

THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

www.theracingconnection.com

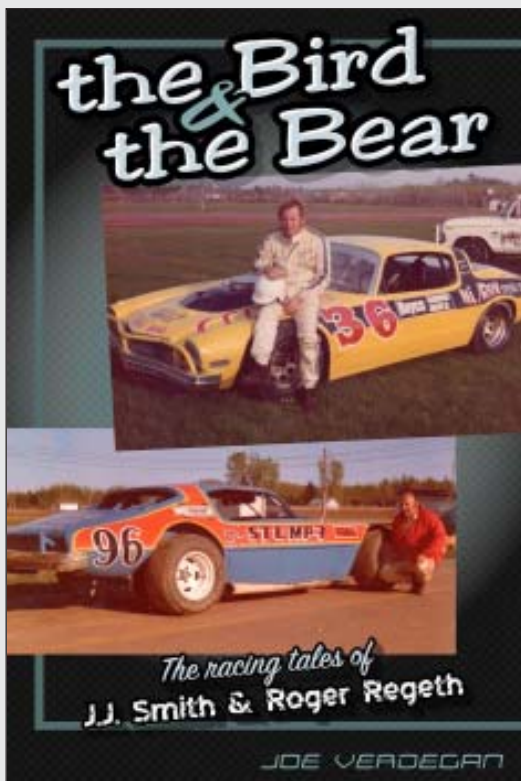
THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

February 2019

Inside...



CWRA Then and Now

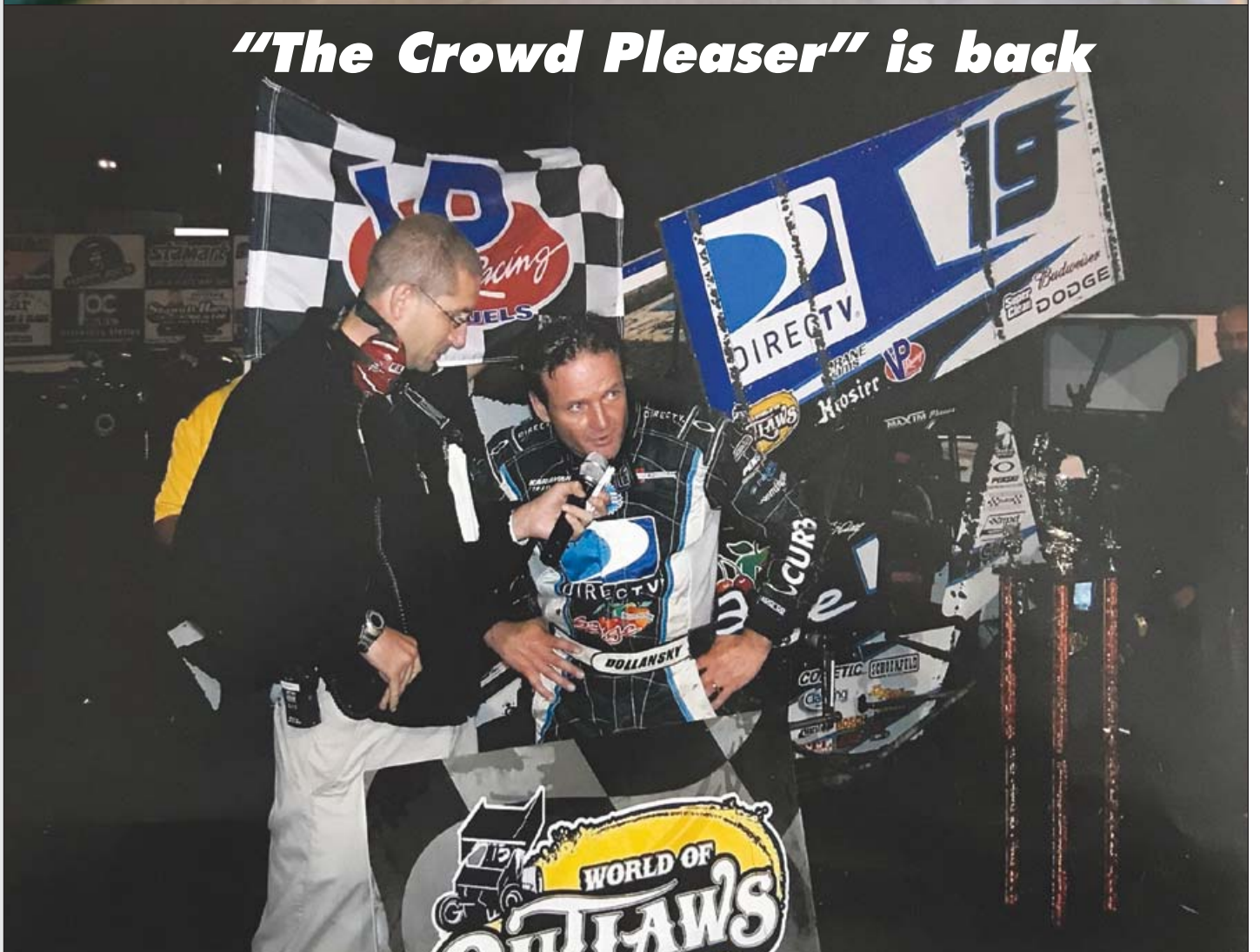


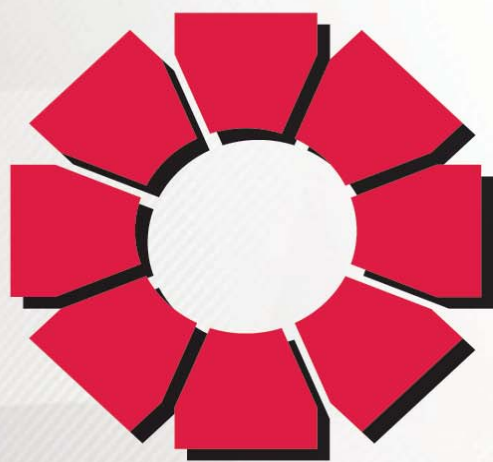
Book Review

Speedweeks stories with Skip & Steve



"The Crowd Pleaser" is back





PIRTEK®

"FLUID TRANSFER SOLUTIONS"

PIRTEK fluid transfer solutions for automotive, marine, off-road and custom applications work to your advantage and your budget. Get the right part the first time. No more leaks or endless trips to the parts store. *No More Headaches!*



Proudly Serving The Construction And Racing Communities Since 1996!



- **Hoses-Adapters-Fittings**
- **Standard-Metric D.O.T. Certified Brake Hoses and Lines**
- **Power Steering • Oil Lines**
- **Transmission Lines • Fuel • A/C**

PIRTEK HAS AUTOMOTIVE SOLUTIONS

MPLS/ST. PAUL

(651) 641-1414

2125 Energy Park Drive
St. Paul, MN 55108

BURNSVILLE

952-895-5400

1409 Cliff Road East
Burnsville, MN 55337

PLYMOUTH

(763) 475-0475

11350 Highway 55
Plymouth, MN 55441

Publisher's Note

Racing According to Plan



Dan Plan

I'm pretty sure that I've mentioned this before, but in my younger days, I wasn't much of a book-reader. As I've grown older, I've found myself with quite the collection of books. Granted, they are all racing related books, but I now have a bookshelf nonetheless.

The most recent addition to my ever-growing book collection came once again from Joe Verdegan. The book is titled *The Bird & The Bear*. The book covers the history of J.J. Smith (the bird) and Roger Regeth "The Bear" Regeth.

Growing up reading the trade papers of the day, I had plenty of time to read the names of J.J. Smith and Roger Regeth. Names that were in the headlines often seem to stick out, and these two names were in the headlines.

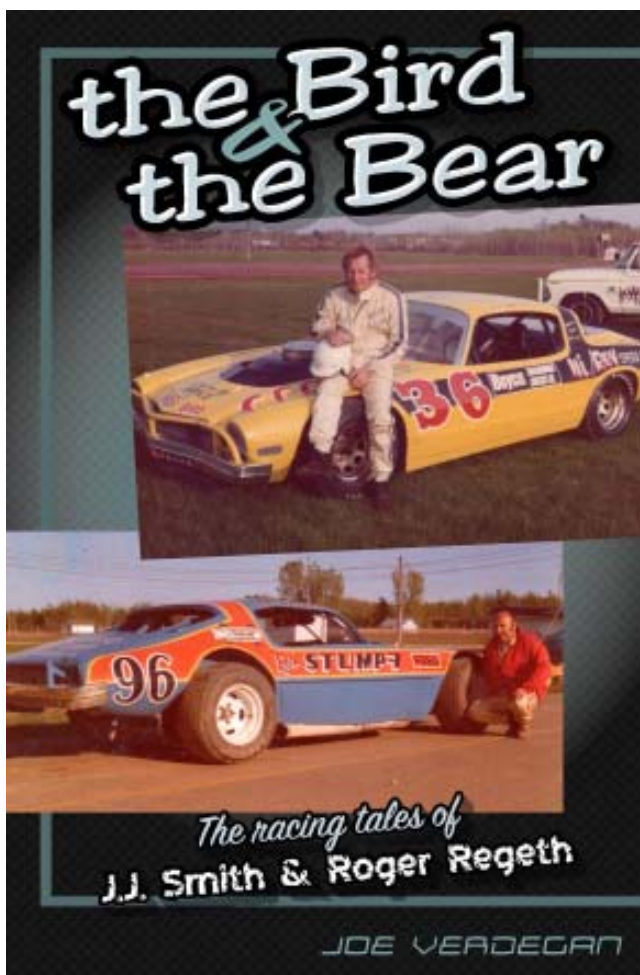
The more I learn about the history of the sport, the more I realize there were similarities between the different parts of Wisconsin. Central Wisconsin had their group of drivers that ran 4-5 nights per week,

The Bird & The Bear

Milwaukee area drivers raced several nights per week, and the Northeastern Wisconsin drivers had just as many opportunities to race night after night. I'm envious of the people that had the chance to witness or participate in racing Wednesday through Sunday all summer long.

Unfortunately, I never had the chance to watch J.J. or Roger race on dirt. I had the opportunity to watch J.J. Smith race a couple of times when he would venture out on the road and run some of the ARTGO shows in the early 1980's. I didn't get a

continued on page 4



**THE MIDWEST
RACING CONNECTION**
THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

February 2019

P.O. Box 22111
St. Paul MN, 55122
651-451-4036

www.theracingconnection.com

Publisher
Dan Plan

Contributing Writers
Shane Carlson
Dale P. Danielski
Jacklyn Nuttleman
Jason Searcy
Dean Reller
Charlie Spry

Photographers
Guy Adams (815-980-0354)
Vance Birno (612-308-3572)
Jeff Blaser (715-498-7544)
Martin DeFries (651-346-1199)
TJ Harron (608-301-5258)
Doug Hornickel (920-563-0993)
Tom Loos (715-370-7895)
Mark Melchiori (414-463-0131)
Bruce Nuttleman (612-860-6622)
Vince Peterson (612-419-6372)
Jess Riedner (608-334-5329)

The Midwest Racing Connection is published six times during the summer racing season by The Plan Company, Inc. All material is copyrighted 2019 and may not be reprinted without permission. Subscriptions are \$20 for six issues. Call 651-451-4036.

Cover photos by: Bob Bergeron collection, Getty Images for NASCAR, Craig Dollansky Family

Member of the NMPA
National Motorsports Press Association



AIRPORT SERVICE - CALL 24 HOURS
*Time Calls - Appointments

DISCOUNT TAXI
FOR TRANSPORTATION
Toll Free 1-888-240-8294

612-723-5500

www.discounttaxiracing.com

J.J. Smith in action at LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway in 1983 (left photo) and Roger "The Bear" Regeth starting mid-pack in a huge Mid American Stock Car field in 1993 at Kaukauna's Wisconsin International Raceway (right photo)



Racing According to Plan from page 3

chance to watch Roger Regeth run until he came out of retirement in the early 1990's and started running some of the early Mid-American Stock Car races. The one thing I do remember is both drivers always had sharp looking cars, and Regeth was the guy to beat in the first few years of the Mid-American series.

This is now the fourth book written by Joe, and I would recommend each one of them. The

latest book focuses on these two drivers. The book covers their careers from their early days in racing to their transition to the top of weekly stock car racing. There's also plenty of focus on the different driving styles of this area's most well-known drivers. J.J. was known for his finesse while Regeth was known for his aggressiveness. Two different driving styles, but both had winning results.

Along with the detail of race events from the heyday of racing in Northeastern Wisconsin, the

book also covers the USAC exploits of Smith and Regeth, along with plenty of nostalgic photos from the Vercauteren family. The coverage also goes in depth with stories from both of the drivers, their car owners, crew members and fans that witnessed it all.

I would definitely give this book 2 thumbs up. If you're interested in copy of the book for yourself, they are available directly from Joe Verdegan via PayPal at jverdegan2



Indoor Motocross through March 24, 2019
www.cedarlakespeedway.com

The Midwest Racing Connection Directory Page

R & R

Automotive

612-721-4210

randrautomotiveonline.com

CLUB LAMARK
Madison's Race Car Bar

Where cold beer & good friends meet

1525 N. Stoughton Rd.
Madison WI 53704
608.244.4004

Weekday Lunch specials
Breakfast
Saturday & Sunday

FOREIGN & DOMESTIC REPAIR SINCE 1957

MAREK'S
TOWING & REPAIR, INC.

Repair Shop
Mon-Fri 7:00-5:30

Office: 952.469.3182
Fax: 952.469.7724

Impound Lot
Mon-Fri 7:00-5:30
Sat & Sun 10:00-12:00

20152 Kenrick Avenue - Lakeville, MN 55044

www.MAREKTOWINGANDREPAIR.com

WILSON
RACE FUELS

RED WING, MN

1-800-634-9666

www.wilsonoilcompany.com

DCA
RaceFab

Racing Parts • Custom Metal Fabrication

La Crosse, WI
www.dcaracefab.com

Daniel Navrestad
Tel: 608.781.3929

Hillside Drywall

Shakopee, MN
612-812-0278



Turtle's
BAR & GRILL

Downtown Shakopee
952-445-9668



TUNING
COACHING
PREPARATION
DATA ANALYSIS

NOAH STARK
412-609-5481

NSEW

NSEWRACINGENGINES@HOTMAIL.COM

PROFESSIONAL KARTING SERVICES

Danco
ACCESSORY CENTER

AUTO - TRUCK - MARINE - POWER SPORT

Dundas, MN
612-269-4232

WEHR'S MACHINE
1710 Pearl St.
Bangor, WI 54614
877-460-7211



www.wehrsmachine.com

1360

SPEED TALK
RACE FAN RADIO



Products — **MOTORSPORTS MARKETING TOOLS**

STARMAKER Multimedia

www.starmakermultimedia.com

Sponsorship Packages
DVD Marketing Packages
Star Cards • Consulting

Dale P. Danielski
dale@starmakermultimedia.com
608.783.5827

Services

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube

www.facebook.com/themidwestracingconnection

www.twitter.com/MidwestRace

www.youtube.com/theracingconnection



Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

With the recent passing of Clem Droste, who served as president for the Central Wisconsin Racing Association, I got to thinking about CWRA through the years from it's beginnings to the present.

Clem was involved with the group practically

from day one in the 1960s, and it's interesting of an incident that took place in 1969.

The Golden Sands Speedway of Plover, WI., had been newly built and promoted by the well known Sam Bartus, who had run a number of Speedways in the State for many years. CWRA was the sanctioning body of choice by Bartus for the track, but it seems some insurance, safety, and driver pay issues cropped up with a resulting boycott of the track by CWRA drivers. Bartus, who didn't think the complaints were warranted, ousted CWRA and kept the track operating but under "Open Competition" rules. Complaints listed by the drivers included Bartus having inadequate insurance, safety precautions not being taken and the \$2,000 purse, or 50% of the gate receipts based on attendance agreement not being followed.

According to Bartus, the arrangement at the Plover track was the same as at his Capital Speedway, of Oregon, WI., with a number of the same drivers racing at both facilities. "If CWRA didn't think the insurance was adequate at the 'Sands, why were they racing at Capital, the policies are the same." Other items that were an issue by CWRA were lack of oxygen in the Ambulance, lack of First Aid kits, blankets, and pillows, and lack of Fire Extinguishers. Bartus claimed he addressed those issues immediately.

CWRA Then and Now

Negotiations between the two parties reached a standstill so Bartus issued the ultimatum to CWRA that he would re-open his track without them. He did just that, although he offered CWRA members on an individual basis the opportunity to race at the track if they chose too. Two officials of the CWRA however were permanently banned, due to their being the reported instigators in the entire affair. Those two officials were CWRA President, David Field, and Secretary Clem Droste! Bartus kept his word and reopened the track on August 10th, with a field of 35 cars on hand for the show. John Brevik won the 25 lap feature.

Meanwhile, CWRA had some differing thoughts on the whole issue, stating all inadequacies were far from minor as Bartus had indicated. 4-5 Fire extinguishers were normally at the track, a number less than needed for potential fire on the track and in the pits. Plus, on more than one occasion, they were found to be empty or at most only 1/2 charged. Supposedly, not even so much as a band aid was found in the Ambulance. The Insurance coverage promised was also compromised. CWRA also complained that the Bartus promise of a \$2,000 guaranteed purse, or 50% of the gate, whichever was greater was not being followed as at numerous programs, over 3,000 fans were reportedly in attendance.

With Bartus operating Golden Sands independently, Howard Johnson leased the Griffith Park Speedway of Wisconsin Rapids, WI., which Bartus had operated previously before building the Plover track, from John Murgatroyd and it featured the CWRA group race cars. Sonny Immerfall was the winner of the 35 lap feature in the first CWRA event held there on July 13th.

Clem Droste survived the early "Banning" and went on to become the president of the Club holding the position for the longest tenure of anyone.

Having followed the CWRA driver group for as long as I can remember and sat in on some rip-roaring rules and tire meetings through the years there were definitely tumultuous times. Officials came and went and one President only lasted two months! The position isn't for everyone. It can be almost as unrewarding as a tech inspectors job. Now keeping close track of the relatively newly formed Central Wisconsin Racing Association, a recent meeting featured the electing of officers. Who would take on the burden of dealing with hard to please drivers and difficult to set track schedules with promoters? The answer: Me

Here and there...Had fun playing emcee at the 2nd CWRA banquet, the fun banquet, which included bad jokes, bowling and some awards given in between! Honored Jeff Weinfurter as 2018 CWRA Champion, Jesse Bernhagen as Rookie of the Year as

Tom Johnson photo



*Racing Observances continued
on page 7*

continued from page 6

well as the top 14 in final point standings. Special awards were given to John Alft, outgoing President who was instrumental in getting the CWRA reformed after a long period of dormancy. Also awarded Steve Moll a special Cal Maul illustrated rendition of Steve's #30, feature winning race car. Moll financed the first order of Towel City Racing tires for CWRA, and if not for that, who knows how things would have gone. The 65 or so that attended the banquet had plenty of fun, and bowling in the dark capped the evening off...

Looking Back in time, on August 10th, 1969, it was John Brevik winning the 25-lap feature race at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI. Following Brevik at the finish were Sonny Immerfall, Rich Somers, Willie Reinwand and Paul Christianson. Heat race winners were Christianson, Brevik and Somers, with Brevik winning the special hot dog race. Fast time honors went to Somers at 14:21 seconds. On August 17th, 1969 it was Sonny Immerfall winning the feature race at Golden Sands Speedway. Following Immerfall were Willie Reinwand, Les Laub, Bob Mackesy and Dick Bentley Consolation honors went to Paul Christianson with heat race victors Wally Pataska and Immerfall. The dash winner was Immerfall, while he also had fast time at 14.56 seconds. On July 13th, 1969 it was Sonny Immerfall winning the 35-lap feature at Griffith Park Speedway, Wis. Rapids, WI., in CWRA sanctioned racing. Following Immerfall at the finish were Ron Beyer, Marv Marzofka, Jim Sauter and Del Kemnetz. Heat race winners were Gale Ashley, Ed Colby, John Brevik and Marv Marzofka. Consolation honors went to Bert Fox over Fred Schultz and Les Katzner. The semi-feature was won by Warren Droesser over Brevik and Colby. Fast time went to Tom Reffner at 14:09 seconds. On August 3rd, 1969 it was Jim Sauter winning the feature race at Griffith Park Speedway. Following Sauter were John Brevik, Ron Beyer, Marv Marzofka and Don Rhoda. The semi-feature went to Del Kemnetz with consy honors going to Les Katzner. Heat race winners were Merlin Weinfurter, Buck Linhart, Dick Severson and Brevik. Fast time went to Dean Spohn at 14:00 seconds in his 1969 Camaro.

Questions, comments, opinions and other information welcome at Starmaker Multimedia 967 10th Ave N Ste A, Onalaska, WI 54650 608-783-5827 or at dale@starmakermultimedia.com

Dale's Pictures from the Past

A John Brevik #7-11 Ford Product. (Mussoni photo collection.) Delmar Kemnetz, #44 at speed at Golden Sands Speedway. Sonny Immerfall, #4-U in his Feature winning Comet at Golden Sands Speedway. Ousted President from Golden Sands Speedway in 1969, David Field. Rich Somers #5 racing at Griffith Park Speedway. Bob Bergeron photos





OKTOBERFEST
RACE WEEKEND

OCT. 3-4-5-6, 2019

#FESTisBEST.

THE MIDWEST
RACING CONNECTION

THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

**Speedweeks
coverage in the
next issue of
MRC, available in
March of 2019**



✓Yes



✓Yes



xNo



✓Yes

✓ Reliably Low Prices
✓ Huge Selection



www.rockauto.com

✓ Easy To Use Website
✓ Fast Shipping



www.IMCAoldtimers.com





By Dan Plan

The longer you're around the sport of racing, the more characters you come across. Two characters I've had the pleasure of talking with the past few years are Skip Pollack and Steve Vermeer. I plan on having several more stories with Skip and Steve in our print issues but figured I would start with their memories of Speedweeks. The stories will utilize a popular format these days of leaving the questions out of the text, and just listing their answers.

Skip Pollack

1976, the year of the Petty/Pearson crash. If you watch the video, you'll see our car. Right at the end of the race, as David was coming across the grass, he ran into Joe (Frasson). The only reason Pearson won it was when he drove into the side of Joe, it turned him back towards the start/finish line.

I went down there by myself. That was when I moved down South. I won the championship at Elko in September and the following week, I was at the World 600 with Joe Frasson. Three weeks later, I moved to Spartanburg, South Carolina.

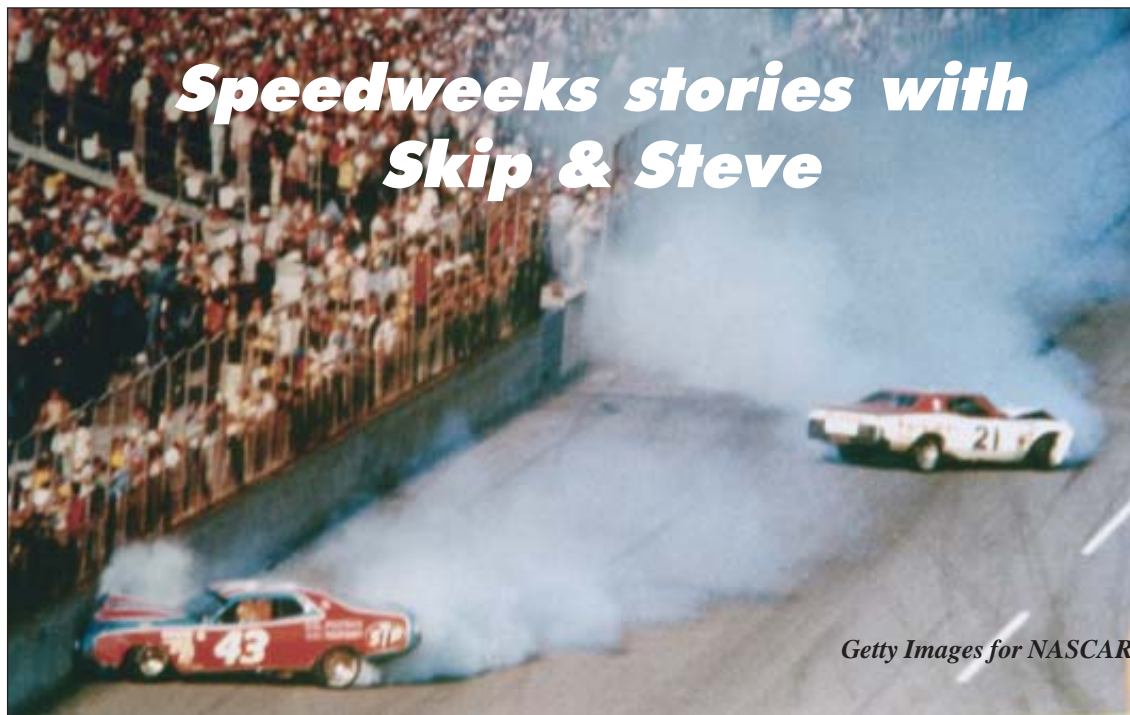
We were all Petty lovers up here. It (Petty/Pearson crash) was a controversy down there with a lot of people.

When I lived down South, we had a Cup car and a Sportsman car. Most of the drivers had two cars. We did Richmond, Bristol, Hickory, Greenville-Pickens and the Fall stuff in Savannah, Mobile and Montgomery. We did all of the stuff with the short

track car.

At Speedweeks we didn't have time to go over to the short tracks. This is how it was in the old days. You had your team owner, your driver/hauler driver and usually 2-3 guys that went to the speedway. If you made the show, you called home and had a crew come down. Otherwise you were kind of on your own.

Honest to goodness, in the evening you'd get back to the motel and maybe have something to eat



The famous Pearson/Petty finish at the 1976 Daytona 500

Getty Images for NASCAR

and get cleaned up. If the motel had a bar, you would go down there and sit for a while. You would go meet some guys once in a while, but we had to be back at the track at 6:00am. You didn't have any money to go out. Back then the owners gave \$5 a day for munchies. Other than that, when you got done, you got in the station wagon and you went back to the motel and watched TV. Your big meal back then was hamburger steak.

There would be 5 or 6 of Junior Johnson's guys or Harry Hyde's crew. They all stayed at the same motel. Usually on the Saturday night before the 500, they would have a live deal where the drivers would show up and tell stories.

After you knew the people a little bit, you understood it. I was from up here and it took almost a season to be accepted in the circle. Once you got accepted in the circle, then you were friends and you could go talk to anybody and borrow stuff. When I first went down there, I stayed right by the car and did what I had to do.



Getty Images for NASCAR



Harry Hyde (above), Blackie Wangerin (above right), Joe Frasson (below left) and King Richard Petty (below right)



Getty Images for NASCAR

Steve Vermeer

I'm going to have to guess. I would have to say mid 80's. Maybe 83 or 84. I went down there with the 39 car of Blackie Wangerin. We affectionately referred to him as Black Eye.

Darrell Waltrip had such a reputation for being an asshole, and to some degree, rightfully so, but he was one of the funniest guys in the garage. Everybody took him wrong and thought he was a bad guy.

Speedweeks stories continued on page 10

Speedweeks stories
continued from page 9

I didn't make it to any of the short tracks down there. That's kind of the odd thing. There were two separate lifetimes there. Volusia is where we used to have the WKA stuff. The times that I went to the short track stuff was many years later, and for Go Kart events.

Oh, there were always late-night Shenanigans. I wasn't a part to all of this stuff, but the one that sticks in my mind was my first visit to Smokey's garage. We

were down there, and it was the first time I'd ever met Smokey (Yunick.) We were having some carburetor troubles and Ralph Johnson was Smokey's partner. In reality, Ralph was the guy that invented the Holley carburetor. We carried the carb down to have him take a look at it after hours. Those guys were BS'ing and had gotten into the cocktails. I decided I was going to go out on tour and show myself around the shop. I got back into the area where Smokey's old Indy Car was. Who do I run into, but Smokey himself. He's got one of his Great Dane's with him and walks up behind me and asks what I am doing wandering

around his shop. I thought to myself, I am so screwed. I better think of something really fast here. I blurted out, "I'm trying to figure out if you actually know what you're doing, or if you're just some old fool walking around in the dark with a flashlight." He didn't say anything for a minute. He looked at me and smiled put his hand on my shoulder and said "Come on son, I'm going to show you around."

Gosh, I think we spent an hour or longer in the shop. When we got back to Ralph's area, everyone was pretty well plastered. He showed me whatever I wanted to look at and some things I didn't think he had. Before I left, he gave me his personal phone number for his desk back in the R&D shop. I had the privilege of speaking with him on a number of occasions after that. It was something I'll never forget. I used to run into him a number of times at Earle Gaerte's place when he had Gaerte Gathering.

For me, at that point in time, it was about the racing. Man, I couldn't get enough of it. The people that were there. It was always a who's who of the racing community. They were all right there, everybody was available. Whoever you wanted to talk to, you just went up and talked to. If they had a minute, they would answer any question you had.

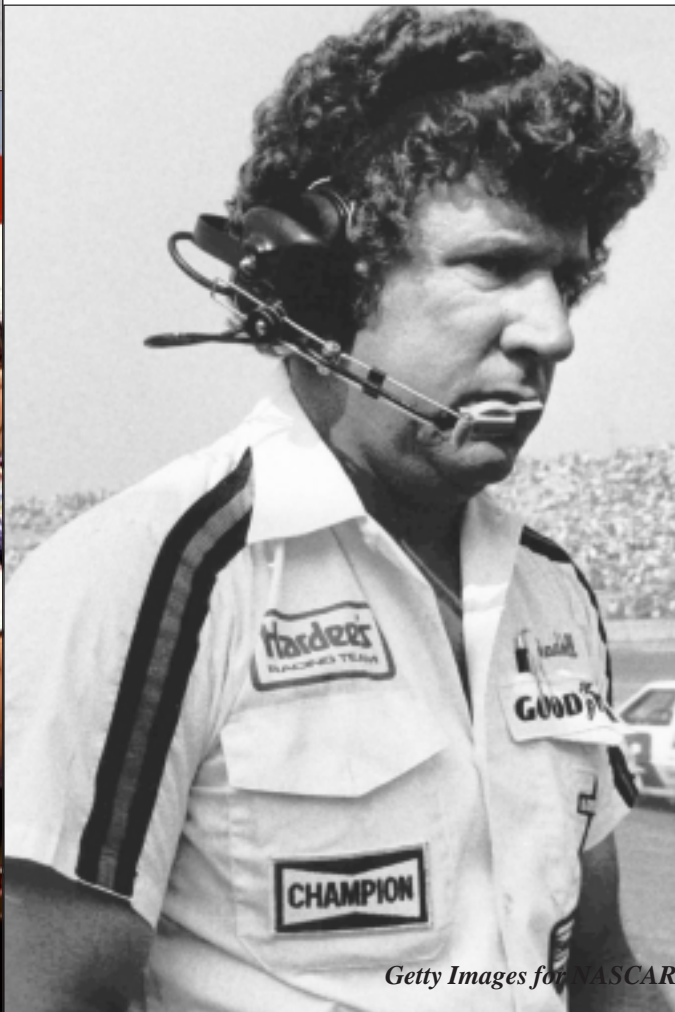
Waddell Wilson was another one of the guys that would take time to talk to you, if he liked you. He was another one that had a reputation of being a bit of a jerk, but he really wasn't. He was way ahead of everybody in engine development. This guy was doing things in tenths of a gram and tenths of a thousandth clearance years before anybody even thought of it. They had the first car over 200mph at Daytona and this guy was pretty serious about what he was doing.

Smokey Yunick's radical Indy Car, Ol'DW and Junior Johnson and Waddell Wilson




SmokeyYunick.com photo


Getty Images for NASCAR



Getty Images for NASCAR



DELLS RACEWAY PARK



RAIN OR SHINE

MARCH 16TH

300 LAPS ALL CARS START AT SAME TIME!


NO YELLOW FLAGS

1st EVER

\$5,000 TO WIN!
Based on 100 cars


LUCKY LEPRECHAUN 300

PITS: 10am Main Gate: 12pm Green Flag: 2pm



We do our pit stops on the track!

300 LAPS IMPACT SURVIVAL SERIES



Admission

- Adults 18 & up \$14
- Seniors 65+ \$10
- Teens 13-17 \$10
- Military \$10
- Children 9-12 \$5
- 8 and Under FREE

Family Packs \$35
2 adults, 2 children or 2 adults, 1 Senior, & 1 Military

Pit Pass \$25

Rules & Regulation Forms available at **iRACEiSS.com**

Registration Hotline 920-755-2852

Wisconsin's Best Racing Entertainment!

WWW.DELLSRACEWAYPARK.COM * N1070 SMITH RD. WISCONSIN DELLS, WI



Redline Graphics Inc.

651-346-1199



Track Rat Photos

Email: trackratphotos vcfunding.com
Phone: 612-419-6372



Follow us on Facebook

The Noelke Team Realtors



NOELKE TEAM REALTORS®

www.noelketeam.com

DWANE NOELKE
REALTOR®
908.179.2484

LAURIE NOELKE
REALTOR®
908.317.2410



COLDWELL BANKER
RIVER VALLEY REALTORS®

THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

Racing Nuggets



PJ "Jacklyn" Nuttleman

It's either racing or snowmobiling. Aside from me—wink-wink—those are the two passions my husband has in his life. Lately, he's been pretty crabby about both of them.

It's been almost two months since he's had one of his cars on a race track; that was the Snowball Derby with Ty Majeski. They came up about a lap short of being able to win the thing.

"Second sucks." ~Toby Nuttleman 12/2/18

So, of course there has been a lot of pondering since Pensacola's P2 finish. Toby tends to ruminate on the races they don't win. Some say you should just "move on" and focus on the next race—and that's solid advice. I've tried to tell him that too, but he's just not wired that way.

Instead, he replays the entire race and what could've

been done differently with strategy or set-up—not to necessarily dwell on the second place finish, but to learn for the next race. He's stubborn like that.

The only time I know that Toby can fully unplug from racing is when he's snowmobiling. He's like a kid in the proverbial candy store when he can be out on his sled, squeezing the throttle and pounding the trails.

I've gone with him a few times. He's hardcore. Most people I know like to stop at local watering holes along the trails for some food and beverages. Toby tends to put on WAY more miles than others, as he'd just as soon forgo any extended stops. He wants to go-go-go, like a wild mustang.

He was crabby because we had a brown Christmas. Zero snow for weeks. He was incredibly obnoxious; sighing dramatically when the weather forecast would come on the radio and speak of sunshine and unseasonable temperatures. He was downright incorrigible. I sprained my left eye while rolling both at his toddler-like pouting one evening.

Finally, he was able to go on a trip up north with his brother, Kevin and some other friends for a few days in mid-January. That seemed to take the edge off... for a bit.

It's been helpful that he's been preparing a car for the Winter Showdown at Kern County Raceway in Bakersfield, CA. That has given him something to sink his brain into and quit thinking about snow. He and Ty will be teaming up again in their second attempt at the \$30,000 prize this weekend (2/2/19). The thought of going racing again has helped to lessen his crabbiness...

...until we just got dumped on with snow; lots and lots of snow.

Snowbody's Perfect

Yep, you guessed it! Now he's crabby that he's leaving town when it snows.

I'm over here all excited at the prospect of sunny California during what is expected to be the worst cold snap in years, and he's lamenting the fact that he'll be gone when we finally have snow.

Fortunately, thoughts of winning the richest superlate model race have kept him distracted enough that I don't think he's paid much attention to the forecast for MORE snow.

God-willing, there will still be snow on the ground when he gets back from Bakersfield—and if they win the Winter Showdown, you can bet he'll have an enormous grin beaming under that helmet of his, as he's zipping across the state on his snowmobile.



RESTORE POWER PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVE GAS MILEAGE



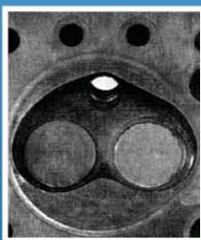
DIRTY



CLEANED



DIRTY



CLEANED



DIRTY



CLEANED



Justice Brothers Fuel Injection System Cleaner
clean valves, combustion chambers and injector
nozzles...and keeps them clean!

Available at your local auto parts stores!



1710 Pearl St.
Bangor, WI 54614
877-460-7211

CLAMPS



WHEEL SPACERS



TRANNNY



PANHARD BARS



SUSPENSION CAGES



FRAME MOUNTS



TOOLS



PINION MOUNTS



ENGINE



ACCESSORIES



CHASSIS



CARB PARTS



www.wehrsmachine.com



Photos Marketing Media

Dean & Jason Talkin' Racin'



Dean Reller

Sometimes you have to be in the right place at the right time and that's exactly what happened as I got the opportunity of a lifetime last September. It was at the Minnesota State Fair, a place that held its final race in 2002. I was fortunate enough to be able to run the track lights for that final race, putting a period on one chapter of racing. Flash forward 16 years and it was a missed call while I was at the Minnesota State Fair that turned into a new opportunity. The call, which I promptly returned, was from Speed Sport who was going to be covering the WISSOTA 100 at I-94 Speedway in Fergus Falls and they were wondering if I was interested in being the pit reporter for the event. It took all of two seconds to answer that question and so I was on board.

I had a couple of weeks to prepare, but since I haven't really done this before it was exciting new territory for me. In the week before the event, I came down with one of those horrible summertime colds.

Runny nose, cough and oh yeah, my voice was nearly gone and I was going to be doing a national TV shoot. Like I said before, timing is everything.

In prepping for the shoot, I went to the Friday night races in Fergus Falls. With a full supply of tissue and cold medicine in my car, I somehow made it through the night as I was scoping out what was going on. Unfortunately, by night's end my voice was nearly gone. A few hours of sleep at home helped, but Saturday morning came quick and I was going to be joining Jason Searcy on the phone instead of being in studio for our show Speed Talk on 1360 (shameless plug here). Lots of water got my voice somewhat manageable and the radio segment went pretty well. Then, it was off to the track. During the two-hour drive, water and other fluids were in order as I tried to get at least my voice back. During the drive, Andy Parsons from Speed Sport called and asked if I had any questions and gave me a quick rundown of what things I needed to cover when I got to the track. Not only was I going to be the only reporter, I was essentially the field producer as well. No pressure, right?

When I got to Fergus Falls, the weather at least was good medicine as the temperature was around 90 that day. I met up with my cameraman Tony and went over the list of things that we were to shoot before the main events of the night. Even though the WISSOTA 100 has several divisions racing, we were only covering the Late Models and Modifieds. Unlike most races you see on TV, this shoot didn't involve a cast of hundreds with production trucks and satellite uplinks. Rather it was a very simple, but efficient way to produce a race. Two cameramen shot the racing action from above. A few well-placed cameras were set up around the track along with a couple of in-car cameras. Plus, Tony and myself who would be the only roaming camera for the shoot. "Booth announcers" Ralph Sheheen and Derek Pernesiglio weren't in attendance and would "voice" the race at a later date

in post-production in Charlotte, NC. Our pre-race mission was to interview the previous night's winners and to get video of things happening around the pits and grandstands to help tell the story of the event.

One other thing we needed to do was to shoot a "standup" that's TV lingo for a short piece with the "talent" only on camera. You see these all the time on the TV news and in sports as well. During the drive to Fergus Falls, I came up with a couple of things that I was going to try to say in my standup. I didn't write a script and wanted to go pretty much off the cuff, like I do on the radio and when I announce a race. Sounds like a simple plan, but with my voice cutting in and out, plus me trying harder than I should have, it took several takes to get to the finished product. Fortunately, that would be the hardest thing all day for me. After we knocked out the interviews, there was some down time before the feature races for the night. Tony shot lots of video of things from the pits to the concession stand to the tailgate area. We even managed to shoot a few little filler segments of fun facts that could be used in the coverage. One of the fillers was the awesome burnout that Justin Vogel did after he won the Street Stock Feature. Amazing to see, since it was a dirt track vs a paved track, where it's a little easier to burn off some rubber. The burnout even made it to the final TV cut for the televised Late Model race.

As race time approached, we did a couple of quick interviews with drivers as they sat in their cars ready to roll out for the feature. When it was finally time to race, Tony and I headed to the infield where we would be for the duration of the race. Tony shot more action from inside, while I positioned myself in a spot where I could see all the track. During the race, I

continued on page 15



CEDAR VIEW ELECTRIC, INC.

952-469-2100

New Construction - Remodel - Service Work

Lakeville, MN

continued from page 14

took notes in my head of who was doing what as the race played out. Following the races, the top three exited the track and went to the scales. After that, they returned to be presented their trophies on the podium. A slight curveball was thrown when one of the top three Late Models didn't make weight and was DQ'd. This quickly forced me to scramble for my post race interviews as I had to figure out how I wanted to handle that. Fortunately, the drivers went to the podium first and then we were able to shoot the interviews, so I had a little bit of extra time to prepare. The interviews went great and somehow my voice held up.

A month and a half after the WISSOTA 100, the Late Model race aired on Suzuki presents Speed Sport on MAVTV. All the pieces fit together for a great looking production and my voice sounded nearly regular. And to think my part started when my phone rang when I was at the State Fair, just a couple of blocks away from where one racing memory ended. I guess you could say things have come full circle.



For Quality Work at a Fair Price use IBEW Local 110

NECA **100 YEARS** **IBEW**

LOCAL 110

www.ibewpros.org www.stpaulneca.org

IBEW 100 YEARS OF BROTHERHOOD

NECA
NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
ORGANIZED NOV. 28, 1891
AFFILIATED WITH - ROBERT JO HOLLAND
FED. U. S. PAT. OFF.

Full Throttle



Shane Carlson

Note: This story first appeared in the Union-Times

Craig Dollansky not done yet. Sprint car driver Craig Dollansky, of Zimmerman, recently announced he was ending his retirement less than a year after he was forced to begin it.

Dollansky has suffered his share of injuries over the course of his 20-plus years of racing, but in January 2016, while racing in the Winter Heat Series in Yuma, Arizona, he crashed and suffered a broken L4 vertebra but chose to race through the pain and not undergo surgery.

He finished the season and began racing a sprint car again in early 2017, but Dollansky said the pain caught up to him and he started to seek some medical advice.

The crash in 2016 wasn't Dollansky's only brush with serious injuries. In 2003, he injured his back, suffering an L1 vertebra burst fracture at Indianapolis Motor Speedway while competing in what is now called the Indy Lights Series.

In 2008, Dollansky injured his right arm, a compound fracture, while at Eldora Speedway, and it kept him out of the driver's seat for the remainder of the World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series.

Previous surgeries to repair Dollansky's back from some of the prior crashes hadn't been as successful as he had hoped, and he said he was misinformed after some early tests in 2016 about his back



Shane Carlson photo

Craig Dollansky stands in his trophy room in his home. Dollansky has won at sprint car racing's top level, the World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series 66 times, but a number of injuries took their toll on his body, forcing him into a premature retirement last year. After a successful back surgery, Dollansky, who adamantly said he was never ready to walk away from racing in the first place, is set for a return to the racetrack this season, focusing his efforts at Knoxville (Iowa) Raceway and making another run at the Knoxville Nationals, sprint car racing's most prestigious event.

injury that had continued to plague him the rest of the season and into 2017. It was the last time he was in a sprint car as he didn't complete the 2017 season.

In March 2018, Dollansky officially announced his retirement from the sport he cherishes the most and he was going to have the necessary surgical procedure to fix his back.

"I knew we had to address the injury, and that it would take a significant surgery," he said of undergoing another back surgery. A team of two surgeons worked on Dollansky, removing his L4 vertebra as well as the disc above and below the vertebra. "I guess it's kind of like losing a couple shock absorbers," he said with a smile. The surgeons found part of Dollansky's L4 vertebra was dead during the surgical procedure, which helped both Dollansky and the team of surgeons better understand his injury and why it had kept progressively getting worse.

Dollansky said he knew it would be a tough road to recovery, and for as much pain as he was in prior to his surgery, he added he was still in pain for three months following the operation. Through it all, Dollansky never lost sight of what he really wanted to do, which was to get back behind the wheel of a race

car. He admitted he wasn't sure if he'd be able to or if his body will allow it.

"I really questioned if I could be prepared physically and mentally after that to go back racing like you need to," he said. No stranger to surgeries, he added: "It takes something out of you. I didn't know how quickly my body would respond."

The pain started to subside three months post-surgery and Dollansky said the doctors were pleased with the progress he had made and the way his body had responded and started to heal.

With the positive reports from the doctors, Dollansky said, "We're going back."

His focus became more about what he needed to do not only to recover and be a physically functional adult again, but also what he needed to do to get himself physically and mentally prepared to get back in the saddle again, slinging a lightweight, high-powered race car sideways through the corner.

continued on page 17

continued from page 16

Dollansky immersed himself in physical therapy, aided by massages and cardio work, mainly by way of spending time in the pool swimming.

He said one of the biggest things that has helped him recover more efficiently has been employing cryotherapy, commonly known as cold therapy, which is a treatment method used to help tissue recover faster. Generally, a person will walk into a chamber with nothing on other than socks, underwear, gloves and a hat in temperatures as cold as 150 degrees below zero for two to four minutes. Specialists are able to view patients inside of the cryotherapy chamber just in case they happen to need assistance.

Dollansky said he's been doing cryotherapy about once a week for three minutes.

He said though he has lost a little bit of mobility overall, "If I could train and get there physically, there was no doubt I was coming back."

Stepping away for 2018 "was much more difficult than I ever thought it would be," Dollansky said. "Racing had just become such a big part of my family's life. It's what we're good at, it's what we love, and it's what we did for 25 years. To have it all

go away, it's difficult to wrap your mind around."

As a result, Dollansky said he went through some dark days following his decision to hang it up.

"My satisfaction came from winning and seeing fans. Racing is a pretty awesome experience and it's hard to adjust to life without it," he said. He started seeing a counselor to help deal with all of life's new changes and to help him get back on his feet.

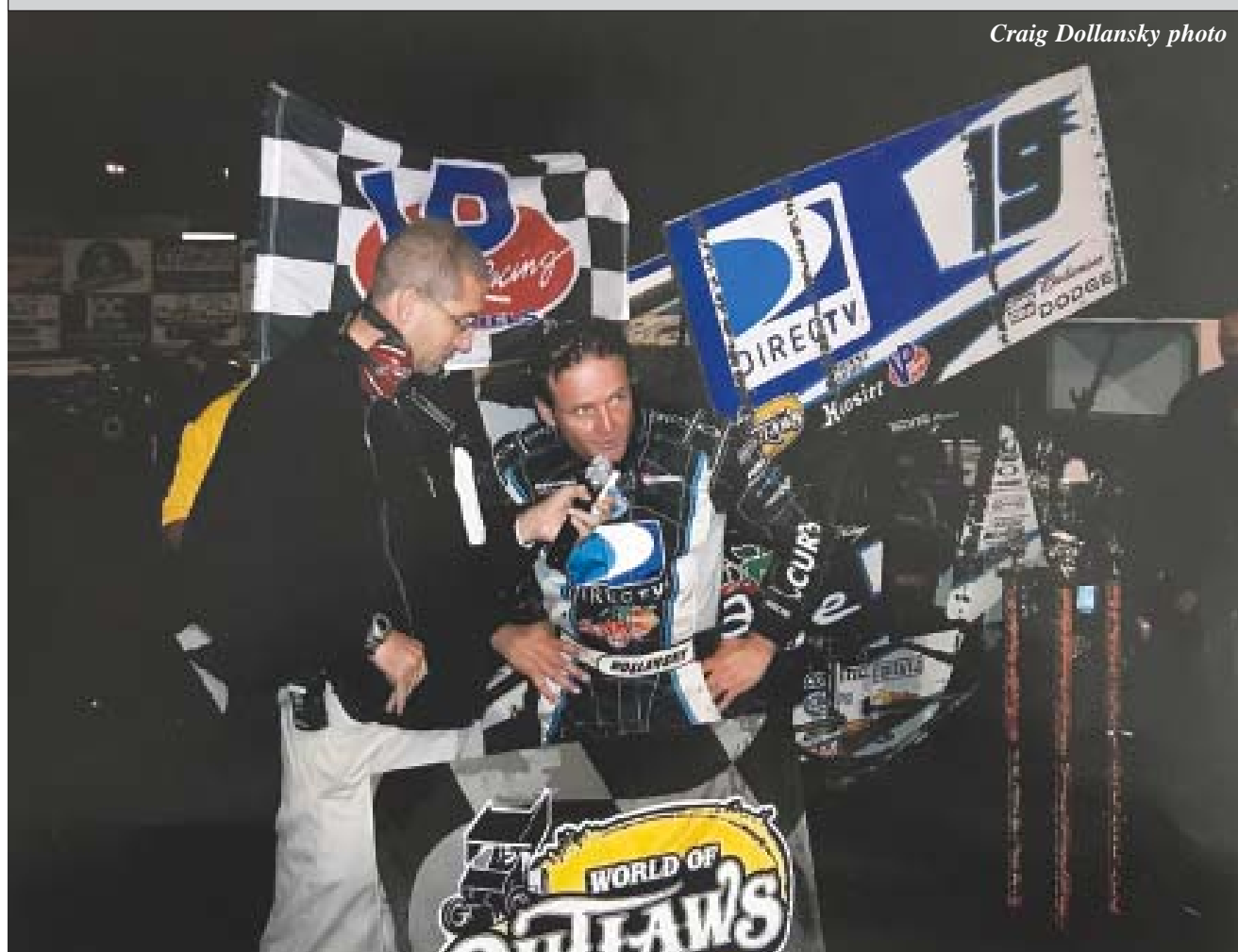
For a brief period after the announcement, he tried to escape from racing and withdrew himself from the sport, but it didn't last. He said he couldn't stay away from it — "It becomes a part of you," he said.



Bruce Nuttleman photo

Dollansky in WoO action at Deer Creek Speedway in 2012

Craig Dollansky stands in Victory Lane after winning a race driving for Kasey Kahne Racing a number of years ago on the World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series circuit.



Craig Dollansky photo

He said while he was out of the car much of 2017 and all of 2018, he was able to reflect on what has meant the most to him.

"I learned there's a lot of incredible people out there," Dollansky said. Fans of all ages wrote him letters of encouragement, a "humbling and heartwarming experience," he said. And he's written a letter in response back to every single one he's opened.

"Those letters, they bring you some strength. They help you get through those dark days," he said. "It's been incredible. I'm so thankful to the fans, my friends, my family and God."

In early January, Dollansky made another announcement: He will be coming back to sprint car racing.

The plan for 2019 is for Dollansky to make his return on March 15-16 at Devil's Bowl Speedway in Texas, driving the No. 88 car owned by Danny and Naomi King as part of the Lucas Oil American Sprint Car Series.

From there, Dollansky will transition into running the No. 7 Selva Motorsports ride in weekly competition at Knoxville (Iowa) Raceway. Dollansky said his focus will be on making another run in the Super Bowl of sprint car racing, the Knoxville Nationals in August. As for competing in Minnesota this year, he said he tentatively plans to race at the Jackson Nationals held at Jackson Motorplex in late June.

continued on page 18

continued from page 17

In his return to racing, Dollansky said he wanted a less-intense schedule than he would normally run and wanted to limit his travel.

“I like competing,” he said. “I’m a very competitive person ... and I feel like there’s a lot more we can accomplish here. I feel like we can win at the highest level.”

Beyond 2019, Dollansky said he would like to make it back to the World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series, but only on the conditions that he be signed to a team capable of winning a championship. He doesn’t want to be a back marker or field-filler; he still possesses a desire to win.

Dollansky said he’s taking it one day at a time and he will measure his progress as the season moves along, as the schedule can be tough with all of the travel between races.

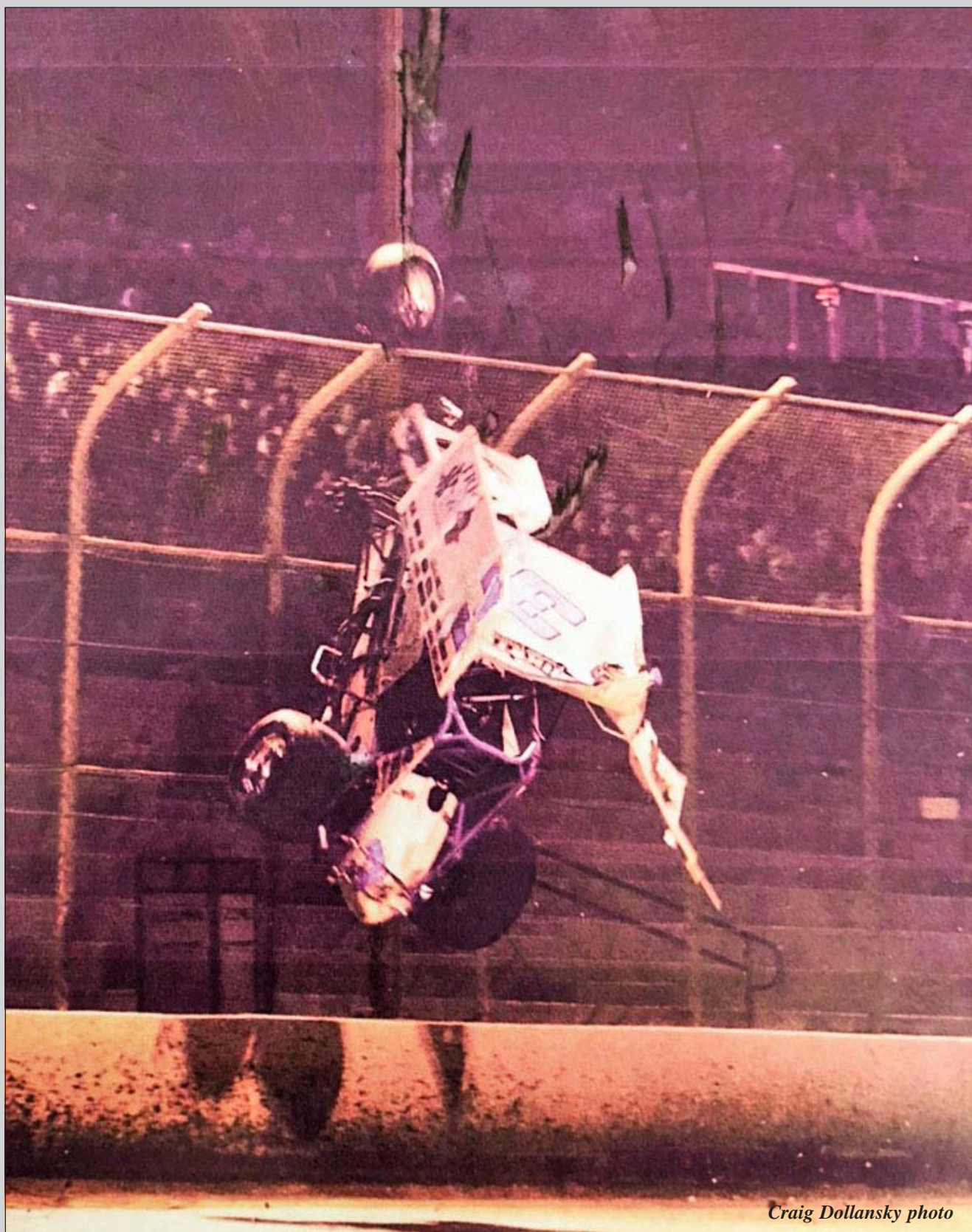
“I know I can’t stay in the sport forever, but as long as I can prepare myself, I’ll race,” he said.

Among Dollansky’s racing credentials are setting the Eldora Speedway track record in 2002, a lap of 12.707 seconds, which equates to roughly 160 mph in a sprint car, the fastest driver to ever turn a lap at the famous Tony Stewart-owned facility. Not only does the record still stand today, but Dollansky also went on to win the feature later that night. Craig’s brother, Troy, was the engine tuner on that particular car the day the record was set.

Dollansky is a three-time track champion at Federated Auto Parts Raceway at I-55 in Pevely, Missouri, and has amassed 66 career wins at the World of Outlaws level, which 12th on the all-time wins list.

Dollansky is also a three-time World of Outlaws Iron Man champion, as it is known as the toughest race on the circuit, as well as the longest race on the schedule at 55 laps.

Craig Dollansky’s father, Bill, won his first race at Princeton Speedway on July 6, 1973, and Dollansky credits seeing his father’s trophy as one of the driving factors for him to continue to pursue racing as a career. He won at Princeton Speedway on back-to-back May nights in 2004. He hopes to score few more trophies for himself this year.



Craig Dollansky photo

Sprint car racing is a dangerous sport. Even with all the safety advancements, like roll cages and head and neck restraints, sprint cars often take a tumble when they make hard contact with another car. Craig Dollansky is shown here mid-air as he takes a hard hit at Yuma Speedway (now known as Cocopah Speedway), a hit that eventually led to his retirement. After a successful surgery and rehabilitation process, Dollansky has his eyes set on a return to racing this spring.

Fans can follow Craig Dollansky and his progress, results and schedule on his nearly complete website, www.dollanskyracing.com, and also follow @CraigDollansky on Twitter and Craig Dollansky Racing on Facebook.

Speedfest 2019

Bruce Nuttleman photos

The Midwest was well represented at this year's Speedfest in Cordelle, GA.



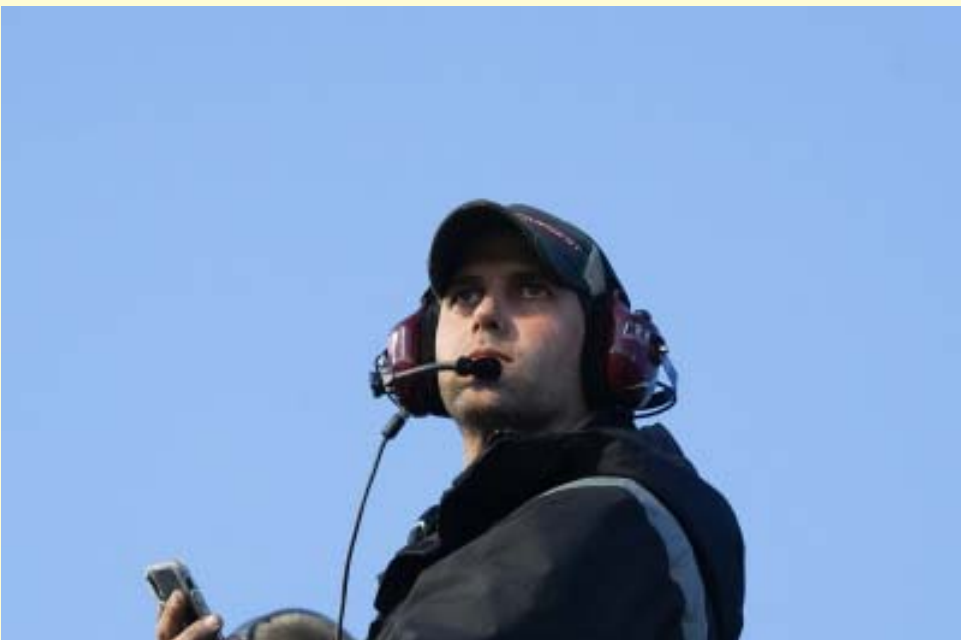
Conner Okrzesik crosses the checkered flag



Mike Garvey keeps a watchful eye on Okrzesik



Okrzesik and crew in victory lane



Chris Wimmer working with Harrison Burton



Scott Null helping out the CRA officials



Rich Bickle made another trip down South

ALL NATURAL
PRODUCT

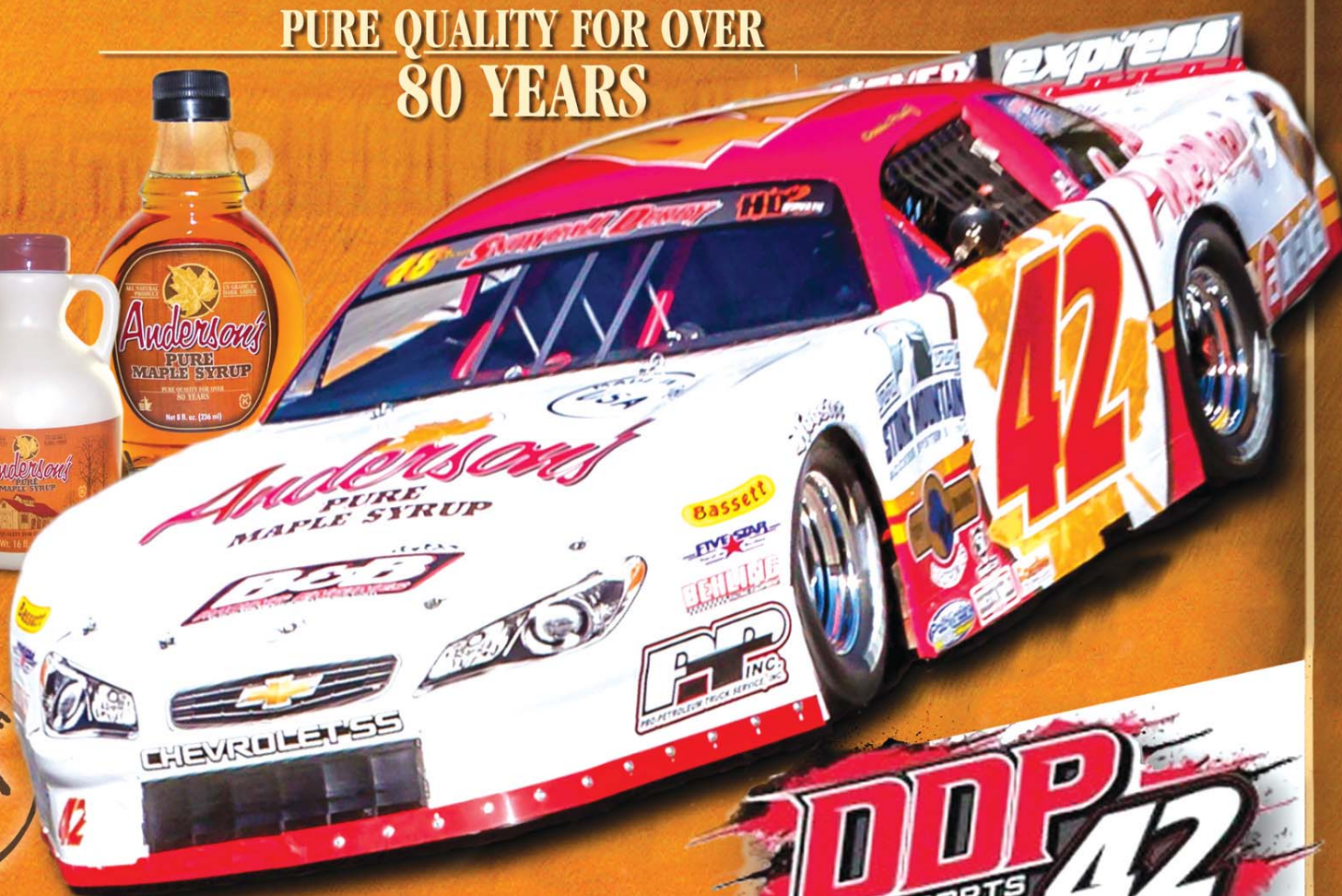
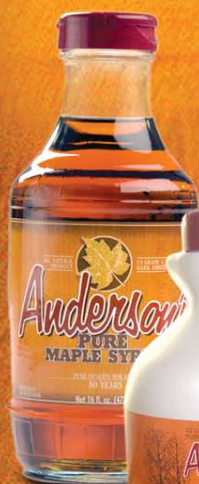
PRODUCT OF
THE USA



Anderson's

PURE MAPLE SYRUP

PURE QUALITY FOR OVER
80 YEARS



*Breakfast Never Tasted So Good!
Follow Our Racing Experiences at:*

www.AndersonsMapleSyrup.com