

Towns County Sports

Towns County's Leader In Sports



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NASCAR 2010

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Johnson wins at Infineon

Jimmie Johnson has four NASCAR Sprint Cup championships, but until Sunday, he had been winless on road courses. That's all history now, as he won the Toyota/Savemart 350 ahead of Robby Gordon.

Marcos Ambrose was leading the race when the caution came out with eight laps remaining. Ambrose, trying to save fuel, cut off his engine under caution and accidentally stopped on the course. He ended up rejoining the field in seventh. Johnson inherited the lead.

"I thought Marcos (Ambrose) was really going to give us a hard time," said Johnson. "I don't know what happened to him, I just saw him pulling off."

"We had the fastest car at the end, but it was because Chad (crew chief Chad Knaus) kept on me to save my tires. It really paid off."

"It really feels good to finally win on a road course. I've worked hard to be a better road course driver and it finally paid off."

The win was Johnson's 51st, and it moved him from sixth to second in Chase points.

Robby Gordon's runner-up finish was his best since 2005 at Watkins Glen.

"We came up about 10-laps short on tires," said Gordon. "The team did a great job, and if we could have had a few more caution laps, it might have been a different race for us. The tires were the difference in winning the race and finishing second."

There were lots of incidents between different drivers. One of them involved Jeff Gordon and Martin Truex Jr. Gordon got into Truex and knocked him off the track.

Truex was furious. "There he (Gordon) is, out there still racing and I'm wrecked," said Truex.

Gordon, who finished fifth, said afterwards that he did some things on the track that he wasn't proud of.

"We had an awesome race car on the long runs," said Gordon. "But it was wild out there. On the restarts there were guys making it three wide. I'm as guilty as they are. When they started doing it to me, I started doing it to them."

"I completely messed up Martin, and I'm going to try and patch that up with him."

Kevin Harvick, Kasey Kahne, Jeff Gordon, Marcos Ambrose, Greg Biffle, Boris Said, Tony Stewart, and Juan Montoya were the remaining top-10 finishers.

Top-12 Chase contenders after 16 of 36: 1. Harvick-2334, 2. Johnson-2194, 3. Kyle Busch-2193, 4. Hamlin-2183, 5. J. Gordon-2142, 6. Kurt Busch-2118, 7. Kenseth-2092, 8. Burton-2027, 9. Biffle-2011, 10. Stewart-1983, 11. Martin-1947, 12. Edwards-1932

EDWARDS GETS NATIONWIDE WIN

Carl Edwards ended Ford's winless streak, as he won the Nationwide Series race at Road America for the manufacturer's first victory of 2010 in any of NASCAR's top three series.

The remaining top-10 finishers were Ron Fellows, Brendan Gaughan, Brad Keselowski, Owen Kelly, Brad Coleman, J. R. Fitzpatrick, Jason Leffler, Steve Wallace, and Trevor Bayne.

Top-10 points leaders after 15 of 35: 1. Brad Keselowski-2466, 2. Edwards-2229, 3. Allgaier-2051, 4. Kyle Busch-1945, 5. Menard-1860, 6. Harvick-1852, 7. Gaughan-1685, 8. S. Wallace-1674, 9. Leffler-1597, 10. Logano-1593

GODFATHER OF RACING PASSES AWAY

Raymond Parks, the godfather of stock car racing passed away Saturday night at his home near Atlanta, Georgia.

Parks teamed with driver Red Byron to win the inaugural modified championship in 1948 followed by the first "strictly stock" -- the forerunner to today's Cup Series -- a year later.

In addition he helped finance many races as well as the fledgling NASCAR organization in its early years.

"The NASCAR community is saddened by the passing of Raymond Parks," NASCAR chairman Brian France said in a statement. "Raymond was instrumental in the creation of NASCAR as a participant in the historic meeting at the Streamline Hotel in Daytona Beach. He was also our first championship owner. Raymond is a giant in the history of NASCAR and will always be remembered for his dedication to NASCAR."

Funeral arrangements have not yet been announced.

NO DECISION ON KAHNE'S 2011 TEAM

When Kasey Kahne announced he was leaving Richard Petty Motorsports at the end of 2010 and moving to one of Rick Hendrick's teams, fans were told his car and deal would be finalized within 90 days.

But according to Rick Hendrick, that isn't going to happen.

ESPN reported that Hendrick has a lot more options for Kahne in 2011 than he expected when he first signed him in April.

"A lot of it is just waiting for the right time and the right deal," Hendrick said. "I haven't been in a hurry. We've got some good options and there are new deals coming out every day. I get unbelievable calls from people in this garage. We're just not ready to pull the trigger yet."

Hendrick downplayed a report that said Kahne would drive the No. 09 car for James Finch and Phoenix Racing next year before replacing Mark Martin in the No. 5 at HMS in 2012. That report also said Martin could take over part ownership of Phoenix Racing in 2012. Phoenix Racing officials said no conversations with Hendrick have taken place.

"I don't know where that rumor came from," Hendrick said.

Kahne said he and Hendrick spoke on Friday and that his 2011 situation wasn't part of the conversation.

"I didn't even ask anything about next year and he didn't bring it up, either," Kahne said. "We were just talking about other stuff, so I would say there is no new news."

Among the speculated possibilities for Kahne next year, in addition to Phoenix Racing, have been Stewart-Haas Racing and Red Bull Racing. Hendrick did say that Kahne would be in a Chevrolet, and Red Bull currently



fields Toyotas.

"The biggest problem with us, with me and the whole situation is I want to make the right decision for him and our company," Hendrick continued. "I'm not really procrastinating as much as I'm trying to let everything unfold."

HAMLIN STICKS BY DEBRIS STATEMENT

Denny Hamlin stood by his previous statement that NASCAR officials sometimes use caution flags for debris just to liven up a race or close up the competition.

Hamlin was leading last week at Michigan when NASCAR threw a caution for debris with 15 laps remaining. Hamlin went on to win the race, but said afterward that NASCAR threw the caution flag because "this is show business."

"There is always debris around the track," Hamlin said Friday at Infineon Raceway. "You can call anything debris. ... You could say that anything is debris and that it is a legitimate safety hazard, but I just think it's the timing. 'OK, there it is, let's pick it up and regroup.'"

"For the sake of show, that's OK, but for the sake of competition, it's not always the right thing. But, if we weren't talking about that last week, if NASCAR had let it go, people were going to be talking about a boring race, and that's something we don't want, either."

Hamlin said he expected a caution flag when he had a big lead last week.

NASCAR spokesman Ramsey Poston refuted Hamlin's claims, saying NASCAR throws a caution flag for debris when there is a safety hazard.

"When we identify something, or there is something on the track that can't be identified, we are going to err on the side of safety and throw the caution," Poston said. "Cautions exist for the safety of the competitors and our fans and we take that very seriously."

"At some point, I suspect drivers would have a different point of view if they were to hit that piece of debris, particularly leading the race and it ruined their day, or worse. Our job is to maintain as best as we can the safety on the track."

Weekend Racing: The Cup and Nationwide teams are at the 1.058-mile New Hampshire Speedway in Loudon, NH. The Truck teams do not race again until July 11.

Sat., June 26, Nationwide Series race, 16 of 35; Starting time: 3:30 pm ET; TV: ESPN. Sun., June 27, Sprint Cup Lenox Tools 301, 17 of 36; Starting time: 1 pm ET; TV: TNT.

Racing Trivia Question: How many career road course wins does Denny Hamlin have?

Last Week's Question: How many Cup teams does Hendrick Motorsports have? **Answer:** Four, the drivers are Jimmie Johnson, Mark Martin, Jeff Gordon, and Dale Earnhardt Jr.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at: hodgesnews@tcherald.net

SHOUT 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament

3 on 3 Basketball Tournament Saturday, June 26th, starting at 9 a.m. at Union Co. Rec. Four Divisions of Play: Boys Ages 13-15, Men Ages 16 and up; Girls Ages 13-15, Women Ages 16 and up. \$40 Entry fee/Team (3 or 4 person Teams). Prizes awarded for each player: Boys and Girls winners receive: \$20 gift card to Fun World; \$10 gift certificate to a Mexican restaurant. Mens and Womens winners receive \$30 fuel card. First Free Will Baptist Church of Hayesville, 259 Tusquitee Street, Hayesville (828) 389-4777 www.hayesvillefreewill.org Sign up by phone or online.

Church Softball League

Church Softball League in Hayesville. Coed Softball starting in August. Come have a great time playing softball, and fellowship with each other. Men and women from surrounding area churches. Contact Jamie McClure (828) 361-3015.

North Georgia Rapids summer update

The North Georgia Rapids Swim League started its summer meet schedule with the annual Pentathlon hosted in Winder, Georgia. The area's local team, the North Georgia Rapids sent six swimmers to this challenging event, offered only to the league's more experienced swimmers.

Gracie Weldon, swimming in her first Pentathlon, placed 5th overall in her age group of 8 and under which included twenty-two swimmers. Gracie had personal best times in all of her races.

Megan Foster, in the 9-10 age group, had thirty-two competitors to compete against. Megan earned four ribbons in her five races finishing 10th overall, swimming personal best times in all of her races.

Three out of the four older swimmers finished within the top ten of their respective age groups. Courtney



Marshall, women's 13-14, finished tenth out of twenty-nine swimmers with her best finish being a 6th in the 50 yd. Backstroke. Anna Knight also in Courtney's age group, finished third overall, earning a beautiful rosette ribbon, along with five ribbons from her individual successes. Jennifer Chinnici, narrowly missed a top ten place by finishing eleventh.

Tanner Gay, swimming in the men's senior age group, swam five personal best times

and finished third out of a field of thirty-two swimmers.

The team's more experienced swimmers started the summer season in excellent form, with all team members having an outstanding afternoon. The team will continue to practice hard for the approaching championship meet in mid July. For more information about the swim team, contact Coach Barry Gay 706-835-1662. NJUN23,C6JAC

Blood drive at Galaxy Bowl

Look for the LifeSouth Community Bloodmobile at 104 Backyard Lane, Blairsville, GA. We need your help to save lives in Georgia hospitals!

A little of your time as a blood donor offers someone in your community a lifetime of tomorrows.

All donors will receive a LifeSouth recognition item, a complimentary cholesterol screening and blood typing, and 12 months coverage in the LifeSouth Blood Donor Benefit Program. Please donate blood and/or recruit others to donate.

Donors must be at least 17 years of (16 years old with a signed LifeSouth parent permission form), weigh 110 pounds or more, and show a photo I.D. at the time of donation. If you have questions about blood donation, call 770-538-0500 or visit our website at lifesouth.org. NTJUN23,A4JSH

YHC Basketball Camp

Coach Pete Herrmann and Coach Brenda Paul will be holding their first basketball camp together this July. Boys & girls ages - 8-15 years old - July 19th-July 23rd. Contact 706-247-5779 for information on camp registration. Cost \$135 for the week. TJUN23,Z1JSH

14-Under Lady Indians need your help!

We need your help! The 14-Under Lady Indians softball team won the District 7 Championship on Saturday. As a result of this win, they are now advancing to the state GRPA (Georgia Recreation and Parks Association) tournament, to be held in south Georgia, July 8-10. Since this was a bit unexpected, and not planned for in anyone's budget, we need help raising the money to help these girls go to the state tournament.

They will be travelling to Appling County (Baxley, GA) which is southwest of Savannah.

An account has been

set up at United Community Bank, also, any donations can be dropped off at C & J Outfitters. (Nancy Noblet is one of the assistant coaches for the team and she and Nathan have already pledged \$20 per girl for a total of \$200 towards our goal), which will probably be several thousand dollars. Donations may also be dropped off at Michelle's Hair Design, Monday through Saturday with Head Coach Penny Ledford. We don't have solid figures yet, because we have to wait for final information from the Rec Dept, which we won't have until later in the week.

TJUN23,F1JSH

Local Racing Action

By: Carl Vanzura



The Kenny Garrett prepared Monte Carlo carried the flag and then on to victory Saturday night.

Alabama's Kevin Thomas blasts around Tri-County at over 100 mph for win

Cullman, Alabama driver Kevin Thomas blasted around Tri-County Race Track at speeds over 100 mph to take the Georgia Mini Sprint feature in the 18-car field. Thomas won his heat race and started on the pole and stayed in the lead as half a dozen fellow racers were glued to him around the super-fast clay oval. On the white flag lap, three of the sprint cars tangled in the second turn with one car flipping and coming to rest on its side. As emergency rescue got to the scene, the driver got out and waved to the crowd. On the restart, McDonough, Georgia driver Dwight Pilgrim

passed Thomas going into turn one only to see Thomas go to the high groove in turn two and hold the lead to the checkered flag. Tom Maushardth, Ron Bishop and Dank Chapman rounded out the top five.

The Late Model feature was another battle between Morganton driver Bobby Panter and Peachtree's Jamie Oliver as the two battled for 25-laps less than a car length separating them. Kevin Sutton, Preston Crisp and Doug Sneed filled the top five.

Copperhill driver Jason Deal returned to Victory Lane in the GM Performance Late Model main event with a strong run over Hiawassee's Kevin Bradshaw, Tony Ledford, Kurt English and Trevor Parker.

Towns County Youth Football

Towns County Youth Football registration will be held June 19th and June 26th and July 10th and July 17th from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Towns County School football fieldhouse. The registration fee is \$60. The ages for eligible players are from 5 years of age to 12 years of age. Each player must have the \$60 registration fee and copy of birth certificate when registering. The first day of regular practice is July 19th at 6 p.m. at the Towns County School soccer practice field.

Towns County Youth Football along with the assistance of the Towns County varsity coaches will also be holding a camp July 14th and 15th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The camp is free and any child from 5 years of age to 12 years of age is encouraged to attend.

If anyone has any questions, they may contact Jimmy Smith at 706-896-2622 or 706-835-6176. TJUN23,F1JSH

VFW Golf League

The results of league play for Thursday, June 17th. The format played this day was the "a" Scramble format in very hot weather.

The winning team was George Darden. Myron Grizio and Gene Hinson with a score of 66, being -6 under par.

TJUN23,F1JSH

GWRRA meetings

Chapter J of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association (GWRRA) meets on the fourth Saturday of each month (excluding December) at Daniels Steakhouse, Hiawassee, GA. Fellowship and food at 11 AM with the meeting commencing at noon. We welcome riders of all brands of motorcycles and welcome participants of other GWRRA chapters. For further information, please contact Chapter Director Peg Jones 678-464-7340. NTJUN23,SC4

In another exciting Cornwell Tools Modified Street feature, Brasstown's Greg Sudderth survived a post race protest which found the car to be legal, to take the win over Justin Thomas, Junior Whitner, Dale Fortner and Heather Taylor.

Racing returns to Tri-County Saturday with the Cornwell Tools Modified Street Mid-Season Championship, then on July 3rd, the Southeastern Late Model Sportsman Series 40-lap \$1500 to win race along with the famous Tri-County Fireworks Show will be on the schedule.

In other local action, Young Harris driver Randy Nichols won at Toccoa Speedway, Derek Ellis was the big winner at North Georgia Speedway. The Lucas Oil Series did their Tennessee tour and raced at Cleveland Speedway Thursday night with Jimmy Owens taking the win. Ray Cook was fourth and Jonathan Davenport ran 14th. The tour moved to Bulls Gap Speedway on Friday and Saturday. On Friday, Jimmy Owen once again took the \$10,000 pay day. Davenport was third and Cook fourth. On Saturday, Scott Bloomquist won and Davenport and Cook repeated their third and fourth place finishes.

Type O negative blood levels drop to critically low levels

The supply of type O negative blood at the American Red Cross has dropped to critically low levels. Type O negative blood is always in high demand because it can be transfused to patients with any blood type, especially in emergency situations. Type O negative donors are needed to help prevent the fragile type O negative blood supply from reaching a crisis level.

Wednesday, July 14 at Union General Hospital Blood Drive (214 Hospital Circle, Blairsville), from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call Amber Pruitt or Mary Murphy at 745-2111 for more information or to schedule an appointment. Walk-Ins Welcome! Appointments preferred! All presenting donors have a chance to win a \$1000 gift card!

"While all blood types are needed during the critical summer months, we urge those eligible donors with O negative blood type to make and keep appointments to give blood this summer," says Joyce H. Brendel, chief executive officer of the American Red Cross Carolinas Blood Services Region. "You

can make the difference between an adequate blood supply and a summer shortage."

Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs blood. The Red Cross Carolinas Blood Services Region provides lifesaving blood to 103 hospitals and must have 1,600 people give blood and platelets each weekday to meet hospital demand. Accident victims as well as patients with cancer, sickle cell disease, blood disorders and other illnesses receive lifesaving transfusions every day. There is no substitute for blood and volunteer donors are the only source.

Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental permission in some states), meet weight and height requirements (110 pounds or more, depending on their height) and are in generally good health may be eligible to give blood. Please bring your Red Cross blood donor card or other form of positive ID when you come to donate.

For more information or to locate a nearby blood drive, please call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit redcrossblood.org.