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February 2015



Talkin' Racin'



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Publisher's Note *Racing According to Plan*



Dan Plan

It's often difficult to come up with an idea for a column during this time of year. With the recent news regarding Rico Abreu getting a shot at stock car racing, and Jeff Gordon "retiring", I suddenly had an idea for this column.

The Future is Looking Good

I've had this conversation several times before, but the future of our sport is looking good. Sure, some tracks have closed, some people will bitch about rule changes and some people will piss and moan about everything. Those types of things are always going happen. Far be it for me to always be a constant ray of sunshine, but a lot of good things are happening; from the local short tracks to the top level of NASCAR.

Despite 2015 being the last full season for Wonder Boy (Jeff Gordon), look at the crop of kids coming up through the ranks these days. We've already got Kyle Larsen running in Cup, Chase Elliot as the Xfinity (aka; Nationwide, aka; Busch) Series champion, and a long list of others like Ryan Blaney, Bubba Wallace and John Hunter Nemecheck on their way to the big leagues.

continued on page 5



Getty Images photo

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St. Paul MN, 55122
651-451-4036

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Publisher
Dan Plan

Contributing Writers
Shane Carlson
Dale P. Danielski
Eric Huenefeld
Kris Peterson
Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttelman
Jason Searcy
Dean Reller
Charlie Spry

Photographers
Jimmy Ambruoso (815-623-3200)
Rick Blewett (507-398-9483)
Martin DeFries (651-346-1199)
Doug Hornickel (920-563-0993)
Tom Johnson (612-309-7142)
Mark Melchiori (414-463-0131)
Stan Meissner (651-428-4717)
Jacy Norgaard (612-432-9113)
Bruce Nuttleman (612-860-6622)
Jerry Zimmer (715-792-2174)

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Racing According to Plan from page 3

The good news is, guys like Larsen have earned their rides on their ability behind the wheel and not their ability to bring a checkbook with. Just imagine how things will look when these guys are battling for a Cup championship ten years from now. Jimmie Johnson will be the 40-year-old veteran with nearly 25 years of Cup experience taking on these drivers. That doesn't sound like a bad thing to me.

On the short track scene, things are looking up as well. It was recently announced that Madison International Speedway will remain open under the leadership of Gregg McKarns. Madison has a storied history in the Midwest, and after a few years of an unknown future, things look to be stable now. There are also some shakeups taking place in the local dirt world regarding weekly sanctioning. As long as the lawyers don't get involved, this too is a good thing. Competition always makes for a better product. Along with these two items, a new 410 Sprint Car organization (The National Sprint League or NSL) was recently formed in the area and will partner with the already well established IRA for a couple of shows in the area.

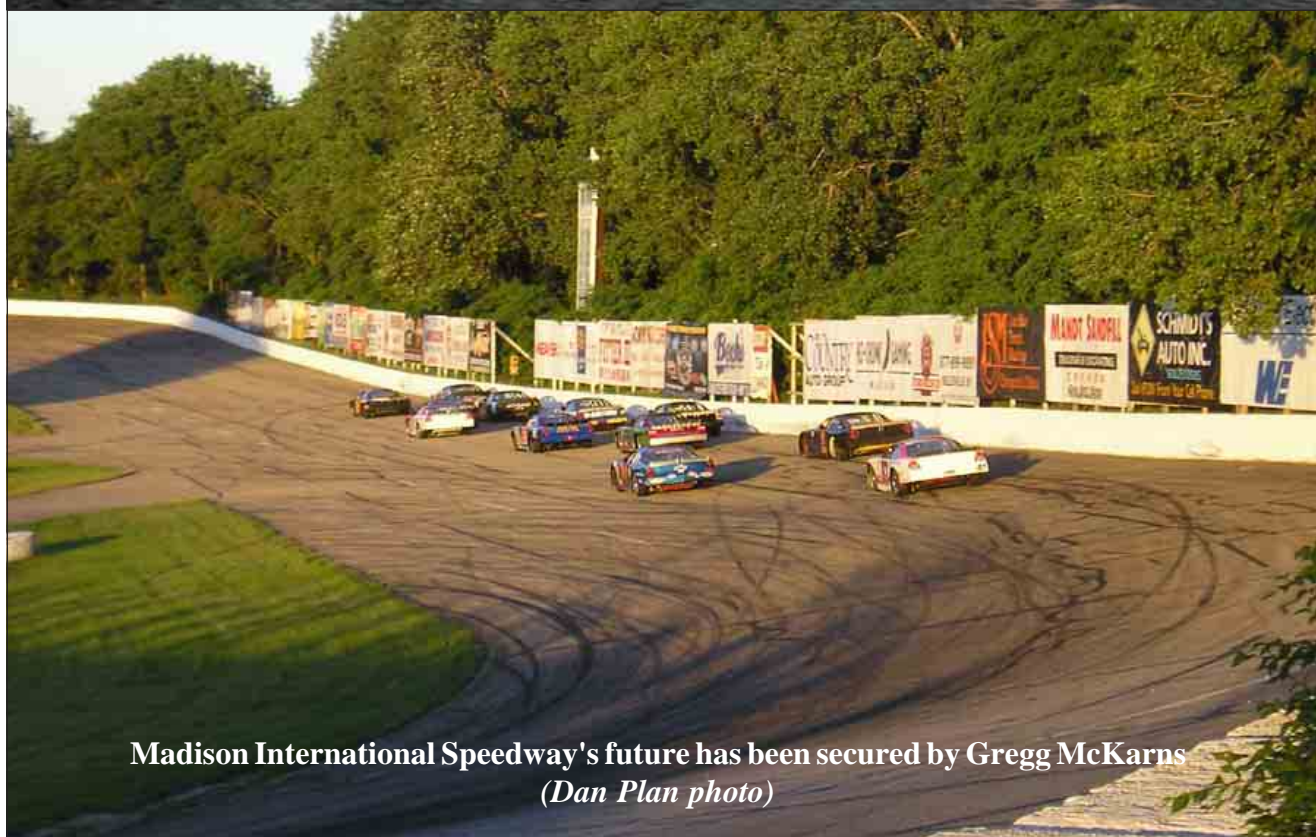
As mentioned previously, there are a few bumps in the road, but there always have been. The previous two paragraphs mention just a few topics, but these good topics far outweigh the bad topics.

Miscellaneous News & Notes:

I can remember reading snowmobile magazines years ago, and seeing the names of Trickle and Prziborowski winning on the frozen ovals in the winter. It seemed natural, as the different schedules don't conflict and both sports had the drivers going in circles. Flash forward to recent times and the Goede family has done quite well with their vintage snowmobile racing program, in addition to their short track endeavors during the summer months. Make sure to check out Jason Searcy's column on Jacob Goede on page 13 of this issue. In addition to the Goede's, ARCA Midwest Tour regular, Cardell Potter, took home the prestigious World Snowmobile Championship at Eagle River. Not a bad winter so far for short track drivers in the Midwest.



Rico Abreu in Sprint Car action. Rico is getting his shot at the big leagues in 2015
(Jerry Zimmer photo)



Madison International Speedway's future has been secured by Gregg McKarns
(Dan Plan photo)

**Make sure to check out our
next issue for 2015
Speedweeks Highlights**

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**available
March 2015**



Dean & Jason
Talkin' Racin'



Jason Searcy

Jacob Goede from Carver (MN) has been named the 2014 Minnesota Asphalt Driver of the Year by Speed Talk on 1360 Radio.

Goede returned to his Minnesota racing roots in 2014 after spending much of the last decade racing in regional Late Model touring series. Goede won the highly contested Elko Speedway Super Late Model division, scoring seven wins along the way including the prestigious Dwain Behrens memorial race.

For the first time in his career, this homecoming made it possible to race side by side the entire season with his brother Matt. The younger Goede also had a successful year, winning two times and finishing fourth in points at Elko Speedway. Jacob and his wife Erica had a new addition to their family with another baby girl born just after the race season concluded.

Jacob Goede was also crowned the NASCAR Minnesota state Champion, he took part in the

Goede Named Speed Talk on 1360
Driver of the Year

ceremony at the NASCAR Hall of Fame located in Charlotte North Carolina. “It was fun,” said Goede “NASCAR does a great job, they treat you like royalty and it really makes you feel like you accomplished something.”

Jacob plans on defending his Super Late Model point title at Elko Speedway in 2015. “We want to focus on Elko again this year,” said Goede “plus I would like to race the Thunderstruck 93 and the Oktoberfest race at the end of the year.”

2015 has started out the right way for both the Goede brothers, they have been busy winning snowmobile races. Jacob and Matt raced in seven different divisions of vintage snowmobiles at the recent Eagle River (WI) classic vintage weekend. The duo took home five titles including the Vintage World Championship where speeds reached 90 mph on a banked 3/8 mile oval track.

For Jacob it’s about time to put the sleds back in storage and start concentrating on the Super Late Model, it took him nearly a decade to win his first Championship. He is determined not to wait that long for the second one.

Here are the previous Speed Talk on 1360 MN Asphalt Driver of the Year award winners:
2004 Dan Fredrickson
2009 Adam Royle
2010 Brent Kane
2011 Chad Walen
2012 Jonathan Eilen
2013 Ricky Martin
2014 Jacob Goede



Jacob, family, & friends on championship night at Elko

Speed Talk on 1360 is a weekly Saturday morning radio show April through September with Jason Searcy and Dean Reller covering Motorsports in Minnesota on KRWC 1360 AM radio. Get more information at www.SpeedTalkon1360.com



Tom Loos photo



Martin DeFries photo



Tom Loos photo

The Goede brothers racing side-by-side in Super Late Model action at Elko Speedway (top photo) and on vintage sleds in Dorchester, WI (bottom photo)

Going in Circles



Charlie Spry

Dirt vs. Asphalt. The debate has gone on forever, so it seems. Many diehard asphalt racing fans want nothing to do with dirt racing, and in a similar vein, many who prefer dirt racing want nothing to do with “tar” racing.

As the debate rages on which is best, why not give each their own credit. I appreciate a good, hard fought battle on either surface, and it doesn’t take long to realize the differences and peculiarities to either type, but why can’t both co-exist in harmony?

There are some people, myself included, that love either type of racing. I especially have an increased respect for those who race on the dirt, as I attempted some dirt racing in a four cylinder, FWD racer this past year, the first time ever. I had an absolute blast! It is much different than racing on pavement. You will

notice I said different, not better. I love doing both, and love attending races on both. Why won’t some fans/drivers open up to the other form? Do we really need to belittle one another? Aren’t we all racers? The goal is the same. I get a hard time about my dirt racing exploits from some friends/co-workers who think I have become a “turncoat.” They love asphalt racing and don’t “get” the allure. I have even offered to let a couple take my car out on the dirt for practice to get a feel for it. Nobody has taken me up on the offer. I was a little apprehensive at first as well, but nothing ventured, nothing gained!

Enough debating. I recently took in the Midwest Racer’s auction and trade show, which was in Delevan, WI. this year. Always fun to catch up on what everyone is doing, plans for the new season, etc.

Ran into central Wisconsin racer Scott Ciesielski. Scott said that he is in the process of building a Ford Pure Stock to run at Golden Sands and possibly Wausau and Dells. He said that building a Ford is tougher than GM, due to lack of parts availability. Scott still has his mod-four car and may race that on a limited basis as well, but wants to get more laps in a V8/Rear drive car as he hopes to move up the racing ladder and feels that is the best route to take.

Probably the most exciting news in Midwest short track racing is the purchase of the Madison International Speedway by Gregg Mckarns. I don’t think there could be a better person and a better fit for this track. Gregg will go about building a strong weekly show on Friday nights, and you can be sure there will be more new and exciting things being introduced as

time goes by. Gregg also purchased the ARCA Midwest Tour in recent months, so he will be one very busy guy.

Got the mid-winter racing blues? Need to see some cars racing in circles? Try one of the many ice racing venues to solve the problem. Many groups run races, and it can help cure the mid-winter blues. Lake DuBay near Mosinee, WI. runs races every Sunday starting at noon as the ice permits. Call-Of-The-Wild Campground near Montello has racing on Sundays at noon as well, and Lake Sinissippi near Hustisford runs races starting at 11:00 A.M. on Sundays.

Putch Bentley said his plans are not set yet, but he is considering running some of the Big 8 races, hopefully with a new car. Putch came down to run with us at the Columbus 151 Speedway about once per year all the way from Iron River, Michigan. He is not afraid to travel, even to attend races. He has raced both dirt and asphalt, and is my kind of racer!

Having been around the racing scene for nearly fifty years, I’ve seen a lot of things change. There are many things that I have enjoyed in the past that are changed or gone altogether now. I miss the old USAC stock car circuit, and the racing during the Thursday of the Wisconsin state fair. I probably lost some hearing ability sitting under the covered grandstand with those loud cars roaring. People didn’t really think about that kind of thing then, but when I look back, it was hard to hear for awhile after leaving the races. Watching those Bolens lawn tractors towing the cars to the front stretch starting grid was another fond memory.

I miss the old Lake Geneva Raceway. The unique way you entered the stands at ground level and looked down at the track. The familiar people who you saw in the same seats week after week. This track was also the setting for the best racing movie ever (in my humble opinion), which was a documentary of the entry level four cylinder BIC class there, and which was named “Four Bangers.”

This month marks my twenty-fifth year of writing for various racing publications, starting with the old Checkered Flag Racing News in 1990. Never in my foggiest notions would I have thought that I would be partaking of this madness for so long. I’ve met so many truly great individuals throughout the whole process. This is what racing is all about....Good people and good competition.



Another great crowd was on hand for the 2015 version of The Midwest Racers Expo
(photo courtesy of Midwest Racers Expo)

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NASCAR Insight**Shane Carlson**

For legions of Dale Earnhardt Jr. fans, 2014 was a special year, and it all started off by winning NASCAR's biggest race, the Daytona 500. Things are different in '15 atop the No. 88 pit box, as Greg Ives takes over crew chief duties from Steve Letarte. Ives won the Nationwide (now Xfinity) Series title last year calling the shots for rookie Chase Elliott. Letarte is now an analyst for NBC Sports. The 2015 Daytona 500 will be exciting as always, with new drivers, new teams, and new paint schemes. Everyone has a shot to win and write his or her name in the history books, but there can only be one driver that claims the title of 'Daytona 500 Champion'.

What it takes to win:

1. Be within earshot of the lead with 10 laps to go. Observing races at Daytona the past few years, it seems to be getting harder to the front in a hurry. Last year, we saw Jr. hold the lead on a late restart and get the win driving out of his rearview mirror.

2. Have a dancing partner. It goes without saying that at a restrictor plate track, drafting plays a major role in

*Dan Plan photo***2015 Daytona 500 Preview**

determining the winner. It helps to have someone to work with throughout the race, but all bets are off with five to go.

3. Don't get caught up in someone else's mess. To come in first, you must first finish. There will be a big wreck, which will prematurely end a lot of drivers' days. Any driver hoping to win has to avoid getting wrecked.

The Favorites:

1. Dale Earnhardt Jr.: He's an Earnhardt. He knows how to get it done.

2. Jeff Gordon: This is his last shot at a 500. Think he's a little motivated?

3. Matt Kenseth: Could he earn Toyota's first win in the 500? He's a two-time winner.

Who's Done it Before:

1. Jamie McMurray: CGR improved a ton in '14, and he has a knack for plate racing.

2. Trevor Bayne: Won in '11, but now joins RFR in the famed No. 6 Ford.

3. Kevin Harvick: Was in contention every week last year it seemed. Why would the 500 be any different?

Potential First-Timers:

1. Tony Stewart: Desperately wants to hoist the Harley J. Earle trophy. He's won everything at Daytona except the 500 over his 16-year career. He's ready for 2015.

2. Brad Keselowski: One of the best drivers in recent years, the fiery Brad K would love nothing more to start '15 off with a statement.

3. Joey Logano: The driver of the No. 22 Ford was solid last season, and has the makings of a great career ahead of him.

Dark Horses:

1. Danica Patrick: She has proven she can run up front at Daytona. Don't be surprised to see her up front.

2. Kyle Larson: This dude's a wheelman. Some say the second coming of Jeff Gordon.

3. Austin Dillon: Last year's polesitter, he showed speed in a place where the No. 3 is linked like no other.

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The Final Lap

By Shane Carlson

Jeff Gordon. Four-time champion. 92-time race-winner. Three-time Daytona 500 champion. Five-time Brickyard champion. The list of accolades goes on, but for me, it was, and never has, nor ever will be about the numbers.

It's about the memories, the relationships. I'm just 21 years old, and I've never known a NASCAR without Jeff Gordon. I never saw Richard Petty race. (Though Petty's last race was Gordon's first. Atlanta, 1992, for those of you keeping score at home. Man, if only they knew.) I liked Gordon's Rainbow Warrior paint scheme better than Earnhardt's so, Gordon became my guy. I was raised on the driver of the No. 24 Chevrolet.

My fondest memories of my dad and I were forged around cheering in front of the television every Sunday for the No. 24. Jeff Gordon brought us together. And from the stories that I've read and the people I've talked to, I'm not the only one.

I remember the double-digit win seasons, including 13 in 1998. I remember the championship seasons; though I didn't fully comprehend how incredibly challenging it is to win a championship. I also remember the lean years. The COT era wasn't a particularly prosperous time for the legion of Gordon fans. It's hard to forget the dustup with Clint Bowyer a few years back in Phoenix. (For the record, I thought it was well deserved) Crew chiefs have changed. Teammates



Getty Images/NASCAR

have come and gone, but as long as Jeff Gordon's name has been inscribed above the door of his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet, it has represented excellence.

I don't have enough space to even start to delve into the changes he has seen over his career, or how he has changed the sport. It's been said in sports that if

you have an era, you're truly among the legends. And Jeff Gordon had an era.

But guess what? This isn't an obituary. Jeff Gordon isn't dead. I don't want to speculate what will happen post-Gordon. We shouldn't be sad. We have the joy of witnessing a legend on the track for one final season, in pursuit of a fifth championship. Whether he wins a title in his final go-round or not, he's going out on top, and whether you've booed him, or if you've cheered for him over his storied 23-year career, at least you made noise and had an opinion.

What a blessing to witness because Jeff Gordons don't come around every day. You know who I'll be cheering for.

Thanks for everything Jeff.

Sincerely, your fans



Getty Images/NASCAR



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Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

It's that time of year when thoughts turn to Florida Speedweeks racing! I'm not going down there but its fun to think of all the racing we've seen there through the years down south.

Paging through the scrapbook I see where we made a trip down there in 1985. A stop at Jacksonville Speedway, Jacksonville, FL., to catch the "Oiled-Dirt" action was the first order of business. Jeff Purvis was the guy to beat then and nobody did on this night as he won the 50 lap feature in his C.J Rayburn creation. Creation is the word for it as he took a page out of the Gary Balough body-style book with his wedge/canopy for the driver racing thing. I have to admit I kind of liked the wild looking cars of the day as to me they were race cars, unlike today where we've gone too far with the stock appearing look. You look at some of the drivers competing that year and it's pretty

amazing. Bob Pierce, Jack Boggs, John Provenzano, Leon Plank, Kris Patterson, Pete Parker to name some. Those guys were always tough wherever they raced and in Florida even the best were at risk of not even making the main event! That's what made it fun though and generally they had so many cars you weren't going to get in on a provisional. Work on the car and hopefully get it right for the next race.

Volusia County Speedway in Barberville, FL., was another stop we made and our boy of the year, Mr. Purvis won again. With numerous nights of racing during the week or two of events you weren't going to win them all, and Purvis didn't as we also saw Billy Moyer take a feature win. Other drivers competing included, Larry Phillips, (Who most people don't realize was just as good on dirt as pavement) Larry Moore, and way too many others to list here. Of course, as part of the Speedweeks racing, the Eastern Dirt Modifieds would compete with the Late Models. Billy Pauch was a winner one night we visited and he had to beat dirt stalwarts Jack Johnson, Bob Mcreadie, Doug Hoffman, Doug Ingalls, Kevin Collins, Jimmy Horton, Donnie Wetmore...and the list goes on and on. It's unbelievable the caliber of competition that would show up during Speedweeks. You couldn't fit them all in a feature! Fun to reminisce about those days. Of course being pavement folks at heart we'd head over to New Smyrna Speedway, New Smyrna Beach, FL., and

continued on page 12



Illinois hotshoe Lil John Provenzano (top photo), Larry Moore #14 in Florida (middle photo) and The East Coast Dirt Modified of "Barefoot" Bob Mcreadie (bottom photo)



The Jeff Purvis (Wedge-Thing) Florida, 1985

Racing Observations from page 11

catch the action as usually we'd see some of our own Midwestern short trackers racing during the nine night Series. During this year we were able to see Dick Trickle and Joe Shear compete there. Late Model winners included Trickle, David Rogers, Daniel Keene and Butch Miller. We also saw the Eastern Pavement Modifieds compete with Reggie Ruggerio, Richie Evans and Jimmy Spencer taking wins. What a treat that was and I think all these guys ended up having pretty fair racing careers!

We did a fair amount of big track event following in Florida too, but it was the short track stuff that got us excited. It's been awhile since we made a trip down there, probably wouldn't recognize a thing. Only one way to find out I guess, take a hike south...well, maybe next year.

Here and there...Seeing a few of the paved tracks in the area schedules coming out and things definitely look different heading into 2015. My all-time favorite short track, Golden Sands Speedway of Plover Wisconsin, is substantially cutting back holding only 7 or so Super Late Model events most on Friday nights. Marshfield Motor Speedway, Marshfield, WI., is filling those Friday night gaps holding Super Late Model events of its own those nights instead of Saturday when they normally race. State Park Speedway has a full slate of racing including an ARCA Midwest Tour event to kick off the season on May 16th. With Greg McKarns now in the fold it will be interesting to see how that series goes in 2015. Speaking of McKarns he is also heading up the effort at Madison International Speedway of Oregon, WI, which at one point was close to being purchased and turned into a test track.



Daniel Keene, #82x, 1985 Florida race winner

Not so now and they will be kicking off their season with an ARCA Midwest Tour event as well on May 3rd. Sadly, the Columbus 151 Speedway, Columbus, WI., is now purported to being the site for the test track as it has been sold and will only be used for that purpose and not stock car racing. La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, West Salem, WI., has released their schedule and it's nearly a carbon copy of last year. Saturday night NASCAR Late Model racing being the main attraction. Dells Raceway Park, Wis. Dells, WI., has a full schedule of racing planned and this year after many years of inactivity will hold CWRA racing. The Central Wisconsin Racing

Association having been the preferred choice for rules back in the day is now again operating in that capacity with cost cutting measures to encourage more participation the order of business. Three CWRA events will be held at the Dells track in 2015 and other tracks interested in getting in the fold should contact the group.

Lots of changes in the paved track world and at this point it will be interesting to see how it all shakes out. Stay tuned...

Back in the day...On Sunday, May 25th, 1969 it was Ramo Stott winning the first ever feature at the new ½ mile paved Capital Super Speedway, Oregon, WI. Following Stott after 40 laps were Joe Shear and Jim Back...On Saturday night, June 15th, 1968 it was John McNamara winning the 30 lap Feature at Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI. Trailing McNamara was Marlin Walbeck...On August 9th, 1970 it was Jim Back winning the 30 lap feature at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI. Following Back were Dick Trickle, Marv Marzofka, Tom Reffner and George Thornton...On Thursday night June 3rd, 1971 it was Bill Wirtz winning the feature at State Park Speedway, Plover, WI. Following Wirtz were Dick Trickle, Marlin Walbeck, Tom Reffner and Dick Schultz...On May 8th, 1999 it was Tom Reffner winning the 25 lap feature at Marshfield Super Speedway, Marshfield, WI.

News, notes and comments welcome to Dale P. Danielski at Starmaker Multimedia 967 10th Ave N Ste A, Onalaska, WI 54650, at 608-783-5827, 608-518-2478, or at dale@starmakermultimedia.com, www.starmakermultimedia.com



Kentucky's Black Jack Boggs B-4 at Speedweeks in 1985

Racing Nuggets



Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman

I remember when I was seven; my two older brothers and I got the Atari 2600 system for Christmas. We were so excited to play video games; what a novel concept! The unit was clunky, compared to today's sleek systems, and it had that posh, faux wood trim, which matched the garish wood paneling in the mobile home where we grew up in northern Illinois. (Yes, I was born and raised trailer trash and dang proud of it.)

We were 100% redneck. We used to set up our pop-up camper in our little sliver of a yard and "camp" in the trailer court. Dad loved his Pabst Blue Ribbon. We even made a birthday cake for him one year that was decorated like a can of the brew. We traveled across the Midwest to follow the ARTGO and ASA series' and various other special racing events.

We were asked to leave Great America once, because we were all wearing "Dick Trickle" shirts, which were deemed inappropriate by non-racing-informed management at the amusement park. Once when we went to Madison Speedway, then called Capital Speedway, I had to go to the bathroom. The "facilities" at that time were comprised of several outhouses. My mother still laughs about me, running back to our spot in the stands, and telling her with incredible enthusiasm that we could, "do a duet," because they had a double seater!

To this day, I still ponder if anyone ever sat next to their buddy to lay some pipe together. How awkward... but I digress.

At this moment in the race season, it feels a lot like a game of Pong. (From poo to Pong. I'm GREAT at

The Changing Landscape of Racing

transitions!) Remember how that game would grind along so slow when you first started it? Ugh. Waiting and watching that square "ball" s-l-o-w-l-y move to the top of the screen and bounce back down to your little line at the bottom, where you would "bat" it back up to the top. The ball would pick up speed as it ricocheted in the corner, eventually whizzing into oblivion, as you were incapable of moving that joystick quickly enough to the left to smack it. I don't know how many joysticks we went through from repeated wrenching on it in an attempt to will the game to our whims.

Joysticks. It wasn't until many years later that I understood the guffaws and chortles emitted from my dad and his friends, when referring to them.

These days, there are wireless steering wheels for folks to partake in online racing. There are even full chassis systems set up on hydraulics with intricate computer programs that give a racer the full effect of running on the surface of a particular track.

My, how times have changed! Kids these days are spoiled! They enjoy having running water and toilets that actually flush at race tracks, and high tech online gaming that has become a training ground for racers. It is doubtful that Pong ever contributed to a career in sports, but iRacing seems to be a great tool for aspiring racers.

I know several local and regional drivers who participate in iRacing series. Even Dale Earnhardt, Jr. has been known to do iRacing from time to time. Probably not so much now that he has a girlfriend and is busy shooting multi-million dollar endorsements for various products, but the point is; iRacing has been legitimized for its ability to replicate a track and give some serious practice to a racer.

Personally, I've never participated as a driver in the series, but I have watched a few races online. It's amusing and entertaining. They actually had announcers, providing a play-by-play for everyone, and it was a real kick to watch a car that got wadded up on the track in a "racing incident" pull into the pits and magically be restored to new! If only real pit stops worked that way, right?

But still, the whole iRacing thing is an incredible tool for racers. I talked with Bill Martin, aka "Dr. Noise," a regular Sportsmen racer at La Crosse Speedway, who has experience not only racing in the online series, but also BUILDING a simulator for the La Crosse Speedway from Papyrus, which proceeded iRacing technology. If you're a techie, or interested in checking out Bill's work on this, go to <http://www.noiseracing.com/lfs>.

Bill says that iRacing has helped in many ways; from how to handle a car, to even setting one up for race trim. He says it also taught him how to understand making adjustments for a tight entry, loose center, snappy loose exit (his words—and I love them), and more by putting a lifelike feel and setup into his hands. More importantly, the advantage with the virtual realm is that one can make adjustments quickly and see instant results, unlike having to jack a real car up and make labor-intensive changes. Additionally, the cost of "parts" is minimized in iRacing, obviously because they are virtual. (Much like a virtual girlfriend is easier on the pocketbook, but that's a whole different article.)

Bill says that online racing provided a shortcut in learning both setups and car control that allowed him to make the jump to an actual race car for the first time five years ago. Anyone who is a regular at La Crosse Speedway knows that Bill had ZERO real on-track racing experience prior to that season, and only had a virtual, online understanding. Of course he spent months prior to that season, logging incredible iRacing hours to prepare. And it paid off for him.

Bill turned A LOT of heads that season. As someone who spent every Saturday night at La Crosse watching the action through a video camera, I can assure you that Bill was a primary focus for my lens. He was fearless, and fast. Was he a perfect racer, thanks to the iRacing? Hell, no. But it was obvious that he learned more from that, than most rookies will learn in an entire season of on-track racing. His online racing experience had given him a notable advantage, which minimized his learning curve substantially.

Bill even told me that he was surprised how much he had learned through sim racing; a lot of which felt the same in the real world. Aside from G-forces, and that oh-sh*t feeling you get when you're about to loop your car, he still felt like he was more prepared for the entry into legitimate on-track racing, thanks to iRacing.

He even scored his first career feature win that rookie season. Yes. That seriously silenced anyone who was snorting under their breath about a "computer racer" trying to make it on the "real" track. And it wasn't luck. Anyone familiar with the Sportsmen division at La Crosse knows that it is stacked deep with talent. Drivers who can't afford to move up to Late Models, tend to make storied careers in that division. It's highly competitive, and always a guaranteed great show each week.

A quick review of Bill's stats that inaugural season reveals that he racked up seven top 10 finishes, including one during Oktoberfest, with a 28-car field. Additionally, he had two top 5 finishes which included that memorable win. That's pretty amazing. His notoriety in iRacing to prepare for this venture was

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such that the mere mention of his name was invariably followed by, “he has never raced on track before this season—only ONLINE.” It WAS a pretty incredible nugget of information for anyone to know, as they watched him on the track.

What many people don’t realize is that the depth of information taken into creating the online tracks is astounding. Every bump, every hole, every seam is included in the makeup of a track, as the racing surface is laser scanned for creation. The same is true for the cars, which results in an incredibly accurate simulator that is updated every 13 weeks, according to Bill. He also tells me that the tire model has improved dramatically, which is the hardest part to simulate. A tire is ever-changing, so attempting to simulate it requires a constant calculation. (See kids, you really SHOULD stay in school and pay attention in math and computer science classes!)

For someone who would love to race, but just can’t afford to do it, or even wrangle the sponsorship dollars together to enter the field, iRacing is a stellar value. If

you’re reading this, you’re obviously involved in some way, shape or form with racing, so you understand the staggering costs to be more competitive. To quote Bill, “the days of buying a \$1000 car and being able to win with it are gone.” But it is for that reason, that he sees iRacing growing exponentially in the coming years.

Bill even says things are on the verge of becoming even more immersed with simulation, as the Oculus Rift is on the horizon. It’s currently in the development stages, but Bill tells me one CAN purchase it now. He would know. He’s immersed in the technology world. He’s also a notable success in the real racing world, due in great part to that.

We’ve come a long way, baby. I kind of wonder what my dad would think of these developments. He’s no longer alive, having passed away in 1986. (A car crash, of all things.) He was pretty old school. But then again, he DID buy us an Atari system when we were kids... not that we would have ever become racing prodigies because of it. Egads! I’m becoming



Bill Martin at speed at Lacrosse Speedway

one of THOSE codgers, who lament about the “old days” and how we had to make do with our meager things.

Honestly, I wouldn’t mind buying an iRacing system, but then I would never be able to get my husband off of it. Plus, the sim world would have to deal with him behind the wheel, and on the track with them. Quite frankly, I don’t think anyone’s ready for that, so for now, we’ll just watch others. You’re welcome.

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2015 CANTERBURY SNOCROSS PHOTO GALLERY

Bruce Nuttleman photo's

Cody Kamm (left photo) getting some serious air and looking good for the home town team of Hentges Racing. Tucker Hibbert's riderless Cat (right photo) after crashing in the main event. For more action from this year's SnoCross at Canterbury Park, check out the Friday & Saturday night photo galleries from Ultimate Lap Photo at:

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