other people go about their business in this game is the thing that has changed the most. There are a lot of cars out there every night, and some of those cars were supposedly a lot better last year. Yet, we're still having the same results. It's kind of a different thing to have the people that talked bad about the Outlaws last year seeing the light. It's a long season, and we know anything can happen.

To be successful you have to continually evaluate what you are doing and determine how you can be better. The World of Outlaws management group has been doing a lot of things trying to improve the product. Some I agree with and some I don't.

In an effort to provide better action the track, we are racing with yet another new format. It's placed emphasis on finishing first or second in the heats, but at the end of the night the guys up front seem to have better success.

SCHATZ: CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

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## Dick May Gets His Just Reward

HARRISBURG, N.C.

**N**ext month Dick May, 76, will be inducted into the DIRT Hall of Fame in Weedsport, N.Y., near his hometown of Watertown, N.Y.

After serving in the Army and running some races around Watertown and Syracuse, N.Y., May headed south, putting down roots here where

he's been ever since. He's happy to tell everyone who'll listen that he's operated some places of business on three corners of the intersection of U.S. 29 and Morehead Road.

"I've got a simple name, which makes it easy," May said.

But May is really not sure why they're putting him into the DIRT Hall of Fame.

"I never won 55 races in a row or anything like that," May explained. "I think the most I ever won in a row was like six. There were others better than I was."

May had a confusing career in NASCAR.

At one time, he qualified six different cars for the same Grand National race. Can't do that anymore. The late Bill Gazaway put a stop to that practice.

May only drove one of those cars in that race, as the drivers of the cars he qualified finally made their way to the track before the race.

"A lot of people never knew Dick May, who worked for STP, was race-car driver Dick May," said May, who now holds court every morning for a few close friends and anyone who wants to show up, making coffee at BSR Auto Race Parts on U.S. 29, just north of Lowe's Motor Speedway in Concord, N.C.

May says he was more famous doing what he did for STP and other companies than he was as a driver.

What May did was hang banners and take care of the inflatable in the days when there were few, if any people, to do that job.

### SAY IT WITH FLOWERS



JACK FLOWERS

"I started out with (the late) T. Wayne Robertson (working for series sponsor R.J. Reynolds)," May explained. "It was nothing to take care of 200 inflatable for one race. Some of them were heavy, too. I never will forget those days.

"I hung one of those STP banners up there on the church in Randleman

(N.C.) close to Richard's (Petty) house, and his mom sure did appreciate that. I had to take it down."

Dick May was known for putting up those STP stickers coast to coast. If they were upside down, then that indicated May approved of whatever place he had chosen to put the stickers.

Pinnacle Pete's Steakhouse out there in Phoenix, Ariz., and Riverside, Calif., was May's favorite dining establishment.

But don't let May fool you when it comes to his driving talent, even though he never won a Grand National or a Cup race.

"Our job was not to win races but make sure we got the car in the race and then not abuse it," said May. "We didn't have a lot of new tires.

"A lot of times, we just completed one lap and parked the car."

May remembers a race at Talladega, Ala., where, after a caution flag, he found himself leading the race.

"On the restart," said May, "I was going so slow they gave me the green flag and the move-over flag at the same time."

But May also remembers some DIRT days at the old Syracuse Fairgrounds when he came close to winning that Labor Day race, a race he wanted to win more than any other.

He never did.

But Dick May did enough to attract their attention and get inducted into the Hall of Fame.

## Curry Is Building Vision Racing

INDIANAPOLIS

**W**hen Indy Racing League founder Tony George announced in 2005 that he was starting a new IndyCar team called Vision Racing, the wise-cracks from his critics quickly followed.

Some even suggested the team's mascot should be a seeing-eye dog.

But in just three seasons, Vision Racing has gone from a one-car dream of George to a three-car effort in the IndyCar Series, with Tomas Scheckter, A.J. Foyt IV and Ed Carpenter as the drivers.

George's next goal is to add a fourth car for the 91st Indianapolis 500.

"We do plan on deploying the fourth entry that we entered this year," George said. "Don't know exactly how or what form that may take, but we need to decide here in the next week or so before we leave for Japan.

"Running a third car full-time has certainly been a challenge, but we're really building this team for the future, inasmuch as we've tried to keep some continuity year over year, when we add to the growing team for the coming season, so that helps us a little bit. But I believe in all three of these drivers and look forward to having a good month of May and a good 2007 season."

Vision Racing ran three cars in last year's Indy 500, with Townsend Bell joining Scheckter and Carpenter. Bell is a possibility for the fourth Vision ride, according to George, along with a list of other drivers.

The man who has to put all of this together is team manager Larry Curry, who used to put cars on the front row for the Indy 500 when he was at Team Menard before a series of personal issues put him out of the sport.

"I won't say that I envisioned that," Curry said of becoming a multi-car team. "I saw that what I felt was that we would eventually become a two-car team. As Tony said earlier,

### LAST WORD



BRUCE MARTIN

when we sat down and thought about it, as much as we enjoy participating in the Pro Series, it just made more business sense to run, add an additional IRL car. When you look at the competition that you're up against, the multi-car teams are getting twice the information and practice sessions and things of that nature.

"I would say to you that I'm probably a little surprised that it happened as quick as it happened, but I think it was best for where we're trying to get to.

"It's like I keep telling people, I said, at Vision Racing we're still trying to really identify who we are because each year we've stepped the program up. And once we get really settled at being a three-car team or wherever that ends up, I think at that moment will be when we really start to get stronger all the way around."

The driving force for Curry is to have a competitive effort in this year's Indianapolis 500.

"We're very optimistic about our opportunities this year in Indianapolis for the month of May," Curry said. "When we started Vision Racing in 2005, it was a bit of a struggle that particular season. We went and addressed some of our issues in the off-season then. And I think last year we showed to everyone that we are capable of running up front with the leaders on the ovals. And we had a good month of May last year, but we didn't get to finish it off the way we wanted to. I don't think that our results at the end of that event spoke for how good our cars were throughout the month of May.

"So our goal is to go over there this time and finish it off properly. And I think that we're going to be in great shape to do that based on some of the performances from down in Homestead. Certainly, Indianapolis is our Super Bowl, so we're putting a big emphasis on that."

## Second Colossal 100 Late-Model Race Is Just Around The Corner

CONCORD, N.C.

**T**he biggest dirt-late-model race of the new season is less than two weeks away, and the Colossal 100 at the Dirt Track @ Lowe's Motor Speedway is shaping up to be a special event.

Despite being plagued by rain, last year's inaugural event at the four-tenths-mile dirt track was successful and gave LMS Director of Events Roger Slack something to build on. He's done exactly that.

Two weeks prior to the event, Slack had entries from 100 race teams in 22 states, including three that were planning to tow across country from California. As well, the event enjoys title sponsorship from Circle K and boasts a record amount of contingency sponsorship.

While the inaugural event was sanctioned by the Lucas Oil Dirt Series, this year's race will carry the support of the 360 OTC World of Outlaws Late Model Series. Like last year, the event carries a \$200,000 purse, with \$50,000 to win.

Several changes have taken place at the LMS facility during the off-season, including the narrowing of the race track on the straightaways in the turns — what Slack says should bring the racing up on the banking and off the bottom of the track.

And as we rode around the facility with Slack last week, the late-model pit area outside of turns one and two was being partially paved with the recycled remnants of the old asphalt surface at the 1.5-mile superspeedway, which had been ground several

### FROM THE DESK



MIKE KERCHNER

years ago and stored elsewhere on the property.

"That's a trick I learned from my grandpa," said Slack, who's grandfather promoted Cayuga Speedway in Ontario.

An extra incentive for the winner of this year's race may come from a huge banner currently flying from

the elevator shaft at the track, which uses the photo of inaugural Colossal winner Scott Bloomquist to promote the second running of the event April 20-21.

"We hope that will be an annual thing, that the winner will have his picture on that banner the next year," Slack said.

With the country's best late-model drivers entered, a big purse and ticket sales ahead of last year, the two-day show, which features qualifying and heats on Friday, with the balance of the show on Saturday, has the makings to become late-model racing's premier event.

■ DIRT MotorSports CEO Tom Deery expressed to this columnist his concerns about a recent headline

in this paper concerning a story that dealt with the number of traveling teams following the World of Outlaws sprint-car circuit this season.

The headline read, "WoO Worries." With the Outlaws off to a profitable and competitive start, we understand his concerns. However, it should be noted that Deery's criticism was good natured, with the longtime motorsports executive suggesting a better headline may have read, "WoO Wonderful."

Deery, like many of the DIRT management team that are currently relocating to the Charlotte area, says he is on the "dual residency program," but will eventually settle in the area.

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# RACE REWIND

## NASCAR BUSCH SERIES

Race 7 of 35: Pepsi 300, Saturday, April 7  
Nashville Superspeedway, Lebanon, Tenn.

### FINAL RESULTS

FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
		
Carl Edwards	David Reutimann	Dave Blaney

Fin.	St.	No.	Driver	Car	Laps	Money	Status
1	8	60	Carl Edwards	Dish Network Ford	225	\$53,650	Running
2	5	99	David Reutimann	Aaron's Dream Machine Toyota	225	48,548	Running
3	15	10	Dave Blaney	Fan1st.com Toyota	225	38,623	Running
4	11	38	Jason Leffler	Great Clips Toyota	225	29,648	Running
5	16	4	Regan Smith	Ginn Resorts Chevrolet	225	26,248	Running
6	12	88	Shane Huffman	U.S. NAVY Chevrolet	225	25,773	Running
7	14	29	Scott Wimmer	Holiday Inn Chevrolet	225	27,498	Running
8	7	90	Stephen Leicht	citiFinancial Ford	225	23,398	Running
9	9	35	Bobby Hamilton, Jr.	McDonald's Ford	225	21,023	Running
10	3	22	Mike Bliss	Family Dollar Dodge	225	18,050	Running
11	1	41	David Stremme	Wrigley's Winterfresh Dodge	225	18,150	Running
12	32	1	J.J. Yeley	Micosukee Resorts Chevrolet	225	15,375	Running
13	10	16	Todd Kluever	3M Ford	225	26,398	Running
14	22	66	Steve Wallace	HomeLife Communities Dodge	225	20,448	Running
15	33	18	Brad Coleman	Carino's Italian Grill Chevrolet	224	16,825	Running
16	24	47	Jon Wood	Armor All Ford	224	19,868	Running
17	2	59	Marcos Ambrose	Kingsford Ford	224	19,043	Running
18	28	42	Kevin Hamlin	Texaco/Havoline Dodge	223	21,750	Running
19	18	20	Aric Almirola	Rockwell Automation Chevrolet	222	21,675	Running
20	34	66	Brent Sherman	Big Lots Chevrolet	222	19,763	Running
21	30	14	Kyle Krisloff	Clabber Girl Ford	221	16,743	Running
22	37	73	Brett Rowe	Imperial Bedding Company Ford	219	14,015	Running
23	31	56	Danny O'Quinn, Jr.	Keith Bryant/Culver's Chevrolet	219	14,355	Running
24	36	70	Justin Diercks	Foretravel Motorcoach Chevrolet	219	13,945	Running
25	13	12	Sam Hornish, Jr.	Mobil 1 Dodge	218	15,900	Running
26	39	0	Eric McClure	Hefty/RACEGIRL Chevrolet	217	14,005	Running
27	29	33	Cale Gale	Camping World Chevrolet	204	21,310	Engine
28	35	34	Jay Sauter	Chevrolet	204	15,775	Running
29	20	9	Boris Said	Stanley Dodge	199	21,240	Running
30	25	7	Mike Wallace	GEICO Chevrolet	196	18,848	Running
31	40	28	Robert Richardson, Jr.	North Texas Pipe Chevrolet	191	15,670	Running
32	19	21	Timothy Peters	AutoZone Chevrolet	167	21,125	Running
33	17	27	Jason Keller	Cottonelle/Dollar General Ford	133	15,585	Accident
34	23	25	Richard Johns	freecreditreport.com Ford	131	13,565	Accident
35	4	37	Johnny Sauter	Tractor Supply/Club Cadet Ford	126	13,545	Accident
36	6	6	David Ragan	Coats/Discount Tire Ford	92	13,525	Accident
37	26	77	Kertus Davis	Dollar General Chevrolet	91	15,505	Accident
38	27	23	Brad Keselowski	Oklahoma Centennial Chevrolet	26	13,485	Engine
39	41	52	Brad Teague	Means Racing Ford	24	13,455	Engine
40	43	48	Mike Harmon	All Sports Armour Chevrolet	20	13,400	Electrical
41	42	76	Jerick Johnson	American Legion Chevrolet	10	13,375	Electrical
42	38	01	Morgan Shepherd	Racing with Jesus Chevrolet	8	13,355	Handling
43	21	44	Ruben Pardo	Family Dollar Dodge	4	13,285	Vibration

### RACE STATISTICS

Race time: 2 hours, 20 minutes, 32 seconds  
Average speed: 128.0561 mph  
Victory margin: 4.673 seconds  
Caution flags: Six for 31 laps  
Lead changes: 17 among nine drivers  
Lap leaders: David Stremme, 1-20; David Reutimann, 21-50; Scott Wimmer, 51-63; Jason Leffler, 64; Shane Huffman, 65; Regan Smith, 66; David Ragan, 67-68; Wimmer, 69-78; Jason Leffler, 79-82; Reutimann, 83-87; Wimmer, 88; Todd Kluever, 89-91; Huffman, 92-118; Carl Edwards, 119-128; Leffler, 129-143; Edwards, 144-182; Leffler, 183-200; Edwards, 201-225.

### TALK OF TIME TRIALS

David Stremme earned his second-career NASCAR pole, setting a new track record with a fast lap of 166.561 miles per hour. Rookie Marcos Ambrose, Mike Bliss, Johnny Sauter and David Reutimann completed the top-five qualifiers.

### STANDINGS

FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
		
Carl Edwards	Dave Blaney	Kevin Harvick

### Top 10

1. Carl Edwards	1,200	6. Marcos Ambrose	754
2. Dave Blaney	879	7. Bobby Hamilton, Jr.	738
3. Kevin Harvick	808	8. Shane Huffman	703
4. Kyle Busch	757	9. Mike Wallace	696
5. David Reutimann	757	10. Regan Smith	691



HHP/ERIK PEREL PHOTO

**DISHING OUT SPEED:** Carl Edwards leads Stephen Leicht and Shane Huffman on his way to winning Saturday's Busch Series race at Nashville Superspeedway in Lebanon, Tenn.

# Carl Cures Wheel Woes

*No. 66 Team Fixes Right Front, Sends Edwards To Busch Victory In Music City*

By AMANDA BRAHLER

LEBANON, Tenn. — On Friday at Nashville Superspeedway, Carl Edwards talked to the media about owning a record company. On Saturday, he won the Pepsi 300 in the Music City, adding another Gibson guitar trophy to his collection.

It was the second-straight Busch Series victory for Edwards and his second consecutive on the concrete Nashville track.

"I felt like it was our race to lose, and then they dropped the green flag and we went backwards like a rock," Edwards said. "I was really nervous there for a little while, because I thought we must have missed something."

A caution flag waved on lap 182 while Edwards was leading, but because of problems with the right-front wheel his No. 60 team was forced to spend extra time on pit road. He

exited the pits in third behind Jason Leffler and Todd Kluever. But just past lap 200 of 225, Edwards was able to pull to the inside of Leffler in turn one and reclaim the lead.

"The right-front wheel kept coming loose," Edwards said. "But I told them, 'Man, I think the right front's falling off.' We pulled in the pits, and they said that sure enough it was."

"That happened one more time, and we got a lucky pit break, and at the end they took some extra time and got the wheel tight. We came out third because of that, but the car was so great that I took my time and it made it pretty simple to get back up to the front."

David Reutimann finished nearly five seconds behind Edwards and equaled Toyota's best finish of the season. As a whole, Toyota had a strong day, with all three of its entries finishing in the top-four spots. Braun Racing teammates Dave Blaney and Leffler followed in third and fourth, respectively.

While Edwards struggled with a loose wheel, the Toyota teams had troubles of their own. Blaney suf-

fered a spin on lap 86 after contact with Johnny Sauter.

During pit stops under the yellow flag, Reutimann had to serve a pit-road penalty after exiting with the catch can still attached to his No. 99 entry.

The unstoppable Edwards led the most laps with 74, but the Toyotas of Reutimann and Leffler each spent more than 30 laps out front.

Rounding out the top five was Nextel Cup rookie Regan Smith, who went down a lap early but received the one-lap benefit and charged his way up to fifth, scoring a career-best showing. Smith's No. 4 was the highest-finishing Chevrolet.

The race began under cool conditions, dipping just below 40 degrees with winds at times in excess of 20 miles per hour. David Stremme claimed the pole and led the first 20 laps, but a penalty on pit road dropped him a lap down and put his Chip Ganassi Racing Dodge out of contention early. He finished 11th, behind Fitz Motorsports's Mike Bliss. Bliss was the highest-finishing Dodge in 10th.

# Miller Shows Patience, Then Power At Greenville

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Junior Miller has built the reputation as "The King of the Southern Modifieds" by letting fellow drivers jump out to early leads

only to stalk them down in the closing laps.

### NASCAR MODS

That was the case Saturday night at Greenville-Pickens Speedway, as Miller rode around in the top five for the majority of the race behind the dominant car of Matt Hirschman.

Hirschman ran out front from lap five until 129, when Miller drove underneath him. Miller led the rest of

the way en route to his 10th NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour victory.

"I think he'd pretty much used his car up," Miller said. "We were good enough to get by him, and we showed him who 'The King' really is. Matt just used his stuff up too early, and we saved our car for the end when it really counts."

After Miller took the lead, Hirschman fell back to second until he spun coming off the fourth turn after contact with Tim Brown. Hirschman's late spin set the stage for a green-white-checkered finish, with

Miller holding off Brian Pack.

Miller's victory allowed him to take the point lead by 28 points over Burt Myers.

For Pack, his runner-up effort tied a career-best Southern Modified Tour finish from last year at Motor Mile (Va.) Speedway.

Brown wound up third, followed by Andy Seuss and Brandon Ward.

The finish:

Junior Miller, Brian Pack, Tim Brown, Andy Seuss, Brandon Ward, Burt Myers, Jason Myers, Chuck Hossfeld, Bobby Hutchens, John Smith, Matt Hirschman, George Brunnhoelzl, Jason Trinchere, Thomas Stinson, Greg Butcher, Wesley Swartout, Rich Kuiken, Jr., Brian King, Buddy Emory, Gene Pack, Earl Baker, Frank Fleming, Johnathon Brown, L.W. Miller.



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## RACE REWIND

WORLD OF OUTLAWS SPRINT SERIES

Race 12: April 6

## FINAL RESULTS

WINNER



Danny Lasoski

## Friday

April 6, Paducah (Ky.) Int'l Raceway

**Qualifications:** 1. Chad Hillier, Hillier 5c, 13.737; 2. Kerry Madsen, Helm 11h, 13.847; 3. Jac Haudenschild, Wright 35, 13.867; 4. Joey Saldana, Kahne 9, 14.013; 5. Jason Solwold, Carnahan r19, 14.082; 6. Chad Kemenah, Kemenah 3x, 14.158; 7. Jason Martin, Martin 36, 14.166; 8. Jason Sides, Sides 7s, 14.292; 9. Dusty Zomer, Zomer 1z, 14.349; 10. Dion Hindi, Hindi 11d, 14.355; 11. Craig Dollansky, Karavan 7, 14.360; 12. Steve Kinser, Kinser 11, 14.434; 13. Danny Smith, Smith 4, 14.480; 14. Danny Lasoski, Roth 83, 14.481; 15. Justin Henderson, Henderson d1, 14.499; 16. Daryn Pittman, Titan 21, 14.554; 17. Brooke Tatnell, Woodward 2, 14.564; 18. Neil Shepherd, Shepherd 4n, 14.601; 19. Donny Schatz, Schatz 15, 14.641; 20. Paul McMahan, Stewart 20, 14.742; 21. Randy Hannagan, Hannagan 1x, 14.778; 22. Tim Kaeding, Kinser 11k, 14.803; 23. Terry McCarl, McCarl 24, 14.868; 24. Sam Hafertepe, Jr., Hafertepe 15h, 14.957; 25. Zach Chappell, Chappell 8k, 14.976; 26. Tim Shaffer, Parsons 6, 15.006; 27. Jason Meyers, Stockbridge 14, 15.044; 28. Mark Dobmeier, Dobmeier 13, 15.079; 29. Tony Bruce, Jr., Bruce 18t, 15.092; 30. Billy Alley, VerMeer 55, 15.152; 31. Jeremy Campbell, Campbell 10c, 15.177; 32. Brian Carlson, Carlson 18, 15.230; 33. Greg Wilson, Warmimount 20w, 15.418; 34. Jesse Hockett, Hockett a12, 15.558; 36. Doc Sloan, Sloan d12, 15.647; 37. A.J. Bruns, Bruns 44, 15.722; 38. Brian Paulus, P&P 28, 15.752; 39. Tyler Thompson, Thompson 11t, 16.376.

**First Heat (8 laps):** Solwold, Smith, Zomer, Tatnell, Hillier, Hannagan, Chappell, Wilson, Bruce, Bruns.

**Second Heat (8 laps):** Madsen, Hindi, Kaeding, Lasoski, Kemenah, Shaffer, Alley, Shepherd, Paulus.

**Third Heat (8 laps):** Dollansky, Martin, Schatz, Haudenschild, Meyers, McCarl, Henderson, Campbell, Thompson, Hockett.

**Fourth Heat (8 laps):** Saldana, Pittman, Kinser, McMahan, Sides, Hafertepe, Dobmeier, Carlson, Sloan.

**Dash (6 laps):** Smith, Saldana, Madsen, Martin, Dollansky, Hillier, Haudenschild, Pittman, Hindi, Solwold.

**B Main (12 laps):** 1. McCarl; 2. Hannagan; 3. Bruce; 4. Henderson; 5. Campbell, \$200; 6. Wilson, \$180; 7. Hafertepe, \$175; 8. Alley, \$160; 9. Shepherd, \$150; 10. Hockett, \$150; 11. Dobmeier, \$150; 12. Chappell, \$150; 13. Carlson, \$150; 14. Paulus, \$150; 15. Bruns, \$150; 16. Shaffer, \$150; 17. Thompson, \$150; 18. Sloan, \$150.

**Feature (35 laps):** 1. Lasoski, \$10,000; 2. Saldana, \$5,500; 3. Kemenah, \$3,200; 4. Martin, \$2,800; 5. Solwold, \$2,500; 6. Schatz, \$2,300; 7. McCarl, \$2,200; 8. Meyers, \$2,100; 9. Pittman, \$2,050; 10. Sides, \$2,000; 11. Smith, \$1,500; 12. Hannagan, \$1,200; 13. Hillier, \$1,100; 14. Dollansky, \$1,050; 15. Haudenschild, \$1,000; 16. Tatnell, \$900; 17. Shaffer, \$50; 18. Kaeding, \$800; 19. Bruce, \$800; 20. Zomer, \$800; 21. Henderson, \$800; 22. Hafertepe, \$50; 23. Madsen, \$800; 24. Kinser, \$800; 25. Hindi, \$800; 26. McMahan, \$800.

## STANDINGS

## Top 10

1. Joey Saldana	1,742
2. Donny Schatz	1,730
3. Daryn Pittman	1,636
4. Danny Lasoski	1,586
5. Terry McCarl	1,583
6. Craig Dollansky	1,580
7. Brooke Tatnell	1,543
8. Tim Kaeding	1,509
9. Steve Kinser	1,498
10. Kerry Madsen	1,485



MARK FUNDERBURK PHOTO

**SLIDE AND GLIDE:** Danny Lasoski (83) works underneath traffic during Friday night's World of Outlaws Sprint Series race at Paducah (Ky.) Int'l Raceway.

## Weather Deals 'Dude' A Win

By TONY VENEZIANO

PADUCAH, Ky. — Mother Nature tried her best to stop Danny Lasoski and the rest of the World of Outlaws on Friday night at Paducah Int'l Raceway.

Despite temperatures well below the freezing mark and a stiff wind, a very hearty crowd was on hand to see Lasoski pick up his first victory of the season.

Starting 15th on the three-eighths-mile oval, Lasoski methodically worked his way to the front. He gained four spots on the opening lap and by the halfway point of the 35-lap event was fifth.

He made the pass for the win on the 33rd lap, as he charged to the low side of Joey Saldana to pick up the \$10,000 winner's check. The pair raced side by side for several laps

with each inching ahead, but each time at the line it was Saldana being officially scored the leader. With Saldana using the high side of the track, the bottom groove was just the opening that Lasoski needed.

"This is a whole credit to my team," said Lasoski, driver of the Roth Motorsports Eagle. "We got punted on the first lap of the heat race, and that put us in the infield and kept us from getting to first or second in the heat race. Everyone knows how important that is.

"My guys never gave up. They said, 'let's work on this race car and see how good we can get it.' I have to thank Dennis Roth for letting me race this car and all these guys that are supporting me in the pit area."

Lasoski kept his car glued to the bottom for most of the race. He now holds the mark of having won from

the farthest back of any of the seven drivers that have picked up World of Outlaws triumphs this season.

Saldana, the current point leader, was looking for his fourth-straight victory.

"We were really good, and with about two or three laps to go, it wouldn't pick the throttle up," Saldana explained. "I got in the fence coming off turns three and four. That killed a lot of my momentum. Every time I tried to pick up some momentum, I would get tighter and tighter. If we would have had one more lap, we probably would not have finished, so we were glad to finish."

Chad Kemenah picked up his best finish of the season, as he charged from the 11th to come home third. Jason Martin scored his best finish of the season in fourth, with Jason Solwold fifth.

## Jason Johnson Goes Distance In ASCS Gulf Opener

BEAUMONT, Texas — Jason Johnson picked up his first victory of the season, wiring Friday night's season-opening 25-lap event for the

## ASCs GULF

American Sprint Car Series Gulf South Region at Motorama Speedway.

While Eric Baldaccini led the feature field to the green flag from the pole, Johnson gunned Larry Row's No. 41 Eagle into the lead from outside the front row.

Johnson was chased to the checkered flag by four-time ASCS champion Terry Gray, with 2003 champion

Travis Rilat charging from 16th to finish third. Johnny Miller and Skip Wilson rounded out the top five.

The finish:

Jason Johnson, Terry Gray, Travis Rilat, Johnny Miller, Skip Wilson, Eric Baldaccini, Kent Lewis, Jr., Brad Best, Gary Watson, Chris Sweeney, Brandon Berryman, Jimmy Brooks, Greg Rilat, Ray Allen Kulhanek, Brad Stokes, Channin Tankersley, Lorne Wolfford, Tommy Bryant, Rod Craddock, Jason Hart.

## Fast Freddie Posts No. 150 At Lincoln

By AL ROBINSON

ABBOTTSTOWN, Pa. — The diehard fans who braved freezing temperatures Saturday night at Lincoln Speedway were rewarded by witnessing a piece of history.

Fred Rahmer won his 150th sprint-car feature at the Pigeon Hills oval, tying the record held by the retired Steve Smith.

Crediting his success to "perseverance and surrounding myself with good people" rather than driving talent, Rahmer singled out for special recognition engine builder Don Ott, who has provided the powerplants for each of the half-dozen teams that Rahmer has carried to victory lane.

The victory was no cruise from the front row, as with point handicapping in effect, Rahmer started the 25-lapper 12th. He dodged a third-lap pileup in front of him with minor wing damage and relentlessly hunted down the leaders as the final 22 laps unfolded nonstop. Moving into second at the halfway mark, he rode the high side around race-long leader Niki Young as lap 16 went into the books.

Brian Leppo took second with six to go but could make no impression and finished nearly a straightaway behind.

Young held on for third, with Cris Eash fourth and Lance Dewease fifth after starting 15th.

Local construction mogul Rich Eichelberger bolted to the lead in the super sportsman feature and hammered the field, leading all 20 laps.

## Kaeding Cruises In GSC Opener

By GARY THOMAS

ANTIOCH, Calif. — Brent Kaeding became the first repeat winner of the 2007 Golden State Challenge Series season Saturday night at Antioch Speedway.

Kaeding started third and got a great run on the third attempted start of the 30-lap feature to shoot to second behind polesitter Ronnie Day. On lap seven, Kaeding sliced under Day to take the lead.

Despite heavy traffic on the quarter-mile oval, Kaeding cruised to his 72nd-career GSC victory and his second in as many weeks.

Sean Becker continued to be consistent, driving from the fourth row to finish second. It was his fourth-straight podium finish, and he continues to hold the point lead.

Indiana driver Brandon Wimmer, who was the fast qualifier, came home third, with Day and Jonathan Allard rounding out the top five.

The finish:

Brent Kaeding, Sean Becker, Brandon Wimmer, Ronnie Day, Jonathan Allard, Jason Statler, Brad Sweet, Jim Skinner, Bud Kaeding, Willie Croft, Jon Maiwald, Brett Miller, Evan Suggs, Mark Workentine, Ric McCormick, Pat Harvey, Jr., Shawn Arriaga, Matt Shelton, Jason Botsford, Joey Magaruh, Cameron Mendes, Chad Vermer.



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## ▶ INDUSTRY INSIDERS

Stories of people who make a living in motorsports

### Just How Does An Indiana Boy End Up In Stock-Car Land?

When I was asked to write a guest column for *NSSN*, a publication I have grown up (and old) reading, I was honored.

I've been asked how a sprint-car crash pilot who grew up traveling all around the Midwest racing as often as my dad's budget would allow ends up in the Southeast making a career employed by three different premier NASCAR Cup teams in 14 years.

Maybe they were desperate for help, or perhaps I just love to eat well.

I realize more and more as my hair turns gray that I have had an awesome life. Fresh out of high school, the opportunity to drive my own sprint car, which had been driven by Brad Marvel and others, presented itself. I took the opportunity.

We loaded my repaired and salvaged ex-Gary Irvin '82 Stanton sprint car on the open trailer, left Brownsburg, Ind., and headed 45 minutes down the road to Paragon Speedway — a quarter-mile bullring in south-central Indiana.

BY ANDY STAPP  
GUEST COLUMNIST

Paragon was a great place for beginners because its only crash wall is along the front straightaway, protecting the grandstands. If you run out of talent in corners one, two or three, or along the backstretch, the runoff room is very accommodating.

However, my talent quickly dried up coming off turn four just in time for that concrete wall to meet me, flipping what a few short moments before was my pride and joy down the frontstretch in front of the grandstands.

Dazed and battered, we loaded what was now a junk pile and headed home. Dad was great. It wasn't like he had never taken a racer home in a bucket before, but in a short time a new J&J was assembled and mom and dad's bank account continued to dwindle.

Some seven or eight years and a few injuries later, I decided maybe working on other race cars was a good career move.

A "career move" would have been listening to mom and paying attention in college so that a real career could have been an option; however, in my youthful wisdom I went to work for an Indy Lights team and then Tony Bettenhausen's Indy-car team.

Then the great idea was formed to move to Charlotte, N.C., to try working on "taxi cabs." Having a CDL license and an ability to tig weld and fabricate landed me with Felix Sabates's Team SABCO. Then I moved on to Hendrick Motorsports and now hang out at Dale Earnhardt, Incorporated's No. 8 shop.

I have had great experiences in all the forms of racing I've tried, made unrivaled friendships and traveled from coast to coast, border to border and beyond.

I would never trade these experiences for a career in an office or factory, and I'm proud to say I've never had a real job. But I have learned a few things along the way:

1. Parents, no matter how hard they are to raise, know so much more than we give them credit for.

2. All race teams are screwed up — from the biggest and best to my own. The only the big ones have more money to throw at their problems.

3. Talent will help even the most screwed-up team, but only when all the players gel together will they make it to the top.

4. Most importantly for me, paradise is found with my own family, going racing with my own kids and watching them do what they enjoy.

Thanks, mom and dad. Now I know why you spent so much for so long.



ANDY STAPP

Stapp, a former sprint-car driver, is a fabricator for the No. 8 Chevrolet driven by Dale Earnhardt, Jr.

**Winner:** Stapp owns one sprint-car victory at Lawrenceburg (Ind.) Speedway.

**Hall of Famers:** Stapp's father, Steve, and grandfather, Babe, have both been inducted into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame.

**New Generation:** Stapp's two sons race motorcycles.



ROBERT COSTANZO/ARCA PHOTO

**OVER THE WALL:** Chad McCumbee's crew services the No. 62 Chevrolet during Saturday's ARCA race at Nashville Superspeedway. McCumbee won for the first time in 31 starts.

## McCumbee Seals Deal

### Final Restart Opens Door For Chevy Driver's First ARCA Victory

LEBANON, Tenn. — Chad McCumbee knew he had a good car, and proved it in winning Saturday's ARCA RE/MAX Series 150 at Nashville Superspeedway.

"I told my crew early on that we had a really good race car," McCumbee said. "If we take care of this thing, we can win this race."

McCumbee, in Jennifer Belmont's Nortrax-Holland Pump Chevrolet, powered inside of Cale Gale on the final restart with three laps remaining and held on for his first ARCA triumph in his 31st start.

"I think we took the green with three or four to go. I don't know if he (Gale) spun his tires a little bit or what," McCumbee said. "I knew we were

good on restarts, but I knew he was a lot better on extremely long runs.

"Either I did something that I hadn't been doing before and got an extremely good restart, which I really don't think happened, or he spun his tires a little bit on the restart."

McCumbee, who pitted during the final caution with less than 10 laps remaining while Gale stayed out, also had the advantage of having four fresh tires.

Gale, who won the pole Friday, dominated the race in Kevin Harvick's Chevrolet, leading 87 of 113 laps in the 150-mile event, but had to settle for second.

Erin Crocker, in Ray Evernham's Dodge Charger, finished third. Scott Lagasse finished fourth in a Dodge in front of Chad Blount, who finished

fifth in a Dodge.

McCumbee led three times for 25 laps and proved to be Gale's biggest threat. Tim Andrews, who finished sixth in a Dodge, led the race for one lap.

**The finish:**

Showing driver, car and laps completed: 1. Chad McCumbee, Chevrolet, 113; 2. Cale Gale, Chevrolet, 113; 3. Erin Crocker, Dodge, 113; 4. Scott Lagasse, Dodge, 113; 5. Chad Blount, Dodge, 113; 6. Tim Andrews, Dodge, 113; 7. Justin South, Dodge, 113; 8. Marc Mitchell, Chevrolet, 113; 9. Dexter Bean, Chevrolet, 112; 10. Frank Kimmel, Ford, 112; 11. Justin Allgaier, Chevrolet, 112; 12. Jeremy Clements, Chevrolet, 112; 13. Justin Marks, Dodge, 112; 14. Bobby Gerhart, Chevrolet, 112; 15. Jason Hedgesky, Ford, 112; 16. Richard Johns, Ford, 112; 17. Phillip McGilton, Ford, 112; 18. Bobby Santos III, Toyota, 112; 19. Billy Venturini, Chevrolet, 111; 20. Gabi DiCarlo, Chevrolet, 111; 21. Josh Krug, Chevrolet, 111; 22. Mike Duncan, Chevrolet, 111; 23. Josh Wise, Dodge, 111; 24. Ron Cox, Pontiac, 111; 25. Patrick Sheltra, Chevrolet, 111; 26. Chris Cokrum, Chevrolet, 110; 27. Mike Harmon, Chevrolet, 110; 28. Darrell Basham, Pontiac, 108; 29. Norm Benning, Chevrolet, 106; 30. Nick Tucker, Dodge, 104; 31. Brad Smith, Ford, 102; 32. Josh Allison, Dodge, 101; 33. Michael McDowell, Dodge, 95; 34. Dominick Casola, Ford, 87; 35. Mike Koch, Pontiac, 86; 36. Mario Gosselin, Chevrolet, 53; 37. Bryan Silas, Ford, 50; 38. Todd Bowsher, Ford, 44; 39. Joey Miller, Dodge, 19; 40. J.R. Norris, Dodge, 5.

## Weir Conquers USA Race Park; Johnson Second

TUCSON, Ariz. — Indiana driver Scotty Weir became the 10th different winner in 10 USAC-CRA Sprint Car Series events this season Saturday night at USA Race Park.

Weir led all 30 laps of the three-eighths-mile oval in his ITI Performance/H-K Construction Hi-Performance machine to beat R.J. Johnson and Casey Shuman who battled to a photo-finish for second.

Mike Spencer and point-leader Tony Jones rounded out the top-five.

**The summary:**

Qualifications: 1. Danny Sheridan, Kittle 18, 17.094; 2. Charles Davis, Jr., Massey 12az, 17.182; 3. Rip Williams, Jory 3x, 17.192; 4. Matt Rossi, Rossi 02, 17.372; 5. Rick Ziehl, Tutco 33, 17.468; 6. Mike Spencer, Chaffin 50, 17.566; 7. Tony Jones, Alexander 4, 17.755; 8. Mike Martin, Martin 57, 17.774; 9. Tom Ogle, Ogle 5az, 17.780; 10. Rickie Gaunt, Keller 94, 17.860; 11. R.J. Johnson, Martin 15, 17.986; 12. Casey Shuman, Massey 2az, 18.138; 13. Scotty Weir, Cossno 38, 18.226; 14. Mike Leslie, Montgomery 76, 18.334; 15. Andrew Reinbold, Reinbold 19x, 18.334; 16. Jessica Zemken, Price 0, 18.395; 17. Tyler Brown, Brown 34, 19.176; 18. Nadine Keller, Keller 16, 19.242; 19. David Cardey, Cossno 83, 19.262; 20. Ronnie Clark, Clark 94t, no time; 21. Jeremy Sherman, Sourant 75x, no time; 22. Rip Williams, Jory 3, no time.

First Heat (10 laps): Cardey, Weir, Gaunt, Rossi, Jones, Sheridan, Zemken.

Second Heat (10 laps): Leslie, Brown, Johnson, Davis, Ziehl, Martin.

Third Heat (10 laps): Reinbold, Sherman, Spencer, Shuman, Clark, Keller, Ogle, Williams.

Feature (30 laps): Weir, Johnson, Shuman, Spencer, T. Jones, Davis, Gaunt, Sheridan, Ogle, Rossi, Brown, Cardey, Sherman, Martin, Reinbold, Zemken, Leslie, Williams, Ziehl.

## Rutherford Rules

VENTURA, Calif. — USAC-CRA sprint-car veteran Troy Rutherford led all 30 laps to win Saturday night's

USAC Western Midget Car Series race at Ventura Raceway.

Scott Pierovich was second ahead of Rutherford's Sala Racing teammate, Robby Flock. Brian Gard and Matt Mitchell rounded out the top five.

Despite flipping his machine in the feature, Chris Rahe continues to lead the standings.

**The finish:**

Troy Rutherford, Scott Pierovich, Robby Flock, Brian Gard, Matt Mitchell, Shane Cottle, Jerome Rodeola, C.J. Sama, Nathan High, Shannon McQueen, Greg Bragg, Garrett Hansen, Johnny Rodriguez, Randi Pankratz, Cory Kruseman, Danny Stratton, Alex Harris, Josh Lakatos, Bobby Michnovicz, Chris Rahe, Doug DeWitt, Quintin Crye.

## NEXT WEEK ...

Lowe's Motor Speedway's Roger Slack discusses the world of short-track promotion.



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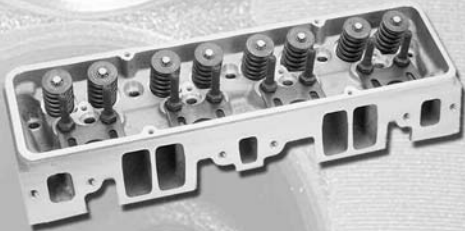
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What's making news in motorsports

## POWER RANKINGS

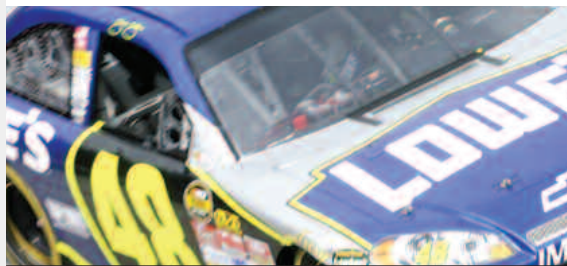
NSSN ranks the top 10 drivers from all forms of motorsports.

### Jimmie Johnson

No. 48 Lowe's Chevrolet, NASCAR Nextel Cup

The defending Nextel Cup Series champion had the weekend off, but he will get his title defense back on the track as the series heads to Texas Motor Speedway this weekend. Johnson has three victories already this year.

# NO. 1



HHP/ERIK PEREL PHOTO

## REST OF THE BEST

### 2. Kimi Raikkonen

No. 6 Ferrari, Formula One

Raikkonen finished third in Malaysia and holds a slim point lead over two-time defending F-1 champion Fernando Alonso.

### 3. Jeff Burton

No. 31 Chevrolet, Nextel Cup

Burton will be looking to get his first Nextel Cup victory of the year when the season resumes this weekend at Texas Motor Speedway.

### 4. Kyle Busch

No. 5 Kellogg's Chevrolet, Nextel Cup

Busch has had one of the strongest cars at every Cup race this season and hopes that trend continues Sunday at TMS.

### 5. Donny Schatz

No. 15 J&J Sprint Car, World of Outlaws

Schatz finished sixth Friday at Paducah (Ky.) Int'l Raceway but still ranks second in the WoO points.

### 6. Mike Skinner

No. 5 Toyota Tundra, Craftsman Truck Series

The Craftsman Truck Series had the weekend off, but Skinner leads the standings with three victories in four races.

### 7. Joey Saldana

No. 9 J&J Sprint Car, World of Outlaws

Saldana extended his point lead over Donny Schatz with a second-place finish at Paducah, Ky.

### 8. Scott Dixon

No. 9 Target Honda-Dallara, IRL IndyCar Series

The point leader after two races, Dixon resumes the IndyCar wars April 21 at Twin Ring Motegi in Japan.

### 9. Ron Capps

Brut Dodge, NHRA Funny Car

Capps gets back on the strip this weekend as the NHRA POWERade Drag Racing Series visits The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

### 10. Sebastien Bourdais

No. 1 McDonald's Panoz, Champ Car

Bourdais struggled through a difficult weekend at Las Vegas and failed to finish the Champ Car season opener.

## Honorable Mention

Defending Formula One champion Fernando Alonso made a big stride toward entering the Power Rankings, while Will Power won the Champ Car season opener.

## Last Week

Jimmie Johnson remained in the top spot. Several spots changed position, but no drivers left the countdown. Sebastien Bourdais fell from second to 10th.

# Darlington Gets \$10 Million Grant

## Resurfacing Among Targeted Projects

DARLINGTON, S.C. — The Board of Directors of International Speedway Corporation approved more than \$10 million in funding for capital projects at Darlington Raceway. Total estimated spending for the projects represents the largest one-time capital investment in the 58-year history of the storied facility.

Scheduled projects include the repaving of the racing surface and aprons and the addition of concrete pit stalls.

A new infield access tunnel, large enough to accommodate haulers as well as motor coaches, will be constructed at the west end of the track.

Projects also include suite renovations and the creation of additional fan parking areas.

## Mac Tools Backs Erin Crocker

STATESVILLE, N.C. — Mac Tools will be the primary sponsor of the No. 98 Evernham Motorsports Dodge Charger driven by Erin Crocker in four ARCA RE/MAX Series races this season.

The four-race primary sponsorship will begin April 27 at Kansas Speedway and continue at Kentucky Speedway May 12, Pocono Raceway June 9 and Michigan Int'l Speedway June 15.

## Washington Track Proposal Dropped

OLYMPIA, Wash. — A \$368-million NASCAR track proposal for Washington State has been dropped after developers encountered opposition from local and state leaders.

NASCAR legends Richard Petty and Darrell Waltrip, along with current driver Greg Biffle, visited the state in February to attempt to sway lawmakers.

The plan proposed by Great Western Sports, a subsidiary of International Speedway Corporation, called for taxpayers to fund half of the project, with ISC contributing \$180 million.

Grant Lynch, the president of GWS, said the group has not completely ruled out a project in Washington State. Lynch claims that officials from the company "still believe the Northwest represents a significant opportunity for ... speedway development."

Developers argued that the track would bring \$4 billion to the state's economy, but the necessary financing legislation had stalled.

## MIS Announces Staff Changes

BROOKLYN, Mich. — Michigan Int'l Speedway President Roger Curtis has announced the restructuring of the marketing, sales and ticketing departments at the track.

"Selling race tickets, sponsorships and partnerships and communicating those



PHIL CAVALI PHOTO

**RENOVATIONS:** Darlington (S.C.) Raceway will receive \$10 million worth of improvements including a new tunnel and a new racing surface.

benefits to everyone is not an event, but rather a process," said Curtis. "This new team effort that aligns ticketing, sales and communications under one umbrella will help us accomplish that — for our partners, for our ticket holders and for our entire team."

John Moreland has been named senior director of marketing and sales and will oversee the track's ticketing, corporate sales and communications departments.

Andy Longenberger will take over as the director of corporate sales. Sammie Lukaskiewicz will remain as director of communications. Kevin Gregory joins Lukaskiewicz's staff as manager of consumer marketing, while Dennis Worden remains as manager of public relations.

## Fox Promotes Hunter Nickell

LOS ANGELES — Fox National Cable Sports Network President Bob Thompson announced Monday that Hunter Nickell has been named President of Speed.

Nickell joined Speed in June of 2005 and helped guide the network through contract negotiations with NASCAR and Formula One while also helping Speed to record audience growth in 2006.

This past February, Speed's viewership topped 70 million U.S. households for the first time in the network's history.

## ASCS2 Sets Five Dates

TULSA, Okla. — Officials from the American Small Car Series (ASCS2) have added five Sunday night cards of micro-sprint racing to the 2007 Creek County Speedway schedule.

"Many of our sprint-car drivers of tomorrow are racing micros today," said ASCS President and founder Emmett Hahn. "It's a fun, affordable and competitive form of racing, and it's important to cultivate [it]."

Creek County Speedway, located in Sapulpa, Okla., will host the series April 29, June 3, July 1, Aug. 5 and Sept. 2.

For information, call (918) 838-3777.

## Pacific F2000 Tribunal Rules

BUTTONWILLOW, Calif. — The results of last Sunday's fourth round of the Pacific F2000 Championship presented by Hankook Tires at Willow Springs Int'l Raceway have been amended following a protest that was lodged with the event's stewards following the race.

The complaint alleged that second-place finisher Shaun Modisette, driver of the No. 26 Carson Trailer/PR1 Motorsports Van Diemen, gained an unfair advantage through changing all four wheels and tires prior to the start of the race. Extreme tire wear was experienced by all competitors on the road course, but series rules require that

only one set of tires may be used during a race weekend, unless prior dispensation has been offered by the chief steward.

"As a result of the tire change, but also considering the confusion caused by (an official's) misstatement, a complete disqualification of car No. 26 will not be made," said the tribunal's published statement. "However, a penalty computed by taking (his) grid position of seventh place less three positions to 10th place will be assessed."

The revised top-10 finishing order follows: Patrick Barrett, Chris Sprietzer, Jeff Westphal, Chuck Hulse, Thomas Merrill, Peter Hastrup, Ira Fierberg, Nicky Freytag, Peter Hansel, Modisette.

## Crew Chiefs To Race Roadsters At LMS

CONCORD, N.C. — The top crew chiefs in NASCAR Nextel Cup racing will trade their wrenches for driving suits during the inaugural Kobalt Tools Crew Chief Race on May 19 at Lowe's Motor Speedway. The event will be the featured pre-race entertainment for the All-Star Challenge.

The crew chiefs will use Thunder Roadsters, which will be decaled to replicate the paint schemes of the Cup cars they oversee, and compete in a 30-minute racing program that will include two qualifying heats and a feature race.

The racing action will take place on the speedway's quarter-mile oval, located on the frontstretch of the 1.5-mile superspeedway, and will be televised by the Speed Channel.

## Pocono To Honor James Hylton

POCONO, Pa. — Stock-car driver James Hylton has been named the 2007 recipient of Pocono Raceway's Bill France Award of Excellence for his contributions to NASCAR racing.

Hylton has raced in 601 NASCAR events and compiled two victories, 140 top fives and 301 top 10s. In February, he made national headlines when he became the oldest driver (at age 72) to try to qualify for the Daytona 500.

## NUTS AND BOLTS

Adrian Fernandez will serve as the honorary host of the fifth annual CARA Charities Raceway Rendezvous April 13 at the Champ Car World Series Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach. For tickets call (317) 299-2277 or visit [www.caracharities.org](http://www.caracharities.org). . . **Raceway 7** in Conneaut, Ohio, will host the 360 OTC World of Outlaws Late Model Series May 4, a date that was previously occupied by Brushcreek Motorsports Complex in Peebles, Ohio. . . Due to inclement weather, **Attica (Ohio) Raceway Park** officials rescheduled the April 6-7 Coors Light Spring Nationals featuring the O'Reilly All Star Circuit of Champions. The April 7 show has been moved to May 4, and the April 6 show has been rescheduled for May 25. . . SCCA Pro Racing has hired **Tish Sheets**, former NASCAR Director of Diversity and Special Projects, as SCCA Director of Business Affairs and Operations.



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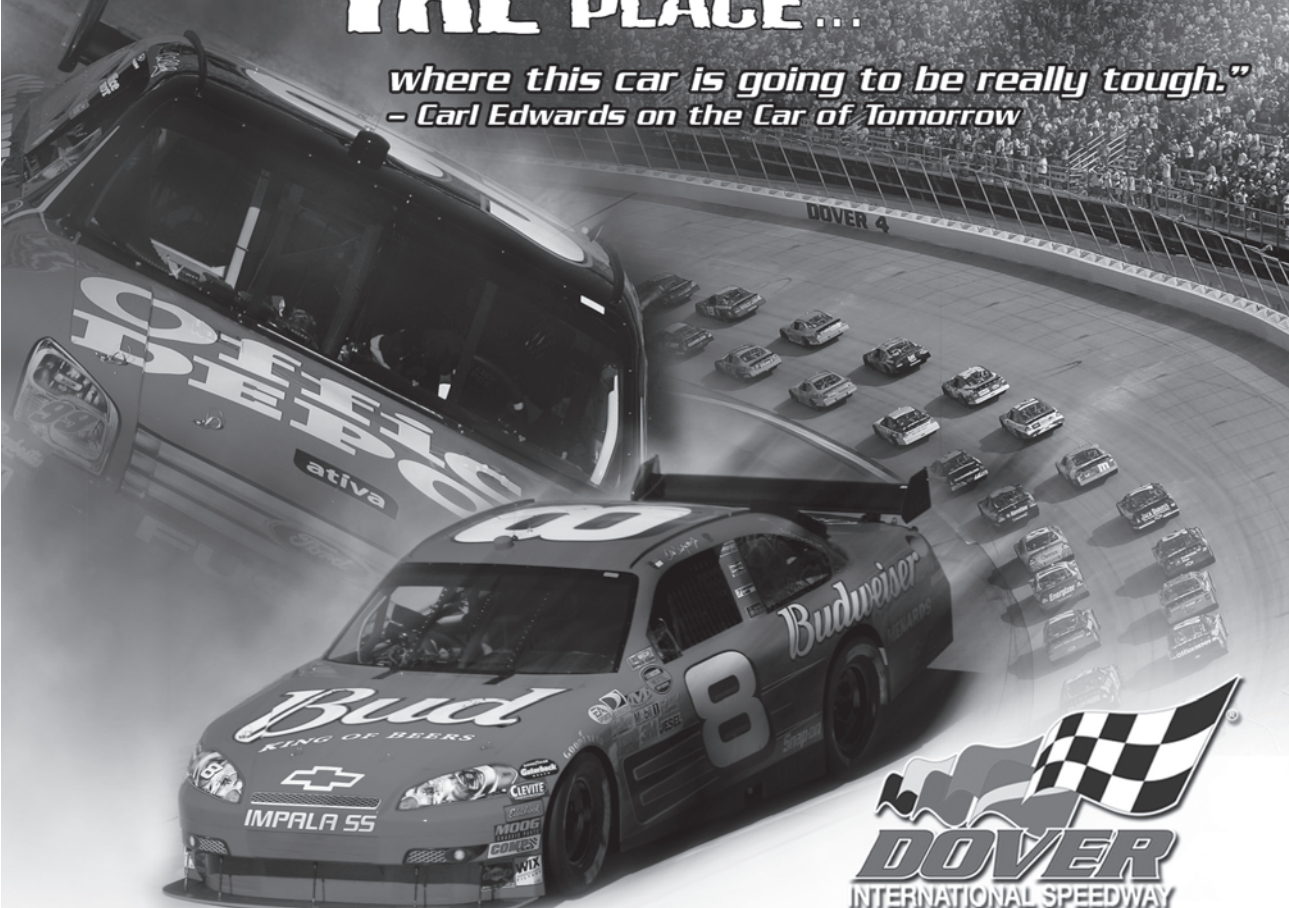
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# Car Count Could Add Drama To Bump Day

By **BRUCE MARTIN**  
NSSN CORRESPONDENT

INDIANAPOLIS — With the opening of Indianapolis Motor Speedway three weeks away, some of the top teams and officials spoke during last week's media tour about the optimistic prospects entering this year's 91st Indianapolis 500.

## INDYCAR

Brian Barnhart, the president of competition for the Indy Racing League, said he has 35-36 car/driver combinations coming together, which means there could be some activity on Bump Day.

"I think we're still anticipating around 35 or 36 car/driver combinations that are looking pretty firm through the entire month or acknowledge second-week programs," Barnhart said. "And you always have potential of other teams running additional cars beyond that, depending on how the month goes for them. But I think we're probably in that same ballpark."

Barnhart was part of the tour's opening program that also included Indianapolis Motor Speedway president Joie Chitwood III and recently named Indy Racing League president, commercial division, Terry Angstadt.

After celebrating a highly successful 90th Indy 500 last year that featured Sam Hornish, Jr.'s incredible last-lap pass of Marco Andretti at the start/finish line, Chitwood knows it will be very difficult to top that in this year's race.

"In our 90 years of history, we've never had a lead change on the last lap of the Indy 500," Chitwood said. "Well, that wasn't even the last lap. That was the last 200 yards. The year before, never had a female led the Indy 500, so I'm not sure what the 91st holds for us. But based on the last couple of years, I'm excited about what it can be."

Major changes for this year's race include the use of 100-percent fuel-grade Ethanol along with engine displacement increased from three liters to 3.5 liters. That could increase speeds back to 230 miles per hour.

"It is the same car that we're bringing back, the same aero package, the same performance, and that's the root of the excitement, because I think it is the best package this facility has ever had in terms of a racing product," Barnhart said. "You've got great continuity with the teams, great continuity with the drivers. The fuel-cell capacity is smaller because the Ethanol gets much better mileage than the methanol did. So, we need to match the fuel-cell capacity with the tire life, so we had to make the fuel cells a little smaller. That will have no effect on the competition."

With better fuel mileage, the fuel cell in the car has been reduced by eight gallons so that pit stops will be in sync with the life of Firestone tires. Barnhart said that should keep the number of pit stops the same as in the past.



ATLANTIC CHAMPIONSHIP PHOTO

**EARLY SHOWER:** Raphael Matos (right) and second-place finisher Robert Wickens celebrate their podium finishes Sunday in Las Vegas.

## Matos Makes Most Of His Opening Run

LAS VEGAS — It might not have been pretty, but the champagne in victory lane tasted just as sweet Sunday for second-year Champ Car Atlantic Championship racer Raphael Matos.

### ATLANTIC

Taking advantage of a strong late-race restart in the No. 6 ProWorks machine, Matos claimed his second series victory in the inaugural Vegas Grand Prix — the second of 12 rounds this season.

Run on the 2.44-mile street circuit in downtown Las Vegas, the season opener was marred by four caution flags, with 15 cars in the 27-car field being eliminated due to contact.

"I knew the race would have a lot of restarts, a lot of yellow flags, but I did not expect that many," the winner explained. "I tried to do my best on the restarts, but you never know what's going to happen. You have to give credit to the guys. We never touched wheels or did anything stupid. I am just trying to score points

and look at the big picture, which is the championship."

Rookie and polesitter Robert Wickens grabbed the early lead, but on the restart of the first caution, James Hinchcliffe charged into the lead. However, Wickens returned the favor following the second yellow and again assumed the point.

On the restart of the third caution, Matos, who started fourth, began his march to the front. The 25-year-old Brazilian moved into the runner-up spot on lap 14 before a seven-car crash forced another caution period.

Matos stole the point from Wickens in the first turn on the lap-19 restart and held the advantage through another late-race caution to take the checkered flag by .160 second over Wickens and Jonathan Bomarito.

#### The finish:

Raphael Matos, Robert Wickens, Jonathan Bomarito, James Hinchcliffe, Franck Perera, Junior Strous, Alan Scuto, Ronnie Bremer, Justin Sofio, Matt Lee, Mike Forest, Brian Thiens, J.R. Hildebrand, Giacomo Ricci, Tom Sutherland, Dominick Muermans, Simona De Silvestro, John Edwards, Dan Selznick, Frankie Muniz, Tengyi Jiang, Adrien Herbets, Bret MacDonald, Richard Heistand, David Garza, Carl Skerfving, Adrian Carrio.

## USCS Field Is Gray With Envy

MILTON, Fla. — Terry Gray led wire to wire to score his first victory of the season in Saturday night's United Sprint Car Series race at Southern Raceway.

### USCS SPRINTS

Gray won his heat race to draw the pole position in the 30-lap feature alongside Kenny Adams, but Adams elected to start from the rear to try and collect the \$7,500 bonus for winning from the back of the pack. Bob Auld moved up to take Adams's spot but spun out on the opening lap to bring the field back for a full restart.

Under green, Gray took off from the field, as R.J. Johnson began his pursuit from the second position. Within

five laps he had caught up to Gray and briefly managed to overtake the leader, but his move was negated as the caution flag waved and Gray retained the top spot.

In the back of the pack, Adams had moved up by lap 15, but his bid for the bonus came to an end when he hit the wall on lap 20.

Up front, Gray continued his run through the field, holding off Johnson over the remaining laps and seven caution flags to take the checkered flag. Terry Coddington was third, followed by Terry Vidrine and Matt Tiffany.

#### The finish:

Terry Gray, R.J. Johnson, Terry Coddington, Terry Vidrine, Matt Tiffany, Robert Casada, Matt Linder, Brian Dyer, Kenny Adams, Bryn Gohn, Bob Auld, Matt Reed, Brian Thomas, Michael Craddock, Timmy Thrash.

## ▶ A LESSON IN HISTORY

*A look back at the formative years of racing*



JOHNNY KLANN COLLECTION PHOTO

**ON THE BEACH:** Johnny Klann at Pismo Beach, Calif., in 1934. He clocked 86 miles per hour in this Fronty Ford-powered car.

## Early Days Racer Johnny Klann Became Racing Historian

By **DON RADBRUCH**

Unless you are deeply into racing history, you have probably never heard of Johnny Klann.

If you are even slightly interested in history, you have read words that came from Klann and viewed some of his remarkable photographs. Klann once said he helped write a dozen or so racing books, and he was certainly right.

Klann was born in the Los Angeles area in 1909, and died in 2005. He spent most of his life around racing and accumulated tons of data, which was supported by a remarkable memory. Klann knew just about everything about Southern California racing.

He developed an interest in racing at a very early age and wanted to attend the 1919 Santa Monica Road races, but his mother refused to allow him to go. She felt a race car might crash into the crowd and kill her son along with other unfortunate victims. Mom was right. Such a crash could have happened, but it didn't and young Johnny Klann missed a historic race.

Klann began racing in the early 1930s with his own bobtailed Model T Ford dirt-track car — a car that would be called a sprint car today. He didn't have the best equipment and was not a big winner. He raced at dusty California ovals like San Diego's Silvergate Speedway, San Bernardino, Colton, Goshen and even on the sand at Pismo Beach.

He had some practice laps at Legion Ascot but, as an outlaw, did not actually race there.

His best finish was a third at Goshen in 1934. There was a huge crowd on hand that day, and this should have been worth a hundred or so bucks. But there was a catch — the promoter had some leftover bills from a previous race and the sheriff confiscated the gate receipts. The drivers passed the hat to collect a few bucks, and Klann's car owner collected all of \$8. Drivers got one-third back then, so Klann's payoff was \$2.67!

Klann got married in 1935 and out of respect to his wife, Virda, quit driving race cars. He stayed very much involved in racing and helped build several race cars. In the 1930s and '40s, he knew most of the racers and car owners in Southern California when this area was the hub of racing in the nation.

Klann's connections provided rare insight to the behind-the-scenes world of racing. The racers of that era were, perhaps, a rougher bunch than today's drivers, but they were dedicated to the sport and, in general, were good guys.

There were a few drivers who could not be considered good guys and were not liked by their fellow racers. Klann knew this, remembered it, and decades later pulled no punches when speaking of certain drivers.

Not only has Johnny Klann left a rich legacy of racing history behind but, as a brick and stone masonry contractor, much of his work still exists in Southern California and will likely be around for another hundred years or so.

I was in touch with Klann for 15 years. He somehow knew I was interested in racing history and wrote me a letter that basically said, "Hey, can I help?" He did just that. We never met, but we exchanged hundreds of letters through the years.

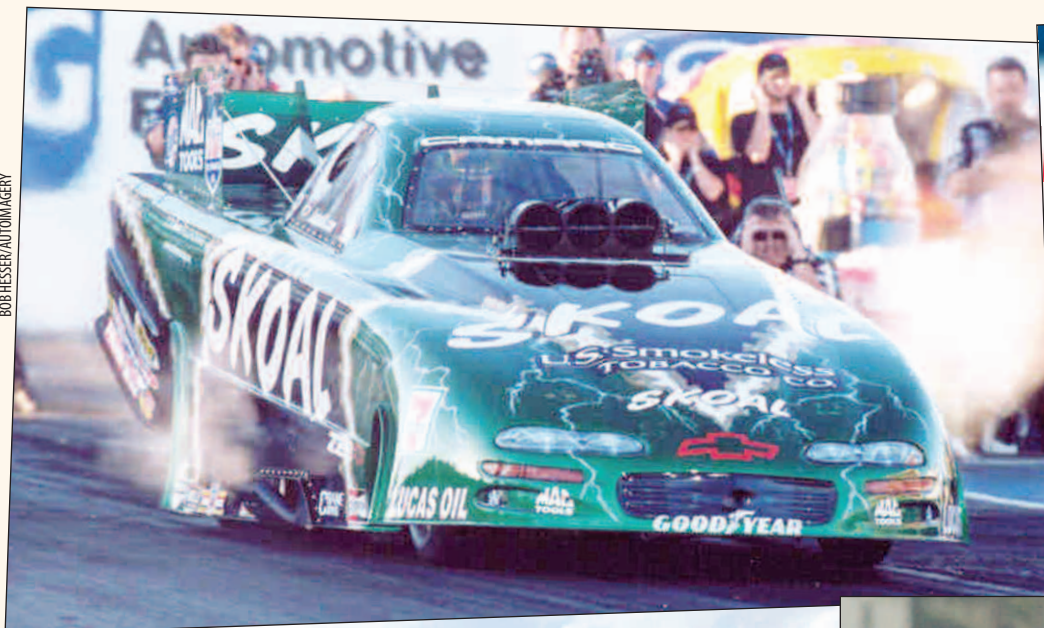
I'm among the lucky authors who had Klann's help in the book writing business. There were the two *Track Roadster* books and more recently *Dirt Track Auto Racing, 1919-1941*.

We lost a great historian when Johnny died, but, thankfully, he left lots of his memories behind.

*Comments on "A Lesson in History" are welcome at 30 Country Lane, Sagle, Idaho, 83860. E-mail to radbruch@sandpoint.net.*



BOB HESSER/AUTOMAGERY



NSSN

# Through The LENS

Presented By



*A visual tour through the history of motorsports*

## Ron Capps

▶ One of drag racing's most consistent winners in recent seasons, Ron Capps has become the sport's biggest bridesmaid.

Capps has finished second in the NHRA POWERade Drag Racing Series Funny Car standings three times and was third in 2006.

The Carlsbad, Calif., native currently leads the standings with two victories in only four races, and it may be the year the 41-year-old driver finally wins the title.

Capps, who made his NHRA national-event debut in 1995, has won 24 times in his career. Last year, Capps drove his Ed McCulloch-prepared Don Schumacher Racing Dodge to five triumphs.

Featured here (clockwise from top left): On his way to taking the 2003 Checker Schuck's Kragen Nationals in Phoenix; At the track in 1998; After a round of the 2006 ACDelco NHRA Gatornationals in Gainesville, Fla.; Sitting with former car owner Don Prudhomme; Defeating Phil Burkhardt, Jr. this season to defend his Gainesville title; Ready to race in 1999; Celebrating his 2006 O'Reilly NHRA Spring Nationals triumph with the Brut Girls.

—NSSN Archives

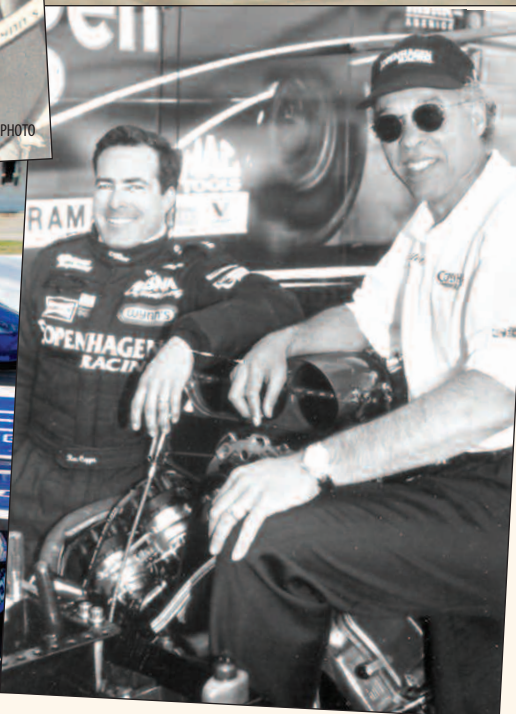
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BOB HESSER PHOTO



NHRA PHOTO



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Your guide to upcoming events

## ON THE AIR

A quick look at what's on television this weekend:

### Thursday

- "NASCAR Now," 12 a.m., ESPN2
- Classic Drag Racing: 1997 NHRA Atsco Nationals, 11 a.m., ESPN Classic
- NASCAR Busch Series Pepsi 300 (taped), 12 p.m., Speed
- NASCAR West Series, 2:30 p.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Now," 6:30 p.m., ESPN2
- "Speed Road Tour Challenge," 8 p.m., Speed

### Friday

- Formula One practice, 7 a.m., Speed
- Classic Drag Racing: 1997 NHRA Slick 50 Nationals, 11 a.m., ESPN Classic
- USAR Hooters Pro Cup, 12 p.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Live!" 1 p.m., Speed
- NASCAR Nextel Cup practice, 1:30 p.m., Speed
- "Survival of the Fastest," 3 p.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Live!" 3:30 p.m., Speed
- NASCAR Nextel Cup qualifying, 4 p.m., Speed
- Champ Car Atlantic Series in Las Vegas, 5 p.m., ESPN2
- "NASCAR Live!" 6 p.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Now," 6:30 p.m., ESPN2
- "Trackside," 7 p.m., Speed

### Saturday

- "Formula One Debrief," 12 a.m., Speed
- Formula One qualifying, 7 a.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Live!" 11 a.m., Speed
- "SpeedFreaks," 11:30 a.m., ESPN2
- NASCAR Nextel Cup practice, 11:30 a.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Live!" 12:30 p.m., Speed
- NASCAR Nextel Cup practice, 1 p.m., Speed

### TUNE IN TO ...

The Formula One Series heads from Malaysia to Bahrain for the Bahrain Grand Prix (7 a.m., Speed).

- "NASCAR Angels," 1 p.m., WGN
- "NASCAR Busch Series Countdown," 2:30 p.m., ESPN2
- Formula One qualifying, 2:30 p.m., Speed
- NASCAR Busch Series O'Reilly 300, 3 p.m., ESPN2
- IHRA Texas Nationals, 5 p.m., Speed
- NHRA qualifying, 6 p.m., ESPN2
- "NASCAR Performance," 7 p.m., Speed
- "Tradin' Paint," 7:30 p.m., Speed
- American Le Mans Series in Long Beach, 8 p.m., Speed

### Sunday

- Formula One qualifying, 3:30 a.m., Speed
- Formula One Bahrain Grand Prix, 7 a.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Now," 10 a.m., ESPN2
- "NHRA Race Day," 11 a.m., ESPN2
- "Thrills and Spills," 11:30 a.m., ESPN2
- "NASCAR RaceDay," 11:30 a.m., Speed
- NASCAR Nextel Cup Samsung 500, 1:30 p.m., Fox
- Champ Car Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, 4 p.m., NBC
- NHRA SummitRacing.com Nationals, 7 p.m., ESPN2
- "Speed Report," 7 p.m., Speed
- "NASCAR Victory Lane," 8 p.m., Speed
- "Wind Tunnel With Dave Despain," 9 p.m., Speed
- Formula One Bahrain Grand Prix, 10 p.m., Speed

## MOTORSPORTS CALENDAR

- April 11 USAC National and Western Midget Series  
Thunder Hill Speedway, Kyle, Texas, Midget Cars
- April 13 World of Outlaws Late Model Series  
New Egypt Speedway, New Egypt, N.J., Late Models
- April 13 Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series  
TBA, Late Models
- April 13 ASCS Sooner Region  
Heart O'Texas Speedway, Waco, Texas, Sprint Cars
- April 13-14 ASCS Midwest, Northern Plains Regions  
I-80 Speedway at Nebraska Raceway Park, Greenwood, Neb., Sprint Cars
- April 13-14 World of Outlaws  
Eldora Speedway, Rossburg, Ohio, Sprint Cars
- April 14 NASCAR Busch Series  
Texas Motor Speedway, Fort Worth, Texas, Stock Cars
- April 14 World of Outlaws Late Model Series  
Virginia Motor Speedway, Saluda, Va., Late Models
- April 14 USAC-CRA Sprint Car Series  
Perris Auto Speedway, Perris, Calif., Sprint Cars
- April 14 USAC National Sprint Car Series  
Twin Cities Raceway Park, North Vernon, Ind., Sprint Cars
- April 14 USAC California Ford Focus Midget Series  
Franklin County Speedway, Callaway, Va., Midget Cars
- April 14 USAC Western Midget, Sprint Car Series  
Madera Speedway, Madera, Calif., Midget Cars
- April 14 USAC Calif., Utah Ford Focus Midget Series  
The Bullring at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Las Vegas, Nev., Midget Cars
- April 14 NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour  
Caraway Speedway, Asheboro, N.C., Modifieds
- April 14 Hooters Pro Cup Series  
South Boston Speedway, South Boston, Va., Stock Cars
- April 14 ASA Late Model Series  
Toledo Speedway, Toledo, Ohio, Late Models
- April 14 Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series  
Tazewell Speedway, Tazewell, Tenn., Late Models
- April 14 Golden State Challenge  
Ocean Speedway, Watsonville, Calif., Sprint Cars
- April 14 URC Sprints  
Bridgeport Speedway, Bridgeport, N.J., Sprint Cars
- April 14 ASCS Sooner Region  
Cowntown Speedway, Fort Worth, Texas, Sprint Cars
- April 14 ASCS Canyon Region  
Manzanita Speedway, Phoenix, Ariz., Sprint Cars
- April 15 NASCAR Nextel Cup Series  
Texas Motor Speedway, Fort Worth, Texas, Stock Cars
- April 15 National Hot Rod Ass'n  
The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Las Vegas, Nev., Dragsters
- April 15 Champ Car World Series  
Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, Long Beach, Calif., Champ Cars
- April 15 Champ Car Atlantic Series  
Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, Long Beach, Calif., Champ Cars
- April 15 USAC National Sprint Car Series  
Anderson Speedway, Anderson, Ind., Midget and Sprint Cars
- April 15 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour  
Thompson Int'l Speedway, Thompson, Conn., Modifieds
- April 15 Formula One  
Bahrain Int'l Circuit, Sakhir, Bahrain, Formula Cars
- April 15 ASCS Mid-Atlantic Region  
Susquehanna Speedway Park, Newberrytown, Pa., Sprint Cars
- April 17 World of Outlaws Late Model Series  
Lernerville Speedway, Sarver, Pa., Late Models
- April 19 NASCAR West Series  
Phoenix Int'l Raceway, Phoenix, Ariz., Stock Cars
- April 20 NASCAR Busch Series  
Phoenix Int'l Raceway, Phoenix, Ariz., Stock Cars
- April 20 World of Outlaws  
Attica Raceway Park, Attica, Ohio, Sprint Cars



TNT PHOTO

**SUNNY LOCALE:** A.J. Allmendinger cruises the streets of Long Beach during the 2006 Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach.

## MARK IT DOWN!

### April 15, Champ Car World Series Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach

**Long Beach Street Circuit, Long Beach, Calif., Champ Cars**  
Champ Car returns to historic Long Beach, Calif., for the series' second race of the season. Last year, Sebastien Bourdais took the victory from the pole, beating out Justin Wilson, Alex Tagliani, Mario Dominguez and Cristiano da Matta.

- April 20 ASCS National Series  
Crossville Raceway, Crossville, Tenn., Sprint Cars
- April 20 ASCS Coastal Region  
Southern Speedway, Hattiesburg, Miss., Sprint Cars
- April 20-21 ASCS Sooner Region  
Mid-America Speedway, South Coffeyville, Okla., Sprint Cars
- April 20-21 World of Outlaws Late Model Series  
Lowe's Motor Speedway, Concord, N.C., Late Models
- April 20-21 StormPay.com Dirt Late Model Series  
Pike County Speedway, McComb, Miss., Late Models
- April 21 NASCAR Nextel Cup Series  
Phoenix Int'l Raceway, Phoenix, Ariz., Stock Cars
- April 21 IRL IndyCar Series  
Twin Ring Motegi, Motegi, Japan, Indy Cars
- April 21 World of Outlaws  
Tri-State Speedway, Haubstadt, Ind., Sprint Cars
- April 21 USAC California Ford Focus Midget Series  
Southern National Raceway Park, Kenly, N.C., Midget Cars
- April 21 USAC National Sprint Car Series  
Lawrenceburg Speedway, Lawrenceburg, Ind., Sprint Cars
- April 21 USAC California Ford Focus Midget Series  
Ventura Raceway, Ventura, Calif., Midget Cars
- April 21 American Le Mans Series  
Grand Prix of Houston, Houston, Texas, Sports Cars
- April 21 Golden State Challenge  
Petaluma Speedway, Petaluma, Calif., Sprint Cars
- April 21 URC Sprints  
Delaware Int'l Speedway, Delmar, Del., Sprint Cars
- April 21 Interstate Racing Ass'n  
Dodge County Fairgrounds Speedway, Beaver Dam, Wis., Sprint Cars
- April 21 ASCS National and Coastal Regions  
Magnolia Speedway, Columbia, Miss., Sprint Cars
- April 22 Champ Car World Series  
Grand Prix of Houston, Houston, Texas, Indy Cars
- April 22 Champ Car Atlantic Series  
Grand Prix of Houston, Houston, Texas, Indy Cars
- April 22 USAC National Sprint Car Series  
Winchester Speedway, Winchester, Ind., Sprint Cars
- April 22 ARCA RE/MAX Series  
Salem Speedway, Salem, Ind., Stock Cars
- April 22 IHRA Nitro Jam Racing Series  
Rockingham Dragway, Rockingham, N.C., Dragsters
- April 22 ASCS Mid-Atlantic Region  
Susquehanna Speedway Park, Newberrytown, Pa., Sprint Cars
- April 25 USAC Regional Indiana Midget Series  
Mount Lawn Speedway, New Castle, Ind., Midget Cars
- April 27 USAC National Sprint Car Series  
Gas City I-69 Speedway, Gas City, Ind., Sprint Cars
- April 27 ARCA RE/MAX Series  
Kansas Speedway, Kansas City, Kan., Stock Cars
- April 27 World of Outlaw Late Model Series  
Farmer City Raceway, Farmer City, Ill., Late Models
- April 27 Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series  
TBA, Late Models
- April 27 ASCS National Series  
67 Speedway, Texarkana, Ark., Sprint Cars

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April 11, 2007

## INSIDE

Rookie Graham Rahal graduates to Champ Car World Series competition. **PAGE L-2**

Everything you need to know about the historic Grand Prix of Long Beach. **PAGES L-4-5**

Celebrities and pros hit the famed Long Beach street course to race for charity. **PAGE L-6**

# Taking It To The Streets

*Champ Car Headlines  
33rd Long Beach Meet*





# Golden Graham

## Rahal Ready To Take On Champ Car With Newman-Haas

**F**resh off of sweeping the Champ Car Atlantic Championship doubleheader last June at Cleveland in dominant style, Graham Rahal was set to board a commercial flight to Paris to test a GP2 car at the Paul Ricard circuit. But a bad break with the weather may have actually been good fortune for the 18-year-old son of three-time CART series champion Bobby Rahal.

Missing the GP2 test because of a cancelled flight was disappointing to Graham and his father at the time, but it helped trigger a radical change in Rahal's career path. Within a couple weeks, Bobby had a basic agreement in place for Graham to test a Champ Car for seven-time series champion Newman-Haas Racing. That test occurred at Sebring Int'l Raceway last September, and to the surprise of absolutely no one, the younger Rahal settled in quickly.

By JOHN OREOVICZ  
NSSN CORRESPONDENT

In all, Rahal compiled around 350 miles of running before rain cut short his test on the second afternoon. But it was enough for Graham to make an impression on the Newman-Haas organization, and he continued to test with the team throughout the winter, even though his contract was not finalized until less than 30 days before the start of the 2007 season.

Shortly after the cancelled GP2 test, Bobby Rahal began casually discussing the possibility of a test for his son with Newman-Haas co-principals Carl Haas and Paul Newman in July at Champ Car's Toronto and Edmonton races. The chance for Graham to test and possibly race for the seven-time series champion team prompted the Rahals to modify their plan for Graham to race in Europe in 2007 in the GP2 Formula One support series. However, F-1 is still his long-term career goal.

"This is a great opportunity for Graham, and he has to strike while the iron is hot," said Bobby Rahal. "If you get hired by Newman-Haas, I think it's a pretty simple decision to make, and if there's a chance to do Formula One after that, then fine, you go at that time.

"Time is on his side," Rahal added. "He can spend two years in Champ Car and still be only 20 years old, which is as young as it gets in F-1. There's not much to be lost by staying here and succeeding here, and if he can run competitively against guys like (Sebastien) Bourdais, especially at his age, that's a good indicator."

Graham Rahal impressed onlookers at his initial Sebring test by quickly getting up to speed, and perhaps more importantly, by his lack of mistakes. Throughout winter testing, he never damaged his car while generally running in the top five and keeping three-time series champion Bourdais on his toes.

"He has done everything we could have hoped for," remarked Newman-Haas General Manager Brian Lisle. "He learns fast and gives good feedback, which is the mark of a good race driver. He was able to run competitive lap times and worked well with the team, so we believe he has a bright future."

Rahal's superb performances in the Atlantic series in 2006 marked him out as one of the most talented young American road racers

to come along in years. He won five races, but he lost out on the championship (and a \$2-million Champ Car sponsorship) to the more consistent Simon Pagenaud, who won only once.

Rahal drove away from the field to claim the second race of the Cleveland doubleheader by an amazing 15 seconds. Conversely, he won at Montreal while withstanding intense pressure from Pagenaud on a damp track. Had he not been taken out in a pair of first-lap accidents (both times after he started from pole), he would have easily clinched the Atlantic crown and the \$2-million 2007 Champ Car sponsorship that went with it.

"Kevin (Kalkhoven) promised \$2 million to move up, and two of us (moved up to Champ Car)," said Graham, who already shows signs of

being as outspoken as his father. "If you talk the talk, walk the walk...it's working, and I think that's more than the Indy Pro Series can say."

For his part, Champ Car co-principal Kalkhoven says that the younger Rahal is the kind of star that Champ Car needs to build around for the future.

"I think a lot will be expected of Graham, hopefully not too much, because he is young and a rookie," Kalkhoven remarked. "But he is an amazingly mature young man, one that will carry American fans's hopes for many years to come."

Graham is the first rookie to drive for Newman-Haas Racing since Nigel Mansell in 1993, and the first American to pilot NHR machinery since Michael Andretti left the team at the end of the 2000 season.

"It's an honor to drive this car," said the younger Rahal. "My dad always told me it was his dream to drive a car for Mr. Newman and Mr. Haas, and now I've got a leg up on him. It's a family environment at Newman-Haas Racing, and everyone made me feel at home."

Rahal refuses to spell out his individual goals for his first Champ Car season, preferring to downplay expectations.

Bobby Rahal was one of only a handful of drivers to win a Champ Car race as a rookie, taking his first victory at Cleveland in 1982.

"Every step I've taken, whether it was out of Formula BMW or whatever, the toughest thing is getting used to the power and speed,"

Graham commented. "The first time I launched the Champ Car out of the pits at Sebring was an experience on its own.

"At the level we are at as drivers, it shouldn't be difficult to learn new circuits," he added. "Now I need to learn to manage the tires and keep the car going for a race distance."

CHAMP CAR PHOTO



### The Rahal File

#### Graham Rahal

Age: 18

Height: 6 feet

Weight: 160 pounds

Home: New Albany, Ohio

Team: Newman-Haas Racing

Lineage: Son of three-time Champ Car titlist Bobby Rahal

History: 2004: Made transition from karts to the Formula BMW Series at age 15, finishing seventh in the standings; 2005: Graduated to the Star Mazda Championship and became the youngest race winner in the series, winning at Portland, Ore., at age 16; 2005: Won the SCCA Formula Atlantic national championship, a title his father won 30 years earlier. 2006: Advanced to the Champ Car Atlantic Championship and finished second in the standings while winning six races. Also competed in the American Le Mans Series, Grand American Road Racing Series and A1 Grand Prix.



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**'07 DRIVER ROSTER**

As of April 4

Car	Driver	Team
1	Sebastien Bourdais	Newman-Haas
2	Graham Rahal	Newman-Haas
3	Paul Tracy	Forsythe
5	Will Power	Team Australia
7	Mario Dominguez	Forsythe
8	Alex Tagliani	R-SPORT
9	Justin Wilson	R-SPORT
15	Simon Pagenaud	Team Australia
14	Robert Doornbos	Team Minardi USA
4	Dan Clarke	Team Minardi USA
21	Neel Jani	PKV Racing
22	Tristan Gommendy	PKV Racing
28	Ryan Dalziel	Pacific Coast
29	Alex Figge	Pacific Coast



**WHERE THERE'S A ...:** Will Power was impressive during his 2006 rookie Champ Car campaign.

# Where Does CHAMP CAR Go From Here?



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

## All Is New — Car, Drivers, Tracks — But Not All Is Well In Champ Car

**W**hat's the current state of the Champ Car World Series? Even the closest followers of the turbocharged open-wheel formula don't really know.

For every positive thing on the horizon for Champ Car — including a new car, six new venues and a new television package on ESPN/ABC — there always seems to be some sort of offsetting factor. That resulted in yet another winter filled with speculation about the very survival of the series.

Three weeks before the start of the season, fewer than a dozen drivers were confirmed, though a "full" field of 18 cars is expected to take the green flag for the season opener in downtown Las Vegas. But the public still perceives that Champ Car enters the 2007 season hanging on by a thread.

If you listen to series co-principal Kevin Kalkhoven, some of that is by design. The native Australian and his partners were adamant that the team subsidies that started flowing in 2003 had to go away, leaving smaller teams like Conquest Racing barely able to keep the doors open.

Several larger teams also made major cutbacks. Rocketsports Racing and RuSPORT Racing reverted to one car apiece before merging under the R-SPORT banner, while Forsythe Championship Racing didn't run a second car alongside Paul Tracy throughout winter testing, only adding Mario Dominguez for a three-race trial a week before the start of the season.

Having three of the series co-owners (Forsythe, Paul Gentilozzi and Dan Pettit) make such public cutbacks certainly did not inspire a lot of confidence in the Champ Car community, and it has to be said that the policy of not announcing drivers until the last minute backfired from a PR standpoint.

What Champ Car needs most is to simply start racing to shift the attention onto the track.

The new Panoz DP01-Cosworth has proven to be very fast in testing, albeit while exhibiting typical new-car bugs. The new paddle-shift gearbox has proved particularly troublesome, as Panoz and individual teams struggled to tailor the new technology to their drivers.

However, by the third

and final preseason test at Mazda Raceway at Laguna Seca, the Panoz was reasonably reliable, and three-time defending series champion Sebastien Bourdais produced a blistering lap that broke the track record established in 2006 by a Formula One car.

The speed is clearly there, but a bigger question remains in terms of parts supply. Champ Car shut down the Panoz production line after only 25 of a planned run of 36 cars were finished. With only a handful of spare cars to support the entire series, Champ Car will be reeling if there are any significant multi-car accidents in the three street races that open the season.

The race schedule itself has undergone an overhaul for 2007. New events have been added

probably be his final Champ Car campaign, the 27-year-old Frenchman finally having attracted some legitimate interest from the Formula One paddock. However, he will have a new teammate at the renamed Newman-Haas-Lanigan Racing in the form of rookie Graham Rahal.

The 18-year-old son of three-time Champ Car titlist Bobby Rahal is amazingly mature for his age, and he has a tremendous opportunity with the series's undisputed top team.

Tracy, the 2003 series champion, returns for his 17th season racing Champ Cars and his fifth year with Forsythe Championship Racing. Tracy is Champ Car's most successful active driver with 30 race wins but he has been held out of victory circle for almost two years.

Justin Wilson finished second to Bourdais in the 2006 standings, but the Englishman had a winter of discontent that finally culminated in the R-SPORT merger. That group (including Rocketsports driver Alex Tagliani) had only one test together, so they will still be playing catch-up in the first portion of the season.

A more immediate challenge may come from Team Australia, which put Will Power consistently near the front at Laguna Seca. The Derrick Walker-managed team will also benefit from the presence of 2006 Atlantic Champion Simon Pagenaud and his \$2-million sponsorship.

PKV Racing's lead entry will be fielded in Red Bull/Gulfstream colors in 2007, and rookie Neel Jani has been fast in testing. Second driver Tristan Gommendy is more of a mystery after making a late arrival.

Under new ownership, the Minardi USA team will field former F-1 tester Robert Doornbos and Englishman Dan Clarke, while Dale Coyne Racing has the strongest lineup in its 20-year history with Bruno Junqueira and Katherine Legge. Conquest Racing lost investor Mike Lanigan to Newman-Haas, but Eric Bachelart's team is back with one car for New Zealander Matt Halliday.

Although the lineup came together even later than in recent years, it could be argued that Champ Car is in better shape because it claims to not be funding any of the entries. In addition, the field will all be piloting brand-new cars that look to be a substantial upgrade from the outgoing Lolas in terms of speed and raceability. But how the Panoz stands up to the race-by-race thrash won't be known until at least midseason.

Where Champ Car needs to make its biggest breakthroughs are in the public eye. Series leaders hope a shift to the ESPN/ABC network will result in more viewers, although Champ Car still suffers from being in a time-buy situation.

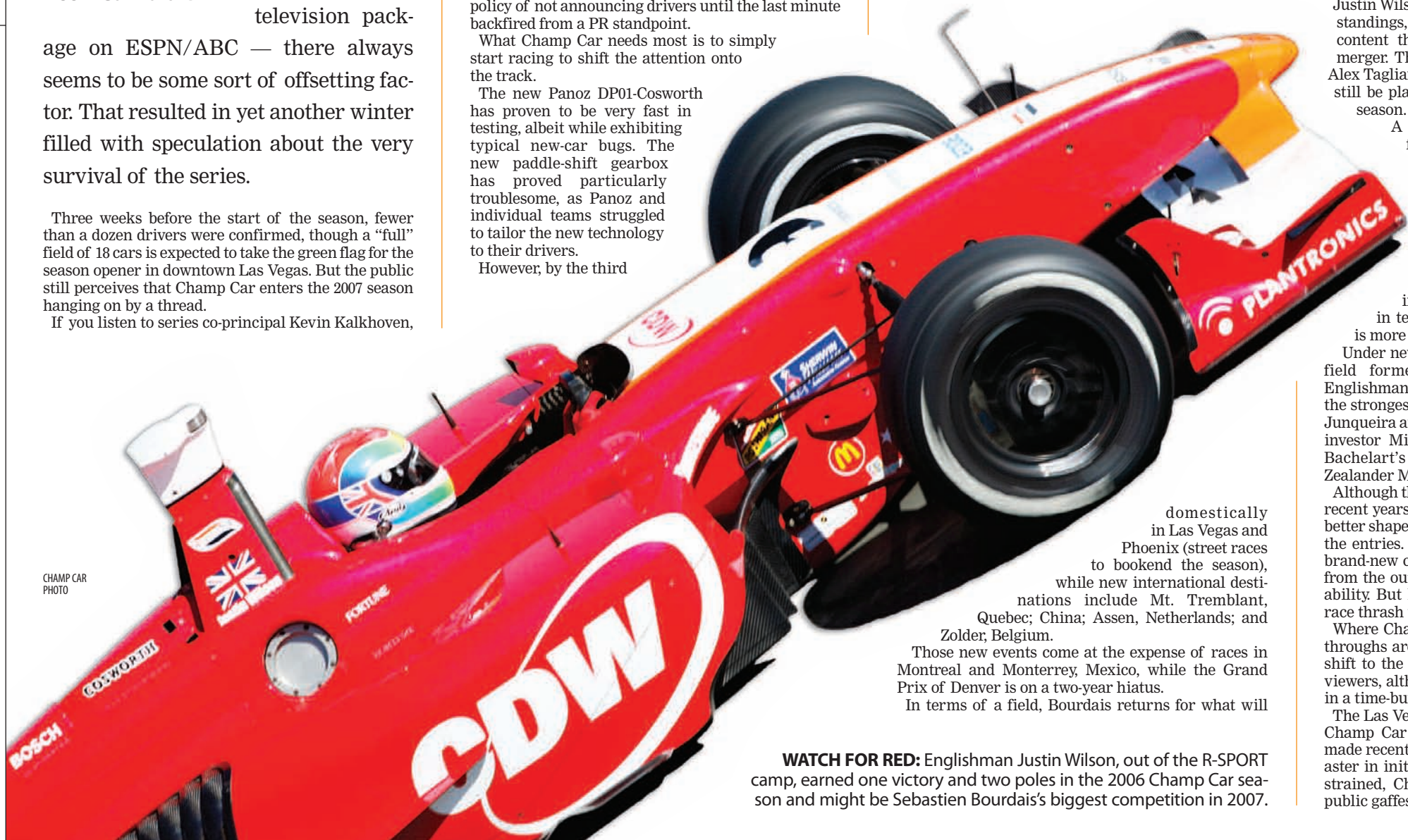
The Las Vegas and Phoenix races are also critical to Champ Car and must not suffer the problems that made recent street races at San Jose and Miami a disaster in initial runnings. With its credibility already strained, Champ Car really can't afford any major public gaffes at this point in time.

domestically in Las Vegas and Phoenix (street races to bookend the season), while new international destinations include Mt. Tremblant, Quebec; China; Assen, Netherlands; and Zolder, Belgium.

Those new events come at the expense of races in Montreal and Monterrey, Mexico, while the Grand Prix of Denver is on a two-year hiatus.

In terms of a field, Bourdais returns for what will

**WATCH FOR RED:** Englishman Justin Wilson, out of the R-SPORT camp, earned one victory and two poles in the 2006 Champ Car season and might be Sebastien Bourdais's biggest competition in 2007.



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

**2007 CHAMP CAR SCHEDULE**

Date	Race	Track	Time	TV
April 8	Las Vegas Grand Prix	Las Vegas (Nev.) Street Circuit	3:30 p.m.	NBC
April 15	Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach	Long Beach (Calif.) Street Circuit	4 p.m.	NBC
April 22	Grand Prix of Houston	Reliant Park (Houston)	2 p.m.	ESPN
May 20	Grand Prix of Zhuhai	Zhuhai Int'l Circuit (China)	TBA	ESPN2
June 10	Grand Prix of Portland	Portland (Ore.) Int'l Raceway	4 p.m.	ABC
June 24	U.S. Bank Grand Prix of Cleveland	Burke Lakefront Airport (Cleveland)	1 p.m.	CBS
July 1	Grand Prix of St. Jovite	Circuit Mont Tremblant (Quebec)	2 p.m.	ESPN
July 8	Molson Grand Prix of Toronto	Exhibition Place (Toronto)	1 p.m.	ESPN
July 22	West Edmonton Mall Grand Prix	JAGflo Speedway (Edmonton)	4 p.m.	ESPN
July 29	San Jose Grand Prix	San Jose Street Circuit	5 p.m.	ESPN2
Aug. 12	Grand Prix of Road America	Road America (Elkhart Lake, Wis.)	3 p.m.	ABC
Sept. 2	Grand Prix of Assen	TT Circuit Assen (Holland)	TBA	ESPN2
Sept. 9	Grand Prix of Zolder	Spa-Francorchamps (Belgium)	TBA	ESPN2
Oct. 21	Lexmark Indy 300	Gold Coast Street Circuit (Australia)	TBA	ESPN2
Nov. 11	Gran Premio Telmex	Autodromo H. Rodriguez (M. City)	2 p.m.	ESPN2
Dec. 2	First Data Grand Prix Arizona	Phoenix Int'l Raceway	4 p.m.	ABC

**LBGP WINNERS**

Year	Series	Winner
2006	Champ Car	Sebastien Bourdais
2005	Champ Car	Sebastien Bourdais
2004	Champ Car	Paul Tracy
2003	Champ Car	Paul Tracy
2002	CART	Michael Andretti
2001	CART	Helio Castroneves
2000	CART	Paul Tracy
1999	CART	Juan Montoya
1998	CART	Alex Zanardi
1997	CART	Alex Zanardi
1996	Indy Car	Jimmy Vasser
1995	Indy Car	Al Unser, Jr.
1994	Indy Car	Al Unser, Jr.
1993	Indy Car	Paul Tracy
1992	Indy Car	Danny Sullivan
1991	Indy Car	Al Unser, Jr.
1990	Indy Car	Al Unser, Jr.
1989	Indy Car	Al Unser, Jr.
1988	Indy Car	Al Unser, Jr.
1987	Indy Car	Mario Andretti
1986	Indy Car	Michael Andretti
1985	Indy Car	Mario Andretti
1984	Indy Car	Mario Andretti
1983	Formula One	John Watson
1982	Formula One	Niki Lauda
1981	Formula One	Alan Jones
1980	Formula One	Nelson Piquet
1979	Formula One	Gilles Villeneuve
1978	Formula One	Carlos Reutemann
1977	Formula One	Mario Andretti
1976	Formula One	Clay Regazzoni
1975	Formula One	Brian Redman



**2004-06:** Sebastien Bourdais has won 20 races over the past three seasons.

**SIMPLY THE BEST**

The past 10 Champ Car champions:

Year	Driver	Wins
2006	Sebastien Bourdais	7
2005	Sebastien Bourdais	6
2004	Sebastien Bourdais	7
2003	Paul Tracy	7
2002	Cristiano da Matta	7
2001	Gil de Ferran	2
2000	Gil de Ferran	2
1999	Juan Montoya	7
1998	Alex Zanardi	7
1997	Alex Zanardi	5

**STILL RECOVERING**

Cristiano da Matta, who won the 2002 Champ Car World Series title, continues his recovery from serious head injuries he suffered last August when he crashed his RuSPORT machine into a deer while testing at Road America.

Da Matta still undergoes physical therapy every day but said he is "doing everything pretty normal." Despite his amazing recovery, da Matta is a long way from returning to the cockpit.

"I can't be back to the race car right now because I can't afford to have another injury, so I might wait a little longer, but I'm fine with waiting for the right time," da Matta said in a message posted on his Web site.

The Brazilian has been riding mountain bikes and participating in other athletic challenges with his brothers and friends.

"I'm training on my mountain bike," da Matta said. "It helps me to develop motor skills, balance, resistance and every single thing that an athlete needs."



**Cristiano da Matta**

**DELAY**

Citing the need for further testing of its standing-start procedures, Champ Car has delayed its plan to use standing starts for the first three races of the season.

"Safety is our concern, and we feel we need to fine-tune our standing-start process before we implement it," said Tony Cotman, Champ Car's vice-president of operations. "We will continue to work with the teams and the manufacturers to find the safest and most reliable option for the standing-start process, with an eye toward using them at Portland if possible."

The race at Portland Int'l Raceway is scheduled for June 10.

**COOL-DOWN LAPS**

Paul Stoddart, who formerly fielded Formula One teams under the Minardi name, has formed Minardi Team USA and will enter a pair of cars in Champ Car competition this season with Dan Clarke and rookie Robert Doornbos at the wheel.

Champ Car debuted a new chassis in last week's season opener at Las Vegas. The Panoz DP01 is the spec car of the series. It was constructed by Elan Motorsports in Braselton, Ga., and features a more aerodynamic package designed to provide closer racing. The chassis is lighter than the past version and is available to teams at a lesser price tag.

Champ Car will be stocked full of newcomers this season, with at least seven rookies racing full-time in the series. Robert Doornbos, Neel Jani, Tristan Gommendy, Ryan Dalziel, Alex Figge and Simon Pagenaud are the tyros currently signed to rides.

Champ Car races can be seen this season on NBC, CBS, ABC, ESPN and ESPN2. Thirteen of the 17 races will be televised by the ESPN/ABC family of networks.

The use of spare cars by Champ Car World Series teams has been limited with teams allowed to use only one car — either the primary car or the backup — in any practice or qualifying session.

Veteran driver Mario Dominguez rejoins Forsythe Championship Racing for at least the first three events of the season. Dominguez drove for the team in 2005 and in the first four races of 2006 before being replaced by A.J. Allmendinger, who went on to win five races before jumping to NASCAR. Dominguez has two victories in 78-career Champ Car starts entering the season.

**WARM-UP LAPS**

Rocketsports Racing and RuSPORT will collaborate on efforts during the 2007 season with a technical and operational merger under the umbrella name of R-SPORT.

Rocketsports owner Paul Gentilozzi and RuSPORT owner Dan Pettit began talks of sharing hospitality units, which ultimately led to further discussions on how the two sides might be able to benefit by working together for the upcoming season.

Rocketsports driver Alex Tagliani will steer the No. 8 alongside veteran RuSPORT wheelman Justin Wilson in the No. 9.

A.J. Allmendinger may have won five Champ Car races last year, but he's ancient history as far as open-wheel racing is concerned. Allmendinger has joined Team Red Bull and is struggling in his rookie season of NASCAR stock-car racing.



Toyota's Pro/Celebrity Race Has Evolved Into An

# All-Star Showdown

**L**ONG BEACH, Calif. — Last year, X Games Gold Medalist Bucky Lasek traded in his skateboard for a Toyota Scion tC Sports Coupe to win the 2006 Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race. To defend his title on Saturday, though, Lasek will have to defeat a record number of female competitors.

Eight women will participate in the 31st annual Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race, a charity event that pits celebrities against professionals in a 10-lap race on the 11-turn, 1.97-mile street circuit in Long Beach. The race is one of six attractions featured during the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, which, of course, is headlined by the Champ Car World Series.

The Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race has evolved over the years.

According to Les Unger, Toyota's national motorsports manager, in the 1970s the Grand Prix Ass'n of Long Beach created a Formula One-style race on the streets of Long Beach modeled after the Grand Prix of Monaco.

"Everybody thought they were insane at the time," Unger says.

"In the early days, we dubbed ourselves 'The Monaco of the West' in order to affiliate ourselves with a successful event like they have there," says Jim Michaelian, president of the Grand Prix Ass'n of Long Beach.

What formed in 1975 was the Long Beach Grand Prix, today's Champ Car event.

That same year, the Long Beach group organ-

## THE TOYOTA PRO/CELEBRITY RACE

The 2007 Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race, set for April 14, is a 10-lap charity race on the 11-turn, 1.97-mile Long Beach street circuit.

### Celebrity

Kathryn Morris  
Emily Procter  
Aisha Tyler  
Kendra Wilkinson  
George Lucas  
Dave Mirra  
Martina Navratilova  
John Salley  
Joshua Morrow  
Kelly Hu  
Robin Quivers  
Annamarie Dean  
Jerry Westlund

### Pro

Bucky Lasek  
Mike Skinner  
Scott Kelley  
R.J. Romero  
Todd Bodine

ized a three-lap match race featuring professional drivers, including Formula One aces Dan Gurney, Phil Hill and Graham Hill. Though "it didn't come with all the trappings of being an actual contest," Michaelian says the event "was the underpinning for what was to evolve into the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race."

The first pro/celebrity event, a nine-lap race with an average speed of 56.90 miles per hour, was held in 1977 and featured nine competitors, including Gene Hackman, Dick Smothers and Sam Posey.

"It started out pretty heavily weighted to the pro side with a handful of celebrities, most of whom had some aspirations or affiliations or were in some way involved in racing," Michaelian says. "As time went along, we began to look for more 'celebrities' who might not be familiar with racing."

"That led to the idea of then sending them to some kind of a school — a racing training school — so they could be adequately taught what racing was all about before they came in and were on the streets of Long Beach."

To prepare for the race, competitors attend Danny McKeever's FAST LANE Racing School, which provides drivers with both classroom and on-track training. This year, FAST LANE offers online blogs so fans can track drivers's progress and experiences.

Since Posey captured the inaugural Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race, nearly 400 athletes, actors, musicians and other celebrities have tried their luck behind the wheel of a Toyota on the streets of Long Beach.

Former participants include Ted Nugent, Joe Montana, Kyle Petty, Woody Harrelson, Cameron Diaz, Patrick Stewart and Mary Lou Retton.

This year's lineup of 18 includes George Lucas, Kathryn Morris, Emily Procter, Martina

Navratilova, Todd Bodine and Mike Skinner. Eight women will compete in the event, marking the first time women outnumber men.

"This is sure to be one of the most unique races we've had in the three decades we've been conducting the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race," Unger said. "Traditionally, we've found that women are some of the more competitive drivers, but — win or lose — this is a race that's exciting for all the celebrities and pros alike because it offers the high-speed challenge of real racing, combined with a worthwhile charitable endeavor."

That "charitable endeavor" raises money for Racing for Kids, a non-profit program benefiting children's hospitals throughout the United States. This year, funds will go to Miller Children's Hospital of Long Beach and Children's Hospital of Orange County.

Toyota donates \$5,000 to Racing for Kids in the name of each celebrity driver and another \$5,000 to the winner's charity of choice. *PEOPLE* magazine, sponsor of the *PEOPLE* Pole Award, contributes an additional \$15,000 to the pole winner's charity of choice. Since 1991, Toyota has donated nearly \$1.5 million to children's organizations on behalf of the race and its participants.



**FOLLOW THE LEADER:** Former NFL quarterback John Elway leads actor Antonio Sabato Jr. during the 2006 Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race in Long Beach, Calif.



# The 2007 National Speed Sport News Grassroots Tour presented by Ethanol and the IndyCar® Series ...



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- May 25 Eckerd Outlaw Showdown • The Dirt Track @ Lowe's Motor Speedway • Concord, NC
- May 25 USAC Silver Crown • Indiana State Fairgrounds • Indianapolis, IN
- May 25-27 NASCAR Nextel Cup @ Lowe's Motor Speedway • Concord, NC
- May 26 Toyota Night Before the 500 • O'Reilly Raceway Park at Indianapolis • Indianapolis, IN

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# CURB RECORDS COUNTRY MUSIC LABEL OF THE YEAR POINTS PAGE



Richard Petty's Curb/STP Pontiac Winner at Daytona



Dale Jarrett with his Curb/Busch Grand National Car



Dale Earnhardt with his Curb Records Winston Cup Championship Car



P.J. Jones - 2006 Top 20 Daytona. Top 20 Indianapolis 500 - 2006



Joey Saldana - 7 Victories. Top 3 2006 World of Outlaws Championship



Johnny Sauter, Curb Records Runner-Up at Indianapolis Raceway Park



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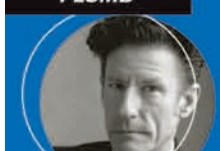
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AMY DALLEY



PLUMB



LYLE LOVETT



CLAY WALKER



RODNEY ATKINS



NEMESIS

## Nextel Cup

1. Jeff Gordon	966
2. Jeff Burton	938
3. Jimmie Johnson	906
4. Matt Kenseth	836
5. Kyle Busch	804
6. Denny Hamlin	776
7. Clint Bowyer	751
8. Tony Stewart	726
9. Carl Edwards	710
10. Kevin Harvick	687
11. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.	677
12. Jamie McMurray	650
13. David Stremme	645
14. Elliott Sadler	639
15. Mark Martin	629
16. Juan Pablo Montoya	625
17. Kurt Busch	624
18. J.J. Yeley	616
19. David Ragan	589
20. Ryan Newman	589

## Busch Series

1. Carl Edwards	1,200
2. Dave Blaney	879
3. Kevin Harvick	808
4. David Reutimann	757
5. Kyle Busch	757
6. Marcos Ambrose	754
7. Bobby Hamilton, Jr.	738
8. Shane Huffman	703
9. Mike Wallace	696
10. Regan Smith	691
11. Stephen Leicht	684
12. Matt Kenseth	683
13. Jon Wood	656
14. Juan Pablo Montoya	650
15. Steve Wallace	645
16. David Ragan	642
17. Greg Biffle	635
18. Jason Leffler	619
19. Brent Sherman	601
20. Denny Hamlin	582

## Craftsman Truck

1. Mike Skinner	745
2. Todd Bodine	651
3. Rick Crawford	602
4. Ron Hornaday, Jr.	601
5. Ted Musgrave	600
6. Jack Sprague	564
7. Matt Crafton	549
8. Johnny Benson	543
9. Travis Kvapil	529
10. Aaron Fike	497
11. Dennis Setzer	482
12. Erik Darnell	456
13. Stacy Compton	454
14. Brendan Gaughan	443
15. Ken Schrader	427
16. Chad McCombee	416
17. David Starr	409
18. Willie Allen	394
19. Terry Cook	385
20. A.J. Allmendinger	375

## NHRA Top Fuel

1. Rod Fuller	271
2. Tony Schumacher	232
3. Whit Bazemore	202
4. J.R. Todd	178
5. Larry Dixon	165
6. Brandon Bernstein	161
7. Melanie Troxel	157
8. Dave Grubnic	157
9. Doug Kalitta	138
10. Bob Vandergriff, Jr.	121

## NHRA Funny Car

1. Robert Hight	253
2. Ron Capps	247
3. Tony Pedregon	243
4. Gary Scelzi	191
5. Eric Medlen	159
6. Jim Head	155
7. Jeff Arend	138
8. Ashley Force	116
9. Mike Ashley	116
10. Bob Gilbertson	11

## NHRA Pro Stock

1. Greg Anderson	311
2. Jason Line	208
3. Mike Edwards	181
4. Dave Connolly	180
5. Greg Stanfield	157
6. Kurt Johnson	156
7. Jeg Coughlin	139
8. Erica Enders	138
9. Vieri Gaines	134
10. Larry Morgan	117

## USAC Silver Crown

1. Tracy Hines	105
2. Paul White	93
3. Wayne Reutimann, Jr.	82
4. Bud Kaeding	80
5. A.J. Fike	79
6. Brian Tyler	72
7. Aaron Pierce	70
8. Tim Barber	64
9. Billy Wease	63
10. Ricky Stenhouse, Jr.	60

## USAC Midgets

1. Darren Hagen	65
2. Jerry Coons, Jr.	62
3. Jon Starbrough	48
4. Cole Carter	45
5. Chris Windom	44
6. Levi Jones	43
7. Johnny Rodriguez	39
8. Danny Stratton	37
9. Matt Mitchell	33
10. Tom Hessert III	30

## USAC-CRA Sprints

1. Tony Jones	574
2. Mike Spencer	513
3. Rickie Gaunt	488
4. Darren Hagen	460
5. Danny Sheridan	431
6. Scotty Weir	414
7. Rip Williams	389
8. R.J. Johnson	345
9. Garrett Hansen	315
10. Cory Kruseman	301

## Champ Car

1. Will Power	34
2. Robert Doornbos	27
3. Paul Tracy	27
4. Alex Tagliani	24
5. Tristan Gommendy	21
6. Katherine Legge	20
7. Bruno Junqueira	18
8. Alex Figge	15
9. Mario Dominguez	13
10. Neel Jani	11

## World Of Outlaws

1. Joey Saldana	1,742
2. Donny Schatz	1,730
3. Daryn Pittman	1,636
4. Danny Lasoski	1,586
5. Terry McCarl	1,583
6. Craig Dollansky	1,580
7. Brooke Tatnell	1,543
8. Tim Kaeding	1,509
9. Steve Kinser	1,498
10. Kerry Madsen	1,485

## WOO Late Models

1. Clint Smith	633
2. Chub Frank	621
3. Shane Clanton	619
4. Rick Eckert	613
5. Steve Francis	605
6. Josh Richards	599
7. Shannon Babb	593
8. Billy Moyer	591
9. Chris Madden	570
10. Jimmy Mars	563

## Formula One

1. Fernando Alonso	18
2. Kimi Raikkonen	16
3. Lewis Hamilton	14
4. Nick Heidfeld	10
5. Giancarlo Fisichella	7
6. Felipe Massa	7
7. Jarno Trulli	2
8. Nico Rosberg	2
9. Heikki Kovalainen	1
10. Ralf Schumacher	1

## ARCA RE/MAX

1. Frank Kimmel	585
2. Justin Allgaier	580
3. Bobby Gerhart	505
4. Phillip McGilton	495
5. Justin South	460
6. Dexter Bean	425
7. Marc Mitchell	415
8. Justin Marks	400
9. Mario Gosselin	390
10. Michael McDowell	385
10. Billy Venturini	385

## USAC Western Midgets

1. Chris Rahe	142
2. Danny Stratton	136
3. Scott Pierovich	125
4. Jerome Rodela	105
5. Matt Mitchell	104
6. Greg Bragg	95
7. C.J. Sama	87
8. Shannon McQueen	87
9. Rodriguez	72
10. Johnny Darren Hagen	65

## Lucas Oil LM

1. Terry English	250
2. Dan Schlieper	230
3. Don O'Neal	220
4. Tim McCreadie	210
5. Jimmy Mars	205
6. Matt Miller	200
7. Scott Bloomquist	195
8. Billy Moyer	195
9. Terry Casey	185
10. Donnie Moran	180

## ASCOT

1. Gary Wright	433
2. Wayne Johnson	410
3. Chuck Swenson	384
4. Darren Stewart	369
5. Jason Johnson	369
6. Travis Rilat	359
7. Jake Peters	294
8. Foster London	275
9. Nick Smith	271
10. Andy Shouse	258

## NASCAR Southern Mods

1. Tony Stewart	256
2. Shane Cottle	200
3. Dave Darland	175
4. J.J. Yeley	151
5. Justin Allgaier	136

1. Junior Miller	490
2. Burt Myers	462
3. Tim Brown	457
4. L.W. Miller	441
5. Brandon Ward	402
6. Brian Pack	394
7. George Brunnhoelzel	389
8. Bobby Hutches	378
9. Jason Myers	376
10. Wesley Swartout	373

## SUPR Late Model

1. Ray Moore	421
2. Allen Tippen	362
3. Jon Mitchell	306
4. Ryan Plaisance	276
5. Jason Ingalls	261
6. David Ashley	259
7. Lee Davis	259
8. John Anderson	250
9. Howard Willis	249
10. Kyle Cummings	247

## IRL IndyCars

1. Dan Wheldon	53
2. Scott Dixon	40
3. Sam Hornish, Jr.	35
4. Vitor Meira	32
5. Tony Kanaan	30
6. Ed Carpenter	28
7. Dario Franchitti	26
8. Tomas Scheckter	24
9. Helio Castroneves	22
10. Buddy Rice	20
11. Bryan Herta	289
12. Scott Sharp	287
13. Kosuke Matsuura	273
14. Ed Carpenter	252
15. Buddy Rice	234
16. Jeff Simmons	217
17. Felipe Giaffone	142
18. Buddy Lazier	122
19. Eddie Cheever, Jr.	114
20. Jeff Bucknum	97

## IRL Indy Pro

1. Alex Lloyd	52
2. Chris Festa	41
3. Hideki Mutoh	35
4. Jaime Camara	32
5. Andrew Prendeville	30
6. Bobby Wilson	28
7. Mike Potekehen	26
8. Robbie Pecorari	24
9. C.R. Crews	22
10. Jay Howard	20

## National Midget Driver Of The Year

1. Tony Stewart	256
2. Shane Cottle	200
3. Dave Darland	175
4. J.J. Yeley	151
5. Justin Allgaier	136

6. Tracy Hines	116
7. Jon Stanbrough	133
8. Chris Windom	110
9. Gary Altig	103
10. Donnie Ray Crawford	103

## Hooters Pro Cup Southern

1. Matt Hawkins	165
2. Bobby Gill	150
3. Trevor Bayne	140
4. Woody Howard	140
5. Frank Deiny, Jr.	135
6. Justin Wakefield	125
7. Gary Helton	121
8. Clay Jones	118
9. James Buescher	117
10. Don Satterfield	109

## USCS

1. Kenny Adams	884
2. Terry Gray	865
3. Bryn Gohn	821
4. Tom Winegardner, Jr.	536
5. Trey Robb	440
6. Ryan Myers	418
7. R.J. Johnson	424
8. Troy Lowery	410
9. Jon Kettlewell	398
10. Dan Statter	394

## ALMS LMP1

1. Frank Biela	26
1. Emanuele Pirro	26
1. Marco Werner	26
2. Rinaldo Capello	22
2. Tom Kristensen	22
2. Allan McNish	22

## ALMS LMP2

1. Bryan Herta	26
1. Dario Franchitti	26
1. Tony Kanaan	26
2. Luis Diaz	22
2. Adrian Fernandez	22

## Champ Car Atlantic

1. Raphael Matos	32
2. Robert Wickens	30
3. Johnathan Bomarito	25
4. James Hinchcliffe	25
5. Franck Perera	21
6. Junior Strous	19
7. Alan Sciuto	17
8. Ronnie Bremer	15
9. Justin Sofio	13
10. Matt Lee	11



Brad Noffsinger - Top 5 USAC Silver Crown Championship



Tim Grose - NHRA Winternationals Champ



Johnny Sauter - Curb/Agajanian Busch Car. Winner at Richmond



Billy Boat - Top 10 Indianapolis 500. Top 5 IRL Championship





### Darvalics Sprinkles Parity On TBARA

BRADENTON, Fla. — Steven Darvalics topped the field in Saturday's Tampa Bay Area Racing Ass'n feature at DeSoto Super Speedway, becoming the sixth

different winner in eight races this season.

Darvalics finished first in his heat race before moving on to the feature, where he beat out Troy DeCaire and Stan Butler to record his first victory of the season.

**The finish:**  
Steven Darvalics, Troy DeCaire, Stan Butler, Larry Brazil, Jr., Dude Teate, Shane Butler, D.J. Hoelzle, Keith Butler, Mark Gimmler, Danny Martin, Jr., Gary Gimmler, Michael Smith, Charles Ladner, Steven Bradley, Eric MacMillan, Wendy Mathis, Paulie Milum, Jim Alvis, Brian Maddox, Bill Pettijohn, Ben Fritz, Curtis Sutton, Brian Gingras, Ricky Burnett, Richard Waddell.

### Denton Does His Thing

BARBERVILLE, Fla. — Tommy Denton survived a crash-filled feature to win Saturday's Florida Sprint Car Ass'n race at Volusia Speedway Park.

Danny Jones moved up from 10th place to take second, but couldn't mount a challenge for the lead. Red Stauffer came home third after a 20th-place start, followed by Matt Kurtz and Allen Kaluziak.

### R.C. Ropes In Victory At Charlotte County

PUNTA GORDA, Fla. — R.C. Roper posted his first victory of 2007 in Saturday night's USA Sprint Car feature at Charlotte County Motorsports Park.

The Fort Myers, Fla., native is scheduled to start chemotherapy cancer treatment this week. Roper's teammate, Mike Tharp, finished second, followed by Greg Leonard, Tim George and Dennis Misuraca.

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## FRIDAY & SATURDAY - APRIL 20 & 21

Super late model stars return to Charlotte for the Circle K Colossal 100 – voted “Best New Race” by National Speed Sport News. The event features two action-packed nights of racing culminating in Saturday night's \$50,000-to-win 100-lap championship. See multi-car time trials and heat races on Friday, while Saturday kicks off with a pre-race autograph session, last-chance preliminary features, and the Circle K Colossal 100.

**\$49 - Adults**

**\$19 - Children** (12 & under)

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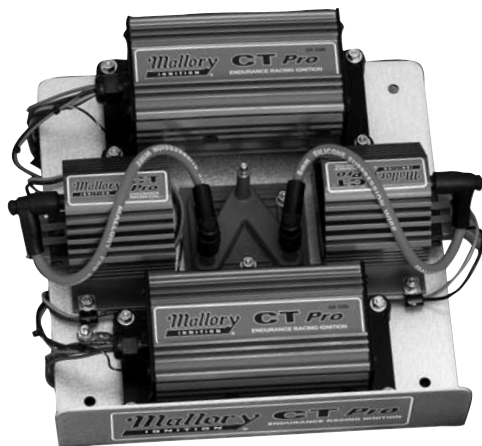
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## RACE REWIND

Race 1 of 16: Vegas Grand Prix, Sunday, April 8  
Las Vegas Street Circuit, Las Vegas, Nev.

## FINAL RESULTS

FIRST



Will Power

SECOND



Robert Doornbos

THIRD



Paul Tracy

Fin.	St.	No.	Driver	Team	Laps	Status
1	1	5	Will Power	Team Australia	68	Running
2	3	14	Robert Doornbos	Minardi Team USA	68	Running
3	2	3	Paul Tracy	Forsythe Championship Racing	68	Running
4	4	8	Alex Tagliani	R-SPORTS	68	Running
5	11	22	Tristan Gommendy	PKV Racing	68	Running
6	13	11	Katherine Legge	Dale Coyne Racing	68	Running
7	6	19	Bruno Junqueira	Dale Coyne Racing	67	Running
8	17	29	Alex Figge	Pacific Coast Motorsports	63	Running
9	7	7	Mario Dominguez	Forsythe Championship Racing	57	Running
10	9	21	Neel Jani	PKV Racing	56	Mechanical
11	15	28	Ryan Dalziel	Pacific Coast Motorsports	52	Running
12	5	15	Simon Pagenaud	Team Australia	47	Mechanical
13	16	1	Sebastien Bourdais	Newman Haas Lanigan Racing	30	Contact
14	8	9	Justin Wilson	R-SPORTS	20	Mechanical
15	12	4	Dan Clarke	Minardi Team USA	13	Contact
16	14	42	Matt Halliday	Conquest Racing	3	Contact
17	10	2	Graham Rahal	Newman Haas Lanigan Racing	1	Contact



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

**NO ROOM FOR ERROR:** It's the nose of Bruno Junqueira to the inside of Robert Doornbos and Alex Tagliani.

## RACE STATISTICS

Race time: 1 hour, 45 minutes, 13.637 seconds  
Average speed: 94.607 mph  
Victory margin: 16.787 seconds  
Caution flags: Four for eight laps

Lead changes: Seven among four drivers  
Lap leaders: Will Power, 1; Paul Tracy, 2-10; Power, 11-27; Alex Tagliani, 28-38; Power, 39-45; Bruno Junqueira, 46-48; Tracy, 49-55; Power, 56-68.

## TALK OF TIME TRIALS

Will Power claimed his second pole position in the last three Champ Car races by dominating final qualifying. The Australian lapped the new 2.44-mile street course in 1:17.629, almost a full second quicker than rookie Robert Doornbos.

## STANDINGS

FIRST



Will Power

SECOND



Robert Doornbos

THIRD



Paul Tracy

## Top 10

1. Will Power	34	6. Katherine Legge	20
2. Robert Doornbos	27	7. Bruno Junqueira	18
3. Paul Tracy	27	8. Alex Figge	15
4. Alex Tagliani	24	9. Mario Dominguez	13
5. Tristan Gommendy	21	10. Neel Jani	11

VEGAS:  
Logistical Bugs Need  
To Be Worked Out

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

free to roam the course, but black vinyl netting obstructed the trackside view in most places. Three-day grandstand tickets cost just \$60.

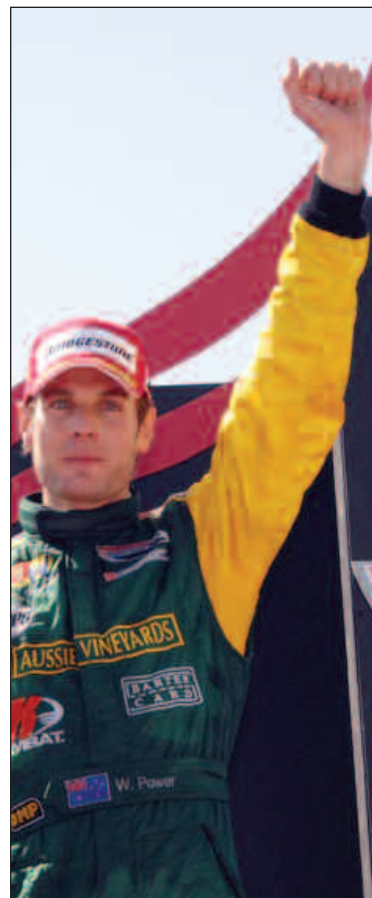
The promoter said that all the grandstand seats were sold out as of 10:15 on race morning. However, no figure for the number of seats sold was released other than co-promoter Brad Yonover saying that the number reached "tens of thousands."

The *Las Vegas Review-Journal* estimated race-day attendance as "40,000-plus."

"There were a lot of people here today," said event manager Jim Freudenberg. "It's tough to determine how many because we made it a free event. Our issue is not the number of people, which exceeded our expectations."

"We know the grandstands we built were oversold," he added. "We need to add seats next year, and we were very pleased with our attendance on Easter weekend."

The only complaints were about access. The only way to get from the Fremont Street area (Zone 2) to the pits and the main straight (Zone 1) was by shuttle busses, which by Saturday afternoon featured long lines. Credentialed workers were able to walk alongside the track, but it was still at least a mile walk to the pits from most downtown hotels.



AL MUNGER/ACM PHOTO

**FIGHT THE POWER:** Will Power salutes the crowd on the podium after winning Sunday's Champ Car opener in Las Vegas.



TNT PHOTO

**MONEY MATTERS:** Champ cars roar through the streets of Las Vegas, below the Lady Luck casino, last weekend.

Race organizers said their plan for a large spectator bridge crossing the railroad tracks that bisect the track into the two zones was quashed less than a month before the race.

"Come hell or high water, there will be a bridge over the tracks next year," said Janzen. "I hate lines, so we're going to work on ingress and egress and make it very easy for people to get in and out of the area in a pleasant way."

From Champ Car's perspective, the event was a smash hit. "An inaugural event is always a bit of a risk, especially the first race of the season and with a new race car," said Champ Car President Steve Johnson. "This was a home run. It exceeded our expectations as a series. Everybody did a fantastic job and it was a good way to start the season."

POWER:  
Power Spoils Tracy's  
Homecoming

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Power took the lead from Tracy on the 10th lap and held it through the first round of routine pit stops on lap 28. Then the 2003 CART series champion was almost immediately called back into the pits because his Forsythe Racing Panoz hadn't taken on any fuel.

"Before the first stop, I was glued to the back of Will's car, but we got only four laps worth of fuel in 15 seconds," Tracy said. "That was frustrating, and it took the fight out of the race for Will."

"I think we could have put a lot of pressure on him, but we were 45 or 50 seconds behind him after the extra stop," he added. "Obviously, we have some problems to work on for next week because if you want to win at this level, you have to get your pit stops right."

Power's biggest problem in the second half of the race was a lack of brakes, which caused him to hit a crewman during a long final pit stop.

Forced to make an extra fuel stop, Tracy was relegated to third behind Doornbos, who gave his former F-1 team owner Paul Stoddart and the Minardi brand a memorable welcome to the Champ Car series.

*"It's a relief to be competitive straight away, and I can't wait to get to Long Beach."*

ROBERT DOORNBOS

SECOND-PLACE FINISHER IN THE VEGAS GRAND PRIX

"I really enjoyed it, and I couldn't have dreamed of a better start, really," said the 25-year-old Doornbos, who qualified third for his Champ Car debut. "It's a relief to be competitive straight away, and I can't wait to get to Long Beach."

Alex Tagliani took a distant fourth place for the R-SPORTS team, while rookie Tristan Gommendy had an incident-free weekend and posted a top-five finish in his Champ Car debut. Katherine Legge was the last unlapped driver, matching her Champ Car career best with sixth place.

Officially 10 of the 17 starters were running at the finish, though three were multiple laps down.

Notable among the DNFs were Newman Haas Lanigan Racing drivers Sebastien Bourdais and Graham Rahal.

Three-time series champion Bourdais had a terrible weekend and crashed out after 30 laps, while 18-year-old rookie Rahal failed to complete the first lap of his Champ Car career.



# Las Vegas Gambles, Wins With Its Circuit

By JOHN OREOVICZ  
NSSN CORRESPONDENT

LAS VEGAS — With an uneven record over the last decade in terms of new street courses, no one knew what to expect from the 2.44-mile layout in downtown Las Vegas.

This time, Champ Car got it right. The Vegas track is wide, fast, and most importantly, interesting to drive. The first two days at a new Champ Car race are generally spent moaning about the track. At Las Vegas, there was nothing but praise.

“This is a great street course, probably one of the finest circuits,” said local resident **Paul Tracy**, who finished third in the race. “At a lot of the tracks we go to, the city wants to have a race, but they don’t want to give up too many streets and they want to limit you to a certain area where there’s not a lot of traffic.”

“So a lot of the tracks we go to are compromised race tracks. They’re in a parking lot or on streets they don’t use, and they make them short. Most street tracks are 1.5- to 1.7 miles, which is a fairly short lap for these cars. Other than Australia, which is 2.7 miles, this track is one of the longest street tracks we’ve ever raced on.”

Second-year driver **Dan Clarke** of Team Minardi USA added: “The Vegas track is quite cool. It’s surprisingly fast for a street circuit, and not too bumpy. It’s a bit of a mix with the fast sections and the fun parts including the tunnels.”

“I reckon it’ll make a good event and an important fixture on the Champ Car calendar.”

■ The Vegas GP marked the debut of what Champ Car calls “The Future of Racing” — the new Panoz DP01 spec chassis used by all competitors in conjunction with strict rules preventing modifications to the car.

The Panoz proved fast but fragile in testing, and that trend continued in the opening race. The thrash-like conditions everyone was operating in were obvious when major shipments of newly constructed spare parts were shipped to the circuit Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, some to replace already-manufactured parts that were rejected on quality-control grounds.

Every team had to fit new refueling components to their chassis, a job that required up to 11 hours per car. Fueling problems were still prevalent throughout the weekend; some cars could run only 30 of 35 gallons in their tanks without leaking, while **Simon Pagenaud’s** Team Australia car underwent a full fuel-cell change on



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

**BACK TOGETHER:** Believe it or not, Paul Tracy (right) and Mario Dominguez are teammates again at Forsythe Championship Racing. Dominguez was booted from Forsythe after crashing Tracy a few times early in the 2006 season, which paved the way for A.J. Allmendinger to drive for Forsythe. But Allmendinger moved to NASCAR, and now Dominguez is back alongside Tracy.

race morning.

At least two competitors — Tracy and **Bruno Junqueira** — had potentially better finishes ruined by pit-stop fuel-feed problems.

■ Three-time series champion **Sebastien Bourdais** was unhappy on Friday after suffering ignition problems. He said his car has burned through five ignition coils since the Laguna Seca test.

“It’s pretty much in line with the way testing went — we just keep piling on problem after problem,” he said. “Between the gearbox department and the engine department, we just can’t seem to get things reliable. It’s really troublesome because obviously if you can’t do more than 15 laps without having problems, entering a race is going to be kind of a little bit of a problem.”

“We’re going to need to be able to do more laps than this without coming into the pits and opening the rear deck.”

■ **Graham Rahal’s** highly anticipated Champ Car debut fizzled out before the 18 year old even made it to the first turn. He said he was forced far to the right by Clarke and he smacked the outside wall where the track begins to funnel toward turn one.

■ **Robert Doornbos** didn’t look particularly impressive in preseason testing, but he put together a tremendous Champ Car debut for himself and the Team Minardi USA brand. The 25-year-old Dutchman qualified third and finished second and over the course of his first two press conferences showed off his wit and personality.

At one point while Doornbos was speaking, a local reporter’s cell phone sounded off. Barely pausing mid-sentence, he slipped, “You’re supposed to turn that thing off, mate!” into his response.

Doornbos said he was enjoying

working with a small Champ Car team after working as a Formula One test driver and racer the last two years. He started 11 grands prix.

“I know everyone’s name on the team, which is a lot nicer than calling 500 guys ‘mate,’” he said.

What does Doornbos rate as the best part of his strong Champ Car debut? “Maybe people will pronounce my name properly now. You guys are doing a good job.”

■ **Justin Wilson** was expected to emerge as the team leader in the R-SPORTS merger, but it was local resident **Alex Tagliani** who had a far better weekend at Las Vegas. The French-Canadian qualified and finished fourth in his LXN2 car, while Wilson’s CDW car broke a gearbox after just 20 laps.

“We definitely had a P2 car, but we’ll take a fourth-place finish,” said Tagliani. “It’s a great way to start the season.”

■ PKV Racing’s **Neel Jani** was extremely impressive in preseason testing, but he didn’t adapt to the confines of a street circuit. The PKV Racing cars of Jani and fellow rookie **Tristan Gommendy** looked particularly bad at the chicane near the end of the lap, but Gommendy put together a consistent run to fifth place in his Champ Car debut. Jani was 10th.

■ **Dale Coyne Racing** had a competitive race, and Junqueira was unlucky not to finish on the podium in his first race for the team.

The same fueling problem that delayed Tracy affected the Brazilian, who led three laps and finished seventh, right behind his DCR teammate, **Katherine Legge**. The English female matched her best Champ Car finish with sixth place.

■ Champ Car confirmed that it has changed the date for its race at Zolder, Belgium, from Sept. 9 to Aug. 26.

## ‘Doctor Doom’ Sheds Light On Good Thing In Vegas

LAS VEGAS

Back in the autumn of 2001, when CART’s implosion was really starting to pick up pace, Bobby Rahal semi-jokingly called me “Doctor Doom.”

Based on what I’ve written about Champ Car’s 2006-07 off-season, I recently wondered if it was time to dust off that old moniker.

With plenty of significant question marks about six new events, a new spec chassis and a last-minute driver lineup, it was easy to lose confidence in whether the series could successfully answer the bell in 2007, and I was as pessimistic as anyone else covering the Champ Car beat.

But to their collective credit, the Champ Car community made the inaugural Vegas Grand Prix a professional and mostly entertaining show. Over the last decade, Champ Car has a hit-and-miss record when it comes to new events, and with the series’s credibility on the line, it definitely couldn’t afford to have a high-profile intrusion into downtown Las Vegas fall into the miss category.

Fortunately, the event was a hit — if not the home run that race organizers claimed, then at least a well-struck double.

The new Panoz chassis showed that it is definitely fast and raceable, but fueling problems ruined the race for several front-runners. There are still significant reliability problems, and only 10 cars were running at the finish of the one-hour, 45-minute contest.

Still, the Vegas GP, staged by the same promotion duo of Brad Yonover and Dale Janzen that are spearheading a December Champ Car race in downtown Phoenix, was a definite winner as a first-year event. The 2.44-mile race track, designed and executed by Chris Kneifel, immediately earned respect as an elite temporary circuit.

Rahal, who drove a Brabham BT44-Ford to victory in the Historic Grand Prix support race, called the Las Vegas track’s turn 12 (a near-flat left-hander onto the pit straight taken after emerging uphill from a freeway underpass) one of the best corners he knows anywhere in the world.

TURNING AWAY



JOHN OREOVICZ

Perhaps more importantly, cars took to the track Friday morning exactly on schedule, and there were no significant problems with the layout throughout the weekend. A major bump that launched the cars into the air just before they headed into the underpass at the end of a lap was dug up and resurfaced Friday night.

“The one issue that there was with the track, the city completely fixed it right,” said Paul Tracy, who like fellow Canadian Alex Tagliani is a Las Vegas resident. “They didn’t just try to Band-Aid it and fix it. They tore the whole intersection out last night. “They’ve done a perfect job.”

Because the event was essentially free to the public, it’s impossible to gauge an accurate attendance figure. There were lots of Champ Car and Formula One-themed T-shirts in evidence at the Fremont Street Experience on Saturday night, yet our waitress at Tony Roma’s said that that race pissed off plenty of locals. She complained that it was the slowest weekend she could remember in years.

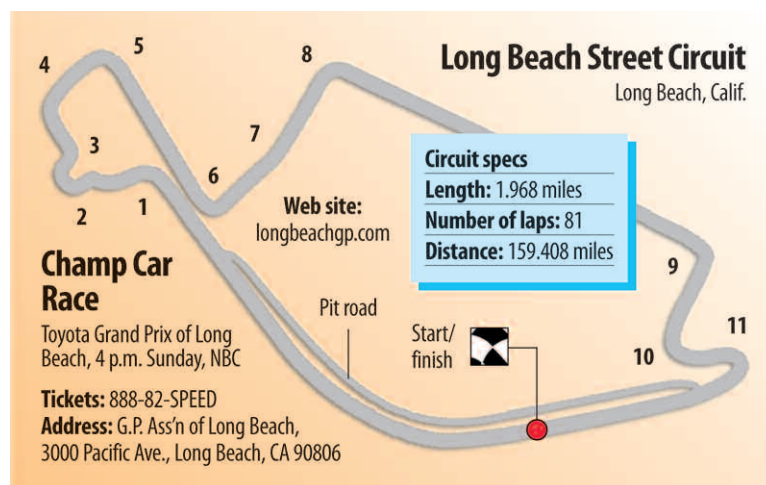
Perhaps those snooty open-wheel racing fans were dining at more “upscale” restaurants.

All joking aside, kudos to Champ Car for pulling off one of its better first-year events in the last 15 years. The Las Vegas race needs to be a success for the long-term stability of the series, as does the Phoenix tilt that will serve as the season finale.

With cars and spare parts in short supply, Champ Car must stage a clean and slightly more competitive race this week at the proven venue of Long Beach and then emerge from a third-consecutive street-course brawl at Houston without major equipment damage. Then the six-week break leading up to the Portland race can be used to work the bugs out of the new Panoz-Cosworth package.

The challenge will be to hold on to anyone’s attention until June 10 rolls around. Oops! That sounds like Doctor Doom talking again.

### UP NEXT





## RACE REWIND

FORMULA ONE

Race 2 of 17: Grand Prix of Malaysia, Sunday, April 8  
Sepang Int'l Circuit, Sepang, Malaysia

## FINAL RESULTS

FIRST



Fernando Alonso

SECOND



Lewis Hamilton

THIRD



Kimi Raikkonen

Fin.	St.	Driver	Country	Team	Laps
1	2	Fernando Alonso	Spain	Vodafone McLaren-Mercedes	56
2	4	Lewis Hamilton	Great Britain	Vodafone McLaren-Mercedes	56
3	3	Kimi Raikkonen	Finland	Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro	56
4	5	Nick Heidfeld	Germany	BMW Sauber F1 Team	56
5	1	Felipe Massa	Brazil	Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro	56
6	12	Giancarlo Fisichella	Italy	ING Renault F1 Team	56
7	8	Jarno Trulli	Italy	Panasonic Toyota Racing	56
8	11	Heikki Kovalainen	Finland	ING Renault F1 Team	56
9	19	Alexander Wurz	Austria	AT&T Williams	56
10	10	Mark Webber	Australia	Red Bull Racing	56
11	22	Rubens Barrichello	Brazil	Honda Racing F1 Team	55
12	15	Jenson Button	Great Britain	Honda Racing F1 Team	55
13	14	Takuma Sato	Japan	Super Aguri F1 Team	55
14	17	Scott Speed	United States	Scuderia Toro Rosso	55
15	9	Ralf Schumacher	Germany	Panasonic Toyota Racing	55
16	18	Anthony Davidson	Great Britain	Super Aguri F1 Team	55
17	16	Vitantonio Luzzi	Italy	Scuderia Toro Rosso	55
18	7	Robert Kubica	Poland	BMW Sauber F1 Team	55
19	6	Nico Rosberg	Germany	AT&T Williams	42
20	13	David Coulthard	Scotland	Red Bull Racing	36
21	20	Christijan Albers	The Netherlands	Spyker F1 Team	7
22	21	Adrian Sutil	Germany	Spyker F1 Team	0



STEVE ETHERINGTON PHOTO

**TIGHT TURN:** BMW Sauber's Nick Heidfeld hangs on for a fourth-place finish Sunday in Malaysia.

## RACE STATISTICS

Race time: 1 hour, 32 minutes, 14.930 seconds  
Victory margin: 17.5 seconds

Fastest lap: Lewis Hamilton, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, 1 minute, 36.701 seconds

## TALK OF TIME TRIALS

Ferrari's Felipe Massa was fastest in Friday's final knockout session with a lap at 1 minute, 35.043 seconds. McLaren's Fernando Alonso came in second, followed by Kimi Raikkonen, Lewis Hamilton and Nick Heidfeld.

## STANDINGS

FIRST



Fernando Alonso

SECOND



Kimi Raikkonen

THIRD



Lewis Hamilton

## Top 10

1. Fernando Alonso	18	6. Felipe Massa	7
2. Kimi Raikkonen	16	7. Nico Rosberg	2
3. Lewis Hamilton	14	8. Jarno Trulli	1
4. Nick Heidfeld	10	9. Ralf Schumacher	2
5. Giancarlo Fisichella	7	10. Heikki Kovalainen	1

## McLaren KOs Ferrari

*Alonso Sets Pace Early In Malaysia,  
Never Looks Back; Hamilton Second*

By DAN KNUTSON  
NSSN CORRESPONDENT

SEPANG, Malaysia — Fernando Alonso brought an end to McLaren's second-longest losing streak (20 races), as he and teammate Lewis Hamilton outfoxed and outperformed the Ferrari duo of Kimi Raikkonen and Felipe Massa in Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix at the Sepang circuit.

After winning in Australia with Raikkonen, Ferrari came to Malaysia with plenty of momentum that it carried right through qualifying, where Massa won the pole. But the folks at Vodafone McLaren Mercedes were gaining speed and confidence, and Ferrari was worried about Kimi's engine.

"We knew that we had closed the gap on Ferrari by the end of Saturday," McLaren director Ron Dennis said after the race. "We had the ability to outpace them."

Massa, Alonso, Raikkonen and Hamilton qualified in that order.

"The key to the race, one of our chances to win the race, was to be first after the first corner," Alonso said, "and thanks to a good start, thanks to the car, I was able to arrive side by side into the first corner. I was on the inside part, so I managed to be first."

Massa was now in second, but not for long as Hamilton sliced by. The following laps were thrilling as Hamilton fended off attacks from Massa.

Several times Massa got alongside or even ahead, but Hamilton fought back and held on to his position.

At times, you almost got the feeling that Massa was more concerned about keeping Raikkonen behind him, and that compromised his maneuvers on Hamilton. On lap six, Massa overcooked it trying to pass and slid off the track.

"I was able to trick him into out-braking himself and get my car stopped," Hamilton said. "And it was very fortunate that I was able to cut across and get back in front of him, to the point where he eventually went off, so I apologize for that."

While all this was going on, Alonso pulled out a 15-second margin before the first set of pit stops. Hamilton, meanwhile, had Raikkonen just half a second behind him.

"That was the most difficult race I've ever had," Hamilton said afterwards. "To see two Ferraris behind you, two red blobs in the mirrors, knowing that they're slightly lighter than you and slightly quicker than you, it's very, very difficult to keep them behind."

"And then I had Kimi hunting me down for most of the race and, phew, I just can't explain to you how tough it was."

Hamilton ran out of water halfway through the race. Alonso had water, hot as coffee, but no radio prior to his



STEVE ETHERINGTON PHOTO

**BANNER DAY:** Fernando Alonso high-fives McLaren teammate Lewis Hamilton after they finished 1-2 in Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix.

first stop, so the team had to hope he saw the arrow on the pit board calling him in. He did, and with radio transmitters in the pit garage now fixed, he was back in contact.

Hamilton also backed off but then had to speed up when he realized that Raikkonen was closing in again. They crossed the finish line separated by .782 second.

Nick Heidfeld qualified his BMW Sauber fifth and took over fourth when Massa went off in the weeds.

Raikkonen, meanwhile, said his race was compromised by having to conserve his engine that had overheated in the previous race, so he was philosophical about finishing third.

F-1's mid-pack is fiercely competitive. Behind the top-three teams came two Renaults (Giancarlo Fisichella sixth and Heikki Kovalainen eighth), a Toyota (Jarno Trulli seventh), a Williams Toyota (Alex Wurz ninth) and a Red Bull Renault (Mark Webber 10th).

## Teams To Settle 'Clone Car' Issue

By MIKE DOODSON

SEPANG, Malaysia — Just as the Spyker F-1 team was preparing to take two rival teams into court over the use of "copycat" designs, Bernie Ecclestone has called on all 11 teams to settle the dispute privately at a meeting he set up for this weekend in Bahrain.

The upstart Dutch outfit has been noisily demanding action by the FIA against two rival entrants accused of using borrowed designs.

Scuderia Toro Rosso's Ferrari-engined chassis is identical to the Adrian Newey design also used by sister team Red Bull, while the latest Super Aguri is virtually indistinguishable from last year's factory Honda.

Although the two teams do not deny the similarities, they claim (rather unconvincingly) to have found technical niceties in the rulebook that permit them to race. The FIA stewards refused to rule on this in Malaysia when they were informed that a complaint had already been lodged by Spyker

with the International Court of Arbitration in Switzerland.

There was a sensational development Saturday when Red Bull Racing boss Christian Horner learned that among the evidence submitted by Spyker in support of its rejected protest was a drawing that could only have come from the Red Bull factory. He has ordered an investigation into how the document fell into Spyker's hands.

Ecclestone, who appears to support Spyker's allegations against STR and Super Aguri, has told team bosses that the appearance of copycat cars is a threat to them all, not just to smaller teams like Spyker.

If Spyker were to press ahead with its demands for the two teams to be disqualified, however, Ecclestone's show would lose four cars. With this in mind, he is thought to favor a compromise agreement that would allow the four copycat cars to continue racing, though probably without being allowed to score points in the constructors' championship.



# Identifying Compounds 'Behind Us'

By DAN KNUTSON  
NSSN CORRESPONDENT

SEPANG, Malaysia — The white lines, applied by a marker pen to the second inner groove in Bridgestone tires, made it very easy for everyone to identify the softer of the two dry-weather tire compounds in Malaysia.

Williams's technical director **Sam Michael** suggested the idea that looks set to be adopted for the rest of the season.

**F-1 NOTES** "It is a pretty good solution," he said. "It is great for us in the pit lane. You can see it from 200 meters away, and it doesn't upset the look of the car. I think this issue is behind us now. It's all done."

It took the Bridgestone guys about one minute per tire to paint the line, which meant about 10 hours of work to mark about 600 tires. No doubt they will find a more efficient system in the future.

■ Ferrari said it had to make only minor modifications to its floor-mounting system to meet the new FIA measurement methods of flexing floors. BMW Sauber said it made no changes. Any shifts in performance with the new rule were not easily apparent.

■ American **Scott Speed** had a painful race on his way to finishing 14th in his Scuderia Toro Rosso.

"That was a tough race, and I've got a lot of blisters on my braking foot as the pedal was very hard to push," he said. "But the car seemed to be a bit more competitive than we had expected. The guys worked very hard over the past couple of weeks, so I am just glad for them that I was able to bring the car home and finish the race."

■ **Nick Heidfeld** supposedly had a BMW contract through 2008, but now he's being linked to Toyota (which denies it) and Honda next year. When asked about the contract situation, BMW's **Mario Theissen** said: "I would like to delay answering this question until I have spoken to Nick about this matter."

■ **Michael Schumacher** and his family went whale watching in the Canary Islands.

■ **Felipe Massa** won his fourth F-1 pole and the 188th for Ferrari. **Fernando Alonso**, **Kimi Raikkonen**, **Lewis Hamilton**, **Heidfeld**, **Nico Rosberg**, **Robert Kubica**, **Jarno Trulli**, **Ralf Schumacher** and **Mark Webber** rounded out the top-10 qualifiers.

■ **Jacques Villeneuve**, wife **Johanna** and son **Jules** have moved from Switzerland to Montreal so that JV can be close to the NASCAR scene.



STEVE ETHERINGTON PHOTO

**UNDERWEAR:** Lewis Hamilton slips on a head sock before taking to the Sepang Int'l Circuit on Saturday in Malaysia. The rookie started fourth and finished second.

He says he's confident that he will land a NASCAR ride.

■ Poking fun at Spyker's complaints about cloned cars at Red Bull, Toro Rosso's Friday press release after practice carried the following heading: "Scuderia Toro Rosso confirms that this press release paper was designed on the same computer as the Red Bull Racing press release paper. Having flown out a 10-strong legal team from Austria, the UK and Italy late last night, we can confirm that our paper complies fully with all regulations regarding media-headed paper."

■ **Rubens Barrichello's** Honda was sent to the back of the grid because of an engine change after qualifying.

■ Having a Singapore Grand Prix just down the road from the Malaysian race will not dilute F-1's appeal in this part of Asia, according to **Bernie Ecclestone**.

"I can only see a positive impact for Malaysia," he told the *New Straits Times*. "The races will be at different ends of the racing calendar. The Malaysian GP would probably remain (at the beginning), while the Singapore race will probably be at the end."

■ The competition in the midfield is incredibly tight. Half a second covered P6 to P13 in qualifying.

■ The Spyskers qualified last, but chief technical officer **Mike Gascoyne** said the car's new aero upgrade made a difference.

■ Calls for improved cockpit safety have been made following **David Coulthard's** Red Bull slicing over the top of **Alex Wurz's** Williams in the Australian Grand Prix.

"It (the car) could easily have taken his (Wurz's) fingers off on the steering wheel as it went across and also damaged his head," Frank Williams told *Reuters*.

"There's still danger out there. There will be a close look at that to see what we can do."

Coulthard hopes that the accident will speed up plans to have improved cockpit protection as early as 2008.

■ How miserable were conditions out there? "It's like racing in a sauna," Massa said.

■ Honda's press releases were filled with words like struggle, difficult, disappointed and frustrated. The RA107 is way off the pace.

## Dennis Says No Way To Bernie's Bigger Calendar

SEPANG, MALAYSIA

**B**ernie Ecclestone continues his quest for a 20-race calendar, but teams will demand more money if this happens. The Concorde Agreement only pays them for 17 races a year.

"We could easily imagine that the number of grands prix in a season could be 20," Ecclestone told *AFP*. "That could be Mexico, India and Russia. South Korea is another candidate."

Bernie is also pushing hard for a night race in Asia so that it can be televised in prime time back in Europe.

I asked McLaren's Ron Dennis about expanding the schedule.

"We have an agreement with CVC, who are the commercial rights holders, and it doesn't provide for that number," Dennis said. "It would require renegotiation."



STEVE ETHERINGTON PHOTO

**GROUP HUG:** McLaren's Ron Dennis (left) congratulates his two aces.

"It is a punishing season already. We tried to rationalize testing to reduce cost. If there is some logic to having more events and if it is better for the sport and better for the commercial aspects of CVC and the teams, maybe it could happen. But there is no provision for it at the moment."

Ecclestone believes that the teams will gain more sponsorship by going to new markets.

"The more we hold races in good countries, the easier it will be for them to find sponsors," he said.

F-1 had a record 19 races in 2005.

■ Meanwhile, in the second of 17 races in 2007, Kimi Raikkonen

## ACROSS THE POND



DAN KNUTSON

arrived in Malaysia sporting a large tattoo on his right wrist. What did it represent?

"Nothing," he said. "Nothing." Is it permanent?

"I don't know," he said. "You will see later what happens."

It is real, and he designed the tattoo he got in Melbourne to celebrate his first victory with Ferrari.

At an FIA press conference, a journalist asked Ferrari boss Jean Todt if Kimi had asked for permission and what the sponsors thought.

"The most important thing (for me) is our people in the team to be happy," Todt said. "So, if Kimi would be happy to put a tattoo on the face and feel comfortable, honestly, if you ask my opinion, I would say better put it somewhere where it is not so disruptive because you may then have some problems in the future."

"Everybody (in the team) is very focused with or without tattoo, and I don't care. It is as simple as that. And if a sponsor complains about the tattoo, I am prepared to change the sponsor to keep him (Kimi) happy."

Perhaps Kimi is celebrating his new freedom as well. A large tattoo would never have gone down well at McLaren.

■ The Friday press conference provided some humorous moments with Flavio Briatore clowning around, and both he and Todt made slips of the tongue about their drivers.

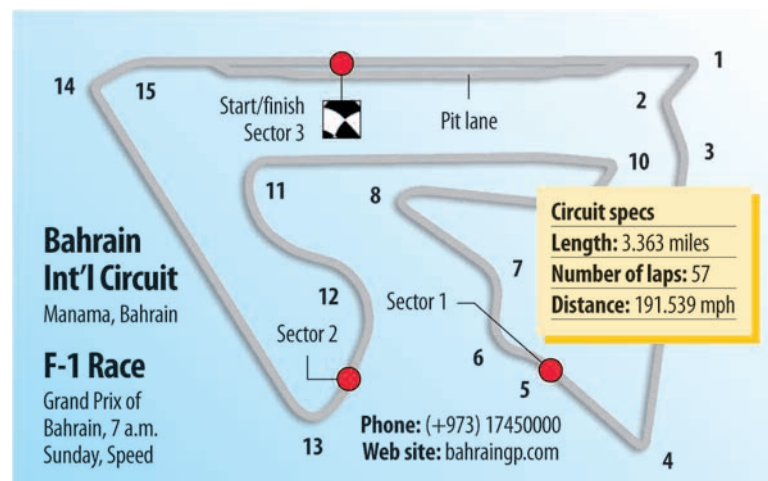
Briatore and Giancarlo Fisichella sat in the upper back row, while Todt and Raikkonen sat in the lower front row.

While the Ferrari guys were talking, Flav had the journalists sniggering by trying on Fisi's sunglasses and making funny faces.

Asked if Renault missed Fernando Alonso, Flav said he was happy with "Fernando and Heikki (Kovalainen) ... I mean Giancarlo!"

Todt then did the same, talking about "Michael" (Schumacher) when he meant Kimi.

## UP NEXT







A weekly report of action from across America



**MID ATLANTIC**  
Delaware  
Maryland  
New Jersey  
Pennsylvania  
Virginia  
West Virginia



**SOUTHEAST**  
Florida  
Georgia  
North Carolina  
South Carolina  
Tennessee

**Orlando Speedworld**

Orlando, Fla.  
April 6, 2007  
**Mini Stock**  
1. Robbie Storer  
2. Robbie Yoakam  
3. Cody Blair  
**Sportsman**  
1. Steve Gainey  
2. Patrick Thomas  
3. Craig Cuzzone  
**Modified**  
1. Alan Bruns  
2. Doc McKinney  
3. Jimmy Winks  
**Super Stock**  
1. Vince Keeler  
2. Roger Benton  
3. Bobby Simcox  
**Strictly Stock**  
1. Steve Anderson  
2. Neil Kirby  
3. William Hindman  
**Junior Stock**  
**12-15 Division**  
1. Jason Rosarius  
2. Cory Gowin  
3. Zachary Curtis  
**8-11 Division**  
1. Wes Railing, Jr.  
2. Luke Burke

**East Bay Raceway Park**

Gibsonton, Fla.  
April 6, 2007  
**Outlaw-4**  
1. Alex Boerner  
2. Austin Gillman  
3. Chad Rose  
**Modified**  
1. Raymond Rogers  
2. Jeff Mathews  
3. Dakota Stephens  
**Late Model**  
1. Jackie Nobsbisch  
2. Keith Nobsbisch  
3. Donnie Tanner  
**Street Stock**  
1. Charles Paris, Jr.  
2. Buck Skinner  
3. Donnie Reed  
**Bomber**  
1. Collin Kruse  
2. Frank Miller  
3. Kyle Eash

**Tri-County Motor Speedway**

Hudson, N.C.  
April 6, 2007  
**Late Model**  
1. Travis Swaim  
2. Brandon Dean  
3. Bruce Greene  
**Street Stock**  
1. Gary Ledbetter

2. Kevin Eby  
3. Ernie Harris  
**Fast 'n Furious**  
1. Stephen Shore  
2. Nicki Long  
3. Chad Miller  
**Mini Stock**  
1. Doug Setzer  
2. Jerry Lineberger  
3. Rob Lewis  
**Tri-County Mini**  
1. Jeff Banks  
2. Tyler Baird  
3. Tim McRae  
**Road Rage**  
1. Jimmy Stockton  
2. Eddie Burke  
3. Jimmy Weatherford

**Columbia Motorsports Park**

Lake City, Fla.  
April 7, 2007  
**Hornet**  
1. Steve Jeffers  
2. Brian Meek  
2. Mike Parcell  
**Super Late Model**  
1. Doyle Boatwright  
2. Kevin Dicks  
3. Trevor McKinley  
**Sportsman**  
1. Charlie Seroki  
2. Jeff Prescott  
3. Charlie Heiderman  
**Pure Stock**  
1. Jason Kight  
2. Wesley Keller  
3. John Roling  
**Southern Welterweights**  
1. Katherine Thomas  
2. Ken Mikesell  
3. Tony Smith

**North Florida Speedway**

Lake City, Fla.  
April 7, 2007  
**Hobby Stock**  
1. David Miller, Jr.  
2. Sammy Hatcher  
3. Scotty Nolan  
**Street Stock**  
1. Dean Sands  
2. Kevin Mills  
3. Tim Dowling  
**B-Modified**  
1. Ronnie Chance  
2. Jake Wood  
3. Kenny Blair  
**Pure Stock**  
1. Nevin Gainey  
2. Gerald Lewis  
3. Shawn Taylor  
**Late Model**  
1. Chad Akins  
2. Brennan Palmer  
3. Alan Bruns  
**Mini Stock**  
1. Jared Allison  
2. Ted Vulpius  
3. S.C. Klinger  
**Modified**  
1. Alan Bruns  
2. Skip Honaker  
3. Matthew Wheeler  
**Sportsman**  
1. Donny Williams  
2. Philip Luizzo  
3. Randall Jones  
**Strictly Stock**  
1. Eddie Rush  
2. William Skip Wager  
3. Jody Roberts  
**Super Stock**  
1. James Frisbie  
2. Edward Barber

**New Smyrna Speedway**

New Smyrna Beach, Fla.  
April 7, 2007  
**Late Model**  
1. Chad Akins  
2. Brennan Palmer  
3. Alan Bruns  
**Mini Stock**  
1. Jared Allison  
2. Ted Vulpius  
3. S.C. Klinger  
**Modified**  
1. Alan Bruns  
2. Skip Honaker  
3. Matthew Wheeler  
**Sportsman**  
1. Donny Williams  
2. Philip Luizzo  
3. Randall Jones  
**Strictly Stock**  
1. Eddie Rush  
2. William Skip Wager  
3. Jody Roberts  
**Super Stock**  
1. James Frisbie  
2. Edward Barber

**Fayetteville Speedway**

Fayetteville, N.C.  
April 7, 2007  
**Super Late Model**  
1. Jeff Smith  
2. David Taylor  
3. Chris Blackwell  
**Limited Late Model**  
1. D.J. Tyndall  
2. Timmy Neighbors  
3. Ronald Hammond  
**Modified**  
1. Hank Edwards  
2. David Hart  
3. Andy Floyd  
**Pure Stock**  
1. Glenn Howard  
2. Thomas Stewart  
3. Joel Wilson  
**Super Street**  
1. Glenn Howard  
2. Ricky Butler  
3. Greg Bass, Jr.  
**Enduro**  
1. David Nelson  
2. Abe Woodard  
3. Ben Woodard

**North Florida Speedway**

Lake City, Fla.  
April 7, 2007  
**Hobby Stock**  
1. David Miller, Jr.  
2. Sammy Hatcher  
3. Scotty Nolan  
**Street Stock**  
1. Dean Sands  
2. Kevin Mills  
3. Tim Dowling  
**B-Modified**  
1. Ronnie Chance  
2. Jake Wood  
3. Kenny Blair  
**Pure Stock**  
1. Nevin Gainey  
2. Gerald Lewis  
3. Shawn Taylor  
**Late Model**  
1. Chad Akins  
2. Brennan Palmer  
3. Alan Bruns  
**Mini Stock**  
1. Jared Allison  
2. Ted Vulpius  
3. S.C. Klinger  
**Modified**  
1. Alan Bruns  
2. Skip Honaker  
3. Matthew Wheeler  
**Sportsman**  
1. Donny Williams  
2. Philip Luizzo  
3. Randall Jones  
**Strictly Stock**  
1. Eddie Rush  
2. William Skip Wager  
3. Jody Roberts  
**Super Stock**  
1. James Frisbie  
2. Edward Barber

**Citrus County Speedway**

Inverness, Fla.  
April 7, 2007  
**Super Late Model**  
1. Mike Bresnahan  
2. Scott Grossenbacher  
3. Herb Neumann, Jr.  
**Limited Sportsman**  
1. Mike Veltman  
2. Ernie Reed  
3. Rusty Bremer  
**Mini Stock**  
1. Phillip Joyner

2. Chris Hooker  
3. Steve Griffin  
**Street Stock**  
1. Richie Smith  
2. Tim Quick  
3. Todd Downs  
**4-Cylinder**  
1. Brandon Elwood  
2. Justin Elwood  
3. Jon Doucette  
**Pure Stock**  
1. Bobby Taylor  
2. Bill Ryan  
3. James Erickson  
**Thunder Rookie**  
1. Chad Markland  
2. John Dye  
3. Chad Fairbanks  
**Open Wheel Lite**  
1. Phil Krauthoff  
2. Dennis Diehl  
3. Max Howe



**WEST**  
Arizona  
California  
Nevada  
New Mexico  
Oregon  
Washington

**Orange Show Speedway**

San Bernardino, Calif.  
April 7, 2007  
**Late Model**  
1. Richard Hooper  
2. Jim Conklin  
3. Brian Malone  
**Figure-8**  
1. Tom Smith  
2. Jay Henson  
3. Rusty Stewart  
**Pony Stock**  
1. Jim Edmiston  
2. Jim Mardis  
3. Matt Goodwin  
**Legend**  
1. Darren Amidon  
2. Bree Brewer  
3. Gary Scheurell  
**Bandolero**  
1. Tyler Faziozzi  
2. Eric Sloan  
3. Andrew Anderson

**The Bullring at Las Vegas Motor Speedway**

Las Vegas, Nev.  
April 7, 2007  
**Super Late Model**  
1. Jimmy Parker, Jr.  
2. Justin Johnson  
3. Alex Haase  
**Legends**  
1. Chris Buescher  
**Bandolero**  
1. Damon Blakemon

**Silver Dollar Speedway**

Chico, Calif.  
April 6, 2007  
**Sprint Car**  
1. Brett Miller  
2. Jason Statler  
3. Stephen Allard

**Irwindale Speedway**

Irwindale, Calif.  
April 7, 2007  
**Super Late Model**  
1. Andrew Phipps  
2. Rip Michels  
3. Travis Thirkette  
**Super Truck**  
1. Pat Mintey, Jr.  
2. Logan Henson  
3. Joe Harold  
**Mini Stock**  
1. Brian Johnson  
2. Rich Garver  
3. Steve Rogers  
**Pure Stock Oval**  
1. Rick Crow  
2. Mike Coletto, Jr.  
3. Jeff Elder  
**Pure Stock Figure-8**  
1. Rick Crow  
2. Ron Davis  
3. George Ruark

**Marysville Raceway Park**

Marysville, Calif.  
April 7, 2007  
**Wingless Sprint Car**  
1. Mark Hill  
2. Tim Sherman, Jr.  
3. Steve Fletcher  
**Pacific Sprint Car**  
1. Jeremy Burt  
2. Shawn Amos  
3. Cort Dozier  
**Dwarf Car**  
1. Kevin Bender  
2. Mike Greenert  
**Sprint Car**  
1. Tim McLaughlin



MARV KELLER PHOTO

**WINNING WAYS:** Andrew Phipps won Saturday's super-late-model race in Irwindale, Calif.

**REGIONAL NOTES**

**Rick Chavez** missed the end of last season after the 46-year-old Californian suffered a heart attack. However, he completed his comeback with a victory in the March 31 super-late-model feature at Orange Show Speedway in San Bernardino... During opening night at The Bullring at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, a monument was erected remembering late-model driver **Spencer Clark**, who was killed in a highway accident last May... With a week off from the World of Outlaws, **Shane Clanton** rolled into Talladega Short Track and won the March 31 late-model feature at the track, becoming the fourth different winner in as many events this season at the third-mile oval... Third-generation racer **Keven Wood**, son of Wood Brothers co-owner Len Wood, won the March 31 late-model feature at Caraway Speedway in Asheboro, N.C... New Jersey's **Scott Flammer** posted his first-career sprint-car victory in the 358 c.i. season opener at Pennsylvania's Selinsgrove Speedway... **Nick Igdalsky**, grandson of Pocono Raceway owners Rose and Joe Mattioli, won a recent pure-stock feature at South Boston (Va.) Speedway.

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## GAS: Rising Prices Affect Spending At Races

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

indication, the answer is probably not when it comes to fans giving up their trips to auto-racing events.

"I'd go to Watkins Glen to see a Cup race even if gas was \$5 a gallon," said Jill Anderson, a Fairport, N.Y., resident who was attending her first Daytona 500 in February. "Gas prices aren't really an issue for me when it comes to racing."

Anderson's views all but summed up how most race fans feel about the rising fuel costs across the country. While they are not concerned about gas prices curtailing their ability to attend their favorite NASCAR events, rising fuel costs take a back seat to other fan-related expenditures.

"The real cost issue of attending a NASCAR race doesn't come from gas prices, it comes from the prices of the hotels," said Al Marquette, a Sinking Springs, Pa., resident attending his 20th Daytona 500 this year. "We used to stay in Daytona, but the cost of the hotels there have gone up so much that we now stay away from the track and drive in for the events. It's those increasing hotel prices that have us thinking we might have to stay back at the room and watch the Busch race on television instead of attending both the Busch and Cup events on a race weekend."

Others like Chuck Acker, who made the trip to Daytona from Byers, Colo., note the rising cost of getting to and from the race track dictates other purchases.



JOHN CLOSE PHOTO

**PURCHASE:** A race fan makes a purchase at a souvenir trailer at a recent NASCAR event. Rising gas prices are affecting how spectators spend their money.

"You don't have as much money to spend on souvenirs and other items at the track because of the high gas prices you pay throughout the year," said Acker. "Increasing gas prices affect all of your spending habits."

The rise in gas prices hasn't been an overnight phenomenon. In April 2004, a barrel of West Texas Intermediate crude oil traded on the New York Mercantile Exchange for \$25.24. Over the past three years, that price has inched up to one and one half more that

price.

According to an ABCNEWS.com poll in March, that price increase led to 53 percent of the poll's respondents stating the price of gasoline has caused financial hardship in their households. That total was up five points from a year ago and 17 points higher than it was in May 2000.

In a statistical oddity, the actual price of gas is lower now than it was in 2000 (adjusted for inflation). However, the American economy is not as strong now as it was then, and

those factors, along with other financial pressures, have left many households with fewer disposable dollars to spend on trips, vacations and other personal items.

Evidently, those folks aren't auto-racing fans.

"The price of gas really doesn't affect how many races I go to a year," stated Marquette. "I travel for a living and racing is my hobby on my time off. If gas prices got to \$3.50 or \$4 a gallon, I might have to rethink how many races I go to a year, but right now, gas prices still

aren't an issue for me."

Others, like David Wells of Toronto, Ontario, indicate while gas prices have recently risen in the United States, they pale in comparison to those north of the border.

"We've seen a lot of Canadian license plates since we got here," said Wells at Daytona. "It doesn't surprise me because gas prices are much cheaper here than they are in Canada. They are much cheaper than we are used to — at least a dollar a gallon."

Meanwhile, the cost of gas is

expected to continue to rise thanks in part to annual seasonal fluctuations. Typically, fuel costs rise nationwide in the weeks leading to Easter as spring and summer motoring picks up. It's also the time of the year that refineries re-tool and produce less oil than usual. That means for at least for the next couple of weeks, you can anticipate additional fuel expenditures as you gas up the family race chaser and head for your favorite race-track.

"The difference between \$2.50 and \$3 a gallon gas is maybe a \$100 to me," stated Bryon Dopkins, a Madison, Wis., resident who has been driving his motor home to both Bristol races for the past five years. "This year, I spent the better part of \$450 on gas for the spring Bristol race. It's already costing me \$1,000 for each trip when you figure in tickets, food and souvenirs along with the gas. What's another hundred bucks? We're not going to stop coming to the races just because of that. We just cut back on the souvenirs and the Shoney's runs for breakfast to make it all work."

While Dopkins isn't hitting the souvenir and buffet trails as often, others like Wells are pounding the midway area enjoying the free exhibits provided by many of the sponsors of the sport.

"Stuff like the Chevy display is great because it's like being able to go to a car show at the race," Wells said. "The free stuff that you can do outside the race track can be a lot of fun."

It's also a lot cheaper than rising gasoline prices these days, which along with fan loyalty to the sport and attendance at their favorite race track is something that apparently isn't about to change in the near future.

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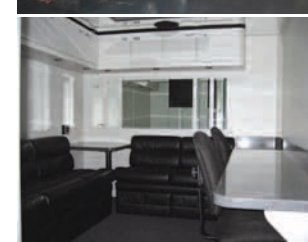


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**2004 FORD F-550,** Lariat crewcab 6.0L diesel, auto, deluxe flatbed, 38,000 miles. Ideal for your largest 5th wheel/gooseneck trailers. Graham Trailers, Ida Grove IA. www.grahamtrailers.8m.com. (800) 238-8314.

**2007 PACE** 48' sprint-car stacker. Loaded. Jack's. (940) 733-1044. (940) 767-7241.



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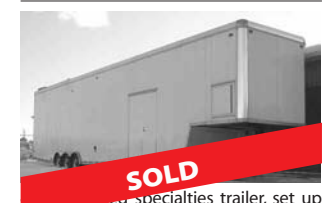


**50' SPRINT-CAR SEMI TRAILER:** Featherlite copy, built by Car-Mate, holds three cars, three motors, three top and six front wings, C-Tech cabinets, 20KW generator, heat/AC, lounge. Used two years on the World of Outlaws tour, new tires, ready to go, excellent condition. (716) 870-3717.

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### Trucks/Haulers 17

**THREE TOTERHOME CONVERSIONS in stock:** (1) Columbia w/a new 2007 14' conversion; (1) Volvo w/a new 2007 14' conversion; (1) FLD120 w/a new 2006 14' conversion. Two Dually diesel Ford crew cab trucks for sale: 2001 Lariat F-350 and 2004 Lariat F-550. 13 single car and stacker trailers in stock with more on order. Call for sizes and pricing. Graham Trailers. (800) 238-8314. www.grahamtrailers.8m.com.



**Specialties trailer,** set up for sprint cars, has upper deck, walk-on roof, new brakes, hauls two complete cars & all spares. \$31,000. See more pictures at www.action-auto-parts.com. 100 S 18th Ave., Marshalltown, IA 50158. (800) 373-3995.

### Safety Equipment 19

**USED NASCAR FIRESUITS.** Race Image sells gently used firesuits from leading NASCAR teams. Top brands like Simpson, Sparco and Impact. Save HUGE money vs new. Visit our website, www.raceimage.com or call (704) 660-9440. Mooresville, NC.

### Collectibles 20

**2007 SPRINT-CAR CALENDARS** printed by Paul Oxman. \$10 each, postage paid. Gale Lambert, 2339 SE Cuvier Drive, Tecumseh, KS 66542. (785) 379-9973.

**ONE IN A MILLION** -- A piece of NASCAR history from the 1985 season when Bill Elliott, "Awesome Bill from Dawsonville," became the first and only driver in NASCAR history to win three of the crown jewels of stock-car racing - Daytona 500, Winston 500 at Talladega and Southern 500 at Darlington, winning a million-dollar bonus. From those four races are a complete set of working press passes, press parking passes and garage passes, and Elliott signed the passes from the three races he ran. Also included is a program from the Cup awards banquet at the Waldorf in New York City that year, also signed by Elliott, and two those million-dollar bills that series sponsor R.J. Reynolds passed out in Darlington after Elliott won the Southern 500 in the No. 9 Melling Coors Ford Thunderbird. All enclosed in a glass frame. Direct all offers, cash-money order-certified check only, to jtfjack@aol.com.



**WANTED:** Absolutely highest prices paid for all gas-powered racers including Dooling Bros., Bremer, Matthews, Alexander, Curley, etc. Also seriously seeking Cox, Thimble, Dromes, O&R, McCoy, etc. Kirk F. White, Box 999, New Smyrna Beach, FL 32170. (386) 427-6660 or fax 427-7801.







NSSN THE FINAL LAP



STEVE ETHERINGTON PHOTO

**BRIGHT LIGHTS:** Panasonic Toyota Racing team members guide Ralf Schumacher's Formula One machine into the garage Friday at Sepang Int'l Circuit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

**HINDSIGHT:** Champ Car Atlantic Series driver Matt Lee awaits race action in Las Vegas.



DON FIGLER PHOTO

**PROVEN WINNER:** Helio Castroneves tries A.J. Foyt's 1964 Indy 500-winning car for size at the 2007 Indianapolis 500 Media Tour.



JOHN HARRELSON/GETTY IMAGES

**HANGING OUT:** Clint Bowyer takes a break during NASCAR Nextel Cup testing at Richmond Int'l Raceway.



CHAMP CAR PHOTO

**SPEED RACER:** Will Power speeds through the streets of Las Vegas during Sunday's Champ Car Vegas Grand Prix.



RICHARD KEPNER PHOTO

**MILESTONE:** Fred Rahmer (51) races Nikki Young on the way to his 150th-career sprint-car victory at Lincoln Speedway in Abbottstown, Pa.



## ECONOMAKI: Keep An Eye Out, Chinese Cars Are On The Way

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

famed Carnegie Deli, courtesy of Suzuki. But to ye ed, the day's fondest find was Toyota's benches, which flanked its third-floor exhibit, where one could sit and relax, hard to find anywhere else. Be sure and catch the show. It runs through the 15th.

Speak Chinese? Better learn, as their cars are coming. Nanjing Automobile of Shanghai, which bought Britain's MG-Rover Car Co. two years ago, rolled out its first MG sports car late last month. The 60-year Chinese automaker, which has a 50-50 partnership with Fiat of Italy, plans to introduce the two-seat MG sports car to China and Europe and build an assembly line in Ardmore, Okla., to produce MGs for the U.S. market. And it is expected that China's Brilliance Jinbei B36 sedan, once established in Europe, will be introduced here. Car lovers in this country should know the 2009 Buick LaCrosse will be designed, in part, by Chinese engineers. Why? Because Buick now sells more cars in China than it does here!

## SCHATZ: Learning To Live With WoO Format Changes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

It's put a little less premium on qualifying...the points are still nice, but there is a big difference between starting ninth and fifth. Danny (Lasoski) won this weekend from 15th and that was quite a show, but I'm not sure how many of those nights this new format will produce.

In a lot of ways the guys that are qualifying 15th or 16th have just as good of a chance as the guys timing first or second. In theory, it sounds good, but we are racing and the name of the game is still about getting

Those who read business pages are keenly aware of the recent financial blows the sub-prime mortgage business has taken of late. One such company, Ameriquest, was hit so hard it was forced to back away from several projects, totalling \$100 million, it had undertaken. One is sponsorship of the Roush-Fenway NASCAR Ford driven by **Greg Biffle**. It told Roush-Fenway to sell off the two remaining years of the three-year sponsorship contract it signed last year. Insiders estimate the savings to Ameriquest — and cost to Roush — at \$30 million. The Roush group is now hard at work trying to replace that backing. I'd bet bossman **Jack Roush** is also pondering which one of his five Nextel Cup teams he will sell in order to meet NASCAR's four teams by a single owner maximum, which comes into effect in 2010.

Sad to hear **Earl Baltes**, one of America's favorite old-line promoters (he built Ohio's famed Eldora Speedway), is recovering from a broken hip suffered in a fall from a stool. Was that a bar stool, Earl?

**Hila Sweet** wants all to know her 15th annual day-long California Racers Reunion will come off May 6 at Joe's Garage in Tustin, Calif. Many famous old-timers show up annually. This year **Cary Agajanian** will serve as emcee. If you plan to attend, Hila asks that you call her at (714) 374-7672.

around the track the fastest.

We've benefited from the new format on a couple of occasions and been hurt as well, so even though I think the format change wasn't needed, it'll probably work out fine.

The spec tire rule is another change. I think some of the drivers are mentally beat because they are saying their cars are actually unhooked more with the tire.

My car seems to be more hooked up with it. We were kind of expecting that. The feedback we got from the process was that Hoosier was going to do some of things in production that were done when we used to run Goodyears.

Cars stuck very well, and you'd see the bicycling a lot, and with these new tires we're back to doing that. I think the floppy wall tire actually

Ferraris anyone? The 50th anniversary of opening day at New York's now-gone Bridgehampton Int'l Raceway will be celebrated Sept. 30th, reports property owner **Bob Rubin**. He has asked all interested parties, plus those who might have some Bridgehampton memorabilia, especially films, to gather at the original track clubhouse on April 28. Details from **Guy Frost** at (516) 621-2745.

One could say Tennessee's Bristol Motor Speedway is for sale — piecemeal. Resurfacing of the half-mile track will allow fans to own their own souvenir piece of the high-banked concrete bowl and contribute to a charity as well. Pieces go on sale July 1, with proceeds benefiting the Bristol Chapter of Speedway Children's Charities. There are three options: A piece of the concrete in an acrylic case goes for \$25, a framed 12 x 14-inch piece is priced at \$60, while a "Concrete Showpiece" carries a \$100 price tag.

With two races in the books, Indy Racing League drivers say their cars — now fueled by 100-percent Ethanol — have more "kick" than ever before. Qualifying at both Homestead and St. Petersburg was faster than ever, with **Marco Andretti** reporting torque is so improved his car "just jumps out of the turns."

unhooks the car, but you'd have a hard time convincing some of the people who don't drive them. It's another thing to adjust to, and time will tell how it works out.

I do need to commend the DIRT management group putting together a strong television package. We've got a dozen shows on Speed and eight more on ESPN2. That's huge for us to keep sponsors like Global ParkerStore and Snap-on in the spotlight and recognized for all they do for our team. Your first impression is a lasting one, and in terms of television, this year is really important for all of us.

From a business standpoint, we've got a lot of customers that we want to make a good impression on. If we can, the second-quarter report will be even better than the first.

## FORUM: Observations And Complaints

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

there were several instances of cars spinning or hitting the wall or having mechanical problems where no caution came out. That might be acceptable at a big track or at a road race, but we are talking about a small half-mile track here. Cars are spread out all over the track, and those drivers trying to get their cars pointed in the right direction and back to running speed were a hazard to others as well as themselves. Bless the skills and luck of the 43 exceptional drivers who kept from running into each other and causing serious injury.

Another observation is the lack of response by the safety crews. I have been to a lot of tracks, big and small. There are small tracks out there with some of the best safety response crews that anyone could ask for. There are some tracks out there with little more than a first-aid person on site. I watched a winged sprint car jump the banking one night and knock a driver unconscious, and it took almost five minutes for the safety crew to respond. We really thought we had lost a driver. Our sprint car caught fire one night with our driver in it, and when the fire truck finally responded, it did not have a hose that would work. Fortunately, someone standing nearby had a fire extinguisher, and a civilian ran out and took care of our driver. We attend races at Eldora, where the safety crew is on site almost before the cars come to rest. I say all this to point out that we have seen the best and some of the worst. Martinsville was one of the worst. The response of the safety crew left a lot to be desired. They were very slow at getting to anyone, but not getting the ambulance over to Bobby Labonte after his crash was absolutely inexcusable. Our premier racing series should have the premier safety response team.

Cheryl Dalhamer  
New Carlisle, Ohio

## It's My Race, Too

I have been a supporter of Tony George's stewardship of IMS and of the IRL. But Tony, come on. Do something to increase the car counts. Don't listen to politics and whining; just create a set of rules that entices your average millionaire to want to try his or her hand at the Speedway and the IRL. Too much money, too much technology and too much politics is a bad recipe.

Racing people love to overcomplicate things. At its core, the sport should be simple. The car has got to be able to go faster than the driver can drive it, and then the driver becomes the deciding factor.

At the very least, mandate a formula that calls for NASCAR Cup motors in the cars and a little tweak here and there to make them less like slot cars (like narrowing the tires an inch) and, bingo, you have your answer. Costs come down, emphasis on drivers goes up and car

counts increase. Fans would have four engine brands, many engine builders, more cars and more drivers to root for. Only the fastest would make the race as opposed to everybody that shows up. Plus, the car counts at other IRL events would top 30 easily because you could afford to race the car elsewhere. What we have now is unused backup cars just sitting there because they are too expensive to race. That's nuts. The very best part of the "old days" was to see 65 drivers trying to qualify one of 57 entries for one of the magical 33 spots. Bump day was heaven. To the best goes a starting spot. Don't tell me why it can't be done; tell me how it can be done. It can be done again, but only if they want to do it badly enough.

Again this year I will be at Indy as I have been since 1961. The Hulman/George family may own the facility, but the race and the history belong to all of us. My name is not Hulman or George or Foyt or Andretti or Mears or Penske, but I have a clear message for all of those guys. It's my race, too.

Alan Beck  
Champaign, Ill.

## WoO Observations

I attended the World of Outlaws sprint show at Volunteer Speedway in Bulls Gap, Tenn., on March 24. It was a great show with a close Joey Saldana victory. However, I would like to make the following observations.

1. The WoO provides a terrific show and great racing. There is no need to play the mood music before each heat, dash and feature to rouse the crowd. We are already excited.
2. In the same light, Heather, the cheerleader/giveaway girl, is unnecessary. The poor response of the crowd should have been a hint.

To the owner/promoter of Volunteer Speedway:

1. If and when you bring the WoO sprinters back, please provide more than three push trucks. It made for a longer show.
2. If you run a support show, please run that feature after the WoO sprints, not before. The mostly out-of-town crowd endured a one-hour spin-a-thon from the crate late models.
3. Finally, the late-model race was mercifully ended at 20 (or was it 19) laps, not the advertised 25. The applause afterward was for the end of the torture, not the winner!

Bob Binda  
Greenville, Tenn.

## Not All Danica's Fault

Poor Danica Patrick. Her spin at Homestead-Miami Speedway wasn't entirely her fault. I listen to the conversations on my scanner, and all the crew chiefs remind their drivers to warm up their brakes. They didn't say a word until after she crashed.

Homestead has such a long deceleration lane into the pits that she hadn't touched her brakes for probably a half hour. So, when she touched them her rears locked up and it threw the car right into the wall.

Donald Dobbs  
Miami, Fla.

# It's All Brian Tyler In Big-Car Season Opener

CECIL, Ga. — Brian Tyler led all 150 laps Saturday night as the Premier Racing Ass'n launched its second season at South Georgia Motorsports Park.

Tyler, who was fast qualifier, drew the number-one starting spot and was never headed on the three-eighth-mile asphalt oval.

Tyler drove the No. 4 Contos Racing Pink Ford-Beast, the same car that Eric Gordon drove to victory at Illiana Motor Speedway in Schererville, Ind., to begin the 2006 Big Car Series campaign.

Wayne Reutimann, Jr. passed A.J. Fike on the final lap to take the runner-up position. Eric Gordon wound up fourth, and NASCAR Nextel Cup driver Ryan Newman rounded out the top five.



MAX DOLDER PHOTO

**BUNNY EARS:** Sporting bunny ears atop his helmet, Brian Tyler dominated Saturday's PRA Big Car Series feature.

Reigning PRA Big Car Champion Chet Phillip suffered a severe setback in his defense of the title when he dropped out with mechanical problems after just 16 circuits.

The finish:

Brian Tyler, Wayne Reutimann, Jr., A.J. Fike, Eric Gordon, Ryan Newman, Marc Jessup, Ron Gregory, Ryan Smith, Kody Swanson, Jacob Wilson, Mike Lichty, Justin Barger, Alex Pruett, Johnny Heydenreich, Sport Allen, Chet Phillip.

# Faas Leads The Way At Ventura

VENTURA, Calif. — Second-generation driver Nic Faas won Saturday night's USAC California Ford Focus Dirt Series feature at

Ventura Raceway. Faas took the lead from J.R.

Williams on lap five and led the remainder of the 20 laps of the fifth-mile dirt track. Walt Johnson finished second, with Ricky Kirkbride third.

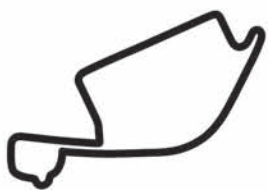
The finish:  
Nic Faas, Walt Johnson, Ricky Kirkbride, John Nickel, J.R. Williams, Austin Williams, Jet Davison, Nick Carlson, Dennis Howell, Todd Carroll.



432,632 GEAR CHANGES  
 249,291 TURNS  
 48,737 MILES  
 16 RACES  
 7 COUNTRIES



48 MAGNUMS OF CHAMPAGNE. ONE CUP.



ROUND 2



THE TOYOTA GRAND PRIX  
 OF LONG BEACH

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Watch it Live!  
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ROUND 3



GRAND PRIX  
 OF HOUSTON

[www.grandprixofhouston.com](http://www.grandprixofhouston.com)



Watch it Live!  
 Sunday, April 22, 3:00 PM EDT.

WWW.CHAMPCAR.WS



Figures estimated based on available information. Actual numbers will vary slightly. Schedule subject to change.