



# Towns County Herald's Sporting News



## NASCAR 2009 By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

### JOHNSON GETS THIRD BRICKYARD WIN

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.— Jimmie Johnson won Sunday's Sprint Cup Brickyard 400 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway to become the first three-time winner. Johnson hadn't led until lap 137. On the race's final restart, he passed his teammate and pole sitter Mark Martin for the lead, and led the remaining 33 laps of the 160-lap race. "That was unbelievable," said Johnson. "I can't say enough for Mark Martin. For an old guy, he had me pretty worried there."

"We had to drive it so hard those last 15 to 20 laps to stay ahead of Mark. There were some places he was better than me, and it was kind of a give and take thing, so neither of us would wreck."

Martin finished second and moved up two positions in the Chase.

"He was better than I was off four and I was better than him off two," said Martin. "I knew I had to make it happen off two. Both of us were driving for all we were worth, and I couldn't get him."

Tony Stewart was third. "It was a good run for us," said Stewart. "We had one minor hiccup in the pits when we lost four spots in the pits, but I made that up. We were just a little too tight and couldn't run with Mark or Jimmie."

Greg Biffle, Brian Vickers, Kevin Harvick, Kasey Kahne, David Reutimann, Jeff Gordon, and Matt Kenseth were the remaining top-10 finishers.

Juan Montoya led the most laps (116) of any driver but after a pit road speeding penalty, he finished 11th.

"I really didn't think it was so. You know, we have lights if we're over the speed, and I was under the lights all the time. They said I was speeding. So, that's what it is. When one thing happens, you can't change it."

Montoya dropped from 10th to 11th in the points.

Dale Earnhardt Jr. lost an engine in his No. 5 during lap 127 and wound up with a DNF.

Kyle Busch hit the wall and was finished by lap 112. He dropped four spots, and is now out of the Chase in 14th position.

Top-12 Chase contenders after 20 of 26: 1. Stewart-3054, 2. Johnson-2862, 3. J. Gordon-2847, 4. Kurt Busch-2608, 5. Edwards-2556, 6. Hamlin-2518, 7. Newman-2606, 8. Kahne-2482, 9. Martin-2471, 10. Montoya-2461, 11. Biffle-2445, 12. Kenseth-2429

**Edwards backflips at ORP**  
INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.— Carl Edwards passed Kyle Busch with 22 laps to go Saturday night at O'Reilly Raceway

Park and went on to win the NASCAR Nationwide Series Kroger 200. After his win, he did his traditional backflip in front of the stands.

Edwards led twice for 72 of the race's 200 laps but lost the lead with 30 laps to go under caution. Edwards' No. 60 Ford was pinned behind Scott Wimmer's Chevrolet in the pits, and Edwards mistakenly put his car in the wrong gear.

Kyle Busch led coming to the green flag on Lap 174, but Edwards battled him hard and finally made the pass for the lead on Lap 179.

Busch finished second, with Matt Kenseth third as double-duty drivers swept the top-three positions. Brad Keselowski finished fourth, with Steve Wallace fifth. Ron Hornaday Jr., who won Friday night's Truck race, finished sixth. Polesitter Trevor Bayne, Jason Leffler, Wimmer and Kenny Wallace completed the top 10.

Top-10 leaders after 20 of 35: 1. Kyle Busch-3296, 2. Edwards-3104, 3. Keselowski-2904, 4. Leffler-2790, 5. Logano-2395, 6. Allgaier-2370, 7. Bliss-2353, 8. S. Wallace-2311, 9. Gaughan-2277, 10. Keller-2244

### HORNADAY IS ON A WINNING ROLL

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.— Ron Hornaday Jr. set a NASCAR Camping World Truck Series record by winning his fourth consecutive race, holding off longtime nemesis Mike Skinner in Friday night's AAA Insurance 200 at O'Reilly Raceway Park.

Skinner pitted later than Hornaday for tires and charged through the top-10 to challenge for the lead. Skinner passed Colin Braun for second with nine laps to go and chased down Hornaday four laps later.

Hornaday used the preferred outside lane and held off repeated inside moves by Skinner to win his 44th NASCAR Camping World Truck race.

Skinner finished second, with Aric Almirola coming from a lap down to finish third. Dennis Setzer was fourth, with Braun fifth.

Rookies James Buescher and Taylor Malsam, followed by Stacy Compton, David Starr and Kyle Busch completed the top-10.

The Cup series has the big names, but the competition Friday night in the Truck race was one of the best in weeks.

Hornaday has now won five races this season and built a lead of almost 200 points. He earns people's respect because he is a pure racer. He wants to win, period, and his skill is on display every week. He's also not afraid to speak his mind, something else that endears him to fans.

Top-10 leaders after 13 of 25: 1. Hornaday-2098, 2. Skinner-1924, 3. Crafton-1922, 4. Bodine-1803, 5. Starr-1758, 6. Scott-1750, 7. Malsam-1693, 8. Setzer-1673, 9. Cook-1657, 10. Braun-1639

### FAMILIAR FACES WON'T MAKE CHASE

With six races remaining to determine the 12 Cup drivers who will compete over the final 10 weeks for the championship, five spots currently belong to drivers who weren't in the Chase for the Cup a year ago.

That means five drivers who qualified in 2008 are on the outside looking in. The biggest name among them is Dale Earnhardt Jr. The biggest surprise among them is that three -- Clint Bowyer, Jeff Burton and Kevin Harvick -- are from Richard Childress Racing.

"It (our team) is in a little bit of chaos at the moment, there's no question about it," Burton said. "I think everybody would admit to that. We haven't had the results that we need to have. Whenever you're not having results, the pressure gets turned up."

There have been rumors that Harvick would leave RCR racing at the end of the 2009 season and drive for Stewart-Hass.

Harvick was asked Saturday at Indianapolis Motor Speedway if he had asked out of his contract. His response: "We're focused on this weekend. Right now, we're here to race and do what we need to do from a driver's standpoint and everybody is working well together."

Roush Fenway Racing is in danger of putting only Carl Edwards in the Chase after having three cars a year ago. Matt Kenseth and Greg Biffle clearly need to pick up the pace. Kenseth, in particular, is a mystery as he has struggled since winning the first two races of the season.

"I don't pay a lot of attention to where everybody else is," said Kenseth, who won the

title in 2003. "We've got our own problems to worry about."

What Kenseth was referring to is, long time sponsor DeWalt Tools will end their sponsorship of his No. 17 Ford at the end of the current season.

Weekend Racing: Three series; three different venues. The Camping World Trucks will be at Nashville, while the Nationwide cars will travel to Iowa Speedway for the first time. The Cup teams will be at Pocono Raceway in Long Pond, Pa.

Sat., Aug. 1, Nationwide Cellular 250, race 21 of 35; Starting time: 4 p.m. (EDT); TV: ESPN2.

Sat., Aug. 1, Camping World Trucks Toyota Tundra 200; race 14 of 25, Starting time: 7:30 p.m. (EDT); TV: Speed.

Sun., Aug. 2, Sprint Cup Pennsylvania 500, race 21 of 36; starting time: 1 p.m. (EDT); TV: ESPN.

Racing Trivia Question: Which RCR driver took over Dale Earnhardt Sr.'s Cup ride after his death?

Last Week's Question: Who was the first woman driver to qualify for the Indianapolis 500? Answer: Janet Guthrie in 1977.

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



Jimmie Johnson, winner of Sunday's Brickyard 400

### Herald's sports quote of the week

"It took me seventeen years to get three thousand hits in baseball. I did it in one afternoon on the golf course..."

- Hank Aaron, baseball player

### Tri-County Junior Golf Association

The Tri-County Junior Golf Association is looking forward to another year of junior golf tournaments in our area. With a new year comes a new tour sponsor. "We are delighted to have Mountain Falls as our tour sponsor this year and take great pride in naming the 2009 junior tour the Mountain Falls Junior Golf Tour", stated Steve Gonyea, TCGJA President and Brasstown Valley Resort Golf Course Superintendent. This year's tour schedule will be featuring five tournaments rather than our normal seven. "We are concerned about the state of the local economy and do not want to overburden our relationships with the local golf courses", continued Steve, "The local golf courses go out of their way to accommodate our junior players by allowing them to use their courses each week. We appreciate their cooperation with our junior tour." TCGJA 2008 members should have already received their 2009 membership sign up packets in the US mail. The deadline for 2008 members to sign up for the 2009 Mountain Falls Junior Golf Tour is July 28, 2009.

All potential new members must wait until August 11, 2009 to sign up in person and new member registration will be based on availability. Information regarding the status of new member registration will be available after August 1, 2009 and can be obtained by contacting either Steve Gonyea at 706-379-1532 or Cathy Lewis at 828-389-1867. This year's fee has been reduced to \$ 60 to coincide with the reduced schedule.

The TCGJA invites the public to watch our junior players participate in this year's Mountain Falls Junior Golf Tour. The TCGJA is adding a new course, Old Union Golf Course, to our schedule and will be playing there on Thursday, September 24th. We are delighted to be adding two new tournament sponsors this year, Scott Carter Insurance & Investments and Rotary's Interact. The 2009 tournament schedule is as follows: Thursday, September 3, the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Masters at Chatuge Shores Golf Course in North Carolina; Thursday, September 10, the Community Bank & Trust Classic at Brasstown Valley Resort for the younger junior players (4 and 5 hole players) and the Appalachian Community Bank Open at Butternut Creek Golf Course for the older junior players (9 hole players); Thursday, September 17, the Scott Carter Insurance Open at Chatuge Shores Golf Course (4 and 5 hole players) and the Bank of Hiwassee Classic at Brasstown Valley Resort (9 hole players); Thursday, September 24, the Young Harris College Junior Open at Old Union Golf Course; Thursday, October 1, the Interact Junior Invitational at Butternut Creek Golf Course and a rain-out make-up date if needed of October 8 at Chatuge Shores Golf Course. Please visit any of the tournaments and watch our juniors tee it up.



### Chatuge Shores Golf Benefit

Chatuge Shores Golf Pantry Picnic to benefit the Towns County Food Pantries will be held on Tuesday Aug. 4 with registration from 8-8:45 am and the shotgun start at 9 am. Lunch and awards to follow.

Format: Scramble (Reg-

istration required). \$30 Entry Fee includes greens fees, lunch, a few prizes, bragging rights and lots of fun. There will also be a putting contest! The deadline is Sunday, August 2 at noon. For more info, contact Chatuge Shores Golf Course at 828-389-8940.

## Local Racing Action

by Carl Vanzura



### And the Mid-Season Championship goes to Randy Nichols

"I have run here a lot and this is my first win since the track was reconfigured about eight years ago, aid Randy Nichols." Nichols who lives in Young Harris and races out of Clayton had to hold off a charging Danny Ledford, who several times in the last 20 laps stuck the nose of his car to the inside of Nichols. After the race Nichols stated that he burned his right rear tire almost to the cord and really had to fight Ledford off. "It is really fun to race with Danny because he will race you clean," said Nichols in Victory Lane. Rounding out the field were Rodney Weeks, Chris Williams, Johnny Chastain, Jody Ledford, Russell Thomas, Glenn Barnett and George Mashburn.

Morganton's Bobby Panter and Copperhill driver Jason Payne battled door-to-door all night in the Sportsman feature that saw Panter take the win for the second race in a row. Rounding out the top five were Payne, Galen Robinson, Preston Crisp and Devin Dillbeck.

After a week when he ran another class, Murphy hot shoe Jacob Anderson pulled away from the field in the Nesmith Crate Late Model feature to lead Kevin Sutton, Brian Kinnersley, Jason Deal and Kevin Bradshaw across the finish line.

The Modified Street main event started 13 cars and when the checkered flag waved, Morganton racer Brad Thomas nipped points leader Greg Sudderth across the finish line stripe. Mike Bryson, Charles Devine and Heather Taylor filled the top five spots.

Murphy's Jeremy Woody who is scheduled to be shipped out by the military at any time carried the flag for the track and then went out and raced an exciting race with nine time feature winner Steven Sofield and took the win on the last lap. Charles Toomey, Kody Owenby and Josh Roberts completed the field.

Sylvia driver Justin Woodard liked last week's win so much he did it again in the Mini Stock event. Behind him in the top five were Adam Creekmore, Travis Robinson, Selina Gibson and Lucus Beaver.

Racing returns to Tri-County with a big money go kart race Friday night and the Mid-Season Mini Stock Championship Saturday night.

In other local racing action, Ray Cook's 10 race Southern Nationals completed Saturday night at Tazewell Speedway with Jimmy Owens taking the win. Friday night Tommy Kerr won at Volunteer Speedway. Kerr managed to win the series championship with Blairsville's Jonathan Davenport taking second place in his new Barry Weight team house car. Jonathan had a great 10 race run and picked up a bunch of new fans. Word has come out that two individuals have come up with a big money sponsor and are planning on a \$6000 to win race at the now closed Sugar Creek Speedway in Blue Ridge in the near future.



Steven Sofield went to his ninth victory last week.



Young Harris driver Randy Nichols won the Mid-Season Championship.



Bobby Panter and Kenny Garrett celebrate last week's championship run.

Photo by Jack Appleget

### Chatuge Shores Ladies golf scores

The Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf Association played Odds and Evens for their weekly tournament. While the ladies played the regular 18 holes, only the odd numbered holes on the front nine and the even numbered holes on the back nine counted for the prize money.

Flight A--1st--Loretta Hughes  
2nd--Mary Reece  
3rd--Barbara Boswell  
4th--Opal Rose  
Flight B--1st--Susan Palmich  
2nd--Sally Mirocke  
3rd--Nancy Steck  
4th--Jackie Rossi  
Flight C--1st--Sandy Navarre  
2nd--Carol Mann  
3rd--Carol Younger  
4th--Lorene Avery  
Flight D--1st--Lucy Newman  
2nd--Jan Thumberg

3rd--Jan Still

4th--Kay Watts

Everyone was a winner with a beautiful day for golf. The ladies made time to discuss the coming August 4th tournament benefiting the food pantries in the tri-county area. They will be joined by the Men's Association as well as golfers from the area in an effort to make known the tremendous need of the local food pantries. All golfers are invited to participate. Call the Chatuge Golf Course, 828.389.8940 to join the effort. Eighteen holes of golf, a putting contest, and lunch are included for only \$30.00. The scramble begins at 9:00 am. registration starts at 8:00 am.

### Chatuge Shores Men's golf scores

7-23-09 Winning team, Tom Moyher, Jim Taylor, Jim Fletcher, Gene Hinson with a Score 67, -5 Under

### North Georgia Rapids Swim Team



### North Georgia Rapids Swim Team Summer Update

Approximately 570 swimmers recently competed in the two day North Georgia Swim League (NGSL) Championship meet held in Gainesville. Our area's local team, the North Georgia Rapids, sent 12 swimmers and made an excellent showing.

Millie Burger, age 8, who lives in Blue Ridge, won her age group out of 54 swimmers, winning 4 medals and bringing home the high point trophy. Way to go Millie!

Shane Smith and Tucker Weldon competed in the boys 8 and under division and finished the day placing 2nd and 6th respectively out of 46 boys. Both boys brought home numerous medals and ribbons. Shane's older sister Lilly also swims on the team.

Neffe DeLaCruz medaled in 3 of her 4 events,

earning her a fourth place overall finish in the highly competitive girls 12 and under age group. Neffe's younger sister Jemina won two ribbons and swam three personal best times.

Tanner Gay, the team's oldest male swimmer at 14, had an excellent meet winning four medals. Tanner missed his age group's high point trophy by five-hundredths of a second. All of his swims were personal best times.

The team's showing was impressive considering its size. Congratulations to our swimmers! With several new swimmers recently joining the team, we look forward to continued success.

Our swimmers work hard and practice year round at the Blue Ridge Mountain Fitness Club in Blairsville. For more information contact Coach Barry Gay at 706-835-1662.