



FEBRUARY 17, 2020

# FasTrack

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## Hamlin Wins Daytona 500

Ryan  
Newman  
Survives  
Horrific  
Crash



# What's Important

**D A Y T O N A**  
BEACH, FL — President Donald Trump put a much-needed ray of sunshine — if for only a handful of minutes — on NASCAR last Sunday.

Much of that was lost when Ryan Newman was sent to the hospital on Monday following a fiery crash 100 yards short of the finish line following a day-long rain delay for the Great American Race.

The president's visit made stock-car racing relevant again, and for all the right reasons. NASCAR and its fans have been people with weathered hands and blue collars who embraced God, guns, fast cars and patriotism every Sunday afternoon.

Trump's visit to the Daytona 500 reminded NASCAR of its roots. It was a place where political correctness was muted by the sound of 850-horsepower engines. Differences were between Ford, Chevrolet and Toyota, not Democrats and Republicans. For more than a week, Daytona was an impeachment-free zone.

American flags popped in the wind, along with the flags that played reverence to favorite drivers like Chase Elliott, Kevin Harvick, Brad Keselowski and Kyle Busch.

But in a flash, though, a lot of that changed.

Newman led Monday's finish with the checkered flag just a few feet away when he was bumped by Ryan Blaney. Newman's car became airborne, was struck by Corey Lajoie's car in the driver's door while it was in mid-air before it eventually landed on its roof. Blaney struggled to regain control of his car to finish second. Denny Hamlin then inherited one of the most improbable wins of his career.

The fact it was the second-closest in Daytona 500 history wasn't important. You can't measure a man's life by inches or milliseconds.

Newman's Ford caught on fire and his team said he wasn't responsive to their calls on the radio. He eventually was extricated from his car. He immediately was taken to a local trauma center, but not before rescue workers shielded his

recovery with black curtains.

Hours later, his team said he was in critical condition without life-threatening injuries. High-speed gladiators aren't supposed to be wheeled into the emergency room. They're supposed to win or vow revenge. After all, NASCAR hasn't lost a warrior since Dale Earnhardt was killed on the final lap of the 2001 Daytona 500 — oddly enough, less than a mile short of the finish line.

Until that moment Monday night, the 62nd running of the stock-car racing's marquee race was the perfect elixir for everything that ailed

NASCAR. Suddenly, there wasn't much talk of sagging television ratings and declining attendance. The fact many of the bigger tracks had significantly downsized its grandstands wasn't insignificant.

NASCAR promised to return to its roots this year, and it took it a step better. Drivers seemed comfortable trading their Corporate America polish for a more authentic, rough-around-the-edge persona. They finally were free to live hard and play hard. And the president was more than happy to shake every hand, take every selfie and wave at fans.

Despite a rain delay that pushed the final 180 laps to a Monday night finish, Trump did what engine builders, marketing departments and driver feuds have struggled to accomplish in the last 15 years. He Made NASCAR Great Again. He made it the lead story across the country, and for all the right reasons.

"My fellow race fans, the Daytona 500 is a legendary display. Soon, the cars will take to the track for the start," Trump said. "Tires will screech, rubber will burn, fans will scream, and the great American race will begin."

The finish, however, was a reminder stock-car racing is about people, not a business platform.

Inviting Trump to be the Grand Marshal was a no-brainer. This was his crowd. When Air Force One did a flyover the massive complex to the deafening roars of nearly 140,000 fans, it was a moment the sport has needed for a long time. Loud and proud, it was chic to be a stock car fan again.

And in true Donald Trump fash-

ion, the president didn't make any apologies, either. He was happy to be there.

"For 500 heart-pounding miles these fierce competitors will chase the checkered flag ... and make their play for pure American glory, and that's what it is, pure American glory," Trump told the crowd before telling 40 drivers to start their engines.

"[The Daytona 500 is] a legendary display of roaring engines, soaring spirits and the American skill, speed and power that we've been hearing about for so many years. The tens of thousands of patriots here today have come for the fast cars and the world-class motorsports. But NASCAR fans never forget that no matter who wins the race, what matters most is God, family and country."

The visual of the president and First Lady Melania Trump standing on pit road with hands over heart, the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds flying overhead and the remarkable performance of Nalani Qunitello's national anthem will forever be a part of NASCAR's storied history, a lot like the snapshot of Richard Petty driving down the backstretch in 1984 with Air Force One landing 250 yards away as a backdrop with President Ronald Regan onboard, or the unforgettable image of Dale Earnhardt clinging to the Harley J. Earl Trophy in 1998 after finally winning the 500 for the first time in 20 attempts.

Trump's parade lap around the 2.5-mile raceway in his 22,000-pound limo known as "The Beast," especially with the field of 40 race cars trailing, also will be remembered as another significant piece in the sport's well-timed turnaround.

Even as storm clouds pushed closer on Sunday, the start of the race was delayed by 13 minutes.

## Update on Roush Fenway Racing Driver Ryan Newman

Daytona Beach, FL -- Ryan Newman remains under the care of doctors at Halifax Medical Center in Daytona Beach, Florida. He is awake and speaking with family and doctors.

Ryan and his family have expressed their appreciation for the concern and heartfelt messages from across the country. They are grateful for the unwavering support of the NASCAR community and beyond.

We will continue to provide information as it becomes available.

**COVER: Hamlin: CHRIS GRAYTHN/GETTY IMAGES**  
**Newman Crash: NIGEL KINRADE/NKP**

As long as Trump wanted to be at Daytona, NASCAR was willing to put its biggest race on hold. At the time, it seemed time well spent.

Following Monday's delay, the president had already moved west for campaigns and the engines were re-fired at Daytona for the resumption of the race. Trump helped set the stage, but the drivers were challenged to find a way to revive the enthusiasm with the way they know best — with tires screeching, rubber-burning and fans screaming.

For all but 100 yards of a race extended by 22.5 miles by overtime, it was pure theater. Then it got painstakingly real. And crushingly horrible.

NASCAR clearly was on a better path until Newman's cash. It was a stark reminder racing is about humans, not market shares. A new car is being developed for 2021 that will bring "stock" back to stock-car racing. The sport is working hard to find a way to keep up with technology without turning their cars into science projects.

But it still is, and always will be, about people.

Trump's appearance put the sport's future on a tee, an easy target to hit it down the middle. Completely off-script, however, Monday reminded us of the shocking dangerously reality of speed, machine and man, especially when the sport's biggest prize is a few feet away.

In the rumble, the challenge for NASCAR still remains never to ignore racing's roots. Know your audience and play to it. Never stop trying to Make NASCAR Great Again.

At the same time, Ryan Newman reminded us we should never forget NASCAR always will be a sport about people, not cars. Or politics.

# Underdogs Shine in Daytona

The first races of the 2020 season are usually filled with excitement, drama, and unexpected results. Speedweeks at Daytona International Speedway this year was no exception.

The first weekend saw the ARCA Series and Busch Clash highlight the on-track action. Also, qualifying

for the front row starting positions for the Daytona 500 entertained the fans. The first underdog highlight for me came in the Lucas Oil 200 ARCA Menards Series.

Driving her first race for DGR-Crosley in her first full season of ARCA competition, Hailee Deegan served notice to the racing world that she will be a contender for wins and titles this season. The 18-year old from Temecula, California drove a smart and calculated race to post a second-place finish in the season-opener for the ARCA tour.

"I will say that one thing I regret from the past two seasons was making more enemies than I should have," Deegan commented. "Carrying more grudges than I should have. That is something this season, especially coming to ARCA and a lot of new drivers, I want to stay away from that and have people on my side. Then, when I get in situations like where Michael (Self) is and we can help each other. It gets him a victory and me a good finish and we are both happy."

Deegan was content to stay in her second place running position and stay on the bottom of the track following race-winner Self to the checkers.

"That was really my goal," Deegan added. "Second is really a win to me this weekend. Winning the first race in my Ford would have maybe been a little too high of standards for the rest of the season. Everything would have been downhill. This finish gives me something to still work towards."

A three-time winner in the K&N West Series, Deegan knows how to get to victory lane. But her maturity in the DGR-Crosley car in the Lucas Oil 200 at Daytona may be

the key to many trophies in her future.

The NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series had several underdogs that made career highlights in the NextEra Energy 250.

Another young female racer, Natalie Decker, made NASCAR Truck Series history last Friday with her fifth-place finish. It was the highest ever finish for a female driver in series history.

Driving for Niece Motorsports, the Eagle River, Wisconsin driver didn't realize her record-setting performance until reporter spoke with her after the race.

"I didn't even know that (record)," Decker said. "Wow. That is so cool. That makes me feel very proud."

Starting her Chevrolet Silverado 30th in the 32-truck

field, Decker certainly had numerous anxious moments during the race. An accident that resulted in a red flag and two multi-truck crashes in the closing laps forced a green-white-checker finish.

"From the beginning all the way up to the last two laps, my team kept telling me to ride in the back," Decker added. "I was just bored back there. I was like, come on, I want to get up there and race and get a good finish. As it turned out, they were right. Just missing all the wrecks in the last two laps and getting up there and finishing it out got ourselves a top five (finish)."

"Last year was a rough year," Decker concluded. "To come here to Daytona and get this finish makes me proud and excited to go to Las Vegas. I know I was capable of doing this. But, it's all about you needing to prove to other people and gain their respect. I hope I did that tonight."

As exciting as the fifth-place finish for Natalie Decker was, arguably the best underdog story of Speedweeks was the second-place finisher.

Jordan Anderson competed in his 102nd NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series race last Friday. He had two top-ten finishes in his previous 101 truck races. However, Anderson made a huge gamble pay off when he finished a mere .01-seconds behind race-winner Grant Enfinger in the Daytona sea-

son-opener. A matter of inches kept Anderson from his first NASCAR victory.

The Forest Acres, South Carolina competitor invested in a new superspeedway truck for the Daytona opener. For a man who has relied on support from friends and sponsors who believed in him, driven his hauler to the races, and maxed his bank accounts just to compete, the NextEra Energy 250 race was a fitting testament for the 28-year old driver.

"I'm excited, I'm excited man," Anderson said after the race. "I think I'm going to be disappointed when I'm in my bed at 2 a.m. tonight, watching the replay of the race. I'll be like, 'Oh, it was so close!' But I can't be too disappointed. It's Daytona and second place. Every kid dreams of coming here and competing at this level. The Truck Series has been home for me the last couple years and to get this finish is a huge blessing."

"It means a lot, I'll say that" Anderson continued. "This finish

tonight hopefully is for every underdog in America, every kid that stays up late and works on his dirt Late Model or his Legends Car and dreams of coming here to Daytona. Hopefully, this finish tonight encourages them to never give up on their dreams that you can come here and compete in NASCAR without having million-dollar sponsors. You can come here and fight and claw and dig and tell everybody that says you can't do it, to prove them wrong and be here. This is for all those kids that are out there fighting for it ..."

"I always talk about embracing the journey and I think embracing the journey is just believing that everything in life happens for a reason – good, bad, indifferent," Anderson concluded. "Everything happens and we just try to learn from it, be better people, and ... this is so cool. This is huge."

There are numerous other underdog success stories from Daytona. Codie Rohrbaugh finishing third in the Truck race in only his 12th Series start. It was his first career top-five finish. Derek Kraus, making his 6th career Truck start, finished fourth. The 18-year old Kraus was the 2019 K&N West Champ. Certainly, a great start for the Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series season for several young competitors.

However, the Jordan Anderson story and his post-race comments speak to the true underdog. To see his success, and the career best finishes from many young men and women could make the 2020 one of the most exciting and historic in recent history.



**DENNIS PUNCH**



Natalie Decker waits for NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series qualifying to begin. (BRIAN LAWDERMILK/GETTY IMAGES photo)

# Denny Hamlin Edges Ryan Blaney in Daytona 500; Ryan Newman Hospitalized after Wreck

**D A Y T O N A**  
BEACH, FL – With the car of Ryan Newman sliding upside-down trailing sparks behind him, Denny Hamlin

joined elite company on Monday night in the second-closest finish in Daytona 500 history.

Hamlin beat Ryan Blaney to the finish line at Daytona International Speedway by .014 seconds, and while the driver of the No. 11 celebrated with a burnout on the infield grass, the emergency crew worked to extricate Newman from his No. 6 Ford, which came to rest on its roof at the end of the tri-oval.

Hamlin—unaware of Newman's predicament when he started his burnout—went to a subsequent subdued Victory Lane celebration as the winner of two straight Daytona 500s and three of the last five, tying him for third with Bobby Allison, Dale Jarrett and Jeff Gordon in number of victories in the Great American Race.

Newman was helped from his car and taken by ambulance directly to nearby Halifax Medical Center. In a statement from Roush

Fenway Racing read later by Steve O'Donnell, NASCAR executive vice president and chief racing development officer, Newman's condition was described as serious, but his injuries were not life-threatening.

In the rain-delayed event that proved to be the longest Daytona 500 in history (209 laps, 522.5 miles), Newman held the lead off Turn 4 at the end of the second and final overtime. Newman blocked the charging Team Penske Ford of Blaney, and contact between their two cars launched Newman's car over the hood of Corey LaJoie's Ford.

The No. 6 Ford landed on its roof and slid across the finish line toward Turn 1, after Hamlin—in the only Toyota still on the lead lap—edged Blaney by inches.

"Yeah, I think we take for granted sometimes how safe the cars are," was Hamlin's first thought after climbing from his car. "But number one, we're praying for Ryan. Worked really well with Ryan through this whole race, and obviously he got turned right there."

"Proud of our whole FedEx team. I don't even know what to say. It's so unexpected. I mean, I



Race winner Denny Hamlin sits in front of the treasured Harley Earl Daytona 500 winner's trophy. (NIGEL KINRADE PHOTOGRAPHY photo)

knew they (Blaney and Newman) were going to come with a big run there. My job was to just make sure I didn't put a block that was going to wreck me, live to race another corner.

"We got to (Blaney's) bumper, got to pushing him there, and I knew I was going to give him a big run, and it was going to... the race wasn't over, and obviously, it worked out well for us at the end there."

Hamlin is the fourth driver to win back-to-back Daytona 500s, joining Richard Petty (1973-74), Cale Yarborough (1983-84) and Sterling Marlin (1994-95).

Behind Hamlin and Blaney at the finish were Chris Buescher, Newman's teammate at Roush Fenway Racing; David Ragan, fourth in a one-off after retiring from full-time racing; and Kevin Harvick. Newman was credited with a ninth-place result behind Bowyer (sixth), Brendan Gaughan (seventh) and LaJoie.

Blaney was more concerned with the well-being of his fellow competitor than his razor-thin runner-up finish to Hamlin, who also recorded the closest Daytona 500 finish when he

beat Martin Truex Jr. by .010 seconds in 2016.

"We pushed Newman there to the lead, and then we got a push from the 11, and I made a move off 4 on Newman and he blocked it, and I kind of went low and he blocked that, so then I was committed to just pushing him to the win and trying to have a Ford win it.

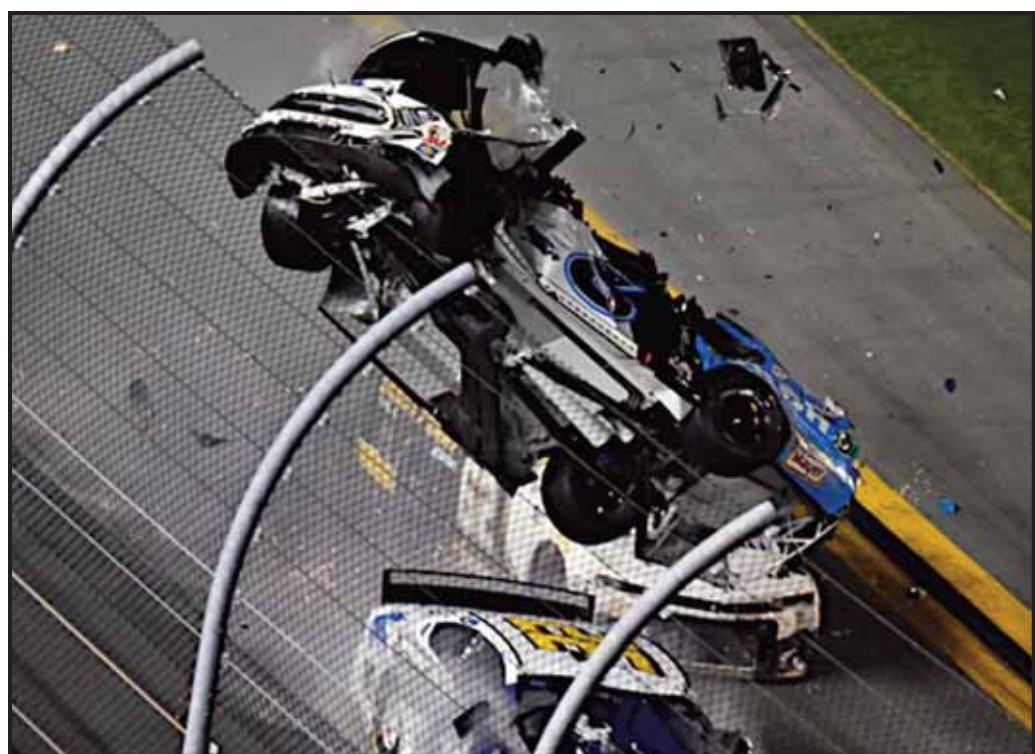
"And I don't know, we just got bumpers hooked up wrong and turned him. I hope he's all right. Definitely was trying to push him to a win. I don't want to say, 'Those things happen.' I feel really bad about it. Man, but close one. But I hope Ryan is all right."

The race resumed on Lap 21 after rain delayed the proceedings for a day. Chase Elliott won Stage 1, and Hamlin triumphed in Stage 2, before, in typical fashion, the intensity ramped up in the closing laps.

A chain-reaction crash that started when Joey Logano bumped Aric Almirola into Brad Keselowski on Lap 184 involved 19 of the 37 cars still in the race and eliminated Keselowski, seven-time champion Jimmie Johnson (likely making his last Daytona 500 start).

A nine-car wreck in Turn 1 on Lap 199 KO'd Logano and Almirola and forced overtime. The first set of extra laps had scarcely begun when a three-car incident in the tri-oval saw Michael McDowell and Clint Bowyer spinning through the infield.

That wreck set up the second overtime and the drama at the finish line.



Ryan Newman's #6 Roush-Fenway Ford goes airborne after being hit by Corey LaJoie (32) after hitting the wall on the straightaway while battling for the lead. (NIGEL KINRADE/NKP photo)

# Joey Logano, William Byron Win Duel Qualifying Races at Daytona

**D A Y T O N A**  
BEACH, FL - Joey Logano grabbed the lead on the final lap of the first Bluegreen Vacations Duel 150-mile qualifying race Thursday at Daytona International Speedway

and held on for the win, but a wreck at the halfway point dashed Daniel Suarez's prospects of competing in his first Daytona 500 with his new team Gaunt Brothers Racing.

In the second Duel, William Byron made a late charge to edge Hendrick Motorsports teammate Jimmie Johnson for the victory by .117 seconds and will start fourth in Sunday's Daytona 500 (2:30 p.m. ET Sunday on FOX, MRN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio).

The victory in the qualifier was Byron's first win of any kind in the NASCAR Cup Series and his first after teaming with seven-time champion crew chief Chad Knaus last year. Logano won his Duel for the second straight year.

Logano led four times for 22 laps in the first Duel, but the real drama occurred on Lap 30, when Suarez's No. 96 Toyota tangled with Ryan Blaney's No. 12 Ford as a contingent of Fords was trying to exit the banking onto pit road. Suarez tried to shoot a gap between Blaney in the outside lane and Brad Keselowski on the bottom, only to

have Blaney turn down the track.

Contact between the two cars turned Suarez's Camry sideways and launched him nose-first into the outside wall, destroying the car. With Suarez out of the race, 18th-place finisher Reed Sorenson transferred into the Sunday's Daytona 500 based on the speed he posted in last Sunday's time trials.

"There was not communication," said a disconsolate Suarez. "The 2 car (Keselowski) all of a sudden started to slow down, and obviously it was either wreck him or go to the right, and I thought the 12 (Blaney) was going to give me a little more room, but obviously he didn't."

"The 2 car, he started getting his hand out of the window super, super late (to signal a pit stop), and I didn't see him. When I started going out, the 12 was there."

After repairs on pit road, Blaney was able to continue and finished 14th.

"I guess, if you wound it, try not to kill it," Blaney said. "We got lucky. We should have never been in that spot in the first place. It was just an error on my part and kind of a little lack of communication that didn't end well."

Daytona 500 pole winner Ricky Stenhouse Jr. led the field to green and was out front four times for 27 laps. After leading laps 58 and 59 of 60, Stenhouse was shuffled back on the inside lane on the final cir-

cuit as second-place finisher Aric Almirola pushed Logano to the front.

"It feels so good," said Logano, who will line up third behind in the Daytona 500 after winning the race that determines the starting order on the inside row. "Obviously, it's the Duels, not the Daytona 500, but momentum is momentum. (Spotter) T.J. (Majors) does such a great job up on the roof understanding the draft."

Logano got his first win with new crew chief Paul Wolfe after an offseason personnel shakeup at Team Penske.

"I've been working with this new group here," Logano said. "They've been working together, but I'm new with them, and it's been a good partnership so far. It's been pretty seamless working out some of the kinks last week (in the Busch Clash) and being able to come to Victory Lane at Daytona."

"Winning anything at Daytona is such a big deal."

Ryan Newman finished third in the first Duel, followed by Keselowski, as Fords swept the top four positions. Bubba Wallace completed the top five in a Chevrolet.

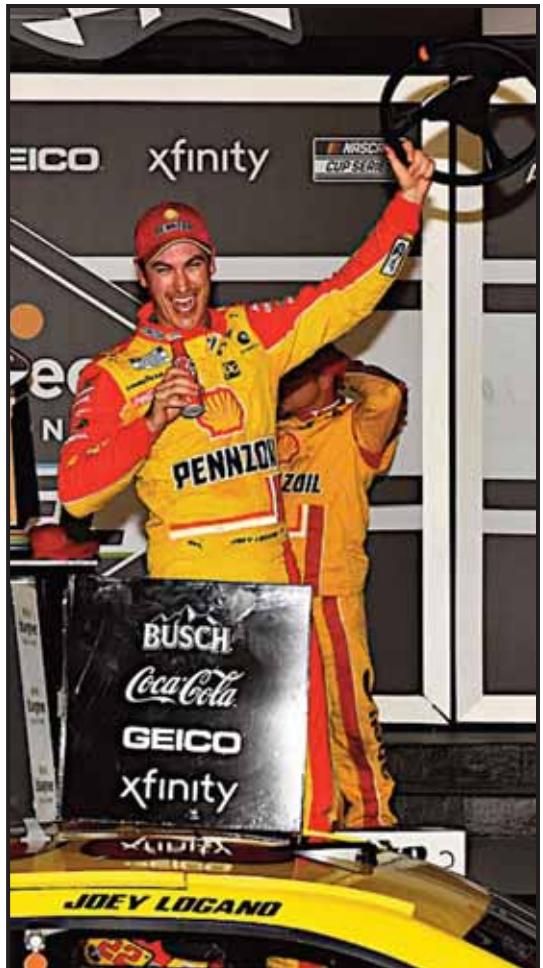
The first caution in the second Duel signaled the demise of another Daytona 500 hopeful. Contact from Corey LaJoie's Ford turned JJ Yeley's Mustang into the backstretch wall and ended his hopes of racing on Sunday.

Yeley's hard wreck gave the transfer spot into the Great American Race to Timmy Hill, who will make his first start in NASCAR's most prestigious race on Sunday.

A strong push from Kurt Busch propelled Byron to the lead with three laps left in the second Duel, and Byron stayed out front the rest of the way, with Johnson surging into second on the final circuit.

Kyle Larson took the third spot, as Chevrolets swept the podium positions. Kevin Harvick, who led three times for a race-high 34 laps, ran fourth, followed by his Stewart-Haas Racing teammate, Sunoco rookie Cole Custer.

In the closing laps, the Chevrolets ganged up on Harvick and Matt DiBenedetto, who pushed Harvick's No. 4 Ford for much of the race. On Lap 57, Byron and Kurt



**Joey Logano celebrates his win of the first Duel qualifying race for his place in the Daytona 500. (RUSTY JARRETT/NKP photo)**

Busch got a strong run to the outside that Harvick couldn't block.

"No, there wasn't any Chevy orders or anything like that," Byron said. "We just did a good job of working together. Kurt was a great pusher and great helper. I really had a lot of trust in him. I was really trying to go with one (lap) to go, but I had enough momentum out of the tri oval."

"Watching the old races, that's where the momentum kind of lines up. I didn't know if I would get that kind of same momentum once everybody started pushing with one to go. Made it there, got to second. I guess Kevin played really nice and didn't pull a big block... Excited for the 500."

To Harvick, discretion was the better part of valor.

"When they're coming that fast, it's putting a lot of risk out there to block," Harvick said. "We have seen how that works out. We had a great car tonight. The guys did a great job. We were able to get onto pit road and had a great pit stop and put ourselves in position to have a chance there. Matt D was a heck of a pusher."

"It was kind of two against the rest of those Chevrolets, and we held our own tonight. We have some fast Ford Mustangs."



**William Byron (24) outruns his Hendrick teammate Jimmie Johnson for the win in the second duel Thursday night. (RUSSELL LABOUNTY/NKP PHOTO)**

# Noah Gragson Gets First NASCAR Xfinity Win in Wild Daytona Shootout

**D A Y T O N A BEACH, FL** - It was a first for Noah Gragson. It was more of the same for Dale Earnhardt Jr.

When a wreck on the backstretch at

Daytona International Speedway ended Saturday's NASCAR Racing Experience 300, Gragson was in the lead, and when the driver of the No. 9 JR Motorsports Chevrolet crossed the finish line under caution, he claimed his long-awaited first victory in the NASCAR Xfinity Series.

What was a novel experience for Gragson was old hat to Earnhardt, who won at the 2.5-mile track for the seventh time as a car owner—with his seventh different driver. Five of Earnhardt's victories have come in the season opener at the

Birthplace of Speed, including the last three in a row.

Gragson recovered from an early pit road speeding penalty to take control of the race. His crew chief, Dave Elenz, won for the fourth time at Daytona with his fourth different driver.

"We were wide open all day and managed to control the group behind us really well," said Gragson, who climbed the frontstretch fence to celebrate his maiden win. "My spotter, Earl Barban, did a great job. He led me to this victory. Very, very thankful to everybody at JR Motorsports, (engine supplier) Hendrick Motorsports for the great power and building this new chassis. Without everybody like that, it just wouldn't be possible."

"Just trying to stay focused, stay positive when we threw it away on that speeding penalty after that first

stage. But I'm so, so proud to be on this team. We stayed till 9:30 the night before we came down here working on the hauler. The team chemistry is better than it's ever been. And I'm ready to go and do this deal some more."

A strong push in the top lane from runner-up Harrison Burton propelled Gragson into the lead after the final restart on Lap 198 of 200. On the final lap, Gragson had pulled away from his pursuers by roughly two car lengths before Brandon Brown knocked Michael Annett's Chevrolet sideways and started the wreck that ended the race under yellow.

The caution froze the finishing order, with Timmy Hill, Brandon Jones and Chase Briscoe running third, fourth and fifth, respectively. A 12-car wreck on Lap 114 that eliminated the contending cars of Jeb Burton and Austin Cindric set up the three-lap dash to the finish.

Previous multicar crashes had KO'd Justin Allgaier and first-time pole winner Myatt Snider. Jeb Burton (26 laps), Allgaier (23) and Snider (22) combined to lead 71 circuits, but none of the three was running at the finish of the race.

Harrison Burton thought he had

an excellent at the victory before the wreck and caution on the final lap.

"Noah got out front about a car-and-a-half, and I thought 'He might be in trouble here,' but then the caution came out," Burton said. "Just really proud of our guys. We had a tough day. I think that there were a couple times in the race that we were down and out, and our guys clawed it out. I was proud of that effort."

Briscoe had grabbed the lead from Gragson before the wreck on Lap 114 but couldn't hold it after the final restart.

"That one is going to sting for a while for sure," Briscoe said. "I feel like we were making more moves than anybody and I thought I was going to have a really good shot there at the end."

"I don't know what was up with the 19, he couldn't give me any help on the bottom."

"It was just one of those where you wish you would have picked the top. We went on the bottom because at the time it felt like the right decision."

Justin Haley, Brandon Brown, Ray Black Jr., Ryan Sieg and Alex Labbe completed the top 10.



Noah Gragson shows the fans his exuberance after winning the NASCAR Racing Experience 300 at Daytona International Speedway. (CHRIS GRAYTHEN/GETTY IMAGES photo)

# Grant Enfinger Wins a Nail-Biter in Gander Trucks Opener at Daytona

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - Grant Enfinger held off charging Jordan Anderson on the final lap of overtime Friday night at Daytona International Speedway to win the NextEra Energy 250 NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series race by .010 seconds.

Enfinger got his shot at the win after a massive wreck on Lap 98 of a scheduled 100 took out his ThorSport Racing teammate, Ben Rhodes, and a baker's dozen of other contenders. Enfinger had the lead for a restart on Lap 105, but on the final circuit, Anderson made a move to the outside and briefly took the top spot as the drivers sped into the tri-oval.

But Enfinger turned the wheel of his No. 98 Ford to the right, door-slammimg Anderson's No. 3 Chevrolet and breaking his momentum just enough to get to the finish line with two feet to spare. Codie Rohrbaugh charged into third place, .070 seconds back, followed by rookie Derek Kraus and

Natalie Decker, whose fifth-place finish was the highest ever by a female driver in the Truck Series.

"It's an unbelievable feeling," said Enfinger, who broke a 28-race winless streak in the series. "It's the 100th win for Ford in the series—unbelievable for them. God's blessed us with a great opportunity to come out here and pull it off tonight."

"The biggest thing is we had a really good F-150 to do it with. I made a mistake there with about 20 to go and got hung up there in the sucker hole. I pulled up in front of Ben (Rhodes) too late, and it was either going to wreck me or put me in the middle, and that's what happened."

"It got to be about four or five laps to go, and it was time to go. We were able to get up in the third groove and make some stuff happen and get the lead during that last big wreck."

Enfinger, who led a race-high 41 laps, won both the second stage and the race, but it was Anderson who was perhaps most elated by his runner-up finish—the first top five of his 102-race Gander Trucks



Grant Enfinger celebrates his win in the NextEra Energy 250, first NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series race of the 2020 season. (JOHN HARRELLSON/NKP photo)

career. Anderson could barely contain his excitement as he watched the replay on pit road.

"Grant, Grant, what are you doing door-slammimg me man?" Anderson said with a laugh as the video rolled. "I came here in 2015 and emptied my bank account to try to come down here and run. To be in a position to even go for a win at Daytona, man, I'm a kid that just wanted to go racing from South Carolina..."

"I thought we set him up good.

We tried to follow Ross (Chastain) there and push him. I know he got loose, and I got up on Grant's bumper there in (Turn) 4 and got a good run. It was like NASCAR Thunder 2003 all over again. I'm like, 'God, I can do this!' And I pushed him out of the way, and I thought we had it."

With five laps left in the first stage, contact from Todd Gilliland's Ford sent the Chevrolet of Tate Fogleman sliding out of control as the field entered Turn 1. Fogleman's Silverado slammed into the Chevrolet of Austin Wayne Self, collecting the No. 45 of Ty Majeski in the process.

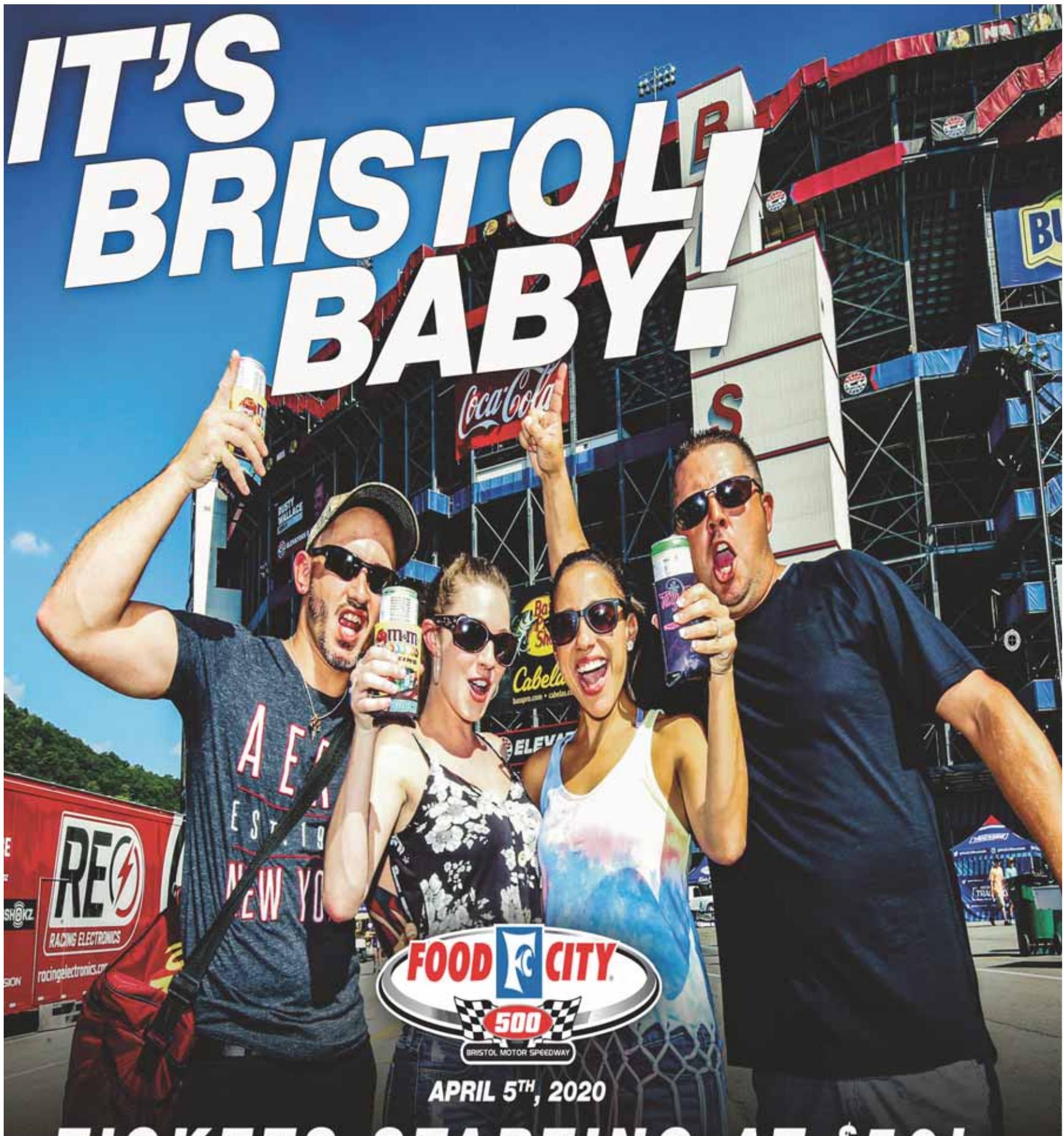
Majeski's Chevrolet tipped over, with help from Fogleman, and the truck slid on its roof through Turn 1, the contact between the sheet metal and asphalt sending a shower of sparks along its path. NASCAR red-flagged the race while the emergency crew righted the truck, enabling Majeski to climb out.

"It's just unfortunate," Majeski said after exiting the infield care center. "It's just a product of this (superspeedway) racing... It wasn't a good feeling (hanging upside-down). I'm not hurt, thankfully—just my pride. It's all good. We'll live to race another day and go get 'em next weekend."

The fiery action-filled race featured three wrecks of nine trucks or more, the last of which set up the overtime finish. Austin Hill, Johnny Sauter, Chastain, Sheldon Creed and Jason White completed the top 10.



Close finishes are the name of the game at Daytona. Here Grant Enfinger (98) edges out Jordan Anderson (3) for the win. (JARED C. TILTON/GETTY IMAGES photo)



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## Sam Mayer Uses Late Surge to Win at New Smyrna

New year, new series, same Sam.

In his first race as defending ARCA Menards Series East champion, Sam Mayer used a late pass on Ty Gibbs to win the Skip's Western Outfitters 175 at New Smyrna Speedway.

It's Mayer's fifth career series win, and comes one year after his fourth-place finish in the 2019 season opener.

"He (Gibbs) drove me up the race track pretty good there, so I was like 'I'm not gonna take that,' so I gave it a little bit back off Turn 2, was able to get to the inside and drive away from there. I think he used his stuff up a little too early which gave us the lead."

Mayer wasn't shy on the aspirations of his GMS Racing team. With an eight-race schedule for the series this season, they have their eyes on winning every single race.

"I mean, we're looking forward to that. That's what I'm trying to do," he said. "This year is going to be a

lot harder than last year. It's a very long shot, but we're one for one right now."

Although Mayer was the one who left with the checkered flag and trophy, Derek Griffith and Chad Bryant Racing stole the show.

Making his first career series start, Griffith, a super late model ace, led over the first 120 laps from the pole and had the quickest car throughout the event. During a late caution, he pitted for tires and fuel, but was penalized for pulling up to pit and was forced to start at the tail end of the field.

Griffith and CBR slowly, methodically worked their way back through the pack and wound up challenging for the lead in the final laps.

But time ran out, and Griffith had the settle for second.

"We started with a blistering pace, and I really didn't even have to use that car up one bit," he said. "We really, really had an excellent car tonight. That Chad Bryant Racing team worked their butts off these last few days. They got that thing dialed in perfect. I've learned so much the past two days."



Sam Mayer picked up where he left off in 2019, winning the season-opening ARCA Menards Series East event. (Matt Stamey photo)

Working with Paul Andrews, Alan Kulwicki's championship winning crew chief, Griffith looked back on the pit road penalty as the determining factor. If he didn't have to come through the field, he believes he would've had a better chance at the victory.

"Definitely hurts a little," he said. "We're gonna definitely look forward, hopefully get another shot in this car, get to race a little more. I hope someone sees it and thinks I deserve it, we definitely need the help. Just such a cool weekend."

Gibbs led a handful of laps en route to a third-place finish, with Nick Sanchez coming home fourth

(career-best) and Giovani Bro-mante (first career race) fifth.

Stephen Nasse, Corey Heim, Parker Retzlaff, Chase Cabre and Max McLaughlin completed the top 10.

Tanner Gray finished 18th after taking a wild ride along the frontstretch wall. Mason Diaz, WHL was also involved in the incident, finished 17th.

The Skip's Western Outfitters 175 is scheduled to be broadcast on NBCSN Friday, February 14 at 1 p.m. EDT. The next race for the ARCA Menards Series East will take place at Five Flags Speedway on Saturday, March 14.

## High School Students Compete for \$59,000 in Scholarships at NASCAR Technical Institute

MOORESVILLE, NC - Universal Technical Institute's Mooresville campus, NASCAR Technical Institute, welcomed students from around the Charlotte area and the region to compete for a total of \$59,000 in scholarships, using in-demand automotive technology skills and knowledge.

23 teams from North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee went head-to-head at the campus on Saturday, competing in both hands-on and written tests on vehicle parts, brakes, diagnostics and electrical systems using NASCAR Tech's state-of-the-industry facility and equipment. Each student placing on a top 10 team won a scholarship, ranging from \$1,000 for fourth through 10th place, to \$10,000 for a first place finish. The top three teams also

walked away with a Snap-On tool set for their school.

Students on the winning team of two, Blake Holbrooks and Devin Fruendt of Clover High School in Clover, S.C., demonstrated know-how in all competitive areas. They now have a chance to advance their skill set after high school thanks to a \$10,000 scholarship, which can be applied to one of Universal Technical Institute's 12 campuses nationwide.

"It is incredibly valuable for high school students to have the opportunity to develop these skills in automotive technology, and we always look forward to celebrating their achievements," said Jennifer Bergeron, campus president at NASCAR Technical Institute.

Recently, the federal government has tripled its estimate for the number of transportation technicians needed nationwide by 2026. According to new projections, there will be more than 1.2

million job openings in the automotive, diesel and collision repair industries. To help reach that total, the transportation industry will have to fill more than 120,000 technician job openings annually on average.

For more information, visit [www.uti.edu](http://www.uti.edu). Like UTI on [www.facebook.com/UTI](http://www.facebook.com/UTI) or follow UTI on Twitter @UTITweet.

## NASCAR Cup Series Champion to Receive Bill France Cup Beginning in 2020

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - To honor the legacy of the sport's founding family, NASCAR today announced that the Bill France Cup will be awarded to the champion of the NASCAR Cup Series, beginning in 2020.

The renamed trophy pays tribute to Bill France Sr., who founded NASCAR in 1947, as well as his son, Bill France Jr., who elevated the sport to a national phenomenon as the sanctioning body's chief executive from 1972 to 2003.

"As the sport ushers in a new era, it's fitting that my father's name is associated with the highest mark of excellence in our sport," said Jim France, NASCAR Chairman and

Chief Executive Officer.

The Bill France Cup, created by Jostens, will maintain the size and shape of last year's championship trophy and will feature outlines of the 24 NASCAR Cup Series race-tracks that comprise the 2020 season schedule.

Bill France Sr. spearheaded NASCAR from its beginning and directed it to its current role as the world's largest stock car racing organization. Born in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 26, 1909, he came to Daytona Beach, Florida, in 1934. In 1947, France became the driving force behind the establishment of the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing. The new organization was called NASCAR.

Bill France Jr. is remembered as the man who followed his visionary father at NASCAR's helm, in the process becoming a visionary himself as he guided NASCAR to unprecedented levels of popularity. France, who passed away in June 2007 at the age of 74, grew up in the formative years of stock car racing, living and learning every detail of the sport from his own experiences, and those of his father.

For more information on the NASCAR Cup Series please visit [NASCAR.com](http://NASCAR.com).

## Allstar Performance Continues Support of CRA

SALEM, IN - Champion Racing Association Powered by JEGS officials have announced that Allstar Performance will continue its support of CRA for the upcoming 2020 season. Allstar Performance will again sponsor the Fast Qualifier Award for the Vore's Welding CRA Late Model Sportsman Series and the Van Hoy Oil CRA Street Stocks events and will continue to be a Contingency Sponsor with the ARCA/CRA Super Series Powered by JEGS, the JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour Presented by Chevrolet Performance and the Victory Custom Trailers CRA Junior Late Models.

The Allstar Performance Fast Qualifier Award at each Vore's Welding CRA Late Model Sportsman Series and Van Hoy Oil CRA Street Stocks event will consist of a \$50 Product Certificate from Allstar Performance, to the driver turning the fastest lap during qualifying. The driver in each division receiving the most Allstar Performance Fast Qualifier Awards during the 2020 season will receive a \$100 Product Certificate. Allstar Performance will also award two \$100 Product Certificates in each division by random draw of the top 10 drivers in final series points at

the 2020 CRA Awards Banquet.

Allstar Performance will award the fifth and fifteenth place finishers at each ARCA/CRA Super Series and JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour event with \$50 Product Certificates. In addition, they will award the fifth and fifteenth place finishers in final series points with \$100 Product Certificates and will award two more \$100 Product Certificates by random draw of the top 10 drivers in each series final points at the 2020 CRA Awards Banquet.

Allstar Performance will award each race winner and fifth place finishers at each CRA Junior Late Models event with \$50 Product Certificates. In addition, they will award the series Champion and fifth finisher in final series points with \$100 Product Certificates and will award one more \$100 Product Certificates by random draw of the top 10 drivers in series final points at the 2020 series Awards Banquet.

"We greatly appreciate Allstar Performance coming back on board as a sponsor with CRA again in 2020," remarked Glenn Luckett, Managing Partner with CRA. "Allstar Performance has been a great supporter of CRA and its racers for many seasons. We look forward to a successful 2020 season with Allstar Performance's support!"

The key to success in any car building project, whether race car, street rod, or street machine, is access to high quality, reasonably

priced parts that will get the job done right - the first time. Each and every Allstar part came about as a direct result of their dedication to continuous research and development. Once a need for a particular part is established, the parts are designed and manufactured by talented craftsmen, many of whom are racers and hot rodders themselves. Remember, many Allstar Performance parts are one-of-a-kind, you won't find them anywhere else at any price! For more information on Allstar Performance, go to [www.allstarperformance.com](http://www.allstarperformance.com).

### **FLUIDYNE to Continue Sponsorship of Cool Under Pressure Award with CRA**

SALEM, IN - Champion Racing Association Powered by JEGS officials have announced that FLUIDYNE has agreed to continue its Contingency Award Sponsorship with CRA and its ARCA/CRA Super Series Powered by JEGS and the JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour Presented by Chevrolet Performance for the 2020 race season. 2020 will be the eighth consecutive season FLUIDYNE has been a sponsor with CRA.

At each ARCA/CRA Super Series and JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour event during the 2020 season, the FLUIDYNE Cool Under Pressure Award will be awarded to a driver or team, who are the coolest under pressure for that event as decided by series officials. The FLUIDYNE Cool Under Pressure Award will

consist of a \$100 FLUIDYNE Product Certificate with the ARCA/CRA Super Series and a \$75 Product Certificate with the JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour.

"FLUIDYNE is very pleased to announce our continuation as a Contingency Award Sponsor with CRA," remarked Gary Johnson, Owner of FLUIDYNE. "Over the years, CRA has earned a reputation for having extremely competitive racing series, where participants can be assured, they will compete against the best short track drivers and teams in the sport."

"We would like to thank FLUIDYNE for coming back on board to support CRA again in 2020," remarked R.J. Scott, Managing Partner of Champion Racing Association. "It's great to have a company with the great reputation that FLUIDYNE has gained in racing, involved with CRA again as a sponsor!"

FLUIDYNE will also award each series 2020 Champion and Rookie of the Year with \$100 FLUIDYNE Product Certificates at the 2020 CRA Awards Banquet.

FLUIDYNE is a manufacturer of innovative cooling products for a wide variety of high-performance applications including Aluminum Oil Coolers, All Aluminum Radiators, Rear End and Transmission Coolers, Water to Oil Heat Exchangers, High Output Cooling Fans and related cooling accessories. More information on FLUIDYNE and its products is available at [www.fluidyne.com](http://www.fluidyne.com).

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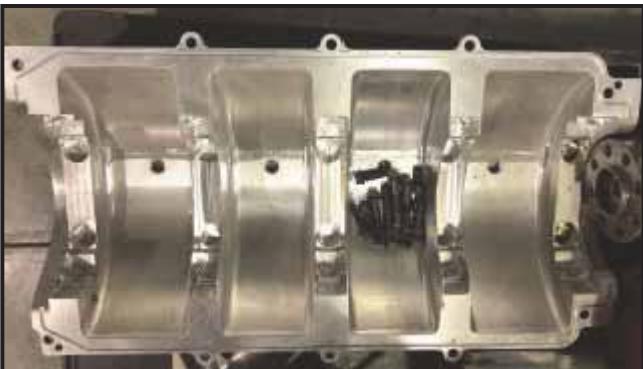
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## Owens Three-Peats at Volusia, Sheppard Claims DIRTcar Nationals Title

BARBERVILLE, FL - Make it three wins in-a-row now for Volusia Speedway Park's newest success story, Jimmy Owens. The Tennessean came into the 49th DIRTcar Nationals presented by Bozard Ford without ever seeing Victory Lane at the facility but left with three gator trophies on Saturday night to show for his efforts across the four World of Outlaws Morton Buildings Late Model Series shows.

"It's awesome, I've never come out of Speedweeks with any kind of confidence. Being in the top ten and a couple top-5s is like 'whoohoo' for us. To come down here and win like this... we're making confident decisions in our team, we're putting our heads together and we're just jiving well," Owens said.

Two-time and defending Series champion Brandon Sheppard successfully defended his 2019 Big Gator title with finishes of first, second, first, sixth, fourth, and fifth over the six nights of 2020 Late Model week for his second career DIRTcar Nationals championship. With those consistent finishes, Sheppard also retains his position atop the World of Outlaws points standings.

He may not have been as dominant at Volusia as he was a year ago, but Sheppard was indeed the rightful champion for his consistency all week. And what a Florida-Georgia Speedweeks he's had overall, winning five races across two Florida tracks and earning several other top-fives. It does the Rocket1 Racing team good to know of their accomplishments as they head back home in preparation for next month's Series races in Tennessee.

"We're still leaving on a good note, even though we didn't win," Sheppard said. "Our confidence is up high and we're looking forward to getting the year rolling."

The start to our year has been so good, can't say enough about it, really. It's been unreal. We've got five wins in Speedweeks, and it's just been unreal, honestly. It's probably not going to sink in for a while because it's been so good."

As for Saturday night's 50-lap

DIRTcar Nationals finale, DIRTcar UMP Modified regular Kyle Strickler kicked things off with the early lead, which he quickly surrendered to Darrell Lanigan on lap two and faded back to fifth. Lanigan led until a hard-charging Jonathan Davenport gave him a great run down low to swipe the spot away as they crossed the stripe to complete lap eight.

The two battled back-and-forth for the next few circuits, swapping the lead a few times until the race's first caution flag waved on lap 10, where Davenport brought it down pit road and did not return to racing – an apparent internal failure.

Owens entered the picture after the restart, driving around Kyle Bronson on the top for the runner-up spot at the line. Bronson would battle back though, regaining the spot on lap 12 and coming after the leader.

Bronson shot past Lanigan on the top side for the lead on lap 16 and led for the greater portion of the contest. Meanwhile, Owens kept it inside the top-three and made a great power move underneath Darrell Lanigan on a lap-25 restart to take second.

Bronson paraded the field

around for the next several laps on his usual high line but was soon slowed up enough for Owens to close the gap in lapped traffic. Into Turn 3 they raced with 11 laps left as Owens drove it high off the fourth turn and stole the lead.

Bronson said tire wear may have played a factor in his car's performance in the waning circuits.

"We just got bottled up behind them lapped cars there and got to where I had pushed the right-front tire off and couldn't steer anymore. I believe them guys had a little bit harder tire on than we did, and it just gave up on us," he said.

As he paced behind Bronson under yellow before the final restart, Owens said he knew the chance to catch and pass the #40B was there, he just needed some patience.

"I know he was running pretty hard and pretty aggressive there," Owens said. "But he was good, he was fast, and I thought I'm just going to calm down and just pace myself, maybe he'll come to me. He got out there a little bit but then I just slowly started reeling him in and it paid off."

As The O-Show crossed the stripe to collect his third-straight Morton Buildings Feature win, Ricky Weiss had just completed his drive back to the podium after starting third. He had slipped way back to as far as ninth at one point before getting back up on the wheel

to regain the lost ground. Using the yellows to his advantage, the 2019 Rookie of the Year turned it into a positive end to his 2020 DIRTcar Nationals campaign.

Bronson crossed the stripe in third, and Lanigan fended off Sheppard for fourth in the latter half of the race to become one of only a few drivers to record top-10 finishes in each of the Late Model week shows. Sheppard also completed the top-five as another driver without a finish of 11th or worse all week.

"We left on a good note," Sheppard said. "We started 11th tonight and got up through there. I thought we were in contention there for a little bit and then the caution came out. I had a bad restart, but our car was a lot better in slick conditions than we had seen it in the past couple nights."

UP NEXT: With another edition of the DIRTcar Nationals now in the history books, the Outlaws turn their attention to Tennessee – Duck River Raceway Park on March 6 and Smoky Mountain Speedway's Tennessee Tipoff on March 7.

Farmer City Raceway's Illini 100 is the next marquee event on the World of Outlaws schedule, get your tickets today for one of Illinois' most storied Dirt Late Model races!

If you can't wait until March to see more great Dirt Late Model racing, get your fix of the Southeast's

(Continued Next Page)



Jimmy Owens celebrates in victory lane after racing to his third straight win in as many days at Volusia Speedway Park. (Trent Gower photo)

**Continued...**

best drivers in action at Modoc Raceway in just two weeks' time as the inaugural Drydene Xtreme DIRTcar Series gets set to crown a champion and hand out the \$20,000 championship points fund check!

Or, if you can't make it to the tracks, catch all the action live with a Fast Pass subscription to DIRTVision presented by Drydene.

## Owens Doubles Up at Volusia

BARBERVILLE, FL - For never having won a Feature at Volusia Speedway Park in his previous 49 starts before his win on Thursday night, Jimmy Owens made going back-to-back on Friday night look easy as he led 24 laps of the Feature en route to his 17th career victory with the World of Outlaws Morton Buildings Late Model Series.

"It's pretty awesome," Owens said. "Our car was flawless last night. We were really good tonight, not as good as we needed to be."

The O>Show certainly was good, backing up his first-ever victory at the DIRTcar Nationals presented by Bozard Ford with his second in two days, fending off a relentless Mark Whitener in the early going, then going on to survive several restarts in the late stages to collect \$10,000 for his efforts across 40 laps.

Kyle Bronson, of Brandon, FL, scored his second podium finish of the week after an amazing charge from 15th, and Darrell Lanigan got hot in the closing laps on the bottom, challenging Bronson after the final restart and coming home third.

At the drop of the green, it looked as though Middleburg, FL-native Mark Whitener was going to have a shot at redemption and Victory Lane, as he immediately grabbed the top spot from the outside pole and jumped out to a sizeable lead in the early going.

As Whitener was maneuvering through lapped traffic, Owens was making significant headway. He caught the rear of Whitener by lap 13 and made the pass down the backstretch the next time by.

But Whitener wasn't done. He re-gathered his momentum on the

top side and came flying by Owens once more to retake the lead on lap 16. Owens continued his pursuit of the lead down low and stole it back on lap 18 as Whitener bulldozed the big cushion in Turn 4.

"We had the cushion up there to hold us in the lead, and we passed Whitener then let him get back by and was able to get back by him. All in all, we held on," Owens said.

Whitener dug up the cushion again after a restart on lap 20, which cost him dearly, as he fell from second to 10th in a matter of just one corner. He made up some ground in the next few circuits but dropped out of the race five laps later – a 22nd-place result for the Speedweeks hopeful.

"I just had to stay off the cushion, that was the biggest deal, because it was pretty treacherous up there," Owens said.

Meanwhile, Bronson had been making major progress towards the front of the field. Killer broke into the top-eight from his 15th-place starting spot by the halfway point and had a full head of steam going forward. By the lap 25 restart, Bronson was in the top-three and pounding the cushion, as he's done effectively so many times at Volusia. He drove around Sheppard on the restart and began his pursuit of leader Owens, playing heavy defense through the final 15 laps.

Lanigan poked his head in the top-five right after halfway and held it there consistently, driving all the way up to third on the low line by the final restart with five laps remaining.

"I knew if I was going to get up there and just follow them guys, I was never going to get around them. So, I was just trying to make the bottom work, so if I at least got to them I could try and get by them," Lanigan said.

That strategy worked, as he took the green on the final restart and drove underneath Sheppard for third. Quickly setting his sights on Bronson, the Union, KY-veteran went on the attack immediately and caught Bronson in a pinch going into Turn 1 with two laps remaining.

"My car was pretty good up top, and I saw [Lanigan] on that one lap, what happened was I was about out of tear-offs and I couldn't really see. So, I got over the cushion and let him by me," Bronson said.

The Bluegrass Bandit rode in second down the backstretch and drove hard into Turn 3, but did not come out of Turn 4 with the spot.

"I overcharged [turn] three too hard, just trying too hard," Lanigan said. "I missed the bottom a little bit

and hung in the middle, then I let [Bronson] get back by me and it was pretty much over with by then."

Still hooked up on the top side, Owens paraded the field back around to the checkered with Bronson and Lanigan following. Bronson seemed the most impressed picking up the night's Hard Charger honors with 13 positions gained.

"To start where we started and come up there and pass all them cars on a track like that, it says a lot about my program," Bronson said.

As for the Viper Motorsports entry, the team made a valiant effort to stay up front, despite Lanigan's thirst for victory.

"I just wish the top wasn't so dominant tonight because our car was phenomenal around that bottom," Lanigan said. "We could run with them around there, we just couldn't get by them." with his performance over 40 laps,

## Owens Earns First Career DIRTcar Nationals Gator Trophy

BARBERVILLE, FL - With all of his continued success around the national Dirt Late Model racing scene over the years, it seemed odd that one major Florida-Georgia Speedweeks venue Jimmy Owens never had a victory at was Volusia Speedway Park.

But on Thursday night at the DIRTcar Nationals presented by Bozard Ford, Owens finally added the track to his "conquered" list, as well as the first gator trophy to his collection.

"It's awesome," Owens said. "We've been coming down here for quite a few years now, and just couldn't quite seem to get our ducks in a row. We've been steadily chunking away at it this week and it worked out for us."

In short, Owens was smoother than silk, leading all 40 laps of the Morton Buildings Feature without missing a beat and cleanly fending off all challengers for his 16th career World of Outlaws Feature win. Dale McDowell crossed in second with his best run of the week while Josh Richards came from 12th to cap off the podium.

The Newport Nightmare grabbed the lead from polesitter Brandon Sheppard down the backstretch on lap 1 and immediately began putting some distance on the field. Sheppard challenged him to the inside in the opening circuits but was unable to make anything happen.

Through 40 laps, that was about the only time Owens was seriously

challenged for the lead. Even lapped traffic couldn't slow down The O>Show, as he maneuvered by every bit of it with ease and never let it slow him down once.

Using his preferred line around the bottom for much of the race, Owens seemed to have a terrific drive off of the corner that propelled him away from the rest of the field.

His acceleration was certainly tested, however, with back-to-back-to-back restarts inside of the final 12 circuits. A hungry McDowell and Richards sat on his rear bumper for the final restart on lap 31, but Owens pulled away and brought the field back to the checkers.

Richards had a very strong car that he put on display early, advancing nine spots to break into the podium by the halfway point. Using that low line, Richards made a great move to McDowell's inside for second on lap 21, which McDowell took back just nine laps later.

"Josh rolled by me and drove off there a little bit, and it took me a little bit to figure out what line to run, to reposition my car, McDowell said. "Then we had a caution come out, and I think that helped me and my right-front tire."

On that final restart, Richards knew the clock was ticking on the time to make another move on McDowell and had to make a tough choice before taking the green.

"I really didn't know whether to pick the top or the bottom on the restart," Richards said. "Both [McDowell] and [Owens] are excellent in that type of condition when it's patchy rubber and drive real straight."

Defending DIRTcar Nationals Late Model champion Sheppard started the Feature on the pole but drifted back into the sixth position by race's end. The 2018 Big Gator champion Chris Madden charged from as deep as 18th at one point to come back and finish eighth. Ricky Weiss was the final car to transfer out of his Last Chance Showdown and started 23rd, picking up 12 spots of position for an 11th-place result.

## Sheppard Wins on Erb Jr.'s Penalty After Wild Whitener-Overton Battle

BARBERVILLE, FL - Just when it looked like Mark Whitener was going to win his first World of Outlaws Morton Buildings Late Model Series Feature on Wednesday night at Volusia Speedway Park, he and Brandon Overton started

(Continued Next Page)

**Continued...**

slamming into each other from Turn 2 to Turn 4, leaving a lane for Dennis Erb Jr. and Brandon Sheppard to claim the lead with eight laps to go.

Erb was glued to the bottom, Sheppard blasted the top side. Erb's groove proved to be just enough to edge Sheppard at the line by the blink of an eye. But following the Victory Lane celebration, Erb did not bring his car to postrace inspection as required, forcing officials to penalize him to last place and award Sheppard the victory, his first of the season. It was Sheppard's second victory during this week's DIRTcar Nationals presented by Bozard Ford.

"The car was phenomenal again tonight," Sheppard said. "We came from eighth and were able to get up through there and challenge Dennis. Unfortunately for him, things happen, and I sure hate to see that for him."

But before all of the post-race drama played out, original race leader Whitener and a hounding Overton reached their boiling points on lap 33, when the two made heavy contact in Turn 4 battling for the lead, leaving Overton in the outside clay-buildup and Whitener slowing at the top of Turns 1 and 2 – a flat left-rear tire on Whitener's #5 and a crumpled nose on Overton's #76. Overton pulled it into the pits and retired on the lap after the restart while Whitener changed his flat and finished the race in 25th.

The battle began with Whitener taking the lead from Erb on lap



**Brandon Sheppard (#1) races with the #76 of Brandon Overton on his way to victory lane Wednesday at Volusia Speedway Park. (Jim DenHamer photo)**

three. Whitener almost immediately went on the defensive, switching from the high to the low side to protect the lead from Erb's grasp. Overton entered the picture on lap 14, making the move to the low side of Erb as he set his sights on Whitener's rear bumper.

More intense battling took place between the top three in the following laps until a caution flag waved on lap 26. Overton made a great move around the outside of Erb for second into Turn 1 on the restart to take second and made the pass for the lead on Whitener at the line as they came back around. Whitener took it back on the outside one lap later before another caution flew with just 10 laps remaining.

"I could see the bottom was starting to get dominant, so I had to get down there. It was starting to go away for me, but I could still blast the top and run it," Whitener said.

Whitener led the field back to the green and chose to slide up to the high line. Overton had the same idea as the two went into Turn 3 on the next lap and ran out of room on the top, forcing him to cross underneath. He slid up tight to Whitener as they passed by the flagstand and took the low line on Turn 1

entry, again drifting up the track in Turn 2.

Whitener had already committed to powering around the top in an attempt to beat Overton out of Turn 2, and the two made contact with each other and the outside wall at corner exit. Overton shot to the lead into Turn 3 and again drifted to the top as Whitener did the same, and the two collided off of Turn 4, sending Overton way up over the heavy cushion, damaging the nose on the Wells Motorsports #76.

The caution flag waived, and the two puffed around the track as the field collected. Overton went right to the rear while Whitener went to the pits to change a flat tire. From his perspective, Overton said he initially left some room on the top side in Turn 2.

"He ran me up the track two or three times, run me up into the fence, pretty much, in Turn 3. I kinda just got tired of messing with him. I slid him, and I left him a lane, I left him some room to get by. I just made it tight for him because I was trying to show him like 'quit doing that.' I guess he felt like I flattened his tire, I didn't run in there and flatten his tire," Overton said.

However, Whitener said he saw

the incident in Turn 2 differently.

"He just wrecked me. He slid all the way into me, put me in the fence and flattened my left-rear tire. He just completely fenced me. I just got wrecked," Whitener said.

When asked about the contact in Turn 4 being retaliatory, Whitener said, "100 percent. And the bad part about it is, me and Brandon have raced Crates, we've raced spec for \$3,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, whatever the case is. But this is a World of Outlaws \$10,000-to-win race. You don't wreck somebody leading the race. A Crate race, a local race, whatever. However he wants to race is good with me, I'll rub doors all day long. But you don't take someone's first World of Outlaws win away from them by putting them in the fence. You don't do that."

Overton was scored with a 27th-place finish and had this to say about the contact in Turn 4:

"We got together, and I guess he felt like I ran him over, so he came back and ran me over. It is what it is, I just hate it for all these guys that work on this thing, but we'll get it fixed up and go again," Overton said.

"It is what it is. We were both trying to win, he was driving hard, I was driving hard and we just came together."

With the two leaders now at the tail of the field, Erb inherited the lead and brought the field back around to the checkers, just .097 seconds ahead of Sheppard. But in the end, Erb was informed of his penalty and Sheppard was declared the winner.

"Not the way we wanted to win it, Dennis did a really good job there," Sheppard said. "He kept it out in front of us that whole race. We were right there, definitely slicing-and-dicing there and had a really good race."

## Texas Two Step On Tap at Cotton Bowl Speedway and LoneStar Speedway

PAIGE, TX - After opening the 2020 season in Florida, The Greatest Show on Dirt will head for an exciting Texas double-header Friday, March 13, at Cotton Bowl Speedway and Saturday, March 14, at LoneStar Speedway.

It will be the World of Outlaws NOS En-

ergy Drink Sprint Car Series' first time back at Cotton Bowl Speedway since 2018 and at LoneStar Speedway since 2017.

Reigning champion Brad Sweet has one of the best records at the 3/8-mile Cotton Bowl Speedway. He won the Series' first race at the speedway in 2016 and finished second to David Gravel the next race in 2018. With a win at Volusia Speedway Park already this year, he'll look to keep that success

going with his Kasey Kahne Racing team in his quest for back to back championships.

The last time the Series raced at the 1/3-mile LoneStar Speedway, 10-time Series champion Donny Schatz took home the victory. After losing the 2019 championship by four points to Sweet, the Tony Stewart/Curb-Agajanian Racing driver will be on the hunt to reclaim title. He'll also be looking to claim his 300th win this year. Schatz also picked up a win in Florida, bringing him to 295 career World of Outlaws wins.

Danny Lasoski holds the track record at both tracks – 13.517 sec. at Cotton Bowl and 13.059 sec. at

LoneStar Speedway. And while he's retired from racing, he'll be back on the tour full-time in 2020 as mentor and crew chief for rookie contender Mason Daniel.

Both events will pay \$10,000-to-win and are sure to produce high-octane action among the winged warriors of the World of Outlaws.

Hot Laps start at 6 p.m. at both events with racing schedule to start at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are now on sale for the Cotton Bowl Speedway event and the East Texas Lone Star Shootout at LoneStar Speedway.

As always, if you can't make it to the races, you can watch all of the action LIVE on DIRTVision.com.

## Davenport Collects First Series Win of the Year

LAKE CITY, FL - Jonathan Davenport, the three-time and defending, Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series National Champion, closed out the 2020 GA-FL Speedweeks with his first win of the season on Sunday Night at All-Tech Raceway. Davenport collected his 48th career series win, at the first-ever Series race held at the Lake City, Florida facility.

Moran jumped to the early lead ahead of Gregg Satterlee, who was making his first start with the Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series this year. Fourth place starter, Davenport, took the lead from early pacesetter,

Devin Moran on lap 20. He sprinted away to win by over three seconds over runner-up finisher, Mike Marlar, in the Rocket Fuels/Rocket. Marlar started in eighth and recorded his best finish of the week.

Brandon Sheppard, a three-time winner at the East Bay Raceway Park Winternationals this week, moved from his 10th starting spot to clear Clanton with two laps to go to finish in third, after a hard-fought battle in the closing laps. Sheppard maintains the Midwest Sheet Metal Point Leader Spoiler Challenge, heading to the series' next events at Atomic Speedway in Ohio on March 20 and Brownstown Speedway in Indiana on March 21.

Jimmy Owens went to a backup car and took a series provisional to start 24th. Owens moved through

the field to finish in fifth, earning Optima Batteries Hard Charger of the race honors.

Davenport, the reigning series champion, was relieved to get his first win of 2020. "You have no idea. My team has worked so hard and we have so much bad racing luck, it's been unbelievable. Thanks to Lance and Darla Landers, I know they are watching back home. Thanks to Steve Martin, from Nutrien Ag Solutions, for supporting us again this year. This was a brand-new car that we never got to test, and then we had to run it at East Bay. We needed this win."

Marlar was pleased his runner-up finish in the series' first appearance at All-Tech Raceway. "This track is so racy. We had a pretty rough week at East Bay, but this track fits me much better. I felt like we had a good run and there was plenty of good racing out there."

Sheppard, whose worst finish during the eight nights of racing

was a tenth, replaced that finish with his third-place finish tonight. "We had a really good car, especially there early in the race. We passed some guys there on the top, but I could run the bottom well too. I should have picked the top on that last restart. I chose the bottom on Devin because I thought the bottom would be better, but I had my momentum broke there. We had a good race between myself and Clanton, we were fortunate to get by him on the white flag lap. Thanks to all of my crew, we've had a great start to this month."

The winner's Lance Landers/Double L Motorsports, Longhorn Chassis is powered by a Cornett Racing Engine and sponsored by Nutrien Ag Solutions, Spartan Mowers, Lucas Oil Products, and Penske Racing Shocks.

Completing the top ten were Devin Moran, Tim McCreadie, Josh Richards, Billy Moyer Jr., and Gregg Satterlee.

## Arneson Tops Arizona Dirt Track Tour Round Four

CASA GRANDE, AZ - Fargo, North Dakota's Casey Arneson pocketed Tuesday night's \$2,000 IMCA Modified winner's share atop the 3/8-mile Central Arizona Speedway by wiring the field in the 25-lap feature event that capped off the fourth round of the Fourth Annual Arizona Dirt Track Tour.

While Arneson earned IMCA Modified honors, Brian Osantowski took the \$750 winner's share in the IMCA Sport Modifieds while Arizona native Ricky Thornton, Jr., picked off his second \$750 IMCA Stock Car win in as many CAS rounds.

Starting from the front row outside of the IMCA Modified main event, Arneson outgunned pole starter Drew Armstrong at the drop of the green flag and then fought off challenges from Jake O'Neil and Alex Stanford on a lap 17 restart en route to the checkered flag.

"I was comfortable the whole race until that last restart," Arneson commented.

Stanford and O'Neil both slipped off the track briefly in separate corners after the restart, allowing Arneson to race on the stripe unabated. Stanford worked back up to second after starting 14th

while Jeff Taylor rallied from 17th to third. Thornton, Jr., was fourth with Chaz Baca, Jr., rounding out the top five.

Brian Osantowski took full advantage of his pole starting position in the 20-lap IMCA Sport Modified feature and then fought off a Cody Thompson bid for the point on a lap 14 restart on the way to pocketing the \$750 winner's share.

Thompson briefly slid past Osantowski following a lap 13 cau-

tion, but Osantowski battled back into the lead and held point the rest of the way to take the win ahead of Thompson with Austen Becerra claiming the show position as Tyler Soppe and 14th-starter Brady Bjella filled out the top five.

In the 20-lap IMCA Stock Car feature event, Ricky Thornton, Jr., raced from fourth into the lead on the opening round and then fought off a late challenge from Zach Madrid to secure the \$750 victory.

With Thornton, Jr., setting the pace throughout, Madrid closed the gap and began to pressure for the point in the final handful of laps as

the lead duo separated from the field. Madrid pulled alongside and then slid into the lead briefly on the 19th round only to have Thornton, Jr., counter the move to preserve the win.

Sean Gentry filled out the podium in third behind Thornton, Jr., and Madrid with Brendon La-Batte and Aaron Hetrick rounding out the top five.

Central Arizona Speedway is back in action on Saturday, February 22, with a \$1,000-to-win IMCA Modified tilt along with Pure Stocks, Bombers, and Power 600 Micro Sprints.

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LOWER LAP TIMES

## Larson Goes Wire-to-Wire to Score Jean Lynch Classic Main Event Victory at East Bay

TAMPA, FL - Certainly synonymous with winning, especially in an open wheel automobile, 'Yung Money' Kyle Larson nearly swept Ollie's Bargain Outlet All Star Circuit of Champions presented by Mobil 1 action on Tuesday night at East Bay Raceway Park, eventually leading every circuit of the inaugural Jean Lynch Classic presented by Winn-Dixie for a \$5,000 payday.

The 30-lap triumph, the product of an outside-front row starting position, was just one portion of Larson's near-domination to close-out the 2020 All Star Circuit of Champions Florida visit. The Elk Grove, California-native set the evening's fastest time during qualifying time trials followed by a convincing victory during the second of two dashes.

Capping an East Bay visit that concluded with back-to-back runner-up performances, former World of Outlaws Rookie of the Year Ian Madsen finished second on Tuesday night, followed by Eliason, a hard-charging Aaron Reutzel, who advanced ten positions, and 'Smoke' Tony Stewart.

"My goal here as of lately was to get to the double-digit win mark in the (NASCAR) off-season and we were able to get number ten here tonight," Kyle Larson explained. "That's not a bad stretch of races since Homestead ended. Hopefully we can move on and win a bunch of NASCAR races with Chip Ganassi Racing."

Untouchable from start to finish, Larson's only real challenges were in the form of cautions and lapped traffic, with the first caution appearing on lap seven and again on lap 29, ultimately setting up a two-lap dash to the finish. Needless to say, the momentum shifts proved to be no harm to the familiar No. 57, keeping KCP Racing's Ian Madsen in the rearview mirror the entire distance even when traffic hit its peak during a 22-lap green flag stretch that extended until lap 29. The caution with two circuits remaining erased a near-five second advantage for Larson.

"I just felt good all night long and

it's really fun to have a car like that. I was actually looking forward to traffic because I knew I had such a good car," Larson said. "I really didn't want to see that last caution because the pace started to slow down in three and four and I was lapping guys around the bottom. You never know where second is, so you gotta figure they would probably go where I wasn't. I was planning on going to the bottom so I was hoping they wouldn't get around me. It all worked out great.

"It has been a struggle the last week or so," Larson said. "So it feels good to come to East Bay and be really good."

With Florida action complete, the Ollie's Bargain Outlet All Star Circuit of Champions presented by Mobil 1 will turn their attention toward Attica Raceway Park in Attica, Ohio, where the Series will take part in a Spring Nationals double-header on Friday and Saturday, April 10 & 11. The two-day program will award a pair of \$5,000 top prizes and officially kick-off the 2020 All Star Circuit of Champions point chase. Fans seeking additional information should visit Attica Raceway Park online at [www.atticaracewaypark.com](http://www.atticaracewaypark.com).

### Aaron Reutzel Scores Second Consecutive All Star Victory at East Bay Raceway Park

TAMPA, FL - Despite the entire Florida campaign not accumulating points toward the overall Ollie's Bargain Outlet All Star Circuit of Champions presented by Mobil 1 championship, if Florida results could give any indication on how the 2020 All Star title chase will unfold, Clute, Texas' Aaron Reutzel is a surefire favorite to earn the \$65,000 top prize, ultimately increasing his consecutive championship run to three.

Now with two consecutive All Star victories in the Sunshine State, the first occurring during Volusia Speedway Park's DIRTcar Nationals on Thursday, February 6, Baughman-Reutzel Motorsports' Aaron Reutzel continued his Florida dominance with a convincing All Star Circuit of Champions presented by Winn-Dixie victory at East Bay Raceway Park on Mon-



Kyle Larson raced his way to victory lane at East Bay Raceway Park leading every circuit of the Jean Lynch Classic presented by Winn-Dixie. (Paul Arch photo)

day evening, February 10, taking command for the first time on lap three before escaping from the rest of the field to snag the \$5,000 payday. In addition, the win was Reutzel's 27th during Series competition, doing so from sixth on the grid.

"We kinda picked up right where we left off last year. Whenever you're running that good at the end of the year, you don't want the year to end. Momentum can change and you can never be too sure how the next year is going to start," Aaron Reutzel explained. "Even when we had the opportunity to practice last week, I told the guys I didn't want to practice. I just wanted to head into race night like it was another race from last year."

A takeover that proved to be just as impressive as the driver performing it, Reutzel's bid for the lead on lap three consisted of two parts, the first segment being a slingshot move around the outer edge of the speedway in turns one and two to power by three-time NASCAR Cup Series champion, Tony Stewart. Reutzel's maneuver in the first two corners was soon followed by a dive through turns three and four to sneak by Brian Brown for the top spot.

The multi-time Knoxville Raceway track champion led the first two circuits.

Reutzel went on to race unchallenged throughout the remaining distance, easily navigating through slower traffic while Tony Stewart, Cory Eliason, Ian Madsen and Brian Brown all jockeyed for position. Climbing ahead from eighth, Madsen eventually settled into second on lap 18 and desperately attempted to track down the two-time champion during the second half of the 30-lap program. The effort was present, but the gap was too much to overcome, even in late stages of traffic. Reutzel lapped all but the top 11 cars and, at one point, maintained a near-five second advantage. The final margin of victory equalled 2.5 seconds.

"The track was phenomenal tonight. I'd love to see a race track like that the entire time we are here," Reutzel continued.

Following Reutzel and Madsen to the line were Cory Eliason, Tony Stewart and Chad Kemenah. On a special note, Aaron Reutzel is now the second Texan to score an All Star Circuit of Champions main event victory at East Bay Raceway Park, now joining Gary Wright on the Florida wins list.



Aaron Reutzel celebrates in victory lane after winning the opening night of action at East Bay Raceway Park. (Paul Arch photo)



## Pocono Raceway

LONG POND, PA - Campsites for the 2020 NASCAR Doubleheader Week will be open for six days, starting on Wednesday, June 24. This announcement comes as camping ticket holders made requests to arrive earlier and marks the first time fans are able to access camping this early in a given NASCAR-event week at Pocono Raceway.

Additionally, less than 125 reserved campsites remain available for purchase.

Camping for the 2020 NASCAR Doubleheader Week will be open for a total of six days and five nights from 2:00 p.m. ET on Wednesday, June 24 until Noon ET on Monday, June 29. All campers will check in at a new and faster RV/Camping Registration area before heading to their respective race week campsite. Upon arrival, campers will receive a welcome bag featuring several partner offerings, a map to navigate facility, important race week camping information and blue bags for recyclable items.

Less than 125 reserved campsites, including spots in the new Turn 1 camping area, are available for purchase. A total of four reserved camping areas are sold out, including Trackside RV, Infield Preferred RV, GEICO 50-Amp Infield RV and GEICO 50-Amp Family Grandstand RV. Pocono Raceway also offers General Admission RV and Tent camping in both their Infield and Family Grandstand (located outside Turn 3) areas. Kids, ages 12 and under, always camp for FREE during NASCAR events at Pocono Raceway. All camping tickets are only available while supplies last.

For complete camping information, please visit [www.poconoraceway.com/tickets](http://www.poconoraceway.com/tickets) or call 1-800-722-3929.

The 2020 NASCAR Doubleheader week will open with ARCA Menards Series practice, qualifying and the General Tire #Anywherels-Possible 200 race on Thursday. On-track action on Friday will include NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series (Gander Trucks) practice and qualifying, along with two scheduled NASCAR Cup Series practice sessions. Saturday's events will feature NASCAR Xfinity Series (Xfinity Series) practice, NASCAR Cup Series

qualifying to set the field for that day's race, a 150-mile Gander Trucks race and a 325-mile NASCAR Cup Series race. Xfinity Series Qualifying, the Pocono Green 225 Recycled by J.P. Mascaro & Sons Xfinity Series race and a 350-mile NASCAR Cup Series race rounds out the bucket-list motorsports week on Sunday.

Note: All events, dates, race lengths and times are subject to change without notice. Children must be accompanied by an adult ticket holder for gate admission and at all times while on Pocono Raceway property. Certain terms, conditions and fees may apply for ticket purchases.

## Talladega Superspeedway

TALLADEGA, AL - One final time! In honor of seven-time NASCAR Cup Series champion and two-time Talladega Superspeedway (TSS) winner Jimmie Johnson's last full-time season racing in NASCAR's premier series, the 2.66-mile track is offering fans two special "Jimmie Johnson ticket options" for the GEICO 500, April 26.

With these ticket offers, fans can watch the legendary driver of the No. 48 tackle the 33-degree banks in what could be his final GEICO 500 start at NASCAR's most competitive venue. Spots are limited, and the ticket opportunities are listed below:

- \$148 Jimmie Johnson Sunday Experience Package (\$54 for kids 12 & under): One (1) Lincoln Grandstand Ticket (between the exit of Turn 4 and the entrance to pit road) for the GEICO 500 NASCAR Cup Series event, Sunday Talladega Garage Experience admission, Q&A session with Johnson in specific area of the NASCAR Xfinity Series garage on Sunday Morning

- \$48 Jimmie Johnson Sunday Grandstand Ticket (\$10 for kids 12 & under): Talladega Sunday Grandstand Ticket (between the start-finish line and Turn 1) to the GEICO 500

In addition to the special Q&A session for only guests who purchase the Jimmie Johnson Sunday Experience Package, also included will be a Talladega Garage Experience admission that offers FREE Wi-Fi, incredible \$4 or less value-priced concessions, Kids Zone, Game Zone, entertainment stage featuring Driver Q&As and other interviews in Fr8Auctions Celebration Plaza, social areas such as Clyde May's Courtyard and Tito's Lemonade Lounge, Gatorade Victory

Lane celebrations after Sunday's race, Sunday pre-race ceremonies and Driver Introductions at the start-finish line, and much more!

Any guests that are current grandstand ticket holders or for those who already have a Talladega Garage Experience admission for the GEICO 500 can add on the Jimmie Johnson Sunday Experience Package by calling the Talladega Superspeedway Main Ticket Office at 855-518-RACE (7223) for more information. Kid's tickets must be added by calling the Main Ticket Office as well.

Johnson, who is in his 20th year competing in the NASCAR Cup Series, will have a shot for his third TSS victory when he rolls into NASCAR's biggest track in April. Of his two victories at 'Dega, both came in the track's spring events. His jaw-dropping 2011 GEICO 500 finish is the closest in NASCAR Cup Series history when he came from fifth position to first after exiting Turn 4 to beat Clint Bowyer at the line by .002 second. Additionally, Johnson has accumulated seven top-five results and 13 finishes in the top 10 at TSS. His second career pole came at Talladega in April of 2002, his rookie season.

For more information on Talladega Superspeedway's ticket options for the track's NASCAR tripleheader weekend, as well as the Talladega Garage Experience, simply visit [www.talladegasuperspeedway.com](http://www.talladegasuperspeedway.com) or call 855-518-RACE (7223).

Talladega Superspeedway – which celebrated its 50th anniversary last year – is the most competitive race track on the NASCAR schedule (record 88 lead changes in 188 laps), the highest-banked (33 degrees) and the longest (2.66 miles), as well as the most fun and fan-friendly. Talladega offers something for everyone, including hundreds of acres of free camping, amazing kids tickets and college student prices, along with special offers for military members, first responders, teachers and educators. It's home to the all-new, one-of-a-kind Talladega Garage Experience, which debuted in fall of 2019, featuring "up-close" access, interactive attractions and enhanced amenities. Allowing fans to be immersed into the sport like never before, the Garage Experience offers fans the opportunity to be under the same roof as the race teams as

they prepare the machines in the garage, plus be a part of the Gatorade Victory Lane celebrations while enjoying FREE Wi-Fi and value-priced concessions, all under \$4. The historic venue, which opened in 1969, is deemed NASCAR's "Party Capital" thanks to the track's infamous infield, the traditional Saturday Night Infield Concert on event weekends and renowned Talladega Blvd., home of the "Big One on the Blvd." party. It's the site of the most comfortable seats in motorsports, large ISM Vision HD video boards lining the frontstretch and numerous pre-race activities for fans on race day, including special Kids VIP opportunities. For ticket information, visit [www.talladegasuperspeedway.com](http://www.talladegasuperspeedway.com) or call 855-518-RACE (7223).

## Charlotte Motor Speedway

CONCORD, NC - Put on your blue suede shoes, showcase your performing talents and sing like "The King" with thousands of Elvis Presley fans and car lovers at the April 2-5 Pennzoil AutoFair at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

As part of a spectacular tribute to one of rock n' roll's most iconic artists, the world's largest automotive extravaganza will host a preliminary round of the Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Contest™ in conjunction with Elvis Presley Enterprises, Inc. and Graceland. The AutoFair winner will go on to compete against other contestants from around the world in the overall Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Contest™ during Elvis Week in August.

Additionally, Elvis' world-famous pink 1955 Cadillac will be the showcase attraction at the Pennzoil AutoFair. The car – recognized as one of the world's most famous American-made cars – will join special Elvis memorabilia on prominent display in the infield Showcase Pavilion. The pink Cadillac's historic first trip to America's Home for Racing marks the first time the car has ever been displayed in the United States outside of Memphis.

In addition to earning a spot in  
**(Continued Next Page)**



## Continued...



the semifinals for the Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist ContestTM in Memphis during Elvis Week, the winner will garner the title of Charlotte Motor Speedway's Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist, receive a one-of-a-kind trophy, \$2,500 in prize money and a \$100 gift card for dinner in The Speedway Club. Second place will receive \$1,000 while third place will take home

\$500 and each will also receive a \$100 gift card to The Speedway Club.

Tribute artists who participate in the two-day regional contest will be evaluated for their vocal talent, appearance, stage presence and overall performance.

The competition will take place on Friday, April 3, and Saturday, April 4, on the stage adjacent to Victory Lane. The top five contestants will perform in the finals, beginning at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday.

The deadline to register for the contest is March 20 at 5 p.m. (EST). Click here to register. Fans can gain admission to see the contest by purchasing a ticket to the Pennzoil AutoFair. Tickets are \$13 for adults and FREE for children 13 and under.

The Pennzoil AutoFair annually attracts more than 100,000 visitors, features more than 50 car club displays, and hosts thousands of vendors offering automotive parts and memorabilia for sale and trade. More than 1,500 collectible cars of all makes and model will be available for sale in the car corral that circles the 1.5-mile superspeedway.

The Pennzoil AutoFair is open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday-Saturday and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

**TICKETS:** Single-day tickets are \$13 each day for adults. Admission is FREE for children 13 and under with an adult. A 4-Day Weekend Pass is available for just \$32. Tickets can be obtained by calling the speedway ticket office at 1-800-455-FANS (3267), shopping online at [www.charlottemotorspeedway.com](http://www.charlottemotorspeedway.com), or buying them at the gate.

### Iowa Speedway

NEWTON, IA - The green flag is waving over a new decade and 15 years of racing at Iowa Speedway. Legendary supergroup America, Puddle of Mudd and platinum

country star Chris Lane will headline the highly anticipated lineup for this summer's NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series at Iowa Speedway.

The NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series returns for a sixth consecutive year, featuring three dynamic acts complementing six thrilling races. As in seasons past, each installment of the NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series will take place at the Party Pavilion, overlooking Turn 4, following the conclusion of the race on each Saturday of race weekend.

"The NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series is focused on bringing fans awesome entertainment experiences across racing and music," said Iowa Speedway President David Hyatt. "The reprisal of the NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series continues our deep-seeded commitment to providing our fans with a complete entertainment experience on race weekends, which involves much more than racing.

"We are always evolving and looking for new ways to create lifelong memories and engage our fans that are looking for that one-of-a-kind motorsports experience."

In less than a decade, the NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series has become a tremendous success for Iowa Speedway. The 2020 NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series kicks off on Saturday, June 13 when America takes center stage following the NASCAR Xfinity Series Iowa 250. The folk-rock act of the early '70s had several Top-10 hits, including "A Horse with No Name" and "Ventura Highway." This year America will spend much of this 50th anniversary year on the road playing 89 concerts in the U.S. and Europe.

Alt-metal quartet Puddle of Mudd's power ballads such as "Blurry" will maintain the breakneck pace at the Fastest Short Track on the Planet following the NTT IndyCar Series Iowa 300 on Saturday, July 18. Puddle of Mudd has sold over seven million albums and has had a string of No. 1 singles.

The NAPA Auto Parts Concert Series will close out on Saturday, Aug. 1 with chart-topping Country artist Chris Lane. His star is on the rise with multiple gold and platinum level single certifications, two #1 hits ("Fix," "I Don't Know About You"), and more than 1.1 billion career streams to date. Lane's current single "Big, Big Plans" – penned for his wife, Lauren – is climbing the country radio charts.

Previously landing coveted opening slots on tours with Florida Georgia Line, Brad Paisley, Garth Brooks, Tim McGraw + Faith Hill, Rascal Flatts and Dan + Shay, he's currently on his headline BIG, BIG PLANS TOUR and will join Kane Brown on the road this spring. His performance will follow the NASCAR Xfinity Series U.S. Cellular 250.

Single race and event weekend tickets are on sale now. The season ticket renewal deadline is Thursday, Feb. 20. Fans can purchase tickets by visiting [www.IowaSpeedway.com](http://www.IowaSpeedway.com), calling 866.787.8946, or dropping by the Ticket Office in Newton, Iowa Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. CT.

### Eldora Speedway

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - Eldora Speedway's promoter and general manager Roger Slack was named Auto Racing Promoter of the Year (ARPY) during the 47th Annual RPM Workshops in Daytona Beach, Florida. The honor, awarded for the 44th consecutive year by Racing Promotion Monthly, is selected by promoters of over 1,200 speedways, dragways and road courses across North America.

Additionally, the 36th annual Kings Royal was voted Outstanding Annual Short-Track Event of the Year. Previously honored in 1997, the Kings Royal is the first event to earn the prestigious accolade for a second time.

"This is a tremendous honor to be able to accept this award on behalf of our entire team at Eldora," said Slack, who garnered over 73% of the ARPY votes during the final round of balloting. "This is voted on by the industry and to be recognized like this is very humbling. I am very fortunate to have my family and so many friends here to share in this – it's incredible. Eldora has such a great history and our entire team, sometimes as many as 400-500 at our biggest events, earned this honor with their hard work and welcoming nature. They are all so dedicated and we're fortunate that Tony (Stewart) continues to provide us with the resources to grow Eldora and continue the legacy built by Earl and Berneice (Baltes)."

Slack has worked his entire career in the racing industry. His family's footprints in racing date back four generations, starting with his great grandparents, who were involved in thoroughbred horse racing. His grandfather, Bob Slack, was the

visionary behind Canada's Cayuga Speedway (now known as Jukasa Motor Speedway) in Ontario and his father, Randy, was an accomplished short-track racer on both asphalt and dirt in late models, big-block modifieds and even big rig semi-trucks. Roger's younger brother, Bobby, is a business partner at Bicknell Racing Products, one of the most-recognized names in dirt modified and specialty parts manufacturing.

"Short-track racing has always been our family's passion," Slack continued. "It is what we have always done and today, this award is not just for me, but for everyone at Eldora and all of those who have believed in me throughout my career."

Originally scheduled as a three-day weekend, the 2019 Kings Royal became a four-day extravaganza by chance when rain pushed the final night of May's #Let'sRaceTwo Doubleheader, featuring both the World of Outlaws and USAC National Sprint Cars, to the Wednesday night preceding the Kings Royal. Never mind that Stewart's bump of the winner's purse from its traditional \$50,000 to a staggering \$175,000-to-win attracted the largest crowd in the 36 year history of the event, temperatures soared to over 100 degrees throughout the week calling for quick response and a robust action plan by Eldora's track services team, the medical professionals in the Premier Health Infield Care Center, area ambulance services, local rescue squads and nearby hospitals.

"This was a big year for the Kings Royal and the action behind-the-scenes was as wild as the action on the track," explained Slack. "Everyone at Eldora is dedicated to providing our fans with the most enjoyable experience possible while watching the best and bravest racers chasing after those big paydays. The way all of the great people of Darke, Mercer, Auglaize and surrounding counties pull together to make them feel welcome regardless of the conditions, whether heat or rain, is second-to-none."

Tickets and campsites for all of Eldora's 2020 events are available at [www.EldoraSpeedway.com](http://www.EldoraSpeedway.com) or by calling (937) 338-3815.





## Selinsgrove Speedway

SELINGROVE, PA - While the Ice-breaker 40 for combined modifieds is coming up as the 2020 season opener at Selinsgrove Speedway on Saturday, March 21, so too is the first show of the season for the 410 sprint cars and super late models just one week later on Sunday, March 29.

The "March Mayhem" program for the 410 sprints paying \$4,000 to win will be the first of seven shows for the powerful, mud slinging 410 sprints at the track this season and Modern Heritage Inc. of Mifflinburg has announced its title sponsorship of the class for the year ahead.

Since opening in late 2019, Modern Heritage has quickly become a region leader in kitchen and bathroom custom design work and installation, "Creating Beautiful and Timeless Spaces."

Offering not only full design and installation services, Modern Heritage also carries full lines of flooring and cabinetry for every customer's needs at its showroom located at 321 East Chestnut Street in Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania.

Modern Heritage owner Nathan Lyons grew up attending the races at his favorite Saturday night race-track, Selinsgrove Speedway and he's excited about the speedway's new direction in 2020.

"I believe with the management team that's now in place at the track and the schedule that it's going to run, it's only going to be successful and its going to be on the up," Lyons says of his expected trajectory for the speedway given the 2020 season of specials that has been put into place for 410 sprints, super late models, 360 sprints and more.

"You're not going to be killing the same fans or killing the same car counts every week, so it's good," he says.

"The diversity only makes sense to put more people in the stands and show off some really good Selinsgrove racing to them."

Other Modern Heritage 410 sprint car dates to come on the 2020 Selinsgrove Speedway schedule of events will take place on: April 26, Ray Tilley Classic, June 28, PA Speedweek Jan Opterman/Dick Bogar Memorial; July

27 Summer Championship; August 29 Summer Sendoff; Sept. 6 Jim Nace Memorial National Open Qualifier; and Sept. 26, 38th annual Jim Nace Memorial National Open.

Each of the Modern Heritage 410 sprint car races on April 26, June 28 and September 26 are part of the 2020 Slivinski Law Offices Super 7 Series of races at the track, featuring just two divisions of racing action on the big half-mile!

Learn all about Modern Heritage by visiting the companies official website at [www.modernheritage.style](http://www.modernheritage.style) and by following the firm on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Make an appointment with Modern Heritage to get your home building or renovation project underway by phone at 1.866.789.5399.

Selinsgrove Speedway will open 2020 at 2 pm Saturday, March 21, with the highly anticipated return of the Northeast Modifieds in the \$5,000-to-win Icebreaker 40!

The Icebreaker will be a combined small and big block, non-sanctioned race offering a \$24,625 purse and will be run under rules and specifications that mirror the Short Track Super Series.

Also on the March 21 racing program will be the crate 602 sportsman modifieds in a \$1,000-to-win 20-lap feature.

For a complete 2020 schedule, the latest news, results, and race status, visit the speedway's official website at [www.selinsgrovespeedway.com](http://www.selinsgrovespeedway.com) or follow the track on Twitter and Facebook.

The speedway office can be reached at 570.374.2266.

## Stafford Motor Speedway

STAFFORD SPRINGS, CT - For the 3rd consecutive season, iRacing will join Stafford Speedway's Late Model contingency program. iRacing, the leader in online Sim Racing, will post a \$125 weekly bonus for the winner of the Late Model feature, boosting the weekly winners share to \$925, and the total posted awards to \$5,600. Stafford Speedway and the SK Modified division have been featured on the iRacing racing platforms since its inception in 2008.

"We are excited to be part of the Stafford Motor Speedway contingency program again this year," explained iRacing Executive Vice President Steve Myers. "Our involvement in grassroots racing is pretty extensive at this point. We do this because we feel it is important to give back to the competitors who

are helping our partners put on good shows every week. The Arute family was one of our first partners and have been with us many years, so we are happy to continue building on that long term relationship with programs like this."

Developed as a centralized racing and competition service, iRacing has evolved into the next generation of sim-racing software used by professional drivers and casual gamers alike. At Stafford, the list of drivers that prepare for the season by using the iRacing service is long with countless drivers improving their craft online.

"We are excited to welcome iRacing back as a contingency partner for the Late Model division in 2020," explained Paul Arute of Stafford Speedway. "iRacing's growth over the last few years has been impressive. Their service has brought countless new fans to the racing world and nearly all of our weekly competitors under the age of 25 are racing on the iRacing platform regularly. We appreciate Steve and the team providing this weekly bonus and giving back to the short track community."

Stafford's Late Model division is coming off one of the most competitive seasons in recent memory with 8 different drivers making it to NAPA Victory Lane. Though Tom Fearn led the way with another impressive 8 win season, many other drivers proved that they belong in the top tier of Late Model racing with Al Saunders, Cliff Saunders, Kevin Gambcarota and Michael Wray all scoring 2 feature wins. 2020 is expected to be just as competitive with all of the top 15 in 2019 points returning to compete full-time at Stafford.

For more information on iRacing and to sign-up for an online racing account visit [iracing.com](http://iracing.com).

Stafford's 2020 season kicks off at the 49th Annual NAPA Spring Sizzler® on April 24-26. 7 divisions of racing are on hand including all 5 of Stafford Speedway's weekly divisions as well as the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour. Tickets for the "Greatest Race in the History of Spring" are on sale now by calling the Speedway Box Office 860-684-2783 or online at [www.stafford-speedway.com](http://www.stafford-speedway.com).

## Stafford Speedway

The Stafford Speedway management team is proud to announce the addition of a new contingency sponsor for both the Late Model and SK Modified® divisions in 2020. Manley Performance Products, a long-time part

supplier for Stafford divisions, has signed on to support a weekly \$100 bonus for the runner-up finisher in both divisions.

Founded in 1966 by Hank Manley, Manley Performance is a high performance parts supplier for many areas of motorsports including Stafford's SK Modified® and Late Model divisions. Based in Lakewood, New Jersey, Manley is now operated by second generation Trip Manley and offers a wide catalog of parts ranging from valves and pushrods, to pistons and cranks.

"Manley Performance is proud to be part of the Stafford Speedway contingency sponsorship program," explained Trip Manley of Manley Performance. "Manley has been manufacturing the highest quality internal components for engine builders and racers competing at Stafford for many years and we are thrilled to be giving back to those who have supported us. Short track racing has been a valuable segment of our overall business and the relationship we have with Stafford and its participants dovetails effectively with our marketing strategy."

Stafford's SK Modified® and Late Model divisions are coming off one of the strongest seasons in recent years. 93 different drivers competed across the 2 divisions in 2019 including 59 different SK Modified® drivers and 34 different Late Model drivers. 7 different drivers made it to Victory Lane in the SK Modified® division while an impressive 9 different drivers in the Late Model division.

"We're excited to get Manley involved in our contingency program," explained Stafford Speedway CEO Mark Arute. "Manley Performance has been an important part of the development of the Stafford spec engine over the years and we thank them for investing back into the competitors. Weekly contingency bonuses go a long way for our race teams and \$100 a week is a nice new addition to the program."

Stafford's 2020 season kicks off at the 49th Annual NAPA Spring Sizzler® on April 24-26. 7 divisions of racing are on hand including all 5 of Stafford Speedway's weekly divisions as well as the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour. Tickets for the "Greatest Race in the History of Spring" are on sale now.

For more information, visit [www.staffordspeedway.com](http://www.staffordspeedway.com), checkout Stafford Speedway on Facebook or Twitter, or contact the track office at 860-684-2783.