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Big News and Banquets



February, 2011

Inside...



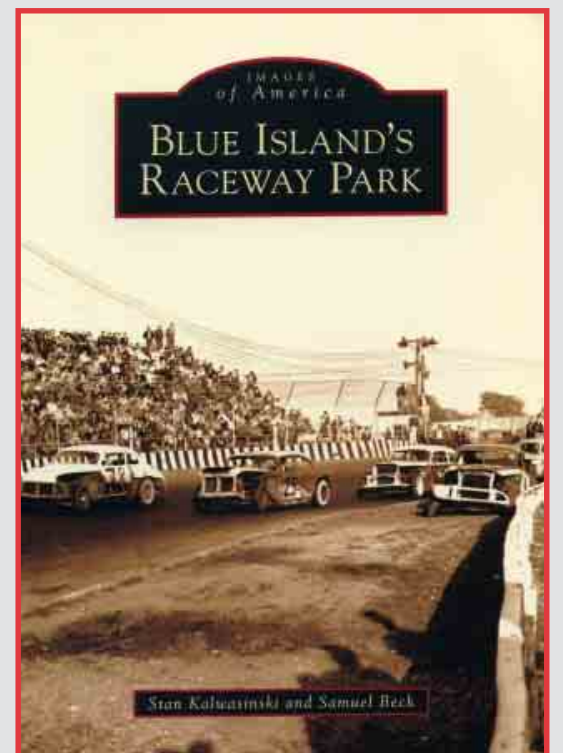
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Blue Island Book Review

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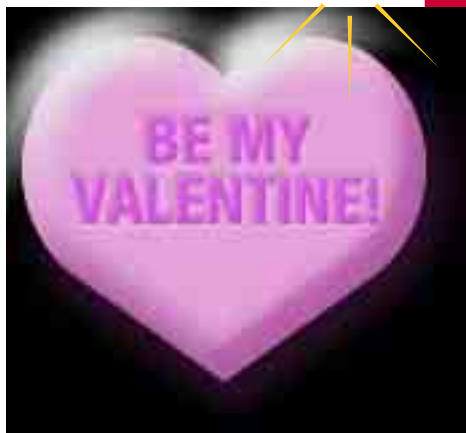
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Publisher's Note

Racing According to Plan



Dan Plan



Rick Blewett photo

By the early reports sent out so far this season, it looks like it will be a great year in store close to home. While it's nice to take a break during the winter months, it's time to get back into the flow of writing about racing in my neck of the woods. With so much happening in the last two months, it's hard to make it all fit, but hopefully I've captured everything in a way that will keep your attention for a few pages of this on-line edition.

The first big announcement in my neck of the woods came from Raceway Park in Shakopee, Minn., as John Hellendrung has returned as the owner of the

Big News & Banquets

speedway with brother Mike (aka "Pinger") handling the day-to-day operations of the facility. Donny and Melissa Reuvers end their two year run of the speedway, but will more than likely still be seen at Raceway Park throughout the summer, as Donny will now have more time to race on Sunday nights, instead of trying to run a race track. Raceway Park recently held their awards banquet, and John Hellendrung let the drivers know that they will still have their playground for 2011. Donny also had the opportunity to speak to the group and gave an emotional speech to cap off the Raceway Park banquet. The standing ovation seems to indicate Donny and Melissa did well in their efforts to keep the racers happy over the last few years. The Figure-8 drivers are always entertaining, no matter what the venue, and kept Kevin Busse on his toes during their portion of the banquet. I must also add that Kevin has been the announcer at Raceway Park for fifteen-consecutive

years, if you weren't already aware of this fact.

The same night, the ASA Midwest Tour and Upper-Midwest Sprintcar Series held their awards banquets. Who would have thought I would have a scheduling conflict in the middle of the winter, but from all reports, all three banquets were a success. Stan Meissner will have highlights and photos of the UMSS banquet in his column, and Doug Hornickel sent a few photos our way from the ASA Midwest Tour banquet. I also heard of a mysterious, endless supply of Coors Light coming from underneath one of the

The Midwest

RACING

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February, 2011

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tables at the ASA Midwest Tour banquet. I'll get right on top of investigating this story.

Publishers Note continued on page 4



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continued from page 3

Along with the banquets came some big news over the last two months. Several new, big events were announced over the winter months along with a modification to one of the traditional events. The first big announcement during our hiatus was the news of a \$20,000.00 to win USMTS Modified event at Deer Creek Speedway in early April. Based on what I've heard about the Jamboree, this show should draw a lot of heavy hitters from the Modified ranks, along with the stars from the hit TV show on Versus, Dirt Knights.

On the pavement side of the world, Elko Speedway and the ASA Midwest Tour announced the highest-paying pavement Late Model race for the Upper Midwest in several years. The winner of this July 9 show will take home \$10,000.00. It's been a few years since a high-paying show such as this has been attempted, and hopefully the drivers will come out in droves to support show with this kind of money on the line.

Cedar Lake Speedway has modified (no pun intended) the format for the Masters event held each June. This year, the USMTS Modifieds and the Dirt Knights will be the second division for the weekend, with the IRA Sprint Cars now getting their own weekend at Cedar Lake on May 21. The IRA event in May has been dubbed the Triple Crown night. Having the USMTS Mods back for the first time in a long time will make the fans of the Modifieds happy and can only add to the excitement of one of the great racing traditions in this area of the country.

Along with the announcement of the big events for the year, several rules changes have been announced during the off-season. The change that resulted in the most feedback was Wissota's decision to change the rear suspension rules for the Midwest Modifieds. From the people I've spoken to, the intent of the rule is to save drivers money in the long run. Unfortunately, a change of this magnitude is going to cost a number of racers to spend money up front. I've always believed it's impossible to save racers money, but it is possible to put rules in place to keep

racers from spending more money. Word on the street has a driver that goes by the name of "Bodetis" used his one and only call from the Scott County Correctional Facility to lobby Wissota for this change to make his leaf-spring Mod more competitive. We'll track down this driver and see if we can confirm this rumor before our next issue. Time will tell if the rule change impacts the number of drivers that show up this summer. Racers are racers, and my gut tells me most of the controversy will be forgotten by the time summer rolls around this year.

The Power Stock division from Elko is also going through a transformation of sorts. A rules meeting was recently held at the shops of Brother's Jorgenson Racing in Elko to finalize how the division will look for the 2011 season. The group is going "back to basics." Over the years, the division has transformed from the original rules, with minor changes along the way to allow components such as racing suspension and tires. The proposed changes have the class of cars now more in line with the Enduro type cars. Hopefully the proposed changes will see the return to larger car counts from years past, and ultimately make racing more affordable for a large group of drivers.

Misc. News & Notes;
New Race Directors

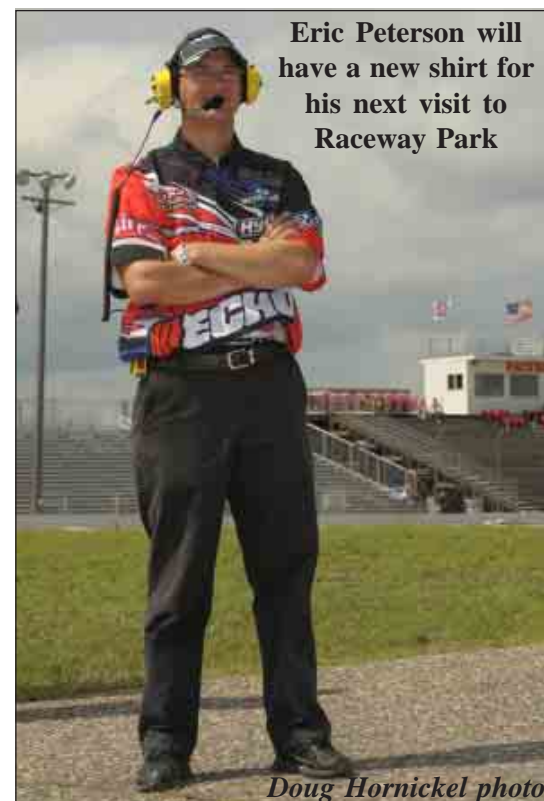
Recently announced were new race directors for Raceway Park and Elko. Former ASA Midwest Tour race director, Eric Peterson, will take the spot atop of the tower at Raceway Park this year. Eric did well in his role with the touring series and will do well working weekly with the gang at Raceway Park. Tim Johnson moves to the race director at Elko. After two successful years at Raceway Park, Tim will bring a new style of leadership to this position at Elko. Sometimes changes are needed to keep things fresh, or to restore things to the way they way they used to be. Both Eric and Tim will do fine in their new roles, and we wish them the best.

Tim Johnson takes over the Race Director role at Elko Speedway



Martin DeFries photo

Eric Peterson will have a new shirt for his next visit to Raceway Park



Doug Hornickel photo

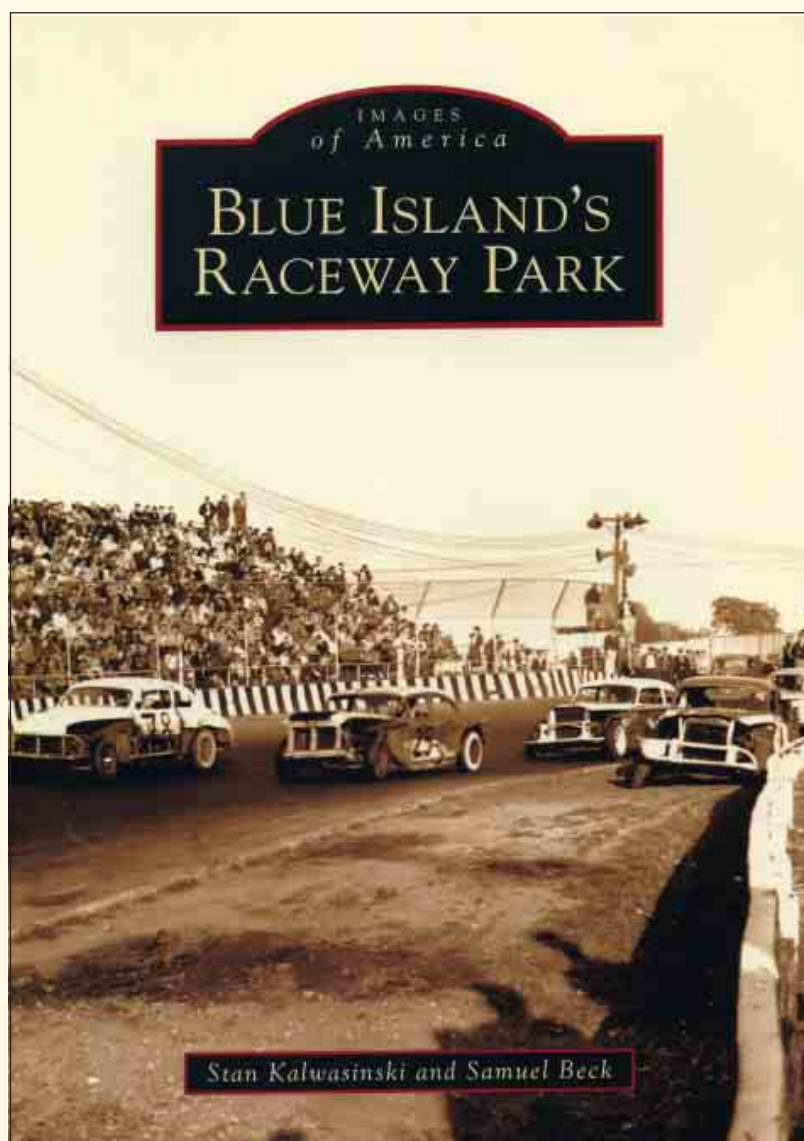


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Special Offer for Wisconsin Midwest Modified Drivers

Wehrs Machine has the solution to the Wisconsin Midwest Modified rule change to a three-link rear suspension for the 2011 season. We are going to offer the Midwest Modified drivers that use our cages a FREE swap out if they send us their housings. In return, we will send them brackets that clamp solid to the rear end and still use our plates.



Blue Island's Raceway Park Book Review

Prior to posting our December issue on our website, we had just received a review copy of the book titled *Blue Island's Raceway Park* by Stan Kalwasinski and Samuel Beck from Coastal 181 Publishing. We've had a few months to look through the book now, this is another item any race fan from the upper-Midwest would truly enjoy. The book is chock full of pictures capturing the history of Raceway Park in Blue Island, Illinois and now I realize why the folks in this area of Chicago are so passionate about their racing and how terrible it must feel to have your home track disappear and turn into a shopping mall.

I've learned over the last few years how difficult it can be to put together a couple dozen pages for print in a racing paper, but can't imagine the amount of time and effort Stan and Sam put forth to have this book published. There are hundreds of photos in the book, each with captions, dating back to the opening of the track back in the 1930's all of the way through the closing of the track following the 2000 racing season.

This book, along with many other racing themed books and DVD's are available through Coastal Publishing at www.coastal181.com.

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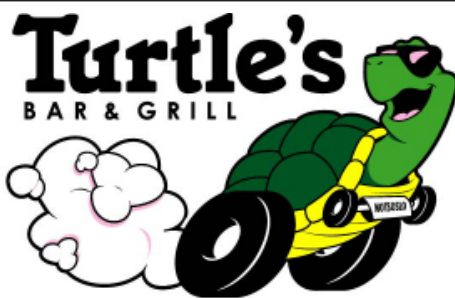
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Going in Circles



By Charlie Spry

This month I will give you some random thoughts and information for the middle of winter.....

Race tracks are like any other businesses, and that means that they need to find customers. Most business ventures now have a presence on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and race tracks for the most part realize that they need to have a presence here as well. Like all businesses, some do a better job of it than others. Marshfield Motor Speedway interacts with drivers and fans as good or better than any I have seen. Promoter Wayne Brevik keeps everyone in the loop as to what is going on, and works hard at this. Another track that reacts very well is Madison International Speedway. They are on top of things and have a very strong and positive presence.

Another thing that race tracks can and should do is release their schedules for the upcoming season as soon as it is feasible. Rules and such should be planned in advance so that the rule book can be finalized in plenty of time to allow racers to make changes or build new cars, etc. Here, State Park Speedway had the earliest schedule of any track, releasing their schedule for 2011 before the new year even started. Well done!

Some of you who regularly read this column know that I usually have an award given to the driver who travels to the most post-season specials, and also taking into account distance travelled, my "Golden Odometer Award" for 2010 goes to four cylinder racer Phil Malouf for the second year in a row. Phil made the long haul from his home in extreme northern Wisconsin to race at any event he could find in the post season, including shows at Rockford Illinois, and Madison, Marshfield, LaCrosse, Jefferson, Columbus and Slinger in Wisconsin. He also made it to a couple of enduros at Farley, Iowa. I don't know of anyone who put more miles on the hauler than he did, especially in a "support" division. Unfortunately for Phil, this writer is unable to provide Phil with anything other than mention here in this publication. I have an old gauge cluster from a '64 Rambler somewhere around here, and I should spray paint it gold or something.

Speaking of old car parts, this is another topic. Most racing people likely have an interest in old cars as well. I know I do. This leads to some of us being "packrats" or "collectors" of STUFF. Most racers keep old door panels and other such stuff from their old cars and display on their shop walls. I have a couple of doors from my first race car, and have also collected a few late model doors from various people for display. This adds to the "look" of the shop, and is a great conversation starter. Some of the panels that I have are probably not even recognized by many, but I know who they are from, and it means a lot to me. I even have the whole side from one of the original Midwest Trucks that raced at Madison when the division was first started. Don't even get me started on the heaps of other "collectibles" around my place. I need a bigger house! Anyone need some taillight bezels for a '62 Chevy? I've got 'em.

With some time to finally get caught up on my race statistics for the 2010 season, I thought I would share some findings with you. I have done some serious research on feature winners for most of the asphalt tracks in Wisconsin, and have some pretty good data from the late 1960's to present, with some sporadic stuff before that. Anyway, some milestones were set this year at various tracks, as first off, Dean Schultz's single late model feature victory this season at Columbus 151 Speedway moved him into a tie for second in the all time limited late model feature victory column with Ron Bishofberger, as both now have 23 career feature here. Pete Moore still leads with 27.



Bruce Nuttleman photo

At Jefferson, hobby stock racer Jim Tate Jr. dominated this year, winning 10 features, putting him atop the list, surpassing long time leader Dennis Gaserude. Jim has 25 to Dennis' 23.

At Golden Sands, four cylinder racer Phil Malouf had three feature wins, putting him into the lead there with 10, passing Mike Oehmichen, who has 9.

At Marshfield, four cylinder racer Derk Hauser's six feature wins this year put him in a tie with several others with 12. Besides Derk, Keith Wirtz, Kyle Oppelt, and Jeremiah Strauss all have the same amount. Also at Marshfield, late model racer Eugene Gregorich Jr. had one feature win this year, which ties him with Mark Eswein for the lead with 28 apiece. I am working on compiling the stats for Marshfield when it was dirt, but this will take some time as some years had better recorded results than others.

Right now I am working on stats for the former Lake Geneva Raceway, with hit and miss findings from the early years. This work may never be completed, but it sure is a fun project.



Bruce Nuttleman photo

THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

Photo Gallery



LaCrosse Late Model top-3
Mary Schill photo



LaCrosse Sportsman top-3
Mary Schill photo



ASA Midwest Sportsman Tour top-3
Doug Hornickel photo



ASA Midwest Tour top-3
Doug Hornickel photo



Raceway Park Figure-8 drivers show of the year-end hardware
Martin DeFries photo



Raceway Park Late model top-4
Martin DeFries photo

***Our next
on - line issue will
be in March***

**THE MIDWEST
RACING CONNECTION**

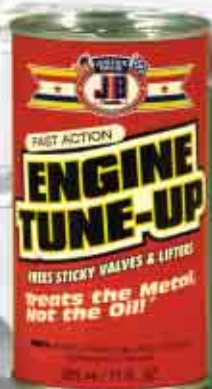
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Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



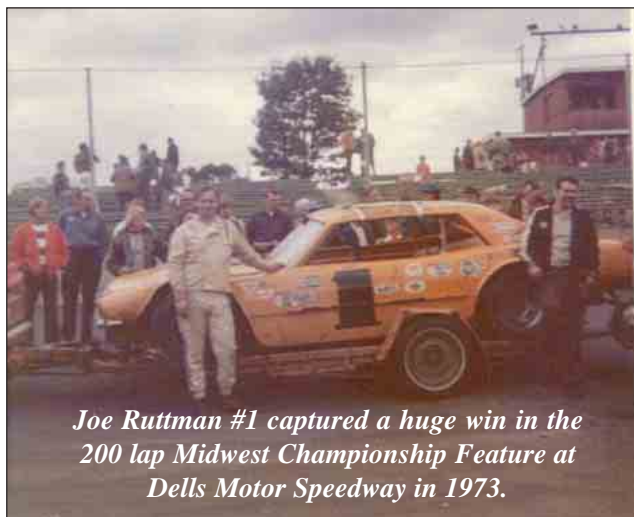
By Dale P. Danielski

The snow is piled high and although a lot is going on in the background by race organizers and competitors alike in preparation for the 2011 racing season, by popular demand, we'll take another step back in time and highlight some of what was going on in racing, this time for the year 1973.

Most folks know of the late John McKarns as a race promoter. But in 1973 Mr. McKarns was on the media side of things informing us race followers of goings on through his Chicagoland STARS column in the Midwest Racing News.

The Midwest paper was pretty much the coverage of racing bible in its day and we all looked forward every week to receiving our copy, generally on Thursday. To continue receiving the paper on a regular basis a \$4.00/year subscription was necessary. \$7.00 would get you two years worth of coverage if you can believe that! Looking at some of the race event admission fees at the time, Hales Corners Speedway outside of Milwaukee, WI., (Menards is located where the track used to be) was charging \$2.50 for adults with children admitted for \$.50. The Brown County Fairgrounds Speedway, a popular venue for the dirt set in Depere, WI., (Fairgrounds is still there but only a small patch of the old speedway remains) charged an adult price of \$2.00 with children in for \$1.00. Truly amazing what racing entertainment cost then to say the least.

With the Pony Car revolution having taken hold the previous year nearly all drivers were on the small car band wagon in 1973. Some that were ready to do battle on the



Joe Ruttman #1 captured a huge win in the 200 lap Midwest Championship Feature at Dells Motor Speedway in 1973.

pavement included Dick Trickle, 1970 Ford Mustang, Marv Marzofka, 1973 Chevy Camaro, Tom Reffner 1970 Mustang, Jim Back, 1973 Camaro, Joe Shear, 1973 Camaro, John Rank, 1972 Chevy Nova, Bobby Wawak, 1973 Dodge Challenger, Jim Sauter, 1973 Camaro, John Ziegler, 1973 Mustang, Larry Detjens, 1972 Challenger, and Whitey Harris, 1973 Camaro to name some. And according to McKarns in an early season column, drivers were wasting no time getting their cars dialed in as Ray Para, Shear, Ray Young, Lee Schuler and Ed Hoffman all took main event wins away from their home tracks. Of course our upper Midwest contingent got the season rolling in quick fashion as well as Trickle took a 150 lap win at the Springfield, MO., Fairgrounds Speedway which was worth \$1,000 and amazingly held in front of a near capacity crowd of 5,000 fans! The "Tricky" one also found victory lane in major events at Rolla, and Odessa, MO., tracks. Shear meanwhile followed up a big win in Springfield, MO., with wins at Golden Sands Speedway of Plover, WI., and at Capital Speedway of Oregon, WI. Not to be outdone, Marv Marzofka and Jim Back were off and running with victories at Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI., and at Golden Sands. Back's winning day was noteworthy in that he scored a clean sweep of all the events he participated in. The feat included setting fast qualifying time, winning the fast dash, his heat race and the 30 lap Feature event! A clean sweep today in many instances is winning as little as two events. Not so back in 1973. The wins for these drivers kept adding up too as they had won more times in the first several weeks of the season than many do in a year or better.

Also significant was the racing career taking shape of New Prague, MN., driver Mike Miller. Miller scored his first career Late Model Feature victory in early May at the Minnesota National Speedway of Elko, MN. In an attempt to speed up that career even further, Miller decided to move south and become a member of the Wisconsin gang. Basing his operation out of Wisconsin Rapids, WI., Miller in short order began competing 5 or more times a week which drastically sped up his learning curve on the pavement. All the extra laps on tracks of different sizes and shapes paid off as Miller went on to win 125 main events in a career that lasted over 20 years.

With the success of the Red, White and Blue Series at Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna, WI., the track decided to schedule a couple additional special events in 1973. One was the Spring Sizzler held in May that year. A gigantic crowd of 6,351 no doubt still getting over cabin fever turned out for the event that saw Joe Shear winning the 50 lap feature. Yes, it was Shear winning and not Trickle who so often took inaugural events wherever they were held. Trickle did wind up 2nd by barely a car length with Dave Watson, Tom Reffner, Whitey Harris, John Rank, Marv Marzofka, Larry Detjens, Dan Bellard and Jim Pierson following. Shear also broke the track record in qualifying with a lap of 21:42 around the big ½ mile Tri-Oval breaking the old mark of 21:60 set by Al Moldenhauer the previous year. Another fact unknown to many is that the late Gary Vercauteran was instrumental in getting the events at WIR scheduled. The idea for the series was a good one and it continues today. The Spring Sizzler title for the opener didn't last long however, as the Stafford, CT., Speedway had a patent on that name forcing WIR officials to later retitl it the Spring Opener 50.

Unfortunately in 1973 one of the biggest racing tragedies up to that point for the area was the death of veteran driver Lyle Nabbefeldt. Nabbefeldt had the throttle stick on his

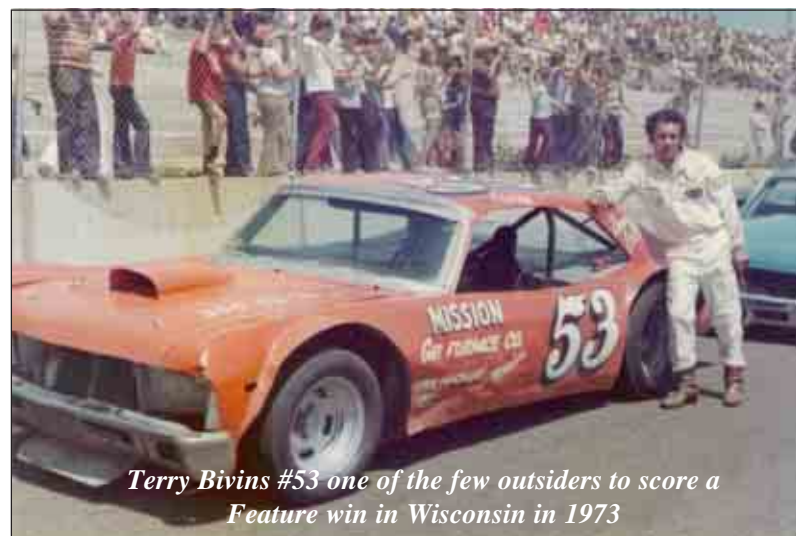


Mike Miller campaigned this 1970 Mustang #18 during the 1973 season

Camaro while qualifying at The Dells Speedway hitting the wall nearly straight on. The impact reportedly knocked his seat loose causing the Nekoosa, WI., driver to make contact with something in the car which killed him instantly. It was also rumored that Nabbefeldt may have had a heart attack but nothing was ever substantiated. What was fact was that one of the areas winningest and most popular drivers was now gone. His death was very difficult for the area drivers as most at some time or another had counted on Lyle for advice, assistance and even money to keep them going which he willingly offered. A big void was left but the season continued on.

Racing actually at this time was becoming much more popular. According to John McKarns in a column he wrote, racing recorded an estimated 76 million in attendance which out drew all other types of sports at the time. Horse racing was at 74 million (With pari-mutuel betting the biggest reason of course) while football was at 43 million which outdrew baseball, basketball and hockey in that order. Always staying on top of things, John's writings definitely made people take note that racing was for real and not just a bunch of red necks driving in circles!

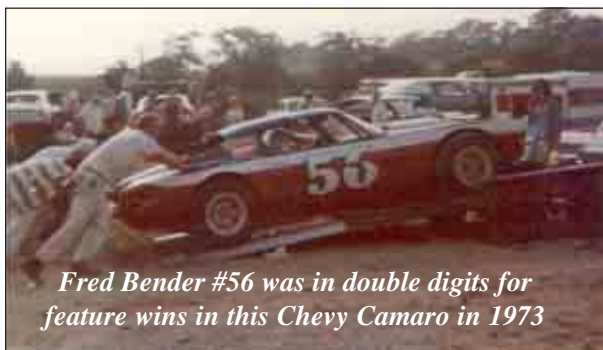
One of the most publicized events for 1973 was the MARC TIMES Invitational to be held at Sam's Capital Speedway. Twin 75 feature events were advertised with \$1,000 going to the winner of each. The show was also considered a Tri-



Terry Bivins #53 one of the few outsiders to score a Feature win in Wisconsin in 1973

R Promotion which was the precursor Series to John McKarn's ARTGO. Drivers from six States appeared for the event but that only represented 25 cars as the sanctioning group American Racing Congress was very strict on their rules enforcement and many drivers were not willing to add hundreds of pounds of weight to be legal. Tom Reffner decided to give it a try but was required to add over 200 pounds of weight. His Mustang apparently felt good at

Continued on page 11



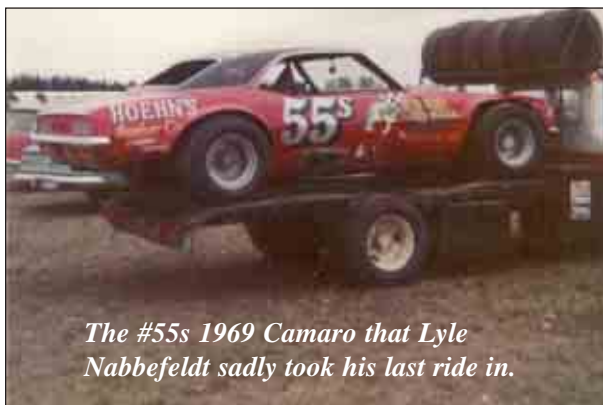
Fred Bender #56 was in double digits for feature wins in this Chevy Camaro in 1973

that weight as he easily won both feature events and set fast qualifying time. You look at the 25 cars that did race and it's a pretty impressive field. Names like Dick Trickle, Bob Senneker, Paul Weisner, Fred Bender, Terry Bivens, Jim Back, Bob Jusola, Boyce Sparkman and even M.J. McBride who took a shot at pavement racing. No slouches here they were just a little short on quantity for this particular event. Speaking of Fred Bender the Sun Prairie driver was having one of his best seasons winning at the Dells Motor Speedway, Capital, Jefferson, WI. and Columbus 151 Speedway, Columbus, WI.. Freddy was one of the most likeable guys on the circuit as well.

It was extremely difficult for an outsider to win where the Wisconsin gang was racing. Kansas visitor Terry Bivins however pulled off the feat in a special event at the Dells Motor Speedway. Rain did help Bivins' cause shortening the event to 80 laps from a scheduled 100 and it didn't hurt that Trickle who was leading blew his engine handing over the lead and win to Bivins. Definitely something to be said for being in the right place at the right time! Bob Jusola one of the Minnesota travelers was racing more and more in Wisconsin and the trips paid off mid-summer as the Burnsville racer took a feature win at the same Dells track in his 1972 Chevy Nova. Like Miller Jusola eventually moved to Wisconsin. Joe Ruttman scored the biggest win for outsiders coming to the Wisconsin playground as he steered Joy Fair's radical short wheel base Ford Maverick to the 200 lap win in the Midwest Championship at Dells Motor Speedway.

Interesting how another racer during this time was beginning to make a name for himself. Terry Baldry in his second year of racing captured a couple semi-feature wins racing in the Fox Valley. Of course we know how well he eventually did winning multiple track and series championships. Baldry is still racing and winning in the Valley today.

Again taking a peak at admission prices we see WIR charging adults \$2.00 admission for their first event of the Red, White and Blue Series. Kids under 12 were free. Raceway Park of Beaver Dam, WI., (Which no longer exists) charged adults \$2.50 to get in with students priced at \$1.50 and kids under 12 free. The track in Plymouth, WI., was charging \$2.00/adult admission with accompanied students age 12-15, \$1.00. The Illiana Speedway just outside of the high roller and high income City of Chicago,



The #55s 1969 Camaro that Lyle Nabbefeldt sadly took his last ride in.

IL., charged \$2.50 for adult admission with teens thru the age of 17 getting in for \$2.00. Children at Illiana age 6-12 had to suffer thru paying \$.50 to get in.

Contrary to popular belief we did during the years get to many different dirt tracks and special events. It was awhile before we made the decision to get a taste of the dirt slingers way of racing but once we did we were nearly as hooked on that form of racing as the pavement style.

Most of the dirt racing we witnessed early on was the guys competing in North Eastern Wisconsin. Actually what got us to an event was the rumor that Dick Trickle, Tom Reffner and Tom Jones were going to be racing at the Seymour Speedway of Seymour, WI., after competing at Kaukauna that afternoon. Perhaps after a couple beers to build up their courage we did get to see Trickle and Jones at the track while maybe Reffner had one extra brew and thought better to head home instead. Not certain how Trickle did on this day but as time went by he became quite good on dirt surfaces winning a number of feature races. It didn't always matter how well he ran either as promoters were paying the crowd attracting Trickle big bucks just to show up! I do remember how Tom Jones fared as the Camaro driver drove to two wins on the night beating a number of dirt regulars in the process. Even more impressive was the fact he did it with the same tires on his car that he had raced on the pavement earlier in the day! You definitely won't ever see that happen again as nobody crosses over surface to surface with the same car anymore.

Of course the dirt guys had their stars too and they could definitely get it done in exciting fashion as we found out. In 1973 many of this contingent had also picked up on the Pony Car explosion. Top drivers in those cars included Roger Paul, 1973 Chevy Nova, J.J Smith, 1970 Ford Mustang, Jerry Smith, 1973 Camaro, Jim Jahnke, 1969 Chevy Camaro, Dave Conger, 1969 Camaro, and a very young Pete Parker, 1967 Nova. The big cars hadn't become totally obsolete yet however and hotshots Roger "The Bear" Regeth, 1972 Chevelle, M.J McBride, 1972 Ford Torino, Russ Peterson, 1971 Torino, Doug Larson, 1972 Chevelle and Bob Bennett, 1972 Chevelle took more than their share of wins.

Speaking of more than their share, Roger Paul, The "Flying" Farmer went on a tear in mid-summer of the year winning main events at Shawano, Seymour, again at Shawano and in Depere. Four wins in four nights of racing against the best the area had to offer, now that would make even the best paved racer proud!

As we mentioned earlier drivers don't cross over at all anymore in terms of racing the same equipment on both surfaces. Harold Mueller a Western Wisconsin dirt track star who raced anywhere and everywhere did however utilize the same car in 1973 to race on both types of tracks. Beginning the year in his 1973 Chevy Laguna on the Central Wisconsin paved circuit, Mueller proceeded to frustrate nearly everyone he raced against with his foot to the floor, sideways through the corner "Style". Most he competed against called it something other than that and

weren't too happy with Harold as they were used to clean, side by side racing with little or no contact. After awhile Harold realized he really didn't belong racing straight into the corner and put the car with some adjustments back on the dirt. He went on to a bunch of big wins that year and never made another attempt racing on black top. Not to diminish from Mueller and what he did racing but he was way more suited for dirt than pavement. And the man could definitely handle a race car as his impressive number of wins through the years indicates.

Unbeknownst to many was the fact that Dick Trickle wrecked the Mustang he started the season with and was forced to build another one. There certainly wasn't any drop off in performance with the second car and that fact came through loud and clear when he won the Badger Monza 150 at Capital Speedway. With three 50 lap features on the racing slate Trickle took the overall win by winning all three in convincing fashion! Having witnessed the event first hand I recall the closest anyone got to Trickle once he was in the lead was 10 car lengths. A thorough trouncing of the field it was.

Hard not to be impressed with the 1970s era of racing and the '73 season had to be ranked right up there with the best of 'em. The fact it was reasonable to travel then

with gas prices less than a buck, and food practically a non-issue price wise you could make yourself very mobile and hit your favorite race event almost whenever you wanted. Still hard to fathom what it cost to get into these shows. Even special events offering anywhere from \$5,000-\$12,000 purses were reasonable to get into. The Dells track had a special event scheduled with a \$6,000 purse. Adult admission, \$3.50 with children 6-12 \$.50. Unbelievable. Of course in my case if I could get in free all the better. Being a bit small in stature I'd get the under 12 free price wherever I went. I guess around the age of 17 tracks thought that a bit suspicious and finally I was forced to pay a buck or two to catch the racing. Of course a press pass or two later and back to free admittance, all I had to do was cover the events. The rest is history.

And here again, I'm glad we could give one and all a glimpse back in time of racing and how it used to be. We'll bring you more special features when time and space allow. Here and there...Harold Mueller ended up winning 16 dirt features during the year after racing the first two months of the season on asphalt...Roger Paul captured 25 main event wins in 1973 racing in North Eastern Wisconsin...Dick Trickle followed up his record breaking 67 win season in 1972 with 47 feature wins in 1973.

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



#4 Bob Jusola another Minnesota driver scoring a win in Wisconsin.

Double Duty Doug

We recently learned of Doug Brown plans on racing two different divisions on a weekly basis during the 2011 season. Doug will be back behind the wheel of his familiar #14 Big-8 ride, but will also contend for the point title in the Thunder Car division behind the wheel of Scott Kingery's potent #7 ride, out of the RPM Engineering Shop.

In a recent exchange with Doug, he stated, "He (Scott Kingery) offered to let me run it, so I couldn't turn it down. It's a good car; we just need to make it turn better. Hopefully Elko will allow me time to do a fast switch to get in my Big 8. I have all sorts of racing going on this year. My 10 year-old son will be in 1/4 midget, and Bandoleros. My 16 year-old daughter is going to try a Hornet at Raceway. She drove a 1/4 midget, and was very good, but aggressive, so it's a little scary for me. We are looking forward to 2011."

It's been a while since we've seen somebody consistently pull double-duty weekly at an asphalt track. You still see guys like Brent Larson or Darrell Nelson jump back and forth between a Late Model and Modified on the dirt, but we're looking forward to somebody making the effort on



Martin DeFries photo

the paved side of the world. Running two cars in one night and preparing two cars for the kids is going to be a full plate for Doug in 2011.

We originally sent a request to Martin DeFries for an action photo of Doug Brown, and this is what we received. We thought it was a good photo, but doesn't really fit with the story.



Martin DeFries photo



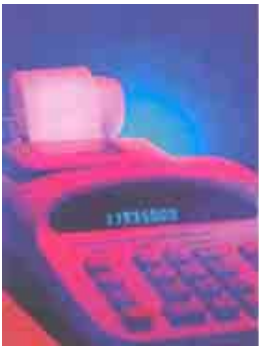
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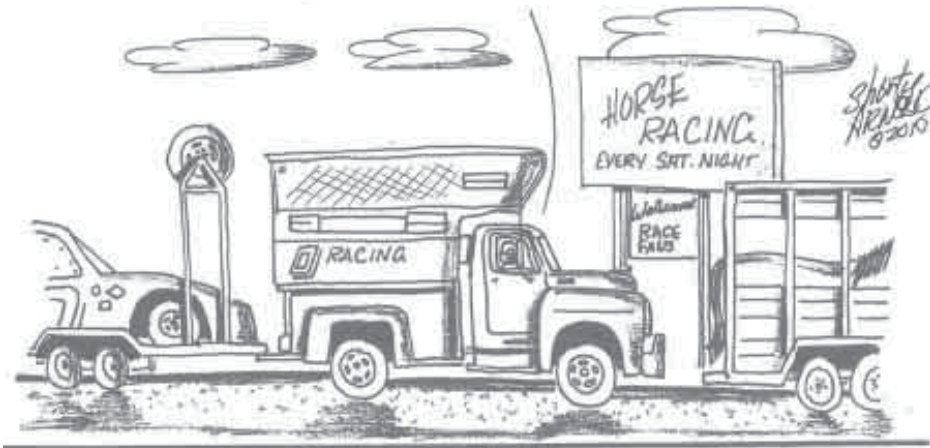
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The Inside Dirt



Stan Meissner

I'm going to admit something that might cause some rabid racing fans to question my loyalty to the sport. After the final checkered flag of the season waves I lock my note pad and cameras in the cabinet and take the winter off. I will admit to watching a few of the remaining NASCAR races and have been following the Dirt Knights on the Versus channel but I don't eat, breath and sleep racing in the winter like I do during the summer. I find the break refreshing and like to approach each winter as a time to regroup and save some gas and hot dog money for my next campaign.

The new year always seems to usher in new resolutions, hopes and dreams. In my case the new year also serves as a racing wakeup call. Dead message boards start to come to life and the Australian season, Chili Bowl, Speedweeks, Banquets and GRP Dirt Track Racing Trivia Contest eventually rouse me from my winter slumber. That is where we are at in the stream of

time as I sit in my man cave writing this column.

Racing started out with a bang down in Australia. Several drivers with local ties including Brooke Tatnell, Craig Dollansky and Donny Schatz have spent all or part of the winter racing in the land down under. The 49th Australian Championship took place at the Premier Speedway on January 28-29. This event is the Australian equivalent of our Knoxville Nationals and this year's version drew a field of 94 cars. Brooke Tatnell of San Souci New South Wales/Forest Lake, Minnesota, won the Saturday night A Main. This was Brooke's fourth event title and one of the perks of this win is the honor of switching to the number au1.

In my biased opinion Brooke Tatnell's win should have been the biggest news out of Australia to appear in the American racing press. Unfortunately Sprint Car racing doesn't get much respect in our NASCAR dominated racing media. Tony Stewart threw a helmet at Parameta City Raceway (Sydney) co-owner Brett Morris in protest of what Stewart perceived as rough track conditions. Morris suffered a fractured orbital bone that required surgery in the January 15 incident. Stewart received a black eye and was detained by Australian police before being allowed to leave the country the following day. Word on the street is that Stewart could be summoned back to Australia to face charges. Morris has declined comment and some speculate that if he presses charges it won't come at a convenient time for Smoke. Tony Stewart could conceivably be summoned to Australia for a court appearance during the upcoming NASCAR season. Anyone who has

attended a race at the Eldora Speedway in recent years will probably agree that Stewart should have had a little more empathy when it comes to dirt track preparation.

I have never been to the Chili Bowl but I guess you could call it a sign of the times that I was able to watch a ten minute highlight video of Saturday night's A Main on YouTube the next morning. This year's event saw 256 entrants from 29 states, New Zealand and Australia. Two drivers



2010 UMSS Champion Cody Hahn is congratulated by Series Director Ron Bernhagen (left) and Greg Parent (right).

from the upper Midwest competed in this year's Chili Bowl, Jody Rosenboom of Rock Rapids, Iowa, and Donovan Peterson, of Brookings, South Dakota. The winner of this year's Chili Bowl was Kevin Swindell who captured his second Golden Driller trophy in a row beating his father Sammy over the line by inches.

The Upper Midwest Sprint Car Series annual Banquet took place at the Running Aces Harness Park in Columbus, Minnesota, on Saturday January 22. 2010 Champion Cody Hahn received the champion's traveling trophy. The remainder of the top five included Brad Barickman, Jerry Richert Jr., Brandon Allen and Kevin Nickel with Jared Goerges taking home Rookie of the Year honors. Series Director Ron Bernhagen released a tentative schedule of 25 winged race dates, 16 non-wing and six appearances for the Micro Sprints. Eight of the scheduled shows will include both winged and non-



Four of the top five in UMSS Points at the Upper Midwest Sprint Car Series Banquet that took place at the Running Aces Harness Park in Columbus, Minnesota, on January 22, 2011. Left is fourth place finisher Brandon Allen, Kevin Nickel fifth place finisher, Brad Barickman second place and on the right 2010 UMSS Champion Cody Hahn. Third place finisher Jerry Richert Jr. was not in attendance.



Jared Goerges (right) was honored as the UMSS Rookie of the Year by Series Director Ron Bernhagen (left) at the Upper Midwest Sprint Car Series Banquet that took place at the Running Aces Harness Park in Columbus, Minnesota, on January 22, 2011.

Continued on page 15



Amy Tatnell accepts the third place trophy on behalf of her brother Jerry Richert Jr. from UMSS Series Director Ron Bernhagen (left) and UMSS Media Director Greg Parent (right).

wing cars. The UMSS winged racers will appear as the support class for the World of Outlaws at the Princeton Speedway on July 25 and the non-wing cars will be on the card at the Cedar Lake Outlaw show. A complete schedule can be found at their website, umsprints.com.

The UMSS non-wing series has been generating a lot of excitement among racers and fans. For the first year the non-wing cars are being billed as an exhibition series in order to attract competitors and develop new talent. You might recall that an attempt was made to generate interest in non-wing racing during the first season among the drivers of the winged cars. Several non-wing events were tentatively scheduled, however, the idea never got legs among the racers. As Ron Bernhagen put it "when I suggested this idea I found out that it wasn't going to be easy to change the present culture" [of winged racing]. The idea of a non-wing series with an entirely different engine package and weight rule was proposed next and has been well received. Non-wing cars will be required to weigh 1650# with fully suited driver. The carbureted methanol burning engines will be capable of putting out around 400 horsepower. Organizers believe that this combination of horsepower and weight will provide competitive racing while making the cars safer to drive. People should be able to obtain a used chassis and competitive engine for under \$10,000, a figure that compares favorably with entry level Stock Car and Modified classes.

I'm a little uncertain what to expect from the World of Outlaws this season. As you may recall, I wrote about the Outlaws making changes to their staff in the last issue of MRC online. Since that time the World of Outlaws announced that they did not extend the contract of "Work'N Woody" the iconic push and tow vehicle fans have seen at WoO races since 1988. Work'N Woody was built by Art Moralies of Carmichael, California, in 1978 and operated by Art and his wife Carol until their retirement in 2008. Art's son Eric operated Work'N Woody for the past two seasons with the Outlaws and recently

announced that Work'N Woody will be touring with the Golden State King of the West Sprint Car Series in 2011.

Outlaw caliber drivers such as Terry McCarl and Brooke Tatnell who have left the WoO tour will be joined this year by the likes of Jac Haudenschield and Danny Lasoski. Carnahan Motorsports released Haudenschield and put their equipment up for sale due to the loss of their primary sponsor. "The Dude" Danny Lasoski will be running his own team out of his Missouri shop. I'm not predicting doom and gloom for

the Outlaws but I do expect to see fewer cars on the tour. That will no doubt have an effect on car counts at some events, especially in areas where there are no nearby 410 tracks. Fortunately for fans in the upper Midwest I feel that the positives will outweigh the negatives. We are fortunate here in Minnesota to be centrally located between three 410 tracks, Knoxville, Husets and River Cities, and one of the best 410 series in the country, the Interstate Racing Association.

A chassis seminar was held at Mastell Brother's Trailer Service on the afternoon of the UMSS Banquet. The UMSS winged Sprint Car that will be driven by Modified standout Andy Jones this season was on display. Andy told me that he did not have a Modified ride lined up for 2011 and the Sprint might be his only racing option this season. You might recall that last season Andy drove a former Stevie

Smith coil over car powered by the UMSS spec engine. This year Andy's ride is a former Craig Dollansky car and the spec motor will be replaced with the team's own engine. The UMSS spec motor is still in the developmental stage but the project suffered a setback when the spec motor blew up last season. I'm predicting that with strong equipment and another year of seat time in the Sprint Car Andy Jones will become a threat to win each and every week. The new chassis is a standard four bar so that should make it easier for the team to get help dialing it in.

Kathy Kouba, the wife of Joe Kouba fell and struck her head on the pavement on January 22. Kathy suffered a skull fracture that required surgery. Her Caring Bridge site can be found at caringbridge.org/visit/kathykouba. Please keep Kathy and the entire Kouba family in your thoughts and prayers.

Dave Tabor had surgery to implant a heart pump on January 19th and has been placed on the list for a heart transplant. Dave and Margaret Tabor have fielded the familiar 34 and 34tw 360 Sprint Cars that raced around the Twin Cities area. Please keep Dave and Margaret in your thoughts and prayers as well.

Long time readers might recall me mentioning my brother-in-law Mark Larsen and his mini Winnebago affectionately called the "Weenie Wagon." Mark passed away unexpectedly on December 26. Lars was the owner and operator of Larsen Motors in Roseville and will be missed.



Andy Jones 2011 ride is a former Craig Dollansky car. Andy doesn't have a Modified ride anymore so he will be concentrating on the Sprint Car.

The Racing Geek



by Jordan Bianchi

Check out The Racing Geek's weekly blog at:
www.theracinggeek.com

The Championship That Means The Most

I like to think of myself as a pretty smart fella. Whether that's actually true or not remains open for debate. What I do know is this; the proposed overhaul of the NASCAR points system that has been bandied about – as was first reported by Jenna Fryer of the Associated Press – is not a positive change for the sport.

There are still a lot of undefined details, but this is what we know so far: Under the proposed plan, NASCAR would award the winner 43 points, with the runner-up receiving 42 points and so on, in one-point increments, all the way to the driver who finishes 43rd getting one point for their efforts.

There's no word yet on whether a driver will be rewarded for leading a lap or the most laps in a race. Furthermore, no one has any idea how this will impact the Chase for the Sprint Cup and what points system will be in place for NASCAR's version of the playoffs. Though it's likely NASCAR would use the

same points system for the Chase.

You won't get a disagreement from many who feel that a change is necessary in the way NASCAR rewards points. The current system tends to reward drivers more for consistency rather than actual winning, which defeats the principle of what this sport is supposed to be all about.

Far too often, we'll see a driver play it cautious late in a race rather than take a risk to gain an extra position on the track. I think we can all agree seeing a driver playing it safe in the closing stages of a 500-mile race is a bit of a letdown.

Fans, media, sponsors and just about everyone with a vested interest outside of the guys footing the bill want to see drivers fighting tooth and nail for every position, be it first or 30th.

If NASCAR is serious about making winning matter, forget racing for points, the time has come to offer a bigger incentive for winning.

As such, when he meets with reporters next Wednesday in Charlotte to announce NASCAR's new points formula, Brian France should step up to the podium and say the following.

"From this day forth, if a driver is to qualify for the Chase for the Sprint Cup, they must win a race. We no longer will be taking the top-12 drivers in points. The only eligible drivers will be those who have won one of the 26 regular season races. The days of points racing has come and gone. This sport was founded on winning and as such NASCAR will re-embrace this concept going forward. If you want to win the Sprint Cup championship, you will now have to lay it on the line in the regular season. 'In closing, 'Boys, have at it.' Again."

Jeremy Markland/Getty Images for NASCAR

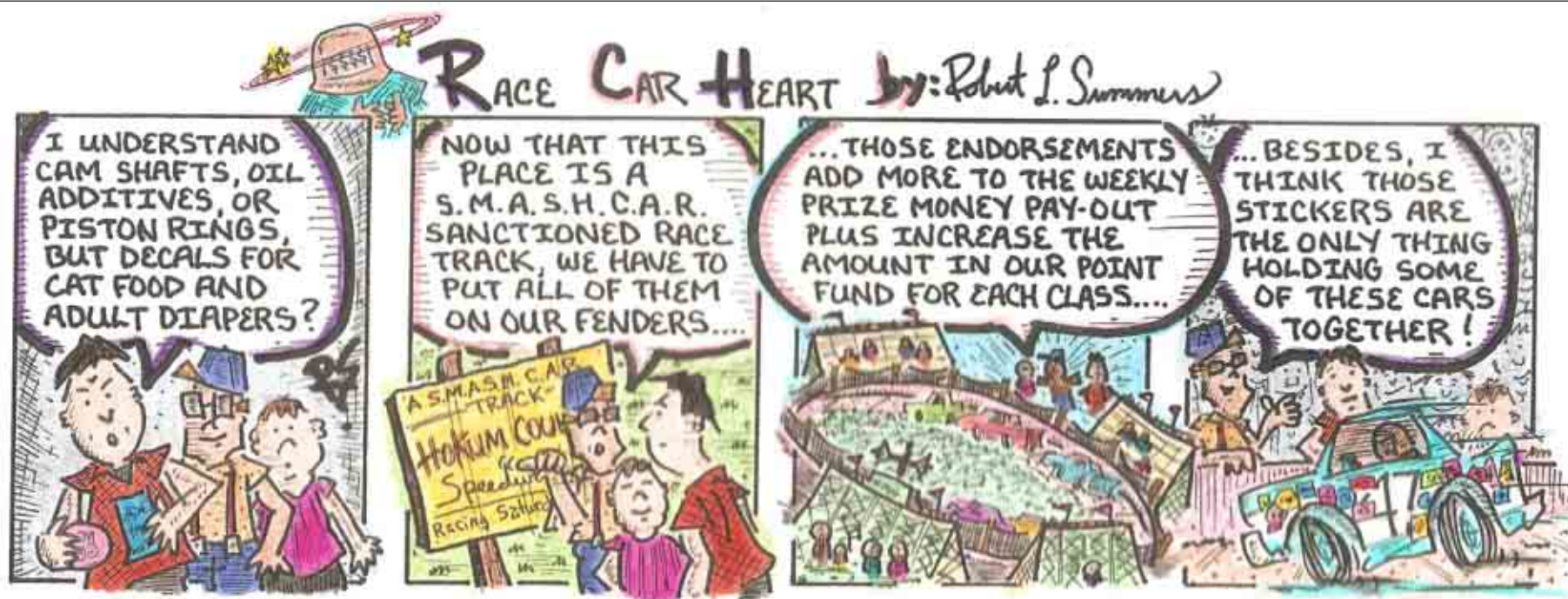


You think this will get an eroding fanbase excited? Your damn right it will. Not only that, I guarantee that many of those who have given up on NASCAR will give the sport a second look and they will like what they see. As for the longtime fan who has felt marginalized over the last 10-15 years, he/she will fall in love again with a sport that looks a lot like the one they once loved so dearly.

But the likelihood of this happening is about as realistic as me finding a writing job where I earn a steady paycheck. Which means don't expect it to happen anytime in the near future.

In the mean time, what would be best for NASCAR is to scrap this proposed 43-1 idea and come up with a compromise between winning and being consistent. In addition, let's come up with a points formula that's easy for fans to understand, makes drivers fight a little more for positions on the track but rewards them for running up front on a regular basis.

Unfortunately, because I'm not a math major, I'm not sure exactly what that system is. However, I will know it when I see. But as of now, I'm still looking.





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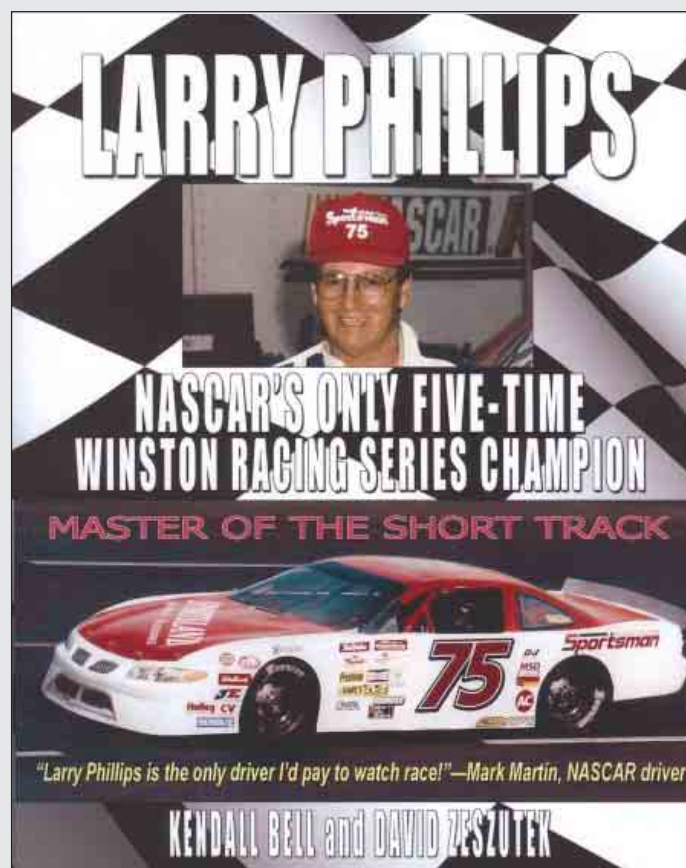
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