



MARCH 27, 2017

# FastTrack

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## Larson Sweeps California

## Trading One Grid for Another

When he was the starting right tackle for Georgia Tech, Eason Fromayan has learned to embrace the challenges of competing on a high level, the importance of teamwork and the sacrifices that comes with success.

But he had enough.

After completing his junior season with

a 33-18 win over Kentucky in the TaxSlayer Bowl, Fromayan said he will give up his final year of eligibility to play for another team – a NASCAR pit crew.

If all goes as planned, the 6-foot-4, 285-pound lineman still will be wearing a helmet and pads on game day. But instead of knocking heads with a defensive end, he will be wrestling with a 3,500-pound stock car.

"I've always been a NASCAR fan, literally since the day I was born," Fromayan said. "I've been to way more NASCAR races than I have football games."

Fromayan is such a big NASCAR fan, he dressed as Jeff Gordon for Halloween when he was 8.

"Head to toe," he said. "Jeff Gordon was my favorite driver."

Fromayan knows he's leaving a starting role for one of the nation's premier football programs for chance in racing that comes without any promises, but he's willing to start at the bottom and work his way through the NASCAR ranks.

He also realizes pit crews have changed in the past 15 years. Former athletes have replaced mechanics on pit road, turning routine stops into a burst of agility, strength and speed.

In fact, former college football, baseball and basketball players make up the majority of positions on pit crews. Most worked their way through pit crew mini-camps and schools, each hoping to land a job on an ARCA, Camping World Truck, Xfinity or Monster Energy series team.

"They have a formal process that usually starts around June or July," Fromayan said. "They start their whole recruiting process and it eventually evolves into something similar to the college football signing dates later on during the Fall."

Bryan Cook, Georgia Tech's quarterbacks coach, and strength coach John Sisk have connections with NASCAR pit crew coaches. They know what race teams need when it comes to the speed needed for seven men working in unison to change four tires and add 14 gallons of gasoline in less than 12 seconds, and the strength it takes to carry a 35-pound tire or hoist a 97-pound gas can.



**DON COBLE**

NASCAR's move to man pit road with athletes came at the same time Fromayan was dressing like Jeff Gordon.

Major teams, especially Hendrick Motorsports and

Joe Gibbs Racing, realized quicker pit stops translated to better finishes. Now there are nearly 100 over-the-wall crewmen with college athletic pedigrees.

Danny "Chocolate" Myers was Dale Earnhardt's longtime gasman. And like others from his generation, his work on pit road came after he spent hours working on the car. His crew, called the "Flying Aces," were one of the best with stops of 16 seconds.

The move to specialized pit crews is something was an important part of the sport's evolution.

"We had to do the cars back then," Myers said. "We'd work on the cars up until race time, then we'd change clothes and pit the car. These professional pit crews are quicker. They work out all the time. We didn't have time for none of that."

In racing, time is money, Fromayan said. A second saved on pit road at the Martinsville Speedway is worth about 30 yards on the track. Denny Hamlin won last year's Daytona 500 by just .01 of a second.

Fromayan got the idea to join a pit crew after attending the NASCAR race at the Atlanta Motor Speedway in 2015. He met front tire carrier Dion "Rocko" Williams in the pits, and the former Wake Forest linebacker convinced him there was great life in NASCAR after football.

"When I met him, he said most of the guys on pit road were athletes," Fromayan said. "That's when I decided I could see myself doing this."

Williams currently is mentoring Fromayan in Charlotte, N.C., as he transitions from one contact sport to another.

## Brandon Jones Joins Hope for the Warriors

CAMP PENDLETON, CA - NASCAR XFINITY Series (NXS) driver Brandon Jones joined representatives of Hope For The Warriors to tour the Hope and Care Center and Wounded Warrior Battalion-West aboard Camp Pendleton on Thursday afternoon. The experience was an expansion of Hope For The Warriors' Drive For Hope program, which connects the military to motorsports while encouraging interaction between service members and those within the motorsports industry.

Jones used the opportunity to spend time with service members while also sharing the story of why he supports Hope For The Warriors. Now 20-years-old, Jones grew up with a passion for both motor racing and the military, and dreamed of either becoming a NASCAR driver or serving in the military. Competing in his sophomore season in the NXS, Jones uses his platform as a driver to help advance Hope For The Warriors' mission of restoring self, family and hope for service members, veterans and military families.

"I've always had a big interest in the military and a lot of respect for the men and women who serve our country," said Jones. "While I was growing up, I either wanted to be a racecar driver or

serve in the military, but I didn't really have that first-hand link to the military to be able to see behind-the-scenes and make those connections. With my career established in racing, it means a lot to me that I'm able to use that to help an organization like Hope For The Warriors. I love the opportunity that relationship gives me to meet our service members, get on base and just experience some really cool stuff. It meant a lot to me to get out to the Wounded Warrior Battalion-West and spend some time with those guys.

"Likewise, the Hope and Care Center was just incredible, and it was great to see some of the amazing things that the Marine Corps is doing through that. I expect that we'll have a strong weekend in our No. 33 Chevrolet over at Auto Club Speedway, but regardless of what happens there, I think our stop at Camp Pendleton will definitely be the highlight of my weekend."

To learn more about the program or find out how you can get involved, visit [HopeForTheWarriors.org](http://HopeForTheWarriors.org). Additionally, you can support Hope For The Warriors and its various programs by making a gift online, by phone at 877-246-7349, or by mail to 8003 Forbes Place, Ste. 201, Springfield, VA 22151.

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### In This Issue:

Fast Forum	2	World of Outlaws	10-13
Monster Energy Cup	3	Artic All Stars	13
NASCAR XFINITY Series	4	Midwest Sprint Cars	13
NASCAR Touring	6	ASCS	14
P.A.S.S.	7	OnTrack	15-16
CARS Tour	8-9	ShorTrack	17-21
ARCA/CRA/SSS	9		

### ON THE COVER:

MENCS - RUSSELL LABOUNTY/NKP  
NXS - NIGEL KINRADE/NKP

# After String of Seconds, Kyle Larson Captures Victory in Fontana

By REID SPENCER  
FONTANA, CA - What a difference one position makes.

After three straight second-place finishes in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series, polesitter Kyle Larson

finally found Victory Lane, pulling away after an overtime restart to win Sunday's Auto Club 400 at Auto Club Speedway.

Larson took the checkered flag at the end of the second extra lap as team owner Chip Ganassi celebrated from his perch atop the pit box.

"It's great to be Kyle Larson right now," said the 24-year-old driver.

Resilient Brad Keselowski, whose spin on Lap 3 caused the first caution of the afternoon—and damaged his No. 2 Team Penske Ford—rolled home in second place, .779 seconds behind the driver variously known as "Young

Money" and "The California Kid."

Larson, who led a race-high 110 laps, kept his cool through four cautions and subsequent restarts over the final 21 laps, giving up the lead to pit for fresh tires on Lap 193 of a planned 200, as Denny Hamlin, Martin Truex Jr. and Jamie McMurray stayed on the track.

But Larson quickly surged back to the front after a Lap 196 restart, passing Hamlin for the top spot through Turn 2 a lap later and holding it through the overtime.

"I was staying as calm as I could be, but also frustrated at the same time," Larson said of the late-race stops and starts. "It seems like every time I get to the lead at the end of one of these things, the caution comes out and I've got to fight people off on restarts. Our Target Chevy was amazing all day. We were able to lead a lot of laps today. Truex was better than us that second stage by quite a bit. We were able to get the jump on him

the following restart and led pretty much the rest of the distance.

"I had to fight them off there after the green flag stops (before the final caution), and that was a lot of fun. This is just amazing. We've been so good all year long, three seconds in a row. I've been watching all the TV like 'He doesn't know how to win,' but we knew how to win today, so that was good."

In posting his second career victory (the first coming at two-mile Michigan last year), Larson completed his first weekend sweep, having won Saturday's NASCAR XFINITY Series event.

Larson extended his Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series lead to 29 points over second-place Chase Elliott, who finished 10th.

Clint Bowyer ran third, posting his best finish since June 2015 at Sonoma, where he also came home third. Truex, who opened a lead of more than eight seconds in winning the second 60-lap stage, was fourth, with Joey Logano recovering a lost lap with a late wave-around to finish fifth.

Keselowski cut a tire during a jam-up at the start of the race, the went for a ride off Jimmie Johnson's bumper on Lap 3.

All things considered—among them a suspension to crew chief Paul Wolfe for an infraction last

week at Phoenix—Keselowski was happy with his second-place result.

"We were tore all to hell," Keselowski said. "Got tore up there really early in the race. Went all the way to the back, just clawed all the way up to second... The last few restarts were obviously key for us. We seemed to get settled into about 10th there, maybe seventh or eighth.

"Then kind of just executed the last few restarts. Good pit calls and so forth. Good timing with the yellows. We caught a few breaks, for sure, and made good adjustments to our car to make up for the damage. It takes a little bit of everything: good execution, good work by the team, and a little bit of luck on the last few yellows."

Notes: With Keselowski having early troubles, Larson is now the only driver who has scored points in both the first and second stages in each of the five races this year... Twenty-first Jimmie Johnson maintained his perfect record at Fontana—but just barely. After a litany of issues throughout the race, Johnson got back on the lead lap as the "lucky dog" under the final caution. He has now finished on the lead lap in all 23 of his starts at Auto Club, completing all 5,306 laps raced at the speedway during his career.

Kyle Larson, driver of the #42 Target Chevrolet, applies the winners sticker in victory lane with his son, Owne, after winning the Auto Club 400. (GETTY IMAGES photo)



# Larson Holds Off Logano for NASCAR XFINITY Win at Auto Club Speedway

By REID SPENCER  
 FONTANA, CA - Kyle Larson kept pole-sitter Joey Logano at bay after a restart with four laps left in Saturday's Service King 300 NASCAR XFINITY Series race at Auto Club Speedway and held on to win by .127 seconds.

Larson and Logano had swapped the lead on three successive laps before Brandon Jones plowed into the outside wall on Lap 142 to bring out the seventh and final caution of the afternoon.

The lead cars pitted for fresh tires under the yellow, with Larson exiting pit road first and Spencer Gallagher grabbing the second spot with a two-tire stop. That proved Logano's undoing, as his No. 22 Team Penske Ford was pinned behind Gallagher's GMS Racing Chevrolet for the restart on Lap 147 of 150.

Logano chased Larson to the checkered flag but couldn't prevent the driver of the No. 42 Chip Ganassi Racing Chevrolet from scoring his first victory of the season, his second at Fontana and the sixth of his career.

"The racing there at the end with Joey was awesome," said Larson, a California native who got his first NASCAR XFINITY Series victory at the two-mile track. "I had just a couple-lap fresher tires than he did, and I was able to chase him down. That was a lot of fun.

"I wish that last caution wouldn't have come out, because it would have been easier for me to win, I think. But a heck of a race. I honestly didn't think we would be here yesterday. I was struggling bad in practice. Fought the balance a lot throughout the race, too. Finally, the last few runs, we hit on it and it felt good for the short run and throughout the long run. So I can't say enough about everyone on our ENEOS Chevy team."

Both the winner and the runner-up had obstacles to overcome. Larson recovered from a pit road speeding penalty to win the race. Logano sped on pit road and subsequently fell to the back of the field when the jack on the left side of his

Ford dropped prematurely during an extended stay on pit road.

But Logano was in prime position at the end, though he acknowledged that Gallagher's two-tire call deprived him of the chance to overtake Larson.

"What's his number? 23?" Logano asked. "Yeah, I don't know about that move. That wasn't a good move. I don't know what they were thinking, but that maybe wasn't the best play at this race track. I knew he was going to spin them

(his tires). There's no way he couldn't. It wasn't his fault.

"He was a sitting duck and I was a sitting duck behind him that lost too much track position on that restart being too far behind Kyle. If not for that, we would have probably been door-to-door across the line bumping and banging or something. We were able to catch Larson the last few laps. We were definitely faster, but I needed another lap, maybe two."

Kyle Busch finished third after scraping the wall on Lap 122 while in pursuit of Logano, who was leading at the time. Erik Jones ran fourth and Sunoco rookie William Byron fifth as the highest-finishing series regular.

The action-filled race wasn't without a number of hard crashes. Paul Menard's Chevrolet nosed hard into the outside wall after con-

tact from Jones. Cole Custer clobbered the Turn 1 wall with an assist from Ryan Sieg—and was upset when he exited the car.

"I just got hooked going into the corner," Custer said. "I think I hit him (Sieg) a tick just on my side-draft going off of (Turn) 4, and then he decided just to hook us going into Turn 1 and wreck us.

"I thought we could have competed for a win there. We had a bad pit stop. We were going to work our way back up there, but just got our day ended by a clown move."

Notes: Byron is second in the series standings, 17 points behind seventh-place finisher Elliott Sadler... Darrell Wallace Jr. finished sixth for the fourth-straight race... Busch won both the first and second stages of the race, earning a total of two playoff points toward the owner's championship.



Kyle Larson, driver of the #42 ENEOS Chevrolet, takes the checkered flag just in front of Joey Logano (22) to win the NASCAR XFINITY Series Service King 300. (GETTY IMAGES photo)

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## Gilliland Doubles Up at Irwindale Paces K&N Pro West Field In NAPA Auto Parts Twin 100s

IRWINDALE, CA - It was a clean night at Irwindale Event Center. And that's just how Todd Gilliland wanted it.

Leading the field from pole, and hot off a win in the first NAPA Auto Parts Twin 100 feature, the 16-year-old from Sherrills Ford,

North Carolina, held off a hard-charging Chris Eggleston to win for the third time in 2017 and 10th time in his NASCAR K&N Pro Series West career.

The victory, his second at Irwindale, also awards him a \$10,000 prize for finishing in the top-three spots in the four-race NAPA 500 Challenge Series.

The NASCAR Next driver's win also marked Bill McAnally Racing's 14th victory at the California short-track.

With only one caution in the opening 92 laps, it looked as though it would come easy to the reigning K&N Pro Series West champion. However, a spin from Takuma Koga set up a mad dash to the checkered with four laps to go.

Eggleston, diving his No. 99 NAPA Filters Toyota into Turn 1, grabbed the race lead for the first time of the night from Gilliland... for about 40 feet.

A swift over-under maneuver from Gilliland and his No. 16 NAPA

Auto Parts Toyota quickly gave him the lead back by the time they reached Turn 3.

Repeating the show with two laps to go, Eggleston was unable to make the move work for the win. A second-place finish marks the fourth straight top-five finish for the 28-year-old Erie, Colorado, native.

Michael Self, 26, from Park City, Utah, was the only other man to win anything Saturday at Irwindale, as he took the top spot in final practice in his No. 9 Sunrise Ford/Eibach Springs/Lucas Oil Ford. In the race, Self grabbed a third-place finish followed by Derek Kraus and Will Rodgers, who earns a fourth straight top five, in fifth.

Julia Landauer finished sixth with Garrett Archer, who rebounded from a start-line violation, Nicole Behar, Blaine Perkins and Todd Souza completing the top 10.

The NAPA Auto Parts Twin 100s will air on NBCSN, Saturday, April 1 7p.m. ET/4 p.m. PT and 8 p.m. ET/5 p.m. PT.

The NASCAR K&N Pro Series West will be back in action May 13 at Washington's Spokane County Raceway.

### **Gilliland Takes Home First K&N Pro West Win Of The Night at Irwindale**

IRWINDALE, CA - Todd Gilliland had them covered in the NAPA



**Todd Gilliland won both NAPA Auto Part Twin 100s at Irwindale Event Center Saturday night. (Jonathan Moore/NASCAR via Getty Images photo)**

Auto Parts Twin 100 at Irwindale Speedway.

Winning a third straight pole in his No. 16 NAPA Auto Parts Toyota, Gilliland swept the show with the race to win the first twin event of the night. The victory stands as the 16-year-old's ninth NASCAR K&N Pro Series career victory and the Sherrills Ford, North Carolina, native's second of 2017 and second at Irwindale overall.

Finishing 2.4 seconds in rears of the defending champion, Chris Eggleston put up a fight in his No. 99 NAPA Filters Toyota.

Taking the lead on Lap 50, Eggleston lost the top spot to Gilliland with 33 laps to go. Still, the Tucson winner grabbed his fourth straight top-five finish with a second-place finish.

Garrett Archer came home third while Nicole Behar, who started from the rear, rallied back to finish fourth. The 19-year-old was fol-

lowed by Will Rodgers, Solvang, California, native earned a third straight top-five finish in fifth.

The 100-lapper wasn't as easy for some competitors, however. Derek Kraus, who finished second to teammate Gilliland last time out at California's Kern County Raceway Park, cut a tire and crashed on Lap 17. The 15-year-old, Wisconsin, native finished 18th, nine laps down.

Jesse Iwuji retired due to engine failure while a two-car crash on Lap 58 collected Dan O'Donnell and Stafford Smith. Rookie Kody Vanderwal also spun in Turn 2, suffering no damage.

Michael Self, who won practice, finished sixth with Blaine Perkins, Johnny Borneman III, Matt Levin and Julia Landauer completing the top 10.

The NAPA Twin 100 will air on NBCSN Saturday, April 1 at 7 p.m. ET/4 p.m. PT.

## Robbie Brewer Muscles Home a Win at Caraway

On Sunday, March 19, 2017 the City Chevrolet 602 Super Limited Series kicked off it's sophomore season with 20 cars hitting the track at Caraway Speedway in Sophia NC. Rock Harris captured his 2nd career American Racer Pole Award and would role a four on the invert dice. That would be 2016's

fourth place points finisher Billy Gregg on the point for the start of the race. After leading the first 6 laps, Andrew Durham would make his way to the front of the field and

would lead the event past it's halfway point. 2016's top gun Bubba Gale would retire to the pits on lap 34 ending his car's winning streak at 3 races.

As Durham's car began to fade Rock Harris and Robbie Brewer would close the gap and the leader and Rock Harris would make a clean pass for the lead, on lap 42.

Harris would continue to lead the event through numerous yellow flags that slowed the race's last 20 laps, but after a restart with only 2 circuits remaining Brewer muscled past Harris.

Brewer would end up taking home the victory, with Rock Harris second, Ryan Robertson third, Andrew Durham fourth and Chris Alli-



**Robbie Brewer celebrates his win in victory lane at Caraway Speedway after a late race pass of Rock Harris for the victory. (602SLS photo)**

son fifth.

The City Chevrolet 602 Series 2nd event of 2017 will be contested

April 1, 2017 at 7pm at the triangle, Concord Speedway in Concord NC.

# Craig Prevails In Wild PASS Super Late Model Return To Orange County

ROUGEMONT, NC - Matt Craig came out on top of a controversial last lap battle that saw both he and third finisher Preston Peltier slap the wall to win the 10th Running of the Orange Blossom Special on Saturday night at Orange County Speedway.

Craig's second straight Pro All Stars Series (PASS) South Super Late Model win also guarantees him a starting spot in the 44th Annual Oxford 250 at Oxford Plains Speedway in Maine.

"Our car was really good, but we got really loose when it was time to go," said Craig, driver of the C&C Boilers Sales & Service Chevrolet #54. "I've raced with Preston [Peltier] for a long time and I knew if I would have stayed on the outside on the last lap, it wouldn't have been any different than what I did. I don't feel bad about it. He's raced me dirty and I've raced him dirty, that's how we get along."

For Peltier, with the chance to end a nearly two year winless drought in PASS dating back to the 2015 Easter Bunny 150 at Hickory Motor Speedway, coming up short was a hard pill to swallow.

"I figured at Southern National that he won the race and I thought man, the kid's turned a corner, but

I changed my mind on that deal," said a disappointed Peltier afterwards. "The kid's wrecked a lot of cars and it's gotta stop. I just hope he gets focused because that's pretty uncalled for."

In qualifying, Craig and PASS rookie, Tanner Thorson ran identical fast laps, but the quick qualifying time was awarded to Craig by virtue of having a faster second lap. Following the top 10 qualifiers redraw, Craig would start fifth, while Kodie Conner and Jeff Batten would move to the front row.

At the drop of the green flag, Batten got the edge over Connor to lead the opening laps. But, on lap four New Hampshire's Derek Griffith was able to make his way by Batten for the lead. While Griffith stretched his advantage to over a straightaway over second place, Peltier was on the move from tenth, bypassing Thorson to move into the top five on lap 29.

The first caution of the night would not wave until lap 69 when Terry Horak would go for a minor spin in turn two. On the restart, Griffith continued to lead with Peltier moving past Craig into second. After restarting seventh, Conner flexed his muscle, making the low line work to move all the way up to third with 63 laps to go.

Griffith and Peltier stretched their advantage over third by 15 car lengths as they began working



**Matt Craig celebrates in victory lane at Orange County Speedway after slapping the wall on the last lap along with Preston Peltier, who finished third. (LWpictures.com photo)**

slower traffic. Using the car of Bradley McCaskill as a pick, Peltier was able to power his way by Griffith for the lead with 37 laps to go. The yellow flag would fly again when Ryan Moore cut a tire and slapped the wall entering turn three with 18 laps to go.

Peltier took the advantage on the restart over Craig and Griffith. Unfortunately for Griffith, he would spin on the front stretch and fall from contention for the win. The final caution of the night would wave with six laps to go after contact between Thorson and Dave Farrington, Jr. would send Farrington for a spin off turn four.

On the final restart, Peltier and Craig raced side-by-side for the lead on the high-banked, 3/8 mile speedway. With two laps to go, Craig ducked under Peltier entering turn three and slid up the track into Peltier. The two cars made hard

contact, with Peltier making slight impact with the wall. With smoke pouring from the right side of his machine, Craig held off a fast charging Ben Rowe to take the win over Rowe, Peltier, Conner, and Tate Fogleman. Rounding out the top 10 were Dalton Armstrong, Thorson, Joey Polewarczyk, Batten, and Spencer Davis.

The PASS National Championship Super Late Models will be in action again, along with the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Modified, as part of The Icebreaker on Sunday afternoon, April 2 at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park in Connecticut. PASS South will hit the track again on Saturday, April 15 at Hickory Motor Speedway for the 12th Annual Easter Bunny 150. Be sure to "Like" the Pro All Stars Series on Facebook or follow us on Twitter at @PASSSLM14.

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## Riggs, Oakley, and Setzer Victorious in CARS Tour Duels at Dominion

THORNBURG, VA - A pair of photo finishes and two dominant wins were the dichotomy of competition in the second CARS Tour event of the season Saturday at Dominion Raceway, the River City QDMA Duels at Dominion presented by Virginia is for Lovers. Layne

Riggs and Jeff Oakley were the winners in the photo finishes, both occurring in the late model stock duels, while Brandon Setzer dominated both super late model races to claim the wins and lock himself into the US Nationals of Short Track Racing at Bristol Motor Speedway.

### LATE MODEL STOCK RECAP:

Brandon Grosso claimed his first Hedgecock Racing Pole Award during pole qualifying, accounting for all laps turned, but lined up deep in the field during the first duel race as his first qualifying lap (used to set race one) was not nearly as quick. Grosso's teammate, Myatt Snider, and Josh Berry led the field to green and it was Snider who controlled the opening laps.

As the race quickly churned toward the end of its 75-lap distance, Jeff Oakley made his presence felt and ended up stealing the lead from Myatt Snider on a late race restart. Snider and Berry made contact just a few laps later which resulted in the No. 88 spinning, a move which race control deemed over-aggressive on the part of Snider and accordingly sent both cars to the tail.

On the ensuing restart, Jeff Oakley bobbed in turn one, setting up a free-for-all as the field raced into turn three. Layne Riggs was able to sneak underneath of Oakley for the lead in turn three, but Deac McCaskill also made his way around the No. 11 of Oakley. On the final lap, McCaskill got his nose underneath of Riggs entering turn three for the lead. The two made minor contact and raced door-to-door to the checkered flag with Riggs claiming the win by a .041-second margin.

"I didn't know if I could hold Deac off, but I know I slipped up on the last lap and I know I had a really good car and I have to thank all the guys on my team and all my spon-

sors," Riggs said in Edelbrock Victory Lane after the first duel. "We weren't really sure about it in the beginning, but I kept running and being consistent. I'm just so glad I finally got my first CARS Tour win. I was trying to save my tires, so hopefully we can win again in the next race from sixth. We were pretty loose in the beginning, and it kept getting tighter and tighter and it was about right in the end. But I just got lucky, mainly."

In the second duel event for the



Layne Riggs out-muscled late model veteran Deac McCaskill to claim his first career CARS Late Model Stock Tour win by .041-second on Saturday at Dominion Raceway in the River City QDMA Duels at Dominion. (Kyle Tretow/CARS Tour photo)



Jeff Oakley celebrates his first career CARS Late Model Stock Tour win in Edelbrock Victory Lane at Dominion Raceway following the River City QDMA Duels at Dominion presented by Virginia is for Lovers. (Kyle Tretow/CARS Tour photo)

late model stocks, Jeff Oakley started on the front row and quickly jumped out to a dominant lead for 74.5 of the 75 laps. A caution for the spinning car of Craig Stallard came out during the final lap before the leader had taken the checkered flag, calling for a green-white-checker restart according to the CARS Tour rulebook.

Oakley once again faltered on the late race restart, allowing Jared Fryar to pilot his No. 81F to the outside and snatch the lead at the conclusion of lap 75 as the field took the white flag. Fryar then slipped on the exit of two, allowing Oakley past, but Fryar laid the bumper to Oakley in turn three coming to the checkers. The orange car of Oakley was jacked sideways, slid up the banking and opened the door for Fryar, but Oakley held on for his  
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first career CARS Tour win by a scant .074-second margin of victory.

"My wife is at home very sick, and I'm sure she would like to be here, but it sure does feel good to come here against some of the best drivers in the southeast and be competitive, and then be able to win one," Oakley said after exiting the car in Edelbrock Victory

Lane.

"That first one was awful tough, but those guys were racing hard. You can't blame them, they were going for the win, just like the 81 car [Fryar] was there at the end. I don't know what it looked like for y'all, but it was a lot of fun for me. That caution at the end was not what I wanted to see."

Riggs emerged unofficially as the points leader after two events and three races as Concord winner Josh Berry had problems during both races and ended with finishes near the bottom of the running order. Official finishing orders and point tallies are generally released by CARS on Tuesdays.

**SUPER LATE MODEL RECAP:**

Brandon Setzer blistered the Dominion Raceway with a 14.385-second qualifying effort, winning



**Brandon Setzer dominated both of the CARS Super Late Model Tour's River City QDMA Duels at Dominion, winning twice on Saturday afternoon. By virtue of his best average finish, he earned a guaranteed starting spot in the US Short Track Nationals at Bristol Motor Speedway. (Kyle Tretow/CARS Tour photo)**

the Mahle Pistons Pole Award and establishing the track record for super late models at the ultra-fast Virginia facility. Both of his laps were fast enough to place him on pole for each duel race, a performance his competitors later envied.

Chase Purdy pursued Setzer from the drop of the green flag in the opening duel of the day but rarely was able to pull within a second of the No. 6 Ford. It remained that way until lap 64 when Cole Rouse, who was trying to chase down Purdy for second, spun in turn one to bring out a caution, impacting the outside wall with enough force for team to withdraw the No. 51 for the second race of the afternoon.

Soon after the restart, Quin Houff began his charge to the front, racing with Christian Eckes for

third. But contact between those two cars caused Houff to spin on lap 66, bringing out the second and final caution of the opening super late model duel.

Setzer held off Chase Purdy on the restart for his first win of 2017.

During race two, Setzer picked up exactly where he left off, jumping out to a one-second lead over Chase Purdy's No. 97 Toyota for a vast majority of the race.

Setzer appeared to be en route to an easy victory until lap 58 when Chad McCumbee cut a right front tire and pounded the outside wall exiting turn four. McCumbee was able to drive his car to the pits but was done for the afternoon.

On the restart, Setzer was forced to fend off a fiercely fast Chase Purdy who made a valiant effort on the outside lane entering

turn one. Purdy drew up to Setzer's door and challenged the No. 6 through turns three and four when Setzer quickly slammed the door in his face, completing the pass and putting Purdy in his rearview mirror for the final time in the afternoon.

Setzer cruised to a 1.134-second margin of victory over Purdy, Nolan Pope, Houff and Mike Speeney. By virtue of his highest average finish (1.0 over two races), Setzer also locked himself into the US Nationals of Short Track Racing at Bristol Motor Speedway in May.

"This is awesome and like a dream come true!," Setzer exclaimed after exiting the car in Edelbrock Victory Lane the second time. "What a beautiful racetrack and what a great fan count, so thankful for all the fans who came out to support us. But, man, what a blast. This car was so good, I just really have to thank all the guys and sponsors who help us to do this."

Setzer unofficially inherited the point lead by virtue of his two-win afternoon and the misfortunes of his closest point pursuer Cole Rouse.

The CARS Tour visits Orange County Speedway for their next event on April 22. The Orange Blossom 300 will feature a traditional format race with 150-lap races scheduled for both super late model and late model stocks.

For more information on the CARS Tour, visit their website at [www.carsracingtour.com](http://www.carsracingtour.com).

**Talented Group of Early Entries for the North/South Super Late Model Challenge 100 in Nashville**

SALEM, IN - Officials from the ARCA/CRA Super Series Powered by JEGS and the Southern Super Series Presented by Sunoco have released the entries to date for the North/South Super Late Model Challenge

100 Presented by Team Construction, which will take place at Fairgrounds Speedway Nashville on April 7th & 8th.

2016 North/South Super Late Model Challenge winner and 2016 Southern Super Series Champion Donnie Wilson tops the list of 27 talented entries to date for the event. Wilson looks to add to add a

fourth Nashville victory to his racing accomplishments and another Nashville Guitar Trophy to his trophy case. Wilson also won the Southern Super Series 50 lap feature that was part of last year's North/South Super Late Model Challenge.

Also entered is NASCAR Legend Sterling Marlin. The two time Daytona 500 winner captured 10 wins with 216 top 10's and 11 pole awards during his NASCAR Cup Series career. The multi time track Champion at Fairgrounds Speedway Nashville is still a regular competitor at that track in their Pro Late Model Division and competes in selected JEGS/CRA All-Star Tour events.

2016 ARCA/CRA Super Series

Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year Dalton Armstrong is entered. Armstrong won the 50 lap ARCA/CRA Super Series feature event that was part of last year's North/South Super Late Model Challenge at Nashville.

2013 and 2014 ARCA/CRA Super Series Champion Travis Braden is entered. The 2016 Winchester 400 winner is seeking his first win at Nashville.

Three time ARCA/CRA Super Series Champion Johnny Van Doorn is entered, along with third in all time ARCA/CRA Super Series wins Brian Campbell. Both of those Michigan drivers won a Nashville All American 400 Guitar Trophy in 2007.

Two time 2016 Southern Super Series winner Cole Anderson is entered. Anderson finished fourth in 2016 Southern Super Series points. Joey Miller is also entered. Miller is a former ARCA Racing Series winner and a NASCAR Camping World Truck Series competitor.

Other top late model drivers en-

tered include Dennis Schoenfeld, Cole Rouse, Dennis Prunty, Stephen Nasse, Paul Kelly, Kyle Plott, Chandler Smith, Tyler Ankrum, Eddie Van Meter, Jack Dossey III, Wes Griffith Jr., Cassten Everidge, Hunter Jack, Austin Kunert, Josh Brock, Connor Okrze-sik, Logan Runyon, Joseph Meyer and Jerry Artuso.

The North/South Super Late Model Challenge 100 Presented by Team Construction will consist of a three hour optional open practice on Friday, April 7th. There will be another hour of practice on Saturday followed by qualifying, a Last Chance race if needed, and then the North/South Super Late Model Challenge 100 which will consist of a field of 32. The ARCA Racing Series will also be in action with a 200 lap event after the North/South Super Late Model Challenge 100.

For event ticket information, contact Track Enterprises at 217-764-3200 or at 651-254-1986 or visit their web site at [www.trackenterprises.com](http://www.trackenterprises.com).

## Sweet Simmers Schatz in Late-Race Showdown at the Stockton Dirt Track

STOCKTON, CA - An exhilarating late-race battle between the top-two in World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series points thrilled the crowd on Saturday at the Stockton Dirt Track, which ultimately ended with Grass Valley, California's Brad Sweet coming

ing out on top to earn his first victory of the 2017 campaign.

Sweet out-duelled eight-time World of Outlaws champion and current series point leader Donny Schatz in a back and forth fight to claim his first ever Stockton triumph at the annual FVP Western Spring Shootout. After earning back-to-back podium finishes last weekend in Tulare the win on Saturday marked the 14th of Sweet's career with the "Greatest Show on Dirt."

"That was a tough race with Donny Schatz right there and I'm definitely glad we came out on top," said the driver of the NAPA Auto Parts/ Kasey Kahne Racing No. 49 mount. "You don't have many opportunities to beat Donny the way he's running, so you always want to capitalize whenever you have the chance. Sometimes the cautions work in your favor and sometimes they don't, luckily they fell at the right times for me tonight. It's always the hardest to get that first win out of the way and I'm excited to do it with a lot of friends and family here tonight. Big thanks to all of my guys for working hard and continuing to give me great cars."

The 30-lap feature started out with pole sitter Jason Sides jumping into the lead, but it didn't last long as the caution lights came on after just one-lap was complete. On the restart Sweet blasted around the outside to take the lead away, with Schatz also coming along for second. Shortly after that Sides slowed with reported steering issues that unfortunately ended his night prematurely.

A number of yellows and a couple of reds slowed the pace over the first half of the feature, but through it all Sweet did a solid job out front.

Following a restart with 11-laps remaining things began to heat up as Schatz started to reel in the leader once lapped traffic hit. The

duo then proceeded to exchange the lead a couple of times through heavy traffic as the crowd came to their feet. Sweet was able to fend him off until Schatz executed a picture perfect move entering turn one on lap 27 to grab the lead. At that same time however, the caution lights came on for a stalled car off the second corner, which saved the lead for Sweet.

With the champ on his back bumper Sweet knew he had to be perfect on the restart with just three-circuits remaining. When the green came back out he hammered the throttle and put together three perfect laps to take the Ed Entz checkered flag by 1.065 seconds back to runner up Schatz.

On the heels of his first victory this season Sweet now puts his promoters hat on, as he brings the World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series back to the Placerville Speedway this coming Wednesday night.

"We're really looking forward to Placerville on Wednesday and we hope all the fans can make it out. Kyle Larson is coming out to run and of course all the Outlaws will be there so it should be a great show. Our cars have been really good lately so hopefully we can take this momentum there and get another win."

Despite not getting another victory Schatz remained positive on the front stretch after earning his seventh top-five in nine World of Outlaws races this season at the helm of the Arctic Cat- Tony Stewart/ Curb-Agajanian Racing No. 15 Sprinter. "We were good enough to win the race tonight and just had a caution that came out at the wrong time, but that's how it goes. Hope you fans saw a great show because it sure was fun from my seat. It's been a great start to the season for this whole team and we'll now move on to Placerville and try to get one spot better."

Third place finisher Shane Stewart of Bixby, Oklahoma was also upbeat after the race and had a front row view to the late-race battle between Sweet and Schatz. "That was a heck of a race to watch from my vantage point," commented the wheel-man of the Eneos- Larson/Marks Racing No. 2 mount. "I was hoping I could get up there and race with Brad and Donny, but we never seemed to get



Brad Sweet clinched the win over Donny Schatz after a late race battle at the Stockton Dirt Track. (Paul Arch photo)

a green flag run that kept us in traffic long enough. I want to send a big thanks to my guys, we have a lot of speed right now and the wins are going to come."

Grain Valley, Missouri's Brian Brown had a strong outing and came home in the fourth spot aboard the FVP Racing/ Casey's General Store No. 21 machine. It was a great run for Brown with a

number of associates and friends from FVP on hand at the Western Spring Shootout. After claiming his first win of the season last week Watertown, Connecticut's David Gravel came back and rounded out the top-five on Saturday in the Go Muddy/ CJB Motorsports No. 5 Sprinter.

The remainder of the top-10 was

(Continued Next Page)

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filled out by Owasso, Oklahoma's Daryn Pittman; Rutherford, California's Rico Abreu; Australian Ian Madsen; Myerstown, Pennsylvania's Brent Marks and San Jose, California's Tim Kaeding, who earned the KSE Hard Charger Award coming from 24th to 10th.

As noted the World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series will return to action this coming Wednesday March 29 for Brad Sweet's Placerville Short Track Showdown at the Placerville Speedway.

## WoO Kickoff Tour Continues to Keller and Perris

CONCORD, NC - The World of Outlaws Craftsman® Sprint Car Series 2017 Kickoff Tour continues through California on Friday, March 31 and Saturday, April 1 with stops at Keller Auto Speedway in Hanford, CA and Perris Auto Speedway in Perris, CA.

The Outlaws visit Keller Auto Speedway at Kings Fairgrounds for the Kings Outlaw Shootout -the first race since 2015. Shane Stewart dominated when the Outlaws last visited the semi-banked 3/8-mile oval on April 17, 2015, leading all 35 laps to score the \$10,000 ransom.

Stewart is coming off a pair of top-10 finishes last weekend at Thunderbowl Raceway in Tulare, CA, including a season-best second-place finish on March 17, where he narrowly missed a victory after leading 32 laps. Returning to Keller, where he has had success, could be the breakthrough Stewart needs to push him into the win column in 2017.

"It feels great to have some momentum coming off of Vegas and Tulare," Stewart said. "The last time we raced at Keller Auto Speedway we were able to get the win, so we should have some good notes from that night to build off of."

Former Outlaw Cody Darrah won at Keller in 2014, while current Outlaw point leader Donny Schatz earned a victory in 2013. Prior to 2013, the Outlaws went 10 years without a stop at Keller following 19 consecutive years of action from 1985 to 2003. In all, the track has hosted 31 World of Outlaws races.

From Keller, the Outlaws head south to Perris Auto Speedway for the SoCal Showdown where Outlaw drivers have dominated the event for 10 consecutive victories. It marks the seventh straight season the Outlaws have visited the Southern California track. Daryn Pittman claimed last season's stop at Perris on April 16 by leading all 30 laps and also won in 2013.

The SoCal Showdown has seen three different winners over the last five years, including Pittman. Joey Saldana has a pair of victories at Perris (2012 and 2014), while Paul McMahan was the victor in 2015. Hall of Famer Mark Kinser is the all-time Outlaw wins leader at Perris with five.

While the Outlaws have traditionally been tough to beat throughout their western swing, several local talents are threats to end the Outlaws western reign. DJ Netto of Hanford, CA is a regular competitor at Keller and has shown speed against the Outlaws after timing in fourth fastest at Tulare on March 18. Add fellow California natives Dominic Scelzi of Fresno, CA, Kyle Hirst of Paradise, CA, and Carson Macedo of Lemoore, CA to the list of competitors seeking to upset the series regulars, and it's a talented roster of Sprint Car racing's best.

Tickets are on sale for both events at Keller Auto Speedway and Perris Auto Speedway and can be purchased online at [dirtcar.ticketforce.com](http://dirtcar.ticketforce.com) or by calling 844-DIRT-TIX (1-844-347-8849).

Advance Reserved grandstand seating for the Kings Outlaw Shootout on Friday, March 31 is \$40. Premium Reserved Seating for the SoCal Showdown on Saturday, April 1 at Perris Auto Speedway is available for \$65 and Reserved Grandstand seating for \$50. All advance Reserved Seat purchases for both events include a free fan pit pass.

## World of Outlaws Sprint Cars invade Cocopah Speedway for the First Time

CONCORD, NC - As the Kickoff Tour winds down, the World of Outlaws Craftsman® Sprint Car Series will kick the dust up for the first time at Cocopah Speedway in Yuma, AZ on Friday, April 7, wrapping up the two-night swing at Arizona Speedway on Saturday, April 8.

"It's pretty awesome to have an Outlaw event at Cocopah," said Tom Dalen, General Manager of Cocopah Speedway. "I grew up watching the Outlaws and have al-

ways said, 'if you want to see the best show on dirt, you have to get to a World of Outlaws race'. The buzz around town has been great - we have a lot of interest in the race. We look forward to having the World of Outlaws in Yuma."

Cocopah Speedway is a new stop on the 90-plus race schedule for the Outlaws, but several Outlaw drivers have experience at the track following the Winter Heat Sprint Car Showdown. The Outlaws are likely to settle in quickly and show why they're the 'Greatest Show on Dirt'. The local favorites and track veterans will look to play the spoiler role during the first Outlaws event at Cocopah.

The second-half of the stop in Arizona will come the following night at Arizona Speedway for the Arizona Desert Shootout.

The Outlaws will all be vying to stake their claim for the final purse of the western swing before beginning the trek back east to Texas for a makeup event at Gator Motorplex on Thursday, April 13.

Tickets are on sale for both events at Cocopah Speedway and Arizona Speedway and can be purchased online at [dirtcar.ticketforce.com](http://dirtcar.ticketforce.com) or by calling 844-DIRT-TIX (1-844-347-8849).

## Outlaws Tackle Riverside for First Time since 2009

CONCORD, NC - The World of Outlaws Craftsman® Sprint Car Series will return to Riverside International Speedway in West Memphis, AR for the first time since 2009 on Friday, April 21 for the Bull Ring Outlaw Blitz. Located on the west bank of the Mississippi River and just west of Memphis, TN. the high-banked quarter-mile was established in 1949 and is among the longest continuously operated dirt tracks in the United States.

The Outlaws last visited Riverside on April 24, 2009 when Tim Kaeding earned the victory over Tony Bruce Jr. Daryn Pittman and Donny Schatz won in 2007 and 2008 visits, respectively. Riverside has hosted the World of Outlaws Sprint Cars nine times, dating back to 1979.

A return of the World of Outlaws is a welcome addition to the Riverside calendar for track owners Clayton and Sherry Allen. The track hosts weekly 305 winged Sprint Car competition, while 360 winged Sprint Cars compete on a bi-weekly basis.

"We have some pretty top-notch drivers around here on a local

basis, but anytime you get a national brand here like the World of Outlaws, it's always more exciting," said Clayton Allen, Riverside International Speedway owner. "We're looking forward to it."

Fans can expect lightning-quick action around the quarter-mile track when the Outlaws invade. The track record sits at 11.060 seconds set by Jason Solwold on May 5, 2007. Riverside boasts a unique gumbo clay surface that often releases additional moisture as the night wears on.

"There's no dirt like it in the country," Allen said. "As a rule, we're faster at the end of the night. It's the highest clay content anywhere around."

Jason Sides raced 360 Sprint Cars at Riverside during the outset of his career. Sides is excited for a return to a track he first raced at in the early 1990s.

"It's always nice to get close to home and race there," Sides said. "Last year Little Rock was the closest that we raced to home. This one here is a lot closer yet, so it will be good. Hopefully we can have a good run there."

Sides is on a short list of four current Outlaw regulars who competed when the tour last stopped at Riverside, including Schatz, Kraig Kinser and Joey Saldana. Current Kevin Gobrecht Rookie-of-the-Year contender Sheldon Haudenschild's father, Jac Haudenschild, was also in the field. Despite his previous experience, Sides doesn't feel he holds an advantage against the talented Outlaw field.

"Anybody can go to a new track that they've never been to and be just as good as anybody else," Sides said. "It's small and a tight little bullring, so it's going to be tough."

Riverside has also been home to several Sprint Car stars over the course of its lifetime, notably former full-time Outlaw and three-time World of Outlaws champion Sammy Swindell, who first competed at the track in 1973. The Outlaws will add to that history when The Greatest Show On Dirt makes its only stop in Arkansas this season.

Tickets are on sale for the World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series return to Riverside International Speedway by visiting [dirtcar.ticketforce.com](http://dirtcar.ticketforce.com) and by calling 844-DIRT-TIX (844-347-8849). Both Reserved Seating and General Admission tickets are available in advance for \$35. Reserved Seating for children 14 and under is \$20.

## Timothy Culp Lands First World of Outlaws Craftsman Late Model Series Win

KILGORE, TX - Timothy "Hollywood" Culp etched his name in the book of World of Outlaws Craftsman® Late Model Series Winners with his victory at LoneStar Speedway. Of the six races this season, the Series has seen six different drivers win.

Culp got a taste of Victory Lane two nights earlier at Whynot Motorsports Park where he finished second behind Brandon Sheppard.

The Rocket Chassis that took him to Victory Lane in Texas has only hit the track three-times. Culp and his new ride have found their way to the podium all three times, racking up one second-place finish and two wins.

"Wow is all I can say," said Culp. "To be able to run with these guys is amazing let alone win. It's exceeded all of my expectations. As soon as we unloaded [this car] brand new it's been a rocket. It's lived up to its name. It's been unreal really, for a guy like me to come out here and be able to run with the Outlaws. A World of Outlaws win is crazy. It's going to take a few days for this one to sink in."

Culp didn't have a smooth sail to Victory Lane, as 2017 Rookie of the Year contender Devin Moran held on to the lead from green until lap 25 of the 40 lap Feature. Moran had the best run of his Outlaw career tonight at LoneStar Speedway as he won his heat, pulled the pole position, and had the second fastest car of the night during qualifying.

"It's awesome to get out here and get a podium finish and hopefully we can keep the ball rolling next week," said Moran. "I wanted [my first win] to be tonight because of where we started but it is what it is."

The toughest heartbreak of the night went to Texas-native, Morgan Bagley. Bagley brought out the guns in Texas as he found his way to Sheppard's door during the Feature knocking for the final position on the podium. The pair ran door-to-door for several laps but with only laps six to go Bagley got a left rear flat. He decided that instead of changing his tire, which would cause him to head to the back of

the field, that he would stay in fourth and give it a whirl. Come the checkers he had fallen back to the 19th position.

With Bagley's hometown being only 15-minutes from LoneStar Speedway there was a fair share of "MoBags" gear in the crowd and he sure put on a show for his fans as he had his best run of the season.

Although Bagley gave it his best shot, it was Sheppard who held on tight to the third position. The current points leader couldn't help but smile in Victory Lane as he knew what was in store next for the World of Outlaws. His home track, Farmer City Raceway.

The World of Outlaws Craftsman Late Model Series will pack up and hit the road to Illinois for the Illini 100 at Farmer City Raceway on March 31-April 1. Tickets for the event are available online.

### ***I-30 Event Cancelled Due to Persistent Rain***

LITTLE ROCK, AR - Due to a night of heavy rain hitting Little Rock, AR the World of Outlaws Craftsman® Late Model Series event at I-30 Speedway has been cancelled.

"We unfortunately got too much rain last night and we are not going to have enough time today to dry out the pit area and we don't want to have to tow rigs in-and-out," said Tracey Clay, I-30 Speedway Promoter.

The Series and the track are looking at potential future dates to reschedule event. Any updated information regarding this event will be posted to the Late Model Series website as well as on I-30 Speedway's website.

### **Brandon Sheppard Wins At Whynot**

MERIDIAN, MS - The World of Outlaws Craftsman® Late Model Series visited Whynot Motorsports Park in Meridian, MS for the first time ever on March 24. A total of 45 Late Models appeared on the scene to test their luck and their skill at the House of Hook but it was ultimately Brandon Sheppard who took the checkers in the 50-lap feature and claimed his first Series win of the 2017 season.

Sheppard showed how consistent he and his Rocket crew will be



**Brandon Sheppard raced his way to his first win of 2017 by outdueling the rest of the competition at Whynot Motorsports Park. (Paul Arch photo)**

this season as he placed fourth in qualifying and won his heat. Sheppard also struck a little bit of luck during the redraw as he pulled out wrench number one from the Craftsman tool box.

"I got to thank Mark [Richards] and all of the guys at Rocket for making this happen for me," said Sheppard. "This is an awesome team and I am really excited for the rest of the year."

Yet, Sheppard didn't have an easy stroll to the lead as Billy Moyer Sr. started second in the Feature, shot to the lead early and held on to that position for 22 laps. Sheppard and Moyer ran door-to-door but with the help of some lap traffic Sheppard pulled away.

Timothy Culp also used lap traffic to his advantage as he made his way from a sixth place start to compete with Moyer for second on lap 22 and then battled with Sheppard for first on lap 24. It was a juggling match between Sheppard and Culp until the last lap.

"Rodney gave us a great race-track and shoot I am just tickled to death to be standing here right now," said Culp. "To compete with these guys is just awesome. I got stuck on the bottom for a bit and I tried to roll onto the middle but if it wasn't for those lap cars I think we might have had a little bit different of an outcome at the end."

Chris Madden rounded out the podium as he found his way from a tenth place start to finish third in the Feature. In Victory Lane, Series Announcer Rick Eshelman reminded Madden that he is racking up the "points, points, points" this Season and Madden laughed and said we want to "win, win, win".

To start the night out, Donald Bradsher put his name on the map

as he claimed his first career Quick Time and almost defeated the current track record. Bradsher landed a 12.542 lap time and the Whynot Motorsports Park track record is a 12.510.

Brandon Sheppard and Brian Shirley Ready for Illini 100

CONCORD, NC - The best dirt Late Model drivers from around the country are rallying their troops and heading to Farmer City, IL for the ninth annual Illini 100 on March 31-April 1. The Illini 100 at Farmer City Raceway has been a staple event on the World of Outlaws Craftsman® Late Model Series Schedule since the inaugural running in 2008.

Even nine years later, the Feature race in 2008 remains at the top of the list as one of the best dirt Late Model events to ever take place in the state of Illinois. The first-ever Illini 100 consisted of eight lead changes among five drivers and kept the fans holding their breath until the last lap where Billy Moyer Sr. claimed the win on from Shannon Babb who had made a hard charge from the tail of the field to contest for the lead.

The Illini 100 is projected to meet the same hype of the event as in years past as two full-time Outlaws call Illinois their stomping grounds and will leave it all on the track only 1.5 hours from their hometowns.

Brian Shirley has consistently been a fan favorite to take the checkers at the Illini 100 among the last few years although he has never been able to seal-the-deal come the end of the night. Last year during the two-day show Shirley took a 17th place finish the

**(Continued Next Page)**

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first night and an eighth place finish the second night. So far, this year Shirley has proved that he's a force to be reckoned with this season as he is currently third in the points race.

"When you're talking about the mid-west or Illinois Farmer City is definitely one of the main tracks that most people focus on as well as Fairbury and

Macon," said Shirley. "It's in the circle of tracks that a lot of drivers enjoy racing on, and a lot of spectators and fans come to watch really good races at. When I first started racing it took me a couple years to figure out how to win there, because for a regular race 40 cars come out, and it's the toughest competition. If you want to know how good you are and how fast you are, you race at these tracks against the guys in Illinois."

Brandon Sheppard and current Series points leader will also be a force to reckon with at the event. Last year at the Illini 100 Sheppard only ran the second night but fin-

ished fifth in the Feature. This year, add his methodical driving style and the knowledge behind the Rocket Chassis crew and that equation poses a real threat to the rest of field.

"I've raced a lot there growing up since it's only about an hour and fifteen minutes from my house, and it's by far one of my favorite tracks we go to," said Sheppard "It means a lot to win there, and we were fortunate enough to win that race in 2015, but we haven't been able to go and run the full weekend there in three or four years. Now that we're running the whole weekend it will be a really fun deal. There is

definitely going to be some tough competitors there. There's not going to be any slackers running at this race. I think we'll be really good at Farmer City."

Shirley, Sheppard and the rest of the Outlaws won't have it easy in Farmer City as local and regional drivers will try to defend their turf, and national drivers will try to claim the title of beating the best.

Some of the biggest names in dirt Late Model racing will appear on the scene, including Bobby Pierce, Shannon Babb, Kevin Weaver, Jason Feger, Chris Simpson, Ryan Unzicker, Scott Schmitt, and more.

## Tony Stewart to Compete in All-Stars' Kokomo Race

INDIANAPOLIS, IN - There's something special about racing in Indiana during the month of May and, for motorsports icon and Indiana native Tony Stewart, having at least one night of racing back home on his 2017 schedule was a must. Tony Stewart/Curb-Agajanian Racing (TSR) announced

today that Stewart will be part of the field for the May 19 Arctic Cat All-Stars (ASCoC) presented Ford

Performance event at Kokomo (Indiana) Speedway.

The Friday-night event is the only Winged Sprint car race at the quarter-mile, high-banked dirt oval this year and the only 410-cubic inch Sprint car race that Stewart is scheduled to contest in his home state of Indiana in 2017. The Columbus native will be making his first start with All-Stars at the facility after previously racing there with the World of Outlaws and competing numerous times early in his career in both Midgets and non-Wing Sprint cars.

"I'm really looking forward to being part of a great night in

Kokomo," said Stewart, who will drive the TSR No. 14 Rush Truck Centers/Arctic Cat/Ford Performance J&J.

"Racing on Friday night is a tradition in Indiana. When I was growing up, we spent the weekends chasing races at dirt-track races Friday, Saturday and Sunday. And, for the event to be in May, it just makes it that much more special. I raced there a few years ago with the World of Outlaws and the races were some of the best they had all season. The Arctic Cat All-Stars have a talented group of guys racing with them and I'm sure it's going to be a great show. Hopefully, we can be part of something special and give all the Indiana fans something to be really proud of."

The program will include a com-

plete show of qualifying, heat races, dash events and feature race that pays \$5,000 to the winner.

The USAC Speed2 midgets will also be on the card. Stewart will be hosting a special autograph session at his merchandise trailer at 5 p.m. for those who purchase the first 150 tickets online.

Fans are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance by visiting <https://tickets.ticketforce.com/eventperformances.asp?evt=1528>. Reserved seats are \$30, general admission tickets are \$25 and pit passes are \$35. Children 10 and under are free – grandstand only. Hot laps are scheduled to begin at 6:45 p.m.

More information is available by visiting [www.allstarsprint.com](http://www.allstarsprint.com).

## MSCS Action Begins on April 8th at Lincoln Park Speedway

HAUBSTADT, IN - The Hoosier Tire Midwest Sprint Car Series season is set to get underway on Saturday evening April 8th at the always exciting Lincoln Park Speedway. The "Indiana Open Wheel.Com Racin' Fest" will be the opening night's program. Fans will also

have the added attraction of viewing a gigantic fireworks display! The 5/16th mile dirt oval is located on U.S. Highway 40 at Putnamville, IN, west of Indianapolis.

The sprint car feature for the Racin' Fest will pay \$4,000 to win! The series will be kicking off the season with drivers running for added bucks in the feature. In all the MSCS season will consist of 17

special events at six different speedways. Four of those events will be held at Lincoln Park Speedway.

Brady Short of Mitchell, IN, will be competing this year as the defending MSCS Champion. Short is now a three time series title holder. He will be contending for a fourth MSCS Crown. Only one other MSCS competitor has reached that plateau in his career. Kyle Cummins of Princeton, IN, took his fourth MSCS Championship in 2014. Shane Cockrum of Benton, IL, was the 2016 Lincoln Park Speedway Track Champion.

Shane Cottle of Kokomo, IN, won the Indiana Open Wheel Racin' Fest last year. He shared the podium with Kevin Thomas Jr. and Jon Stanbrough. Other past Racin' Fest winners include Chase Stockon, Hunter Schuerenberg,

Jeff Bland Jr., Jon Stanbrough, Dave Darland, and Levi Jones. This is according to results dating back to 2010.

Drivers interested in running for the MSCS Rookie of the Year are reminded that they need to complete a license application requesting rookie status. Hinchman Indy Racing Uniforms will continue in its role in sponsoring this very important MSCS Driver Development Program for rookies. For 16 years the series has provided a competitive environment for drivers to learn the ins and outs of touring with a sprint car series. MSCS has served drivers as the road for improvement and further success in the sport.

The pit gate at Lincoln Park Speedway is set to open at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

The main gate opens at 4 o'clock. Hot laps and group qualifying begin at 6 P.M. and racing be-

gins at 7 P.M. Drivers are reminded to be there early. The first races held each season require added paperwork and the pill draw ends 45 minutes before hot laps. The program includes events for the track's Modified, Super Stock, and Bomber classes.

MSCS also has two other races scheduled during the month of April. On Saturday April 15th the series will combine forces with USAC to present the "Spring Showdown" at Tri-State Speedway in Haubstadt, IN. Then on Sunday April 30th MSCS will return to the Terre Haute Action Track for the annual "Spring Fling."



## Colton Hardy Dominates ASCS Southwest at Central Arizona Speedway

CASA GRANDE, AZ - Leading start to finish with the Carlyle Tools ASCS Southwest Region at the Central Arizona Speedway in Casa Grande, Ariz. on Saturday night, Colton Hardy laid down a dominating performance for his first victory of the 2017

season, and third overall with the ASCS Southwest Region.

Despite three attempts to get rolling due to crashes, of which everyone walked away from, the race finally began nose to tail with Hardy pacing the field to green.

Taking off with the point, Colton would find traffic just past the feature's half-way point. With Rick Ziehl running second, the difference between the pair was never under two seconds before clearing the slower machines. With clean air to his advantage, Colton would go on to win by 6.729 seconds for his first ASCS sanctioned win at the Central Arizona Speedway.

Ziehl's runner-up performance is the Las Cruces, N.M. native's first podium appearance of the season with third going to Stevie Sussex who advanced from the sixth starting spot. Billy Chester III came across fourth with Josh Shipley picking off four positions to round out the top-five.

Lance Norick sixth was followed by Jeremy McCune from 12th with Darrell Sickles in tow. Steve Cush-

man from 15th moved up to finish ninth with Steve Stone crossed tenth. Heat Races paid \$25 to win thanks to Ron Gilson Photography. The bonus money went to Lance Norick, J.T. Imperial, and Stevie Sussex.

Up next for the Carlyle Tools ASCS Southwest Region will be a trip to the Southern New Mexico Speedway for the ASCS Southwest Sprint Car Shootout presented by Consolidated Solar Technologies on Friday, March 31 and Saturday, April 1.

Each night will pay \$2,500 to win. With identical payouts, there will be no A-Main lock-ins from Friday to Saturday. Both nights will also be broadcast live on Racinboys.com.

For continued updates on the Carlyle Tools ASCS Southwest Region, log onto <http://www.ascsracing.com>.



Colton Hardy (center) celebrates his victory over second place finisher Rick Ziehl (right) and third place finisher Stevie Sussex (left). (Ron Gilson photo)

## Battleground Glory Goes To Tommy Bryant With ASCS Gulf South Region

HIGHLANDS, TX - For the 12th time in his career, Tommy Bryant raced his way into Victory Lane with the Griffith Truck and Equipment ASCS Gulf South Region with his first ASCS score at the Battle-

ground Speedway in Highlands, Texas this past Saturday night behind the wheel of the Saw-Blade.com No. 28.

Taking the green from inside the second row, Bryant was ultimately chased to the finish by Travis Rilat who charged forward from the ninth position in the ShopTheBoss.com No. 29.

Ray Allen Kulhanek garnered the final podium step in the Big Bass Tours No. 21t with Scottie McDonald from seventh to fourth. Zane Lawrence completed the top-five. John Pate was sixth with Caleb Martin from 13th to seventh. Dustin Gates, Chris Sweeney, and Randy Allen made up the top-ten.

The Griffith Truck and Equipment ASCS Gulf South Region returns to competition with a showdown against the Lucas Oil ASCS Southern Outlaw Sprints at Jackson Motor Speedway in Byram, Miss. on Friday, April 7 and Saturday, April 8.

For continued updates log onto <http://www.ascsracing.com>.



Tommy Bryant celebrates in victory lane with his family after winning at Battleground Speedway. (Manvel Motorsports photo)

## Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series Races to Three Events in Three States This Week

BATAVIA, OH - The stars of the Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series will resume competition this week - tackling three states in three days with three action-packed events along the way.

Duck River Raceway Park in Wheeling, TN will host the Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series for the first time since 2009 on Thursday, March 30th. Opening in 1973, the

1/4-mile oval has a long history of producing some of the nation's most exciting events for fans and drivers alike.

A strong contingent of local and regional standouts are expected to battle the nation's top dirt late model drivers.

The Duck River Raceway Park event will include a complete program of: Miller Welders Time Trials, Heat Races, B-Mains, and a 50-lap, \$10,000-to-win main event. The Crate Late Models, Street Stocks, and Pure Pony divisions

will also be in action on Thursday, March 30th.

For more information, visit: [www.duckriverracewaypark.com](http://www.duckriverracewaypark.com).

The action will shift to Boyd's Speedway in Ringgold, GA on Friday, March 30th for the finale of March Madness. In 2016, Chris Madden led all 50 laps to claim the victory over Randy Weaver, Jared Landers, Jonathan Davenport, and Scott Bloomquist.

The event will once again feature a complete program of: Miller Welders Time Trials, Heat Races, B-Mains, and a 50-lap, \$10,000-to-win main event. The Crate Late Models and Sportsman will serve as support divisions on Friday, March 30th.

For tickets and more information, visit: [www.boydsspeedway.net](http://www.boydsspeedway.net).

The Series will return to East Alabama Motor Speedway on Saturday, April 1st for the final stop of the three-day showdown.

The 3/8-mile oval stands as one of the south's most famous and longest running motorsports attractions. In 2016, Jonathan Davenport charged from third to first in the final three laps - winning over Jared Landers, Scott Bloomquist, Jimmy Owens, and Darrell Lanigan.

The Alabama Shootout includes a complete program of: Miller Welders Time Trials, Heat Races, and B-Mains - highlighted by a 60-lap, \$12,000-to-win main event. Other divisions competing include: Crate Late Models, EAMS Late Models, and Limited Late Models.

For tickets and more information, visit: [www.eamsdirt.com](http://www.eamsdirt.com).

## Dover International Speedway

DOVER, DE - Dover Downs Hotel & Casino and Dover International Speedway will continue their support for increasing understanding and acceptance of autism by participating in the global "Light It Up Blue" campaign, organized by Autism Speaks, in April.

Two of Delaware's most famous landmarks, the Monster Monument at Victory Plaza presented by Smithfield, as well as the Dover Downs Hotel, will be illuminated in blue light throughout April, coinciding with Autism Awareness Month.

The Monster Monument is 46-foot tall and is the largest fiberglass sports monument in the country. Since its unveiling in 2008, it has become the symbol of Dover International Speedway throughout the motorsports world. The hotel, Delaware's largest with 500 rooms, has been serving thousands of guests per year since it opened in 2002.

Autism is a summary term for a group of brain development disorders, characterized by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication and repetitive behaviors. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's latest statistics show that 1 in 68 U.S. children have autism.

Dover International Speedway has had a long relationship with autism awareness. The "AAA 400 Drive for Autism" Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race on Sunday, June 4, will mark the 11th consecutive year the Monster Mile's spring Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race will have an autism awareness element within the entitlement sponsorship.

Also on June 4, in partnership with Autism Delaware, the track will host an Autism Awareness Day at the Races program for families and children on the autism spectrum for the sixth straight year. The package provides a sensory-friendly environment to watch the race, and also features pre-race appearances by NASCAR drivers and personalities, seating in the enclosed grandstands, presentations by educational speakers, food and beverage options, as well as a quiet zone, with muted lighting and sound, allowing attendees to take a break from the race and crowds



**Dover Downs Hotel & Casino supports the "Light It Up Blue" campaign organized by Autism Speaks. (DDHC photo)**

when necessary.

Dover Downs Hotel & Casino and Dover International Speedway proudly partner with Autism Delaware's Productive Opportunities for Work and Recreation Program (POW&R), which provides employment opportunities for adults on the autism spectrum. Twelve people on the autism spectrum are employed by Dover Downs Hotel & Casino and Dover International Speedway in a variety of capacities. Through the partnership, both companies have gained highly productive, reliable employees, and emphasize defining a person by their ability, not disability.

To help support this partnership, Dover Downs Hotel & Casino donated office space to Autism Delaware in 2013. The office supports the POW&R program, and provides a Kent County office for Autism Delaware, which offers adult services, clinical services and family support.

For more information about Light It Up Blue, visit [autismspeaks.org/liub](http://autismspeaks.org/liub).

For more information about Autism Delaware, visit [www.autismdelaware.org](http://www.autismdelaware.org).

## Bristol Motor Speedway

BRISTOL, TN - Bristol Motor Speedway and Speed51.com are partnering to give fans around the globe the opportunity to enjoy the upcoming short track race from the comfort of their own home.

Speed51.com will offer customers a webcast pay-per-view experience of the Short Track U.S. Nationals (May 19-21). The partnership will provide a stage to a worldwide audience for what will be one of the most memorable events in short track racing history. While PPVs are a common practice in the short track world, Speed51.com's webcast will offer a new platform for BMS and its guests.

A subscription for the pay-per-view will include lifetime replays,

DVR capabilities (pause, rewind, etc.) and much more. These options will give real-time followers the opportunity to customize their Short Track U.S. Nationals experience. The event also will be available for sale for seven days following the race, giving event participants the option to relive the experience with the added features. As usual, Speed51.com will provide free and easy access for all the up-to-date information, statistics and highlights from the event and the world of short track racing.

"With the NASCAR All-Star weekend taking place at Charlotte Motor Speedway, we've looked for ways to give those who can't attend the Short Track U.S. Nationals an opportunity to still enjoy the world's largest short track race and glad we were able to partner with a leader like Speed51.com," said Jerry Caldwell, executive vice president and general manager of Bristol Motor Speedway. "The pay-per-view program will give viewers the chance to customize their experience to their own needs, all while providing a platform to showcase the Bristol brand to a global audience."

"I fell in love with Bristol the first time I covered a race there in 1997 and we believe this event is just going to add to the lure of Thunder Valley," said Bob Dillner, owner of Speed51.com and veteran Motorsports TV broadcaster. "With all the cars and all the racing, this is a can't miss for racing fans, but the broadcast partnership between Speed51.com and Bristol Motor Speedway will allow fans around the globe the opportunity to see one of the most exciting events in racing history. Trust me, there will be plenty of thrills & spills through the Short Track U.S. Nationals weekend and we'll capture it all on our multiple cameras."

There will be two pricing tiers for the webcast. Prior to the event, Speed51.com will offer the early bird weekend combo price of \$44.99, which will end on Friday, May 19. The PPV also will be available for \$24.99 on Saturday and \$29.99 on Sunday.

More than 500 race cars split among six classes are expected to be in competition during the three-day event, including racing in Super Late Model, Pro/Crate Late Model, Late Model Stock, Modified, Street Stock and Compact. The five sanctioning bodies that will be represented are CRA (Super Late Models, Pro Late Models, Street Stock), CARS Tour (Super Late Models, Late Model Stock), Southern Super Series (Super Late Model), National Short Track Alliance (Modifieds), VORES Compact Touring Series (Compacts).

Tickets and pit passes for the Short Track U.S. Nationals are still available, beginning at \$85 for a weekend grandstand seat/pit pass combo and \$45 for a Saturday/Sunday grandstand GA combo. Kids 12-and-under are just \$10 for a Saturday/Sunday grandstand GA combo. Individual pit passes also are available for ages 14-and-up.

Please visit <http://www.bristolmotorspeedway.com/tickets/us-short-track-nationals/> for more information on ticketing for the race.

For more information, please visit [www.bristolmotorspeedway.com](http://www.bristolmotorspeedway.com).

## Daytona Int'l Speedway

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - "American Ninja Warrior," the popular Emmy nominated sports competition show that airs nationally on NBC, is coming to Daytona International Speedway.

"The World Center of Racing" will serve as a filming location on April 7-8 for season nine of American Ninja Warrior, the action-packed series that follows competing competitors as they tackle a series of challenging obstacle courses in both city qualifying and city finals rounds across the country. Those that successfully complete the finals course in their designated region move on to the national finals round in Las Vegas, where they face a stunning four-stage course

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modeled after the famed Mt. Midoriyama course in Japan. The winner will take home a grand prize of \$1 million.

Guests can view the television tapings, which will begin each night at approximately 8:30 p.m., just outside Daytona International Speedway in between the Axalta and Chevrolet Injectors. There will be two different sessions for each night of taping. To sign up for free tickets to attend the event, guests can visit [http://on-camera-audiences.com/shows/American\\_Ninja\\_Warrior](http://on-camera-audiences.com/shows/American_Ninja_Warrior).

"I can't think of a better place for our ninja warriors to compete than on the biggest stage in the world for motorsports: Daytona International Speedway," said Kent Weed, executive producer of "American Ninja Warrior." "The high-energy atmosphere of Daytona will surely bring out the best in our competitors as they tackle one of our toughest courses yet."

"We're excited to serve as a host location for the filming of American Ninja Warrior and add another new event to an already busy schedule," Daytona International Speedway President Chip Wile said. "We're thrilled to welcome the competitors to the world's only motorsports stadium and provide an electric atmosphere as individuals attempt to navigate these challenging obstacles. To succeed, they are going to need strength, speed and perseverance, very similar to what we see on the high banks of the Speedway."

American Ninja Warrior returns for its ninth season this year premiering on Monday June 12 at 8 pm. The Daytona Beach qualifying episode will air on June 26 and the city finals will air on August 7. Matt Iseman returns as host, along with Akbar Gbajabiamila and co-host Kristine Leahy.

Tickets for all Daytona International Speedway events are available at [www.daytonainternational Speedway.com](http://www.daytonainternational Speedway.com) or by calling 1-800-PITSHOP as well as through PrimeSport.com. Fans can stay connected with Daytona International Speedway on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

**Talladega Superspeedway**  
TALLADEGA, AL - Take care of

all your hotel needs for Talladega Superspeedway's triple-header spring race weekend by booking your room through DEGARooms.com with a simple click of a button. It is the quickest, easiest, and most economical way to find a room for the May 5-7 race weekend at NASCAR's Most Competitive Track. Vacancies remain, but be sure to book by the April 14th deadline date.

DEGARooms.com gives race fans the chance to stay in numerous hotels within close proximity to Talladega Superspeedway. All hotels are screened for quality and assurance, and the rates are guaranteed to be the lowest publicly available over any online channels. Featured top hotels include, Doubletree, Hampton Inn, Sheraton, Westin and many more.

Hotel prices start as low as \$109 per night and many have been vetted by the DegaRooms.com staff. Several hotels have been given a rating out of five stars, giving fans even more information about the quality of hotels available.

Making the deal even sweeter is the fact that there are no surprises of booking fees or change fees associated with DEGARooms.com. The staff will even send a hotel confirmation letter and follow up with you during GEICO 500 race week with up-to-date schedules and weather information.

To book a hotel room, simply click the "Book or Change a May Reservation" tab on the left side of the homepage. After being redirected, select the reservation type "Race fan." Upon reviewing the list of hotels available, choose the hotel of your liking and book your room in no time.

Be sure to check out the incredible transportation offers, as select hotels offer a shuttle service to and from the race track. The option to purchase transportation for one or multiple days is available. A single-day transportation pass starts at \$45, while a combo ticket for both Saturday and Sunday is \$85.

For more information on the entire weekend, visit [www.talladega-superspeedway.com](http://www.talladega-superspeedway.com) or call 1-877-Go2-DEGA.

**Texas Motor Speedway**  
FORT WORTH, TX - Disney\*Pixar's "Cars 3" opens its Road To The Races nationwide tour today that will include a stop at Texas Motor Speedway on April 7-9 for the O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 NASCAR doubleheader weekend. The 27-city, nationwide tour fea-

tures life-size, character look-alikes of five-time Piston Cup champion Lightning McQueen, tech-savvy trainer Cruz Ramirez and the sleek next-gen racer Jackson Storm to celebrate the new "Cars 3" movie, which opens June 16. The tour, which opened today at Walt Disney World, will visit Texas Motor Speedway during each of the three days of on-track activity for the O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 and is free to the public.

The massive display will be located in the FanZone outside of Gate 7 of the frontstretch grandstands at Texas Motor Speedway. The hours of operation will be Noon-6 p.m. on Friday, April 7; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday, April 8; and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sunday, April 9.

In addition to the Lightning McQueen, Cruz Ramirez and Jackson Storm race cars, the display will allow fans to catch a sneak peek of the movie in the on-site Cinetransformer Mobile Movie Theater. Other display highlights include:

- Mattel presenting an interactive play area, which sends Lightning McQueen and other racers down the gravity drop and launches them into action in new play sets that feature locations from the movie. Also on display will be a collection of die-cast racers from past and present.

- Alamo Rent A Carhosting a street art booth that will bring "Cars 3" to life with a giant coloring mural featuring Lightning McQueen and friends, along with a color pencil pack souvenir.

- Coppertone creating a racer pit crew that encourages visitors to take part in a tire-changing activity and photo-sharing opportunity.

- Crest and Oral-B providing fans with an opportunity to create a digital postcard with Lightning McQueen and get "Cars"-themed oral care products.

- Dole inviting visitors to sample fruit and vegetable smoothies and collect "Cars 3"-inspired recipes.

- NASCAR Acceleration Nation displaying the science behind NASCAR racing, and elements from the NASCAR Hall of Fame that will allow attendees to get up close and personal with the history of the sport.

The roster of cities also includes Miami, Chicago, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Denver and Los Angeles, among others - the full list is available at [CARS3tour.com](http://CARS3tour.com). The Road to the Races tour wraps up in California for the NASCAR race weekend at Sonoma Raceway on June 24-25.

For families coming to visit the "Cars 3" display, Texas Motor Speedway has a great ticket offer for children 12 and under for that weekend's NASCAR action. For every adult ticket purchased for the My Bariatric Solutions 300 XFINITY Series race on Saturday, April 8, up to four children 12 and under are admitted for free. For the O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 NASCAR Cup Series race on Sunday, April 9, tickets are \$10 for kids 12 and under.

For more ticket information, please visit [www.texasmotorspeedway.com](http://www.texasmotorspeedway.com) or call the speedway ticket office at 817.215.8500.

### Talladega Superspeedway

TALLADEGA, AL - Want to get up close with the stars of NASCAR? Go behind-the-scenes of each race day with the Unrestricted VIP Weekend Package for Talladega Superspeedway's triple-header event weekend, set for May 5-7.

This limited quantity, one-of-a-kind package provides fans access to exclusive areas, including the garages, pit road, and more throughout race weekend. With the Unrestricted VIP Package, for just \$599, fans get to experience the benefits of a "Very Important Person" all weekend-long. The Unrestricted VIP Package includes:

- Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series, NASCAR XFINITY Series Garages and Pit Access

- Hot Lap Around the 2.66-Mile, 33-Degree High Banks in an Official Race Grand Marshal Car

- Friday Night Infield Access to the "Big One on the Blvd." Parade and Party

- Gatorade Victory Lane Photo Opportunity Prior to the Race

- Saturday Garage Tour

- Saturday NASCAR XFINITY Series Driver Introductions Prior to the Sparks Energy 300

- Access to VIP Area at the Saturday Night Infield Concert featuring The Charlie Daniels Band

- Reserved area Sunday by the Red Carpet to the Driver's Meeting Entrance

- Reserved Stage-Front Area for Fan Q&A, and Driver Introductions Prior to the Running of the GEICO 500

- Weekend Parking Passes

The Unrestricted VIP Package must be purchased in addition to a GEICO 500 grandstand ticket. For tickets, call the Talladega Superspeedway ticket office at 855.518.RACE or for more general information, visit [www.talladegasuperspeedway.com](http://www.talladegasuperspeedway.com).

## Hickory Motor Speedway

A beautiful spring day and packed grandstands were in store for the return of the Minimizer Bandit Big Rig Series for Cosmo Motors Night at the Races as they roared back into Hickory Motor Speedway with a great slate of NASCAR Whelen All-American Series racing.

Leading off the evening would be the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series Bojangles Late Models and their first of two 40 lap features. Ryan Millington in the #76 would set fast time and start from the point with Cole Glasson in the #5 to his outside. 2-time track champion Austin McDaniel in the #12 would make a return visit to his old stomping grounds and start inside of row 2 with the #98 of Stefan Parsons, son of former Monster Energy Cup driver Phil Parsons, starting to his outside. The battle at the point would be side by side for several laps until Millington would get the edge and nose ahead of Glasson. McDaniel would look to get by Glasson for several laps before finally taking the position and began to chase down the leader, Millington. Millington would ultimately prove too strong and hold off the field for his 3rd win of the year. McDaniel would finish 2nd with Glasson posting up in the 3rd spot. Parsons would come home in 4th with Charlie Watson in the #9 hot on his heels rounding out the top 5.

Next out of the blocks would be the 4 Cylinders with the #17 of Curtis Pardue leading the charge. Pardue would be strong at the wave of the green flag with the #6 of Brian Mundy hounding Pardue for position in 2nd. Mundy would begin to start reeling in the leader until his engine would appear to develop a miss late in the race and relegate him to the runner up position behind Pardue, who would be the first to the checkered flag. Robbie Lewis in the #98 would come home 3rd, with Robbie Trivette in the #11 finishing 4th, and Cody Combs in the #9 rounding out the top 5.

The Paramount Auto Group Limited Late Models would roll off next for their 35 lap feature. Jeremy Pelfrey in the #51 would start from the pole with Monty Cox in the #21 rolling off just to his outside. The veteran pair would run side by side



**Robbie Decker crosses the finish line in front of dueling Justin Ball and Tommie Boileau. (SHERRI STEARNS photo)**

for several laps before Pelfrey would finally pull into the lead with Cox following close behind. The race for the front would end just like that with Pelfrey grabbing his 2nd win on the season and Cox coming home in 2nd. The most exciting battle would be for third as Mitch Walker in the #29, Mark Johnson in the #13, and Pat Rachels in the #34 would all be looking for the last spot on the front stretch podium. Walker and Johnson would battle side by side for the last few laps with Rachels looking to get by them both. At the line Johnson would grab 3rd, Walker would take 4th, and Rachels would round out the top 5.

The always exciting Renegades would roll off next with Darren Dickinson leading the way in his Dickinson Service Center #6. Dickinson would jump to the lead but Kyle DiVanna in the #71 would give a serious charge the entire distance. Dickinson would go on to finish 1st with Kyle DiVanna holding on for the runner up spot. Justin Austin in the #1 would post the 3rd finishing spot, David Hasson in the #83 would finish 4th, and Robert DiVanna in the #71D would round out the top 5.

Firing up next would be the Cosmo Motors Street Stocks and their 30 lap feature with Cody DeMarmels in the #18 leading the way from the pole with Kevin Eby in the #03 to his outside. DeMarmels and Eby would put on a good side by side battle for several laps until DeMarmels would start to nose ahead and drive on to the victory with Eby finishing 2nd. Marshall Sutton in the #64 would come home in 3rd, Trey Buff in the #69 would grab 4th, and Ethan Johnson in the #2 would round out the top 5.

The NASCAR Whelen All-American Series Bojangles Late Models would roll off for the last of their Twin 40 lap events. Ty Gibbs in the #18 would pace the field for race #2 with Colby Howard in the #16 to his outside. Gibbs would grab the early lead with Howard close behind in 2nd and Charlie Watson in the #9 looking to get in the mix. Howard would work his way to the inside of Gibbs and move to the point with Watson following him to grab 2nd. Watson would bide his time and decide when to make his move to the point, getting around Howard. Ryan Millington in the #76 would methodically work his way from the back of the pack and also work his way around Howard, settling into 2nd but aiming for Watson and the top spot. Watson would hold off the 3-time winner, Millington, and also grab his 3rd win on the season as he would be the first to take the checkered flag. Millington would hold on for 2nd but end up with a great NASCAR Whelen All-American Series Bojangles Late Models points night. Howard would grab the 3rd spot, Austin McDaniel in the #12 would finish 4th, and Stefan Parsons in the #98 would round out the top 5.

Ending out the night and getting the crowd on their feet would be the Minimizer Bandit Big Rig Series presented by Cosmo Motors, as they would roll off 13 semi trucks for the Big Rig feature, and a huge Hickory Motor Speedway crowd cheering them on. Robbie Decker jumped out to the lead at the drop of the green flag from his pole position starting spot, which was a gift from Craig Kruckeberg, who elected to drop to the tail of the line as he was experiencing transmission issues. Justin Ball in his Semi-

Truck was quickly making his way through traffic from his 9th starting spot. Ball was making short work of the competition, until he worked his way up to do battle with the Semi-Truck of Tommie Boileau, who was running 2nd. Boileau and Ball put on a thrilling side by side, back and forth battle for the runner up spot while both were slowly closing the gap on Semi-Truck driven by Decker. But at the line, Decker crossed the stripe with a two truck lead over Ball and Boileau, giving Decker the \$10,000 winners check while Ball and Boileau would have to settle for 2nd and 3rd. Fan favorite, Chris Kikelhan, would finish 4th after spending the majority of the race drifting his Semi-Truck sideways down the front stretch of the famed 3/8 mile oval. Allen Boles would round out the top 5.

Next week the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series will return with the Paramount Auto Group Limited Late Models taking center stage for the Finish Line Heating & Air Spring Classic with a 100 lap feature and Round #3 of the Paramount Kia "Big 10" Racing Challenge. Also in action are the One Design Super Trucks, Cosmo Motors Street Stocks, 4 Cylinders, and Catawba Realty & Insurance Classic Sportsmen.

Gates will open at 5pm, Qualifying at 5:30pm, Autograph Session at 6:30pm, and Racing at 7:30pm.

Tickets are only \$12.50 Adults, \$10.50 Seniors/Youth 11-19), and children 10 & under FREE!

For more info check us out at [www.hickorymotorspeedway.com](http://www.hickorymotorspeedway.com), Facebook and Twitter.

## Grandview Speedway

BECHTELSVILLE, PA - Despite all the efforts being made to be able to get the 2017 season started with a free-to-the-public practice session at Grandview Speedway on Saturday, Ma Nature has helped create different plans.

"Practice is postponed for tomorrow, due to wet grounds, and the forecast of more rain this afternoon," said track spokesperson Tina Rogers. "We do not want to take the chance of having drivers ruin their equipment, for a track that cannot be prepared properly.

"We have been monitoring the grounds, and track conditions all week. We were hoping we could get on the track and prepare a good racing surface, however with not much sun, and the melting snow, it has left us with untraceable conditions and grounds."

The practice session has been **(Continued on next page...)**

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postponed until Saturday, April 1st following the same schedule for the day. Pit gates opening at 9 a.m. and practice, featuring a variety of different race cars, starting at noon. Pit admission is \$30.

And the battle for the lucrative NASCAR and track titles at the one-third-mile, banked clay track will get the green on Saturday, April 8th when a triple-header show featuring

the T.P.Trailers 358 Modifieds, BRC Late Models and Sportsman stock cars will be presented. Spectator gates will open at 5 p.m. with racing starting at 7 p.m. At least 12 events of stock car racing will be presented.

Admission for the season opener will be \$15 for adults with youngsters 11 and under admitted free.

On Sunday, April 9th 1 p.m. the Enduro racers and Blast from the Past Vintage racers will perform in a doubleheader show.

The first extra distance event of the season is set for Saturday, April 15th with a 35-lap main event for the T.P.Trailers NASCAR Modifieds being presented. That race will pay \$3500 to win. In addition, as is the norm, the BRC Late Models and Sportsman will race.

Admission for the April 15th show will be \$20 for adults, \$5 for youngsters 11 to 6 with kids under 6 admitted free.

Grandview Speedway, one of the most successful NASCAR Whelen All American Series short tracks in the nation, is located on Passmore Road just off Route 100, 10 miles north of Pottstown, in Bechtelsville, PA. The popular one-third-mile, banked clay track offers a great view from each seat, excellent reasonably priced concessions and will stocked novelty stand. Information can be had at 610.754.7688 or check in at www.grandviewspeedway.com.

## Kingsport Speedway

KINGSPORT, TN - Defending track champion Ronnie McCarty took the lead on the final restart of the season-opening Food City 175, overcoming highly competitive opposition.

McCarty qualified on the pole position for the 60-lap NASCAR Whelen All-American Series Late Model Stock Car feature. After an

invert of four positions, Zeke Shell and Chad Finchum were on the front row.

Finchum went straight to the lead with the green flag waving, but the caution would wave on lap four when the No. 33 of Rick Pannell spun in Turn 4.

Finchum would regain the lead on the restart, and the caution would wave on lap seven when Billy Light spun in Turn 4 and Robbie Ferguson's car went up in smoke with an electrical fire.

With the green flag waving, Finchum would regain the lead. The yellow flag would be displayed on lap 13 when David Strong and Mardy Roberts spun in Turns 1 and 2.

On the restart, Finchum and VanDyke would battle for position with Finchum taking the lead on lap 19. VanDyke would come battling back to the inside on lap 20, while Shell came racing in hard on the back bumper of Shell.

The race would remain under green until lap 40 when the caution waved for Pannell and Darin Silver spinning.

Finchum and VanDyke would battle hard on the restart, racing door to door with the green flag waving. Two laps later, the duo continued to battle with VanDyke taking over the lead as Finchum got loose exiting Turn 2.

On lap 51, the yellow flag would be displayed when the No. 33 of Pannell cut a tire in Turn 1.

With the green flag back in the air on the restart, VanDyke would battle with Finchum once again. Finchum would receive hard contact on his rear bumper, pushing him up the track and making way for McCarty and Wayne Hale to slide by.

McCarty would battle up behind VanDyke and began to work on VanDyke's rear bumper. The two would make contact multiple times with McCarty attempting to root VanDyke out of the way. McCarty would be able to make room on the inside of VanDyke and take over the lead.

McCarty would lead the remaining laps with VanDyke still battling hard from behind. McCarty would cross the finish line and take the first win of the season.

"It feels really good to be back in Victory Lane," said McCarty. "I hope this kind of luck continues all year."

In regards to the final restart, McCarty said it was just hard racing.

"I went out there on the track and gave it all I had."



Ronnie McCarty celebrates his win at Kingsport Speedway on opening day. (DREW HIERWARTER photo)

Mark Christian started on the pole for the 30-lap Modified Street feature.

Jared Broadbent took the lead on the green flag from Christian. The caution would wave on lap four when Sam Hurd and Mark Christian spun in Turns 1 and 2.

Broadbent retook the lead on the restart, but four laps later Royce Peters would race to the lead. A spin by Rusty Clendenin on lap eight would force the caution flag back out.

Three attempts to restart the race would see the yellow flag wave each time. Finally, after the third attempt, Peters regained the lead.

Nick Cole would take the lead from Peters on lap 19. With less than 10 laps remaining, Cole's No. 63 would begin to smoke and leak fluid onto the racetrack.

Cole would be forced out of the lead with the fluid leaking, placing Peters back up front. Peters would lead the remaining laps for the win.

Jason Ketron and Billy Byington were on the front row for the season's first 30-lap Pure 4 race.

With the green flag waving, a bad start for John Ketron would create a three-car pileup on the

frontstretch.

Byington would take over the lead on the restart, with Billy Ketron sliding into second-place. The caution would wave quickly on lap two when Robert Smith and Tim Young spun in Turn 4 on lap two.

Back under green, Byington would race back to the lead. The caution waved again on lap five when the No. 18 of Levi Cox spun in Turn 2.

Byington would regain the lead on the restart. The caution would wave once again on the 11 when Josh Collins spun in Turn 4.

On the restart, Byington regained the lead but the final yellow flag would be displayed on lap 17.

With the green flag back in the air, Byington would take back over the lead, leading the remaining laps and taking the win.

Billy Duty and David Brown were on the front row for the 30-lap Mod 4 feature. Brown jumped to an early lead on lap one.

On lap five, the race's first caution would wave on lap five when Dennis Arnold spun in Turn 2. Gobble returned to the lead on the restart.

Kevin Canter, racing through the

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field, would take over the lead on lap 11.

The caution flag would wave on lap 16 when Chris Amburgey spun in Turn 2. Canter and Gobble would battle on the restart with Canter racing to the lead.

Canter would take the win, his first driving for Rocky Yates.

Joey Sykes dominated the 25-lap Pure Street race. Sykes took over the lead on

lap three and never relinquished for his first Pure Street win.

### Southern National Motorsports Park

LUCAMA, NC - Tyler Hughes held off Mason Diaz in a photofinish in the first of two Late Model races while Tim Allensworth survived a wild race to score the victory in the second race at Southern National Motorsports Park on Sunday.

Hughes dominated the first of the two thrilling 40 lap duels, but Mason Diaz ran him down in the closing stages of the race. Diaz tried to get around in the final laps through a variety of methods, but Hughes kept shutting the door and survived one last run from Diaz on the final lap to score the win in a photofinish.

"I don't mind the rubbing, that was some good racing," Hughes remarked. "I tried to stay out front, two car-lengths and keep that distance and save my tires a little bit for race two. Mason did a good job trying to put the pressure on to take the win. I'm glad I was able to hold him off."

The victory was much needed for Hughes after some hard luck at Myrtle Beach Speedway and South Boston Speedway in recent weeks.

"I was really looking for a win to get this season going and get some momentum," Hughes continued. "Hopefully this applies momentum for the rest of the year and keeps it going and keeps the wins coming."

Diaz was content with his second place finish, which was followed up by a third place effort in the second race.

"I raced him clean, he raced me clean the whole race," Diaz stated. "There were a couple times there I probably could have drove it in there and got by. The car's in one piece and second place for the first race this season. I'm happy with

it."

2015 Southern National Motorsports Park track champion Jonathan Findley dominated the second race and appeared to be on his way to victory, until Louis White caught him in the closing laps. With five laps to go, Findley wrecked off the front bumper of White in a crash that collected Tyler Hughes in turn one.

Findley was miffed after the incident.

"Typical Louis, you know," Findley said. "We were racing and, flat out, I was outriving him. He caught me quick, you know. I outdrove him pretty much. Kept maintained once he got to my back bumper and, you know, I guess he decided he had to wreck an 18-year-old kid to get the win but clearly that didn't happen either. We'll have a chat and maybe he'll get payback here soon."

White, who was penalized for

"[Findley] brake checked me," White retorted. "If he was outriving me, how did I catch him from a half straightaway down? If I wanted to wreck him, I could have done that a lap or two before that. I didn't, I backed up and got a run on him and he ran me down the straightaway and got in the corner and threw on the brakes and brake checked me. I hit him and let off and he threw on the brakes again. That's why his car got messed up, because he brake checked me."

Tim Allensworth inherited the lead when White was sent to the rear for avoidable contact and held off Chris Chapman to score the win - his first Southern National Motorsports Park feature win in a Late Model.

"Better lucky than good," Allensworth explained. "We did have to deal with those guys. Everybody was pushing on the rear bumper in the corners. We outlasted them

you see what we got."

Brian Obiedzinski led wire-to-wire score the victory in the first race of the season for the Charger division. However, the battle for the win came down to the last lap as he had to hold off a hard charging Jeremy Bohne in the closing laps.

"Jeremy's a great guy," Obiedzinski remarked. "Any time I get to race with him, it's awesome. He was closing in. If it was 40 laps, he would have been the winner. We got the setup right. Big thanks to John West Engines for the power and Deac McCaskill for helping me with the setup. Man, it was a great way to start the season and a great way to honor the great sponsors I have."

Obiedzinski's victory launched his pursuit of the Charger division championship at Southern National Motorsports Park.

"We're looking forward to coming back," Obiedzinski said. "We're going to give it everything we have to win the championship and bring it home to Franklinton."

Another photofinish took place in the Bandolero division when Ethan Johnson, aided by the lapped car of Kaleb Bradley, passed Cameron Murray on the frontstretch to score the win.

"I just thought that, when he went to go around lapped traffic, that it would slow his momentum down," Johnson explained. "So I took the gutsy move and went to the bottom and had half my car on the apron. I was just trying to keep the car down there. It came right to the wire and I'm glad we pulled it off."

Ronnie "Buckshot" Jones passed PJ Flowers on the final lap of the Mini Stock race to take the lead and the win while Tommy Jackson, Jr. dominated the Legend Car feature to score the victory.

Racing returns to Southern National Motorsports Park on April 8th when the Southern Modified Racing Series (SRMS) invades for a 125-lap shootout on a Saturday night. The race will also feature twin Late Model races as well as racing for the Chargers, Mini Stocks, Legends and Bandoleros.

### South Boston Speedway

SOUTH BOSTON, VA - Speed records were broken, the new pavement was broken in and Philip Morris showed he still has what it takes to win at South Boston Speedway.

The four-time former NASCAR Whelen All American Series national champion and two-time for



**Tyler Hughes wins the first of two Late Model features at Southern National Motorsports Park Saturday. (SNMP photo)**



**Tim Allensworth survived to take the second Late Model feature. (SNMP photo)**

the contact with Findley, said the wreck took place because Findley brake-checked him entering turn one.

and move on. We were setup for the long run. We felt pretty good on the restart. My dad said I was better than the cars behind me and

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mer South Boston Speedway champion won both of the twin 100-lap NASCAR Whelen All American Series Late Model Stock Car Division races that headlined Saturday's season-opening Danville Toyota NASCAR Whelen Late Model Twin 100's racing program.

Morris led the entire race which had to be extended to 102 laps to accommodate

a green-white-checker finish following a late caution period. He cleared Kelly Kingery on the ninth lap after a close battle and fended off a challenge from Nick Smith of Hampton, Virginia in a two-lap dash to the finish following the race's final caution period to win the first race. Bobby McCarty of Summerfield, North Carolina, Cordova, Maryland resident Tyler Hughes and Madeline Crane rounded out the top five finishers.

Morris started eighth in the second race after a drawing to determine how many cars would be inverted for the start of the second race. He gradually picked his way through the field, taking second place away from McCarty on lap 45, and setting out after race leader Lee Pulliam.

A caution flag on lap 57 allowed Morris to restart the race beside Pulliam. Morris slipped past Pulliam for the lead on lap 65 only to have to battle Pulliam on another restart with 13 laps left.

Morris was able to get out front immediately and hold off Pulliam the rest of the way, edging Pulliam by .291second at the finish. Smith finished third with Peyton Sellers of Danville, Virginia and Austin Thaxton of South Boston, Virginia rounding out the top five finishers.

Morris averaged 58.706 mph in winning the first race and averaged 75.576b mph in winning the night-cap.

Latour Wins Limited Sportsman Division Race: David Latour of Clemmons, North Carolina won Saturday's 50-lap Limited Sportsman Division race to score his first career win at South Boston Speedway.

In a wild race that saw the lead swap hands eight times and be slowed by six caution periods, Latour grabbed the lead from Trey Crews of Halifax, Virginia with two laps to go and held off Eric Winslow

of Pelham, North Carolina by .528-second at the finish to pick up the win.

Dylan Saul finished third, Ross "Boo Boo" Dalton of Liberty, North Carolina and Crews rounded out the top five finishers in the 15-car field.

Creed Scores First SBS Pure Stock Division Win: Ryan Creed of Reidsville, North Carolina sped past Johnny Layne of Nathalie, Virginia with three laps to go and hung on to win the 30-lap Budweiser Pure Stock Division race.

Creed's first career South Boston Speedway win came by a margin of .644-second.

Scott Phillips of Halifax, Virginia finished third behind Creed and Layne, with Tyler Conner of Scottsburg, Virginia finishing fourth and Jimmy Wade of Halifax, Virginia rounding out the top five finishers.

Crute Wins Hornets Division Opener: Tyler Crute of Alton, Virginia picked up his first career South Boston Speedway win, topping a field of 13 cars in the 15-lap Budweiser Hornets Division race.

Crute took the lead from Simon Jones of South Boston, Virginia on the fifth lap and led the rest of the way to pick up the win.

Kevin Currin of Chase City, Va., Justin Dawson of Nathalie, Virginia and Jred Dawson of Nathalie, Virginia completed the top five finishers.

Next Race At South Boston Speedway: NASCAR racing returns to South Boston Speedway on Saturday, April 8, when the track goes under the lights for the first time in the 2017 season with the NASCAR Late Model Twin 75s racing program.

Getting the green flag at 7 p.m., the five-race card will be highlighted by twin 75-lap races for the competitors in the NASCAR Whelen All American Series Late Model Stock Car Division. A 50-lap Limited Sportsman Division race, a 30-lap race for the Budweiser Pure Stock Division and a 15-lap race for the Budweiser Hornets Division will round out the night's action.

Registration and pit gates open at 2:30 p.m., practice runs from 4 p.m. until 5 p.m. Grandstand gates will open at 5:30 p.m. and qualifying starts at 6 p.m. The first race gets the green flag at 7 p.m.

Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for youth ages 7-12. Kids ages six and under are admitted free with a paid adult.

For additional information about the NASCAR Late Model Twin 75s racing program or any other events at South Boston Speedway, please

visit the speedway's website at [www.southbostonspeedway.com](http://www.southbostonspeedway.com) or telephone the speedway at 434-572-4947 or 1-877-440-1540.

## Volunteer Speedway

BULLS GAP, TN - Following a nice springtime day with sunny skies and temperatures in the mid-70s around East Tennessee, a large gathering of fans assembled at Volunteer Speedway for an outstanding five division weekly racing program Saturday night.

Bobby Mays of Jonesborough and Ryan King of Seymour each captured Steel Head Late Model feature wins as the class competed in twin 20-lap main events.

Mays and King led the 23-car field to green in the first race with Mays jumping out to the lead over King and Jason Trammell. But caution waved just three laps in when Tim Maupin, Dale Reed, Shane Taylor, Preston Whitehead and Lynn Leach were involved in an accident in turn one, with Maupin, Reed and Taylor forced to retire into the infield pits for remainder of the race with damage.

Only a couple of laps back under green and John Tweed got into the turn three wall to bring the caution out again.

Finally back up to speed, Mays had King glued to his rear bumper, while Josh Henry was up-on-the-wheel in overtaking Trammell for third in the running order. Trammell began feeling pressure from Jason Cardwell and Chase King, with both working their way around Trammell and dropping him back to the sixth spot.

Out front Mays was in command on the point, while King was just waiting for the opportune moment to try and make his move. The event's final caution waved on lap 15 when Leach spun.

Ready for a five-lap sprint to the finish, when the green flag waved Mays, driving the B&B Auto Repair/L & L Steam Cleaning/Mc-Croskey Trucking/Jimmy Morrow Trucking/West Haven Speed Equipment/Porky's Fast Bodies/Matlock Decal Company/Vic Hill Racing Engines/TNT Race Cars/No. 25 Camaro SS, smashed the loud pedal to hold his ground and take his first-ever Steel Head Late Model victory over King, Henry, Chase King and Cardwell.

Trammell and Layne Clifton were on the front row for second feature, with Chase King and Ryan King alongside one another in row two. Trammell launched out ahead over Clifton with waving of the green flag, while Ryan King moved

in behind Clifton.

Ryan got to inside of Clifton between turns one and two on lap 3 to make pass for second place, setting his sights ahead on leader Trammell. Caution waved just one circuit later when Leach's engine began smoking.

Back under green Trammell was feeling heat from Seymour's Ryan King, and working the eighth circuit King got around Trammell and never looked back. King, driving the Brian King Roofing Inc./Jim Sands Roofing/Mighty Muffler/Parton's Smokin' Butt BBQ/O'Reilly Auto Parts/Day Gutter, Siding, Windows & Roofing/Phantom Racing Engines/High Velocity Heads/Simpson Racing Products/Hoosier Racing Tire/Fox Shocks/Mike Nuchols IG Shock Service/Warrior Race Cars/No. 30 Corvette, recorded his second career win at "The Gap" over Trammell, Chase King, Clifton and Mays.

Terry Poore and Tyler Smith led the stellar 24-car Sportsman Late Model field to green from the front row, with Poore jumping out to the lead quickly over Jordon Horton and Jed Emert. Horton, from New Tazewell, used a strong run working the fourth circuit racing off the second corner to launch down the backstretch and get to the inside of Poore entering the third turn to take a lead he would never relinquish.

Emert slowed on lap 4 and headed into the pits to end a strong run early in the 20-lap feature. Behind Horton and Poore, action was heated involving several including Smith, Matt Tharp, Heath Alvey, Zach Sise, Brad Seagle, Travis Fultz and Wayne Rader.

But out front the race belonged to Horton, driving the Discount Auto Parts/Southern Pride Land & Cattle/All Out Bail Bonds/Norton Heating & Air/GRT Race Cars/No. 57 Chevrolet Camaro SS, as he captured the win over Poore, Tharp, Alvey and Sise.

Chris Rickett of Morristown didn't compete in the season-opener a couple of weeks ago. But the defending Modified Street track champion came out of the gates wide-open in the second event driving the Blistered Chicken Saloon/Rickett Sheet Metal/No. 36 Chevrolet, as he led flag-to-flag in winning over Brad Davis, Cody Thompson, Eddie Stewart and Bret Banks.

John Stevens of Wallins Creek, Ky., grabbed the lead at start of the Classic feature and never looked back en route to capturing his sec

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ond straight win to start the season. Chasing Stevens, driving The Parts House/Anna Mae's Vapor/Hensley Trucking & Excavating/Chad Shannon State Farm Insurance/Hensley Grocery/Slingin' Ink Tattoos/Red Eye Racing/No. 7 to the checkers were Tony Trent, Joe Keck, Hayston Collett and Eli Keck.

Danny Pennington led all 20 laps to apparently capture the Mini Stock feature win over Chuck McMahan and Kurt Owens. However, following the event while at the scales for post-race inspection, all three were stripped of their finishing spots and disqualified. Thus, David Darden inherited the victory followed by Steve Owens, Mitchell Fox, Rufus Collett and Steven Russell.

## Bear Ridge Speedway

CONCORD, NC - Bear Ridge Speedway will celebrate its 50th anniversary of racing in 2017, but the accomplishment is even more impressive when you dig deeper into the story of the tight quarter-mile track in rural Vermont.

For all 50 seasons the track has been under the ownership or operation of an Elms family member. The track was initially the vision of George Barber while Charles V Elms Sr. was a part of his opening day operations team and eventually purchased the track from Barber in 1972.

Charles Elms Sr. continued in his role as the owner and operator of Bear Ridge until 1990 when he sold the track to his son, CV "Butch" Elms III. In 2006, April May Preston joined the track as a co-owner and the facility has continued to grow ever since.

"The fact that it's been 50 years and it's always been managed by one family is exciting. You can't say that today about a lot of businesses," Preston said. "If it weren't for the love of the track and Butch's dedication, we may not be celebrating 50 years."

It's an impressive feat for a track that initially planned its life expectancy to be only a couple of years. Located off I-91 near the New Hampshire state line, Bear Ridge is about 25 miles north of Hanover, N.H. and Dartmouth College. Its quiet location in rural Vermont certainly makes it one of the

more unique dirt tracks in the country.

Bear Ridge's 50th season will be its seventh under DIRTcar Racing sanctioning for its Sportsman and Coupe Modified divisions, the track's top and most popular divisions, respectively.

"We've made it through some rough times and now our car counts are up. Being affiliated with DIRTcar has been a big plus and we're just really excited to say it's 50 years of racing," said Preston.

The track's Sportsman Modified division routinely sees fields of 30 or more cars, a statistic Preston attributes in part to the track's DIRTcar affiliation.

"Being this little back-of-the-woods racetrack in Vermont, nobody knows about us," Preston explained. "It's nice, but it's bad because you want everybody to know about you. So the DIRTcar sanctioning, I think it lends a bit of credibility."

Bear Ridge's DIRTcar sanctioning is just one of the many changes and improvements over the track's storied history that has allowed it to remain vibrant. In recent years, the track has added a new novelty area, new VIP suites, a new scoring tower and was forced to expand its parking lot to accommodate increased attendance.

The success is largely due to a commitment to an affordable family-friendly atmosphere. The Bear Ridge kids club is popular among younger fans, who receive a toy at each race. The track also takes pride in offering fresh, local food products to its fans.

Bear Ridge is excited to offer a 50th racing season with the same nostalgic environment and modern enhancements but maybe with a few extra fireworks. The 2017 season is scheduled to begin on May 6.

"We want to focus on an excellent season," Preston said. "The fans want entertainment, but not all night. We've worked hard to make a show short, but not too short. We want our fans to feel they got their money's worth."

For more information on Bear Ridge Speedway and to view their 2017 schedule, visit [www.bearridgespeedway.com](http://www.bearridgespeedway.com) or call (802) 222-4052.

## Franklin County Speedway

CALLAWAY, VA - After an incredible 2016 campaign climaxing with four drivers in each division racing for the championship in the season finale in September, Franklin County Speedway is gear-

ing up for another year of Chase for the Championship with many more drivers set to compete for the championship.

The Chase format will be used this season in the core four divisions including Late Models, Mini Stocks, V8 Street and U-Cars. Competitors in these four divisions will be racing a little over the first half of the season to lock themselves into the Chase for the Championship. A win in the first segment will lock a driver into the Chase while others can earn a spot by competing in all the races or being among the top 10 in points at the cutoff point.

Drivers in the second segment will advance to the final race by a mix of formats. The highest in points before the final race automatically advances to the final round. The winner of the most races during the second segment will advance to the final round. The driver who wins the Buster Carroll Memorial, if competing for points gets an automatic bid to the final round as well. If the winner of the Buster Carroll Memorial is not a points competitor the second highest in overall points will advance. The final spot in the championship Final Four goes to the driver who is awarded the most passing points during the course of the whole 2017 season.

Passing points you say? Yes. Passing Points. Every position gained from the starting lineup to the finishing order is awarded one point. Whoever gets the most positions gained in each race is awarded an additional five points per event. Passing points is being added with the hopes that drivers will take advantage of them to gain points throughout the season and put themselves in a better position to race for the championship. That in turn will give the fans a better race.

"Fans want to see passing," said track promoter Langley Austin. "Fans want to see good racing and while we have the best racing of any area track there's always ways to improve upon the product. The Chase for the Championship did exactly that last year. It made the racing more entertaining to watch and it made drivers really want to win a race, maybe more than usual."

Passing points will not only count for the season long points standings but will be kept up with separately for the final spot in the Final Four of the Chase for the Championship.

"Passing the most cars this sea-

son will get you a spot in the Final Four on Championship Night in September. That should be enough of a reward for drivers to want to start further back and really go after those points. I think as the season goes on more drivers are going to be looking at that and looking at how they will get themselves in the mix for the final race for the championship."

"We've got a lot of top notch racers who could find themselves in the mix for the championship in all divisions," continued Austin. "This season is going to be one of the most storied championship battles we've ever had in our four core divisions. The Chase for the Championship format and now passing points will make things more interesting for the fans and the drivers."

One driver who is all for the Chase for the Championship format is Wesley Thomason, who made the Final Four in last season but finished fourth among the Late Models.

"It's really exciting," said Thomason. "In the past you knew with a couple races to go who was going to win the championship, there was no great build up. Now you don't know who's going to be in the final group of drivers and what's going to happen. You don't sleep at all for a week before it. You have to work hard just to get into it and then you've got as good of a chance as anyone. I love it. You really have to earn it now and not just race all season and take home the trophy."

The Moonshine Modifieds and the newly formed Blue Ridge Mini Cup Series will compete for the championship this season via an old school championship format. Both will however obtain passing points for every car passed from starting lineup to finishing order same as the other divisions.

Twin 35-lap Late Model Stock Car features are set for Sunday and the Moonshine Modifieds will compete for 35-laps as well. Moonshine Modifieds is a mix of IMCA style and Tour style Modifieds on scuff tires. The Mini Stocks will compete for 30-laps, V8 Street for 25-laps, U-Cars for 25-laps and \$500 to Win and the East Coast Flatheads will go for 20-laps on Sunday afternoon.

Tickets are \$10 for Adults, \$5 for Kids 5-12 years old and Children under 4 get in free. Grandstand Gates open at 1pm with practice starting at 1pm, qualifying at 2:30pm and racing action hitting the track at 3pm. Make plans to attend the Spring Throwdown on Sunday afternoon.

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SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2017



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