



Towns County Herald's Sporting News



NASCAR 2009 *By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter*

MARTIN GETS FOURTH WIN OF SEASON

JOLIET, Ill. — Mark Martin is disproving the theory that older drivers can't win in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. His win Saturday night in the LifeLock.com 400 at Chicago was his fourth victory of the 2009 season, more than any other driver.

And all four wins have come after he turned 50.

"That was fun," Martin said. "That's what life's all about right there. These guys (Martin's No. 5 Chevrolet crew) deserved to win. We could have parked the car (Friday) with an hour left in practice. I knew it was awesome."

"But the best car doesn't usually win. The double-file restarts are to mess the best car up so he doesn't win, to make it good for the fans -- and it did -- but luckily we pulled it off anyway."

Martin pulled away after a double-file restart with two laps left in the race. He gained two positions to 11th in the standings and will have at least 40 bonus points for the Chase, if he can hold a position in the top-12.

His four wins are the most of any one season since 1998, when he was driving for Jack Roush.

Martin took the checkered flag .415 seconds ahead of Hendrick Motorsports teammate Jeff Gordon. Kasey Kahne ran third, followed by series points leader Tony Stewart and Denny Hamlin.

Jeff Gordon did not lead a lap in the race, but rallied late after taking four tires on a pit stop on lap 248 of the 267-lap race.

"Our performance overall was so-so," Gordon said. "We definitely had a challenging night. We started off, our

car was really good the first few laps, but then it got really tight. So we had to make some adjustments. Had a close call there with Carl (Edwards). We lost a bunch of positions. It was basically just fighting back from that point on.

"We got ourselves inside the top-10, which is still a great effort. Then, you know, the caution came out at the right time for (crew chief) Steve Letarte to make an excellent call to come and get four tires. The pit crew did its job getting us off basically first. At that point it was just trying to maneuver through the traffic."

Kasey Kahne battled Gordon during the closing laps but had to settle for third.

"Well it's still good, said Kahne. "We've been on a roll I would say for a while now. I'd say this is eight or nine weeks straight where we've been capable of running in the top-five or top-10 and we finished it off tonight solid. We just have to keep it up."

Tony Stewart dodged one accident and rallied back from a pit miscue and a flat tire to finish fourth.

"You always need strong nights like we had tonight," said Stewart "When you're trying to put yourself in a position to win a championship, consistency is the biggest thing. To be able to knock off top-fives like we did tonight, that's what it's going to take to win a championship. That's what makes nights like tonight so crucial, being able to battle back from some adversity."

Ryan Newman, pole sitter Brian Vickers, Jimmie Johnson, Clint Bowyer and Juan Montoya completed the top-10.

Note: Martin is within one victory of Harry Gant's 1991 record of five wins in a season by a driver 50 or older. ... By picking Martin and Jeff

Gordon to finish first and second in the LifeLock 400 at Michigan in June and seeing them finish in the same order at Chicagoland, sweepstakes winners Donna and Richard Musgrave of Newcastle, Colo., won a \$1-million prize.

Top-20 Chase contenders after 19 of 26: 1. Stewart-2884, 2. J. Gordon-2709, 3. Johnson-2672, 4. Kurt Busch-2526, 5. Hamlin-2457, 6. Edwards-2438, 7. Newman-2385, 8. Kahne-2336, 9. Montoya-2321, 10. Kyle Busch-2298, 11. Martin-2296, 12. Kenseth-2295, 13. Biffle-2285, 14. Reutimann-2219, 15. Bowyer-2169, 16. Vickers-2149, 17. Burton-2113, 18. Ambrose-2078, 19. McMurray-1960, 20. Logano-1956

Only the top-12 drivers will be in the Chase for the Championship, which begins with race 27.

LOGANO IS CHICAGO NATIONWIDE WINNER

Joey Logano picked up his third NASCAR Nationwide Series win of the season, and the fourth of his career, in Saturday's race at the Chicagoland Speedway.

Top-10 leaders after 18 of 35: 1. Kyle Busch-2931, 2. Edwards-2739, 3. Keselowski-2597, 4. Leffler-2527, 5. Logano-2395, 6. Allgaier-2140, 7. Bliss-2129, 8. Gaughan-2080, 9. S. Wallace-2065, 10. Keller-2013

TRUOX TO MICHAEL WALTRIP RACING

Michael Waltrip is going to scale back his 2010 racing schedule and concentrate more on his role as team owner. Replacing him will be Martin Truex Jr.

Waltrip will keep his No. 55, and race in at least four races - maybe as many as 12. Truex will be in the No. 56.

Truex said the future of Michael Waltrip Racing was much more solid than that of Earnhardt Ganassi Racing, his current team.

"There is not a lot in question here," said Truex. "They have all their ducks in a row. They know what they're doing. They know where they're headed. That's comfortable for me. I feel like their cars on the race track are running great, and we're just really starting to see what they're capable of on the track."

Truex is 24th in points, while his teammate Juan Montoya is 11th.

"I am running with Montoya, but I'm not finishing (with him)," Truex said. "It's not necessarily that I'm not happy with the performance over there or they're not doing the things or making good cars because we've had good cars and run well. ... I know what I can do. People out there know what I can do."

"People in this sport know what they're seeing. If I was running 35th every weekend or 25th every weekend they might say, 'He ain't got it no more, he's washed up.' But I don't. When my car is fast, I lead laps, and I run up front. It's as simple as that. I know what I can do when my stuff is right."

"I never seen any of it coming [with Ganassi]," Truex said. "The plan when I resigned was to go back to four cars, get some teammates in there that run well, and we could get in there and be competitive together."

"Chip has been great to work with, and what he has to work with really has helped us there. This year would have been a lot tougher without that. But that wasn't the way we were supposed to head. I got promised a lot of things that just disappeared. A lot of things changed, and that's just how it goes."

Weekend Racing: The Sprint Cup teams are idle this weekend in preparation for next weekend's race at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The Nationwide Series goes to Gateway International Speedway, a 1.25-mile facility just across the river from St. Louis, MO. The Camping World Trucks are at the 1.5-mile Kentucky Speedway.

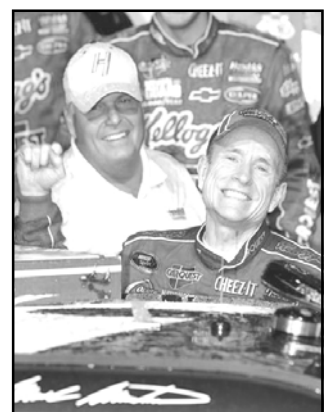
Sat., July 18, Camping World Trucks Built Ford Tough 225, race 12 of 25; Starting time: 6:30 p.m. (EDT); TV: Speed Channel.

Sat., July 18, Nationwide Missouri-Illinois Dodge Dealers 250, race 19 of 35; Starting time: 9 p.m. (EDT); TV: ESPN2.

Racing Trivia Question: Why is Indianapolis Motor Speedway often referred to as "The Brickyard?"

Last Week's Question: When was the first NASCAR race held at Indianapolis Motor Speedway? Answer: Aug. 6, 1994. The winner was Jeff Gordon.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at: hdgesnews@earthlink.net



Mark Martin and team owner Rick Hendrick after Martin's Chicago win

Local Racing Action

by Carl Vanzura



Murphy's Jacob Anderson takes Mid-Season championship

Young Murphy driver Jacob Anderson set his sights on the four foot trophy that goes with winning the Nesmith Crate Late Model Mid-Season Championship at Tri-County Race Track Saturday night. In a caution free 30-lap event, Anderson led from the drop of the green until the checkered flag waved. The finish at the end behind Anderson showed Seth Wimpey, Kevin Sutton, Kevin Bradshaw, Jason Deal, Terry Ledford and Kurt English crossing the finish line.

Thirteen super fast Sportsman took to the track in preparation of next weeks Mid-Season Championship, and what a race they put on for the fans. After several restart due to one of the pole setters jump starting, the race settled down to Tiger, GA's Wesley English and Morganton's Bobby Panter battling all night for the win, English held on with the top five going to Panter, Galen Robinson, Sammy Berrong and Doug Sneed.

Murphy driver Chris Thompson drove his Monte Carlo to a popular win in the Modified Street feature over a hard charging Billy Roberson. The two ran door-to-door almost the whole race. Brad Thomas, Heather Taylor and Brandon Dills made it a close top five finish.

After a close race between Hiwassee's Steven Sofield and Hayesville's Kurt Kelly which saw Kelly leading at half way in the race, Kelly developed problems and pulled into the pits. Sofield took the street Stock win followed by Charles Toomey and Josh Roberts.

The most exciting race of the night came in the Mini Stock feature that saw 13 of the 15 cars enter take the green flag. Right off of the bat, Sylva driver Justin Woodard and Andrews driver Marty Clark followed by fellow Andrews driver Adam Creekmore shot to the front with first Woodard and then Clark leading. Much like last week when Jeff Cooke and Casey Roberts had to work their way through lapped traffic in the Southern All Stars race, Clark, Woodard and Creekmore drove with perfection. Ricky Dyer and Travis Robinson rounded out the top five. First time racer 14-year old Kelah Hendon had a great sixth place finish as well as carrying the flag before the features started.

Tri-County races each Friday night with go karts and every Saturday night with stock cars on the program.

In other local racing action, Tony Knowles won at Dixie Speedway, Anthony White won at Cleveland Speedway, Young Harris driver Randy Nichols won at Toccoa Speedway and Jonathan Davenport set fast time at 311 Speedway for the \$4000 to win Carolina Clash race and led 35 laps of the 40 lap event only to break and ended up 17th at the finish. Blairsville's Brian Kinnersley won the Nesmith Crate Late Model feature Friday night at Sugar Creek Speedway in Blue Ridge. Young Casey Elliot has been having some good runs at Lanier Speedway in Flowery Branch. Take in a race this week end at one of your favorite tracks.



Steven Sofield added another win at Tri-County.

Photo by Jack Appleget

Herald's sports quote of the week

"If you think the last four words of the national anthem are 'Gentlemen, start your engines,' you might be a redneck."

- Jeff Foxworthy, comedian

July 3rd Activities Day winners!



3 Legged Race
Chaiz Davenport
Jonathon Watson



11 & under Homerun Derby
Jonathan Watson

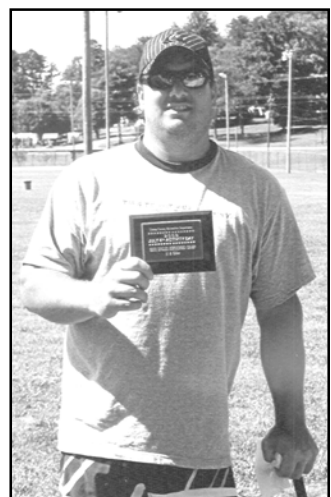


Men Single's Horseshoes
Ray Everett



Men's Doubles Horseshoes
Ricky Moss & Dennis Moss

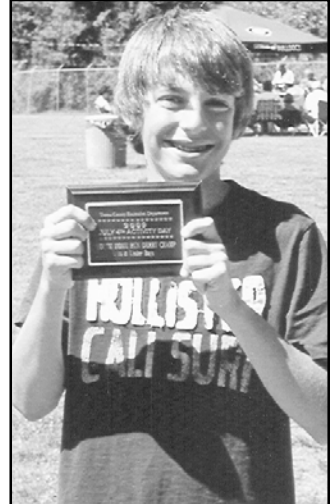
The Towns County Recreation Department held its annual Activity Day on July 3. The weather was great, and all of the participants seemed to have an enjoyable day. Here are a few of the winners who competed that day.



Men's Homerun Derby
B.J. Bush



Youth Single's Horseshoes
Jonathan Everett



14 & under Homerun Derby
Jordan Denton

Towns County Herald

Local sports and racing covered by

Lowell Nicholson

Charles Duncan

Jim & Lisa Bryant

Jerry Kendall

and Carl Vanzura

10 and under baseball team



Front row: Trey Chastain, Cole Ledford, Kobe Denton, Zachary Davenport, Jacob Parker
Middle row: Nicholas McConnell, Major Moss, Willem DeVries, Jackson Taylor, Brody Graper
Back row: Coaches Brett Davenport, Kevin Parker
Not pictured: Russel Cox



Chatuge Shores golf scores

The following are scores from the last two weeks.
7-2-09 Winning team is George Darden, Robert Lyle, Gene Hinson, Score 65, Under -7
7-9-09 Winning team is Bill Kiser, Tom Moyher, Robert Lyle, Score 67, Under -5

North Georgia Rapids Swim Team



The North Georgia Rapids Swim Team recently headed south to Winder, Georgia to compete in the North Georgia Swim League Pentathlon Swim Meet. Eleven teams, consisting of over 250 swimmers participated in this popular summer meet.

With family vacations impacting the team's numbers, the team sent only seven swimmers to compete. Of those seven, five finished within the top seven of their age group, taking home beautiful rosette ribbons for their efforts. All team members swam personal best times and were pleased with their team's achievements.

2009 Rec Dept Summer Day Camp

Towns County Recreation Department's Summer Day Camp is here for boys and girls ages 6 thru 12. The session runs two weeks, Monday thru Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sessions will be as follows:
Session IV July 20 - July 31
The fee for the session is \$120, payable to the Towns County Recreation Department the first Monday of each session.

Children need to bring a swimsuit, towel, sprayable sunscreen and sack lunch. The Recreation department will furnish the drinks for the campers.
Registration will be the first Monday of each session at the Recreation Department located on Hwy. 76 west of Hiwassee. For more info, call 706-896-2600.