

# THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

[www.theracingconnection.com](http://www.theracingconnection.com)

THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY



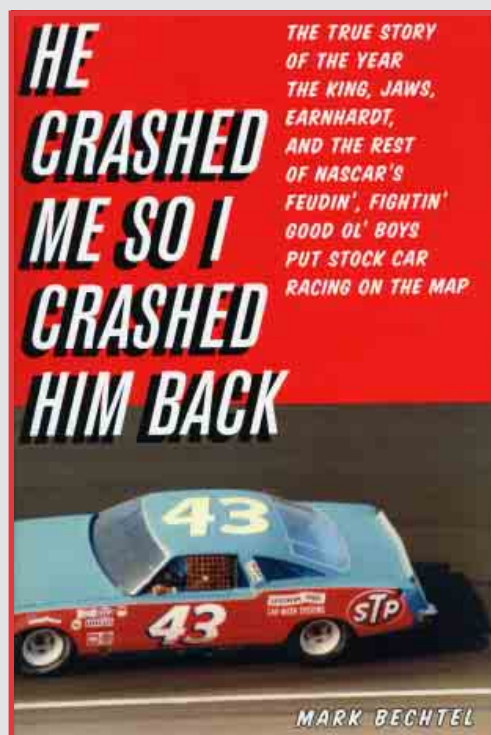
*You'll flip over this issue*

April, 2011

## Inside...



The Inside Dirt



A Nice Read



Texas Dirt Trackin'





✓Yes ✓Yes ✓Yes xNo ✓Yes

✓ Huge Selection  
✓ Everyday Low Prices

**RA**  
**ROCKAUTO.COM**  
ALL THE PARTS YOUR CAR WILL EVER NEED  
GO TO WWW.ROCKAUTO.COM ROCKAUTO, LLC (EST. 1999)

✓ Fast Shipping  
✓ Easy to use Website

# JUST COOL IT...

## ...and take a Load Off Your Mind.

Whether Towing or Hauling, it's No Problem.

**REDUCE HEAT BY  
UP TO 30° F (17° C)**

**Works Like Adding Two or More  
Rows of Tubes to your Radiator**

- Increases horse power
- Smooths gear changing
- Saves fuel consumption
- Runs quieter, cooler and smoother
- Reduces cavitation and electrolysis



**JUSTICE BROTHERS**  
Car Care Products



Toll Free: 800-533-7492 | [www.justicebrothers.com](http://www.justicebrothers.com)

"GO WITH THE WINNER"  
**GILLUND**  
ENTERPRISES  
QUALITY CAR CARE PRODUCTS



## Publisher's Note

### *Racing According to Plan*



**Dan Plan**

Well, hopefully you have all made it through the winter, and are now officially into spring. Many tracks in our neck of the woods are scheduled to open during the month of April, and we're looking forward to the 2011 season.

I'm usually quite envious of the folks that are able to make racing trips to the south over the winter. Although I've had my fair share of trips in the past, it's been several years since I was able to get away to a warmer climate over the winter. I have a special attraction to Texas for a couple of reasons. First, and foremost, this is where I met my wife. Texas is her home state, and all of her family still lives there. Secondly, they have some great racing in the state. Although my wife and son have been able to make the annual trek to Texas each year, I've had to miss out on the trip last several years for one reason or another. This year, I tagged along to visit the in-laws, but was able to sneak in a couple of dirt track races while in town. On previous trips, I've always tried to make my way over to Devil's Bowl Speedway for one night. This was the first track I went to in the state of Texas, and one of the first places I took my wife on a date. Who would have thought I would take somebody to a dirt track on a date? This year, we were a couple hours away from Mesquite, but I was



able to attend two tracks that I had never been to before.

My Texas in-laws have questioned why I'm not in town for the "big race" at Texas Motor Speedway. I've been to the big track in the past, and enjoyed the Cup race, but I can see more actual racing at a fraction of the price at the local short track. Sure, it's cool to see Jimmie, Junior and Jeff under the bright lights, but I have just as much fun watching a bunch of guys (and gals) that I've never seen or heard of, battle for position on a short track. As Dan Frederickson recently posted on Facebook "Anyone who enjoys a NASCAR race in TV would probably foam at the mouth if they experienced the excitement of a short track race." I couldn't agree more.

I always enjoy going to a new track for the first time. You get to see things you may not necessarily see done at your home track, and come home with a few ideas that might be worth passing along. You also might see a few things that make you appreciate what's in your own back yard a little bit more.

The two tracks I was able to venture to while on my trip were Heart O'Texas Speedway in Waco, and Texas Thunder Speedway in Killeen. The two tracks are about an hour away from each other, with Heart O'Texas running on Fridays, and Texas Thunder Speedway running on Saturdays. Both tracks were sanctioned by IMCA and run many of the same divisions.

*Continued on page 4*

*The Midwest*

**RACING**

*Connection*

April, 2011

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

[www.theracingconnection.com](http://www.theracingconnection.com)

Publisher

Dan Plan

Contributing Writers

Jordan Bianchi

Dale P. Danielski

Stan Meissner

Charlie Spry

Photographers

Jim Ambruoso (815-623-3200)

Rick Blewett (507-398-9483)

D's Racing Imagery (608-448-2288)

Martin DeFries (651-457-7719)

Joe Gibbs (612-860-6622)

Doug Hornickel (920-563-0993)

Ken Johnson (218-590-5820)

Mark Melchiori (414-463-0131)

Stan Meissner (651-428-4717)

Mary Schill/Forte Design

Jerry Zimmer (715-792-2174)

*The Midwest Racing Connection* is published ten times during the summer racing season by The Plan Company, Inc. All material is copyrighted 2011 and may not be reprinted without permission. Subscriptions are \$20 for ten issues and are mailed out first class. Call 651-451-4036.

Cover photos by: Stan Meissner, Bruce Nuttleman and Dan Plan.

Member of the NMPA  
National Motorsports Press Association



**CEDAR VIEW  
ELECTRIC, INC.**  
**952-469-2100**

New Construction - Remodel - Service Work  
Pools/Hot Tubs - Basements - Additions

Residential & Commercial

Lakeville, MN

[www.cedarviewelectric.com](http://www.cedarviewelectric.com)



*continued from page 3*

Even though I was 1,200 miles from home, a lot of similarities took place at each track. I always try to make it a point to make my way to the drivers meeting if possible. It's all part of the show, and typically pretty entertaining. The drivers meeting had a familiar feel, as the race director in Killeen reminded the drivers to respect each other and that everybody needs to try to have fun. Then there were the folks that thought the line-ups were wrong, and the poor gal that has the job of writing down the line ups (and has nothing to actually do with creation of the lineups) has to listen to some verbal jabs because somebody is going to start in the wrong spot. Oh, the joys of working at a race track. Again, it's all part of the show to me. I didn't have a clue as to who any of the people were, but the arguments were all familiar, albeit with a southern accent.

A couple of items stood out while in Waco. I didn't realize this is the town where Dr. Pepper was invented. If you don't like Dr. Pepper, you're probably going to go thirsty in this town. The other item was more closely related to racing. When I first took a peak at the Heart O'Texas website, I noticed they had ten divisions on the schedule for a regular race night. When I was younger most tracks only had two or three divisions, but times have changed, and I don't see these days returning anytime soon. Many tracks have been accused of back gate promotion, but let's face it, times have changed and the tracks have

to do something to make sure there are enough cars to put on a show. I've yet to see a major publication get a promoters side of the story of having so many divisions, but if done properly, it can work. While I was a little hesitant about how long the show would take with ten divisions, I was pleasantly surprised at how they ran their show. A simple one-lap-per-car rule for the heats saw races anywhere from 6 to 10 laps in length. They also enforce the one-spin rule, where if you cause a caution all by yourself, you're done for the race. A couple of simple ideas that had the heat races wrapped up in just about an hour, kept the races entertaining and left more time for feature races. The feature races were also an appropriate length for the number of cars in each class, with none being longer than 30 laps. Again, a simple idea to keep the show moving along and keep the fans on the edge of their seats.

It's no wonder there are some with concerns about attendance at short tracks in 2011, given the economic situation

we are currently in. From what I was able to witness in Texas, a well organized short track show, at a reasonable price, still packs 'em in pretty well. Hopefully the tracks in our area will see the same good fortune this year.

And now it's time to get out to our tracks in the Upper Midwest. Look for our first print issue of the season to be available on April 28, continuing through Labor Day weekend.

*Although Camaro's have been banned around this part of the country for some time, there were plenty on hand in Texas.*

**MPLS/ST. PAUL****(651) 641-1414**[www.pirtekusa.com/fwp/midway/](http://www.pirtekusa.com/fwp/midway/)**PLYMOUTH****(763) 475-0475**[www.pirtekusa.com/fwp/plymouth/](http://www.pirtekusa.com/fwp/plymouth/)**PIRTEK****"THE METRIC EXPERTS"**

Proud sponsor of  
Late Model Champion  
Adam Royle



Proud sponsor of  
Jonny "Hot Rod" Hentges

**MOBILE ON-SITE 24 Hour On-Call Service**  
**HYDRAULIC HOSE REPLACEMENT**





**EXtreme** **Plus**  
**Performance**

Distributed Worldwide By



**CALL TODAY 1-800-634-9666**

Red Wing, Minnesota

## He's a Road Racer?

For fans that are new to the sport in the last 10 or 15 years, may just know of Bill Prietzel as a front runner, and former champion of the Mid Am Stock Car Series. As the saying goes, "Back in the Day" Bill picked the name the Franklin Flyer as one of the top dirt Late Model drivers in the upper Midwest.

We knew that Bill had some experience on the road courses with the Mid Am group. Little did we know that Bill is quite the road racer as well. Mark Melchiori was on hand for Bill's latest adventure of turning left and right at the 12 Hours of Sebring. Much has been said about the versatility of drivers like

Andretti and Foyt, or more recently Tony Stewart, but it looks like we have a pretty versatile driver right here in our neck of the woods. Prietzel took second in class during the half-day run. For more Sebring photos, check out Mark's photo gallery at [www.mdmracepix.com](http://www.mdmracepix.com)



Prietzel in action at Sebring  
Mark Melchiori photos



Bill Prietzel's winged creation during the Hales Open in 1983  
Mark Melchiori photo



## Going in Circles



By Charlie Spry

With the 2011 racing season approaching quickly, and some tracks even running already, it's time to catch up with what news I have heard recently on the local level. So, with just a little sneak peek, here we go...

Colin Reffner will be racing a super late model full time for GEM Motorsports, operated by Gary and Elaine Kawleski. Also helping mentor and advise will be Tom Reffner, Dick Trickle, Kevin Lang, and of course, Baird Reffner. The car will be a new 2011 Holmes Motorsports chassis, with 2011 Impala SS body, with a bit of a change, as Colin will now race with the number 44 instead of the traditional Reffner Racing numbers of 87 and 88. The change will come about as the team felt that there were too many other cars running the 88 number, and 44 is the number that car owner Gary Kawleski ran when he raced. They will race full time at Golden Sands, as well as the Larry Detjens Memorial and the ASA Midwest race at Wausau, with selected other shows a possibility. Sponsorship has went well too, as they have garnered sponsorship from LK Enterprises Inc., 4 Star Family Restaurants, Industrial Recyclers Of Wisconsin (IROW), Peskie Builders and Excavating, Ultra Com Wireless, Kramar Plumbing, Heating and Cooling, Solarus, and Salon Ultimate. Sounds like a pretty solid team to me!

Colin's super stock car has been sold to Ryan

Hinner, who has previously tested with the car and performed very well. Baird will help with crew chief duties when not helping Colin.

Tucker Miller will run his super late at all of the Wausau shows, and will be attempting his first ever ASA Midwest race when that tour races at the Wausau track. Tucker reports that they have updated the rear suspension and freshened everything else on the car in preparation for this season. He has secured sponsorship from Wimmer Suspension, Hilltop Auto, and Tom Loos Racing Photography.

Columbus 2010 Sportsman champ Phil Denikas plans on racing full time at Columbus once again, hoping to get two championships in a row there. He also may race at least part time at Jefferson, and possibly full time. He also has a late model that he is working on, and hopes to get that out by the end of the year. It is the former Scotty Hatton car.

Central Wisconsin racer Dave Cabelka still has an asphalt late model, but also plans on trying some other things this season. He plans on running some shows with Matt Rowe's ISS enduro series, as well as possibly racing on the dirt at Central Wisconsin Raceway in a super stock. He still may run his super late at Wausau and/or Golden Sands, but states that the cost is getting out of control for this type of car.

Scott Ciesielski plans on racing the two-man cruiser class at Golden Sands, Marshfield, Slinger, and possibly Wausau if they run that class there. He also plans on running some enduros and maybe a car in the four cylinder stock class at various tracks at the end of the year shows.

Justin Woller is the proud father of a new baby girl, Jaycee. Justin will be working with dirt late model racer Todd Frank, but also hopes to race a sport mod at Shawano, and maybe some year-end specials in the WISSOTA midwest modified class. Justin has raced on both dirt and asphalt in various classes, always running well in any type of car.

Jefferson late model racer Dylan Schuyler is another proud new father to a baby Daughter, Kahlan. Dylan

hopes the new addition to the family will bring him better racing luck as he goes for the track championship. That, and a radical color change for his car, going from his traditional blue and silver to purple!

Steve Dobbratz plans to concentrate on racing only at Jefferson this season, with the Jeff Falbe memorial race at Columbus also a possibility. In past years, "Dobie" has raced two or more times per week, but is cutting back a little this year.

Terry Ciano Jr. has purchased Charlie Frisch's quick Roadrunner class car and plans on racing at Rockford Speedway this season. He still has his hobby stock that he raced at Madison and other tracks last year. Charlie has purchased a Bandit car and plans on racing that "everywhere."

CWMSA racer and club president Don Dunow plans on racing the full season at Marshfield once again, posting video from his in-car camera on YouTube and Facebook. The club has adopted the Federal Formoza FD1 tire for the class, as the former tire of choice, the Sumitomo HTR 200 has been discontinued by that manufacturer. The Sumitomo will still be legal, but the club acted in finding a suitable replacement quickly as the Sumitomo supplies run out.

Mark Muller will be back behind the wheel of a stock car this season. Mark formerly raced street stocks, sportsman and limited late model cars at tracks all over the Midwest, but hasn't raced since 1997. He did race my Bandit car one night at Jefferson in 2003 (That night they sent that race clockwise, much to his chagrin). Mark will be racing John Remsik's thunderstock on Friday's at Columbus.

One racer who won't be racing this season will be Dennis "Barney" Schmidt. Dennis has had some bad luck lately, as last fall he was testing at Jefferson, and a carburetor malfunction caused fuel to be sprayed all over the engine, resulting in a fire and severe damage

*Continued on page 7*



*continued from page 6*

to the body, wiring, and engine of his sharp looking car. Dennis says that it would cost \$8,000 to repair the car, and he just can't do that right now.

James Bell will be back this year racing in the International division at Jefferson Speedway. After taking last year off, the racing bug has hit once again and he is putting together a 1992 Acura Integra.

Former Columbus 151 Bandit champion Ed Klug will be back in that division this year after moving to the hobby stocks last year. He purchased a dirt car from Tim Rose, a.k.a. "The Secret Agent Man." Ed "The Image" will race at both Columbus and Jefferson in 2011. He sold his hobby stock to Justin Kumbier.

Dan Lensing reports that he plans on racing full time at the Dells this year, with the possibility of running the Big 8 series as well. He also plans on running selected super late model races all over.

Chris Quam has no big change of plans for the upcoming season, still planning on running his late model at Jefferson weekly. However, he was able to add a couple of sponsors, Hanson Pest Management and Simple Life Country Store.

Jenny Nitzsche is planning on getting a new four cylinder car built and on the track this year, probably concentrating mainly on racing on the dirt tracks of Tomahawk and possibly others. She has raced in the past on asphalt, dirt and ice, and had a good season on the ice of Lake DuBay this past winter. Rule changes and cost factor are the reasons behind deciding to run mostly on the dirt this year.

Columbus 151 Speedway will play host to the Big 8 series this season, as a race has been scheduled for Memorial Day afternoon.. Should be interesting to

see if the locals run the show and how they compete against the series regulars.

Dave Lashua has purchased a pure stock from Eric Buchholz, and plans on racing the shows at Wausau's State Park Speedway, as well as some specials at the end of the year. Dave started out in this division, then moved up to late models, and now is looking forward to racing again in a more cost effective division. "It's more to our racing roots. We had more fun in that division," said Dave. He will have the car dressed in red and white.

Art Blakely has put together a new Bandit car for the 2011 season, planning on running at both Columbus and Jefferson. The car will be a '95 Grand Am. Art is a veteran of many years, having gotten his start back in 1975 with a '67 Camaro that he never raced. He also had the former Russ Grossen Corvair for awhile, and had raced super late models, limited late models and mini-stocks before taking many years off, returning to Bandit racing in 2003. He also has at his disposal the former John Beale Bandit car as a backup, and this car will be raced by his son-in-law, Ken Ring, when not needed by Art.

I guess that is all for now. As I write this I am looking forward to attending my first race of the year, and I can smell it already!



**MICKELSON'S TAX SERVICE**  
**HILDA MICKELSON**  
**PAT MIKEL**  
**TJ WHEELER**  
 420 S. ROBERT ST.  
 SAINT PAUL, MN 55107  
 PHONE 651-224-4245  
 FAX 651-224-6058  
 MICKELSONTAX@AOL.COM



**ALS**  
**A RACE WORTH WINNING**  
[www.araceworthwinning.org](http://www.araceworthwinning.org)

**First print issue of 2011 available  
April 28**

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



**651-457-7719**





# \* LIVE STOCK CAR RACING \* EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT



608.786.1525 • [www.lacrossespeedway.com](http://www.lacrossespeedway.com)

west salem, wi





**WEHRS  
MACHINE**  
*#1 Racing Products*

**Aluminum Lift Bar**

Quality Racing Products

WEHRSMACHINE.COM 1.877.460.7211

**Hoosier**  
RACING TIRE

**"TIRES DESIGNED FOR CHAMPIONS"**

**Kart and Quarter Midget tire distributor**

**Bob Snyder**

**651-455-8589**

**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**

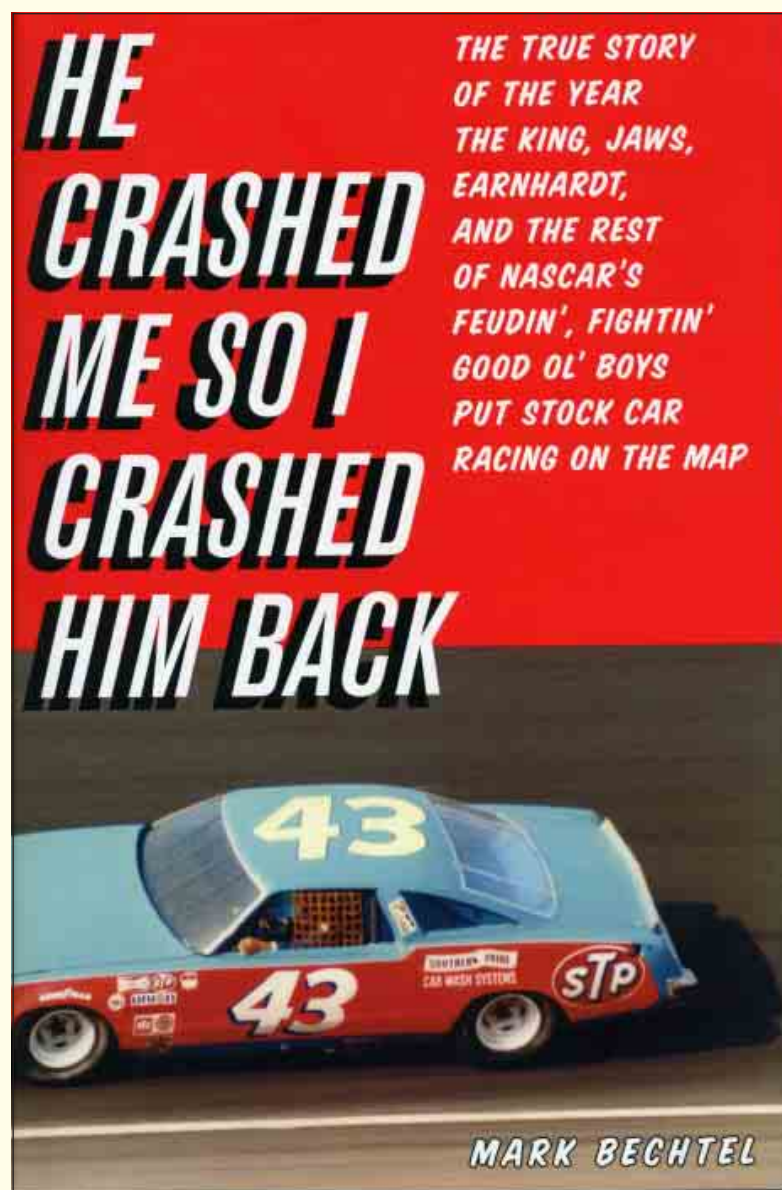
One of the books we picked up over the winter was a book titled "He Crashed Me So I Crashed Him Back." This book covers the 1979 NASCAR Winston Cup season. This book had a special meaning for me. I was thirteen going on 30 in 1979. I still remember watching this particular race with my dad. With two laps to go, my dad called my mom and my sister into the living room; "You need to come in here. There's going to be a wreck." With a prediction like that, I only wish we would have had the lottery back then.

As far as I'm concerned, Ken Squier saying; "And there's a fight!" is equally as important as Al Micheals "Do you believe in miracles?" during the 1980 Winter Olympics. We've all seen and heard how the crash between Donnie Allison and Cale Yarborough set off the fire-storm that made NASCAR the product it is today, but the book also covers many other items that happened in the world during the last year of the 1970's.

As most of us are now aware, the 1979 Daytona 500 ended with the crash starting on the backstretch and ending in turn 4. Richard Petty goes by the carnage to end a long winless streak, and all is good in the world once again.

The really neat part about this book covers the items that happened leading up to the 500 and the rest of the year. Things like Petty almost losing the STP sponsorship and Kyle Petty winning the ARCA race at Daytona in his very-first race. We're not just talking about his first race on a superspeedway, but his first start ever in a race car. In the 500, some rookie by the name of Earnhardt makes a bunch of noise. This same rookie then goes on to pick up a win at Bristol and capture the 1979 Rookie of the Year award.

If that wasn't enough excitement in one year, you also had one of the top drivers in David Pearson, get fired from his ride with the Wood Brothers mid-way through the season. Pearson fills in for an injured Earnhardt and picks up a win as a substitute driver. And then there was the point battle that went down to the final race of the year in California. Two points separated Petty and Waltrip and it all came down to the final race. Whew, I'm wishing it was 1979 all over again.



While the 1979 Daytona 500, and the 1979 season as a whole, were memorable events, there was just so much that happened in the world that is also covered. I don't consider myself much of a "stick and ball" type of a sports fan, but I did find the section about basketball stars Larry Bird and Magic Johnson playing against each other in the NCAA tournament an interesting read. I never knew Bird was known as "The Hick from French Lick" after his home town in Indiana. The book also covers the Iran Hostage situation, the energy crisis with high gas prices (sound familiar?), the premier of the Dukes of Hazzard, the beginning of ESPN and the end of Disco. I would cast my vote that this book be considered as required reading for public schools trying to educate today's youth about 1979.

Hands down, this book by Mark Bechtel is the best book I have ever read about NASCAR at the Cup level. He Crashed Me So I Crashed him back is available from Coastal 181 Publishing at [www.coastal181.com](http://www.coastal181.com)

**Follow us on facebook.**  
**Just search for *The Midwest Racing Connection*.**

**facebook**



# The Midwest Racing Connection Directory Page



**MAREK'S  
TOWING**

20152 Kenrick Ave. West  
Lakeville, MN 55044  
Phone (952) 469 - 3182 \* Fax (952) 469 - 7724



**Niemeyer  
TRAILER SALES**

"Your guide to R.V. Trailers & Truck Accessories since 1965"

SALES • PARTS • SERVICE • STORAGE

763-420-2727 952-461-2525  
877-949-2727 800-340-8724  
7918 Troy Lane 10405 E. 260th St.  
Maple Grove, MN 55311 Elk, MN 55020  
www.niemeyers.com

Open Your Accounts Online! [www.tsbf.com](http://www.tsbf.com)



**NO MORE RACING to the bank!**

**SBF** STATE BANK OF FARIBAULT Member FDIC

**Brothers  
JORGENSEN  
Racing INC.**

**952-461-3300**



**FIVE STAR  
RACE CAR BODIES**

★ Race Car Bodies  
★ Custom Formed Racing Windows  
★ Custom Plastic Thermoforming  
★ Advanced Composite Design and Manufacturing

262.877.2171 • [www.fivestarbodies.com](http://www.fivestarbodies.com)



**TEAM Steve  
STREMSKI**

651.457.6348 Steve Stremski Agency  
20 Thompson Avenue, Suite 201  
West Saint Paul, MN 55116



**EXTREME  
POWDER COATING**  
(507) 583-7448

521 Industrial Drive NE • Blooming Prairie, MN 55917



**CLUTCH & U-JOINT  
PROVENFORCE**

Driveline Specialists • Since 1974

651-486-4888  
1-800-280-4327  
Arden Hills, MN

**Power to Deliver**  
American Axle & Manufacturing

Mention Ad for Special Discounts

**A Repair Garage, Ltd.**  
Specializing in General Repair and Diagnostics

Joel Hughes — Owner  
Mark Kaufenberg — Owner

1350 Hastings Ave. "Rear"  
Newport, MN 55055

Phone: 651-768-0523



**C & E AUTO  
UPHOLSTERY**

Complete Interiors  
Seats  
Carpets  
Headliners  
Convertible Tops  
Vinyl tops  
Seat Heaters  
Boat • Aircraft  
Motorcycle • RVs  
Snowmobile

Tom Rodwell  
8847 West Hwy. 101  
Savage, MN 55378  
(952) 445-5466  
Since 1972

Custom Work  
[www.candeautoupholstery.com](http://www.candeautoupholstery.com)



**Turtle's  
BAR & GRILL**

Downtown Shakopee  
952-445-9668



**PLT  
AND  
AUTO SERVICE**  
Transmission Specialists

16783 Toronto Ave. Prior Lake, MN 952-440-6600

**Krome's Bar**  
DOWNTOWN WEST SALEM, WI

163 Leonard Street South  
608-786-3323

**IMPACT  
PRINTING**

Phone: (651) 489-0803  
Fax: (651) 489-8077  
Toll Free: 1-800-489-0803  
[www.impactprintingink.com](http://www.impactprintingink.com)



**NORTHERN  
RACING PRODUCTS**

RACE CARS, PARTS & ACCESSORIES  
Rosemount, Mn 651 423-5800



**Minnesota Dirt Track Racing  
by Stan Meissner**



**Ellen & Sons  
LANDSCAPE SUPPLY**  
HAMPTON, MN



**BGB  
RACING ENGINES**

Appleton, WI  
920-739-1550  
[www.BGBRacingEngines.com](http://www.BGBRacingEngines.com)



## Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



By Dale P. Danielski

A number of Series and track schedules for 2011 are out so hopefully a mild spring will allow for racing here in the Upper Midwest in short order.

Several tracks in our vicinity are looking at April openers with the Deer Creek Speedway just south of Rochester, MN shooting for the 2<sup>nd</sup> with a 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> special scheduled for the following week of the month. That's pretty ambitious considering our finicky weather here but they've done it for many years and are usually quite successful. Maybe instead of successful the word used should be lucky as you never know what you will get weather-wise this time of the year. It seems it's either a home run or a total wash or snow-out with these early season events. Deer Creek has taken it a step further than most by scheduling a high dollar special event this time of year which is normally something reserved for later in the season when weather is more predictable. Again it's a feast or famine type scenario as you can get a ton of cars and people who are anxious to get things going early on, or you can spend a bunch of money on advertising and facility preparation only to need additional funding to advertise a rain date down the road! The Queensland family of promoters is very



Dick Trickle with his new Mustang at the Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI., April 1974 opener.

equipped to handle just about everything thrown at them and you don't get voted as promoter of the year as the family did by Racing Promotion Monthly for 2010 without taking a few risks along the way. We'll see if it pays off for them to start off 2011.

In the immediate area La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, West Salem, WI., will kick things off with media and practice day April 16<sup>th</sup>. A program of NASCAR Late Models, Sportsmen and Thunderstox race cars will officially get the season underway the following Saturday, April 23. Much discussion is currently taking place of a night those divisions won't be racing at the track as June 18<sup>th</sup> will see a SMASH-O-RAMA event instead of the normal three Divisions of racing. It will be interesting to see how the week off plays into those chasing championships during the year.

And with so many race tracks facing noise, dust, congestion and potential closure issues it's nice to be able to report of a track re-opening. The Excalibur Speedway of Tomah, WI., will again be holding racing events on Friday nights in 2011. Dave Thompson, owner of the facility has brought on Greg Oliver to operate the track this season. If that name sounds familiar it should as Oliver is the flagman at La Crosse Fairgrounds and also for the Big 8 Series of racing. Opening day for the 3/8 mile paved oval will be Sunday, May 15 where a 200 lap 4 cylinder Enduro will take place. The following Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup> regular weekly racing gets started with Sportsman, Thunderstocks and Bumble Bee Divisions competing. Oliver hopes driver participation is in the form of established divisions of racing in the area and expects to draw competitors from the La Crosse, Wisconsin Dells and Marshfield areas. According to Oliver, "If we can get 45 cars in all divisions each week and 300 people in the stands to start out I'd be ecstatic!" We wish the best for the track which hasn't operated in 10 years and hope to attend a number of events there.

Mississippi Thunder Speedway will have at it for another season of racing as the 3/8 mile clay oval near Fountain City, WI., will open Friday night, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Bob Timm and his crew always have something special going on with a number of big events again on tap for 2011.

The ASA Midwest Tour schedule features a number of traditional and very prestigious events for 2011. The Joe Shear Classic gets things started at Madison International Speedway, Oregon, WI., April 30<sup>th</sup>-May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011. The Rockford Speedway is opting to go with ASA Midwest Tour sanction this year for its 46<sup>th</sup> Annual National Short Track Championship event October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Other notables include the Annual Dixieland race moved up to May 14-15 at Wisconsin International Raceway, Kaukauna, WI., from its normal August date. The Wayne Carter Classic takes



Bob Gunn in an Ex-Trickle Mustang in 1974.

place at Grundy County Speedway, Morris, IL., June 3<sup>rd</sup>, while the Iowa Speedway of Newton, Iowa is back on the schedule for 2011 with a 150 lap event on the 7/8 mile super speedway August 5<sup>th</sup>. Rounding out the impressive schedule are dates at Illiana Speedway, Schererville, IN., June 18<sup>th</sup>, State Park Speedway, Wausau, WI., June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Marshfield Motor Speedway, Marshfield, WI., July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Hawkeye Downs Speedway, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, August 12<sup>th</sup>, Raceway Park, Shakopee, MN., August 21<sup>st</sup>, Norway Speedway, Norway, MI., September 4<sup>th</sup>, and the huge season ender at La Crosse Fairgrounds for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Oktoberfest October 8-9. And we would be remiss if we didn't mention a new format for the ASA Midwest Tour event at Elko Speedway, Elko, MN. The Summer Clash 250 will take place July 8-9 at the 3/8 mile oval and the main event will feature 250 laps of feature attraction racing. And best of all, Elko which has hosted Tour events from the beginning, plans to pay the happy winner a cool \$10,000! Always one to do things big, the Elko event this year certainly fits in that category.

Here and there...Steve Holzhausen who was badly injured at Dells Raceway Park, Wis. Dells, WI., in a racing accident last year and had surgery on his leg and ankle, has been informed the healing of the bones has not taken place properly and consequently he will need further surgery. As we speak the surgery should have taken place and if all goes according to plan he will be ready to go racing in 2011, albeit later than planned in the Spring...Quote of the column comes from Skylar Holzhausen, son of Steve. "I want to run the entire ASA Midwest Tour this year even if I have to spend all my own money. I need to show something this year!" Young Holzhausen will also have that opportunity at La Crosse Fairgrounds during the season as he will race Saturday nights when free in a second Terry and Michelle Herbst NASCAR Late Model...Now that National Speed Sport News has ceased publishing a paper all the more reason to read MRC! Tell me readers, what coverage or feature stories you would like to see and we'll get it done through the Midwest Racing Connection...

Questions, comments, opinions and other information welcome at Starmaker Multimedia 967 10<sup>th</sup> Ave N Ste A, Onalaska, WI 54650 608-783-5827 or at [dale@starmakermultimedia.com](mailto:dale@starmakermultimedia.com)



## The Inside Dirt



**Stan Meissner**

The earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan on March 11 along with the subsequent nuclear disaster has taken a tremendous toll on the country and its people. In addition to the human tragedy, Japanese business has been hit hard and the photo industry was not spared. Racing photographers rely on Nikon and Canon equipment and these industry leaders were both affected by the devastation. Thankfully there was no loss of life and no serious injuries reported in Japan's photo industry. Nikon reported that four plants were taken offline.

Most notable was their factory in Sendai that produces the high end D3S, D3X, D700 and F6 bodies. Canon suspended operations at eight factories in northern Japan, the area hardest hit by the quake. Third party lens manufacturer Sigma suspended operations at two of its facilities and reported damage to machinery in one of its plants. All of the camera and lens makers will be affected by the rolling blackouts that will continue through the summer. The websites of online sellers in the United States are already reporting that many products are indefinitely out of stock.

National Speed Sport News ceased publication after a 76 year run but will continue to have an online presence. I can't recall when I had my first exposure to NSSN but I was a longtime subscriber prior to the emergence of the internet. One of my most memorable racing experiences was meeting Chris Economaki in person at a Minnesota State Fair race. The past couple seasons I have had the honor of getting some of my photos published in NSSN. It's a shame to see a long standing publication close its doors, but the internet has changed the way that



Craig Dollansky scored a March 12, 2011 Feature win at Chico, California, after being fast but experiencing bad luck in Florida. This photo was taken at Cedar Lake on July 12, 2004, where Craig won the Feature seven seasons ago. Nearby tracks the Outlaws will be making stops at during the 2011 season include Cedar Lake and Princeton.

*Stan Meissner photo*

racing fans follow the sport. In recent years there has been a proliferation of online coverage including live streaming races, driver interviews, video channels, and instant results. With the advent of sites such as Facebook and Twitter fans can even follow the personal life of their favorite driver. I don't know if all of this coverage is a good thing but the information age is here to stay. I remember when I had to wait a week for NSSN to come in the mail so I could find out who won. Those of us who used to get their racing news in that fashion appreciated any tidbit we could get our hands on.

Danny Lasoski is the one of the latest examples of talented Sprint Car drivers that have found themselves out of a ride and have put together their own deal. Lasoski reported in a recent interview that he has enough funding to race through April 16 but is uncertain whether he'll be able to continue beyond that date. Aside from taking his photo and making small talk I don't know Danny Lasoski personally, but he is known by many in the Minnesota racing community. Lasoski came into his own while driving Guy Forbrook's car and the pair



Four wide action at the September 11, 2004, Jerry Richert Memorial with Joe Roe's #61 on the inside, Mark Toews in the #5t next in line, the #10 of Lynton Jeffrey and the #80K of Mike Kertscher on the outside. The IRA will not be taking part in the Masters this season but will be competing at a new event called The Triple Crown at Cedar Lake on May 21. The IRA will also be appearing with the UMSS at Elko on July 15-16 and both will return to Cedar Lake on September 10 for the Jerry Richert Sr. Memorial.

*Stan Meissner photo*

*Continued on page 13*



**AIRPORT SERVICE - CALL 24 HOURS**

**\*Time Calls - Appointments**

**DISCOUNT TAXI**

**FOR TRANSPORTATION**

**Toll Free 1-888-240-8294**

**612-723-5500**

**www.discounttaxiracing.com**



*continued from page 12*

won a lot of races together down at Knoxville and elsewhere in our region. Danny Lasoski admittedly has a few blemishes on his public relations resume' most notably the infamous televised family feud with his father at the 2006 Nationals. I think that with fewer sponsor dollars available, it's more important now than ever to have an unblemished reputation with fans and car owners. Hopefully Danny Lasoski will find the support he needs to keep on racing. He's too good to be sitting on the sidelines.

Danny Lasoski isn't the only driver that has faced the harsh reality of our economy during the past couple of seasons. Terry McCarl recently announced that he will be driving the VerMeer Motorsports #55 at the Knoxville Raceway this season and making a few starts in his own #24. McCarl is one of the great ambassadors of the sport in the Midwest and the sport needs him out there racing.

Brooke Tatnell had another successful season in Australia and recently returned to Minnesota to begin preparing for the 2011 season. Tatnell says that he will be driving the #59 and running a similar schedule to last year. He reports that he might make a few starts in John Nelson's #14 360 machine as well. When I talked to Brooke he was getting ready to head down to Charlotte to pickup some equipment. Brooke will be racing out of his shop in Minnesota again this season.

Another racing team that I have mentioned will no longer be competing with the Outlaws is the Carnahan Motorsports R19. Their former driver Jac Haudenschield drove the Roth Motorsports #83 with

schedule.

Craig Dollansky won his first World of Outlaws Feature of the season at the Mini Gold Cup in Chico, California, on March 12. As I mentioned in the last issue of MRC, Craig got off to a fast start in Florida but was bit by the bad luck bug. It's great to see that they have ironed out the kinks and gotten back on track.

Bristol used to be the hottest ticket in NASCAR racing but the grandstands at their spring race appeared to be half empty. Remember not too many years ago when dirt track racing emulated NASCAR and the goal was to bring the sport to the next level? Based on what I'm seeing at the upper level of the sport I think that dirt track racing needs to put the emphasis on what it does best and not aspire to be something it is not.

Let's take a quick look at April Sprint Car events that will be of interest to fans around the upper Midwest. At the time of this writing my yard is still covered with snow with more in the forecast so as always keep in mind that April racing is dependent on the weather. Call before traveling.



Danny Lasoski showed up at Cedar Lake's one and only National Sprint Tour race on July 9, 2006, with this radical looking top wing on the Roth #83. Tim Kaeding won the Feature on this evening in the Kinser 11k.

*Stan Meissner photo*

30 at the Beaver Dam Raceway. Knoxville's opener is scheduled for April 30 and for those willing to travel even further the World of Outlaws will be racing at I-55 Raceway in Pevely, Missouri (St. Louis area) on April 16. Jackson Speedway's Spring Sprint Nationals got even bigger when it was recently announced that this annual Friday night event will be an ASCS National Tour race.

Congratulations to Pat Doar who is running for Rookie of the Year honors with the World of Outlaws Late Model Series. I got to know Pat during my years covering weekly racing at Cedar Lake and I'm confident that he'll be an excellent representative of our area to fans across the country.

The Deer Creek Speedway had scheduled a big money race billed as the World Modified Dirt Track Championship for April 6-9. At the time of this

*Continued on page 14*

Danny Lasoski drove the Tony Stewart Motorsports #20 on the World of Outlaws tour during 2004. This July 29, 2005, shot was taken at the Princeton Speedway on the first night of the Princeton National.

*Stan Meissner photo*



the World of Outlaws in California and has a ride in the Miller Motorsports #6 back east when the series is near his native Ohio. These drivers have all competed with the Outlaws on a regular basis and owners would be standing in line to enlist their services in a better economy. One former Outlaw told me that a career Sprint Car driver has to race upwards of 50 times per season and finish in the money consistently to make a living running a regional

eastern Wisconsin or those willing to head east the IRA opens their season at the Dodge County Fairgrounds in Beaver Dam on April 16. The IRA will be back in Beaver Dam on April

The UMSS is scheduled to open their season at the Elko Speedway on April 15-16 along with the Corn Belt Clash Late Models. The UMSS will take to the high banks of the Cedar Lake Speedway on April 30. For our friends in

Danny Lasoski started 2008 in Guy Forbrook's #5 shown here at the June 29 Cedar Lake World of Outlaws show.

*Stan Meissner photo*





*continued from page 13*

writing a decision had not been made as to whether the event will go on as planned due to concerns about the weather. Don't read between the lines, I'm not wishing anything bad on this event, the Deer Creek Speedway, or the USMTS. I wouldn't wager my money against Mother Nature in early April but that's not my decision. If the race goes on as scheduled I'll be following the results and I wish everyone involved the best of luck. *(Editors note; this event has been postponed until July of 2011)*

Last season I made the decision to concentrate my efforts on Sprint Car racing and my schedule will center on that type of racing again this season. Nevertheless, don't be surprised if you see me sneak out to watch other types of racing and automotive events. I don't want to lose touch with the friends I have made over the years so don't rule out an occasional Late Model or Modified race when I've got a free weekend.

We'll see you at the races! Hopefully Mother Nature will allow that to be soon.

**Photo Captions**  
**all photos by Stan Meissner**

Top: Danny Lasoski finished the 2008 season in his own #33 shown here at the October 3 North Central Speedway World of Outlaws event.

Middle: Danny "The Dude" Lasoski drove the Parsons #6 during the 2009 and 2010 seasons leaving the ride at the end of 2010. This May 1, 2010 shot was taken at the Jackson Speedway World of Outlaws race. Stan Meissner photo

Bottom: Danny Lasoski checks out turn two of the Jackson Speedway prior to qualifying at the May 1, 2010, World of Outlaws race. Lasoski owns four Knoxville Nationals Championships, eight Knoxville Track Titles, 87 World of Outlaws Feature wins and a 2001 World of Outlaws Championship but is having trouble finding enough sponsorship to keep his own team on the road this season. The combination of the high cost of fielding a car and a tough economy have made things difficult for many of the top drivers in the sport this season.





# THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

## Photo Gallery



Trouble in turn 4



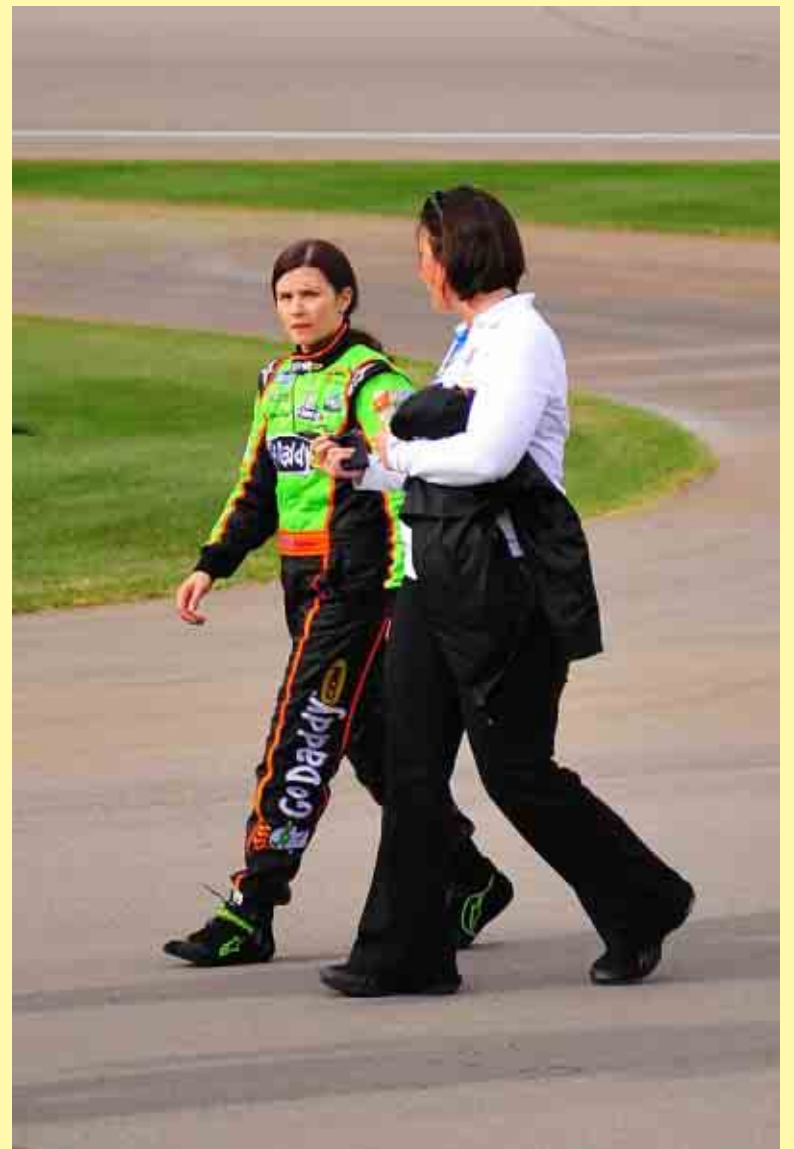
Former Midwest standout Mark Martin takes the Vegas win



Cambridge, WI native Matt Kenseth set fast time in Las Vegas



All photos by Bruce Nuttleman. For more photos from LVMS, check out the Ultimate Lap Photo gallery at [www.ultimatelapphoto.com](http://www.ultimatelapphoto.com)



This driver shows her displeasure after reading the most recent issue of MRC



**The Racing Geek**

by Jordan Bianchi

Check out The Racing Geek's weekly blog at:  
[www.theracinggeek.com](http://www.theracinggeek.com)

The key word to start the year is parity. If you count Kurt Busch's non-points wins in the Budweiser Shootout and his Gatorade Duel qualifying race, all four manufacturers have tasted victory at least once this season.

While parity is good for the sport, it does make it difficult when ranking the top-15 drivers as they stand at the beginning of the season. As such, this Power Poll is a bit top-heavy, but I guess that's better than being bottom heavy.

**(1) Carl Edwards**

Edwards was surprisingly quiet at Fontana. But his quiet and nondescript day did see him finish the race in the sixth position and it was enough to move him atop the standings. It will be interesting to see how he runs at Martinsville; a track where he has just one top-five and has yet to lead a single lap in 13 starts.

**(2) Kyle Busch**

When you lead three-quarters of a race and don't win, most would be both frustrated and disappointed. But what has become the norm this season, Kyle Busch handled the situation remarkable well.

**(3) Ryan Newman**

What Ryan Newman is doing is not spectacular, it's just effective. In five races this season, he's quietly collected four top-10 finishes, three of which have been in the top-five. The end result has the Purdue University graduate sitting second in points, the best start points-wise, since his rookie year of 2002.

**(4) Kevin Harvick**

In the 15th running of the Auto Club 400, Kevin Harvick picked up his 15th-career Sprint Cup victory. While I'm sure that a statistical anomaly will make "Happy," well, happy, I think what will make him smile the most is finally winning on what is considered his home track, and in the process topping Jimmie Johnson on the last lap.

**(5) Jimmie Johnson**

A hard-fought second-place finish is exactly what the 48 needed after a so-so start to 2011. Now it's onto Martinsville, where in 18 career starts, Jimmie Johnson has six wins and 17 top-10 finishes.

**(6) Kurt Busch**

The lack of speed Penske Racing has exhibited for most of the year finally caught up to them Sunday in Southern California. Kurt Busch was never competitive, ran mid-pack throughout the day and ended up finishing a substandard 17th.

**(7) Tony Stewart**

Late-race situations continue to haunt Tony Stewart.

At Daytona, he slid from second to 13th in the closing laps. The following week at Phoenix, on old tires, he went from the lead to finish seventh. Then there was Las Vegas, where pit strategy bit him in the butt and he finished second with a car that should have won. And on Sunday, running second on the day's final restart with nine laps to go, the two-time champ dropped like he had an anchor attached to his car and left in 13th-place.

**(8) Kasey Kahne**

It was a good weekend all around for Team Red Bull, both in NASCAR and in Formula One. On the Cup side of things, both Kasey Kahne and Brian Vickers posted top-10 finishes. While down under in the F1 season-opening Australian Grand Prix, Sebastian Vettel won in dominant fashion.

**(9) Matt Kenseth**

It's amazing how back-to-back top-fives can change one's perspective of a given driver. Two weeks ago, I viewed Matt Kenseth as a bit of an afterthought at Roush Fenway Racing. Now, I think the 17 team is starting to get on the kind of roll that could propel Kenseth back to victory lane for the first time in 75 races.

**(10) Paul Menard**

It was a solid yet unspectacular outing for Paul Menard Sunday. But don't expect the same this weekend, as Martinsville is a track where the RCR driver owns an average finish of 20.3 and never has finished in the top-10 in seven career starts.

**(11) Dale Earnhardt Jr.**

Can we please put a moratorium on the "Dale

*continued on page 17*

## RACE CAR HEART by: Robert L. Summers





*continued from page 16*

Earnhardt Jr. Is On his Way Back” stories until he starts running and finishing up front somewhat consistently? While it’s obvious the Earnhardt-Steve Letarte relationship is blossoming, their best finish five races in, is eighth. If you haven’t noticed, the 88’s has only paced the field for nine laps this season.

(12) Juan Pablo Montoya

Started on the pole, finished 10th and to be honest, that’s all I really have to say about Juan Pablo Montoya.

(13) Greg Biffle

After hovering dangerously close to being eliminated from Chase contention with finishes of 35th, 20th and 28th to start the year, consecutive finishes of 11th or better has breathed life into this team and has jumped them up 11 spots in the standings to 20th.

(14) Jeff Gordon

If you take away Jeff Gordon’s win at Phoenix, his average finish this season would ironically be 24th. If you discount the 138 laps he led in his winning race in the desert, he’s led all of three laps this year. Nonetheless, with the dearth of guys deserving a spot in this week’s Power Poll and as a sign of respect, we’ll give a nod to the 83-time race winner.

(15) Mark Martin

Like his Hendrick brethren, outside of course Jimmie Johnson, results for Mark Martin this season have been mixed. However, look for the No. 5 car to be strong this weekend. Martinsville is a track where Martin has three top-10s in his last four starts, including a



runner-up finish last fall with a car that looked like it just rolled out of the junkyard.



# RaceTeamGear.com

OFFICIALLY LICENSED MERCHANDISE

**Shop Now & Save at  
RaceTeamGear.com**

For a limited time get **15% off** our entire selection of officially licensed NASCAR® merchandise. But don't wait to order, this offer ends 12/31/10. To receive the discount enter promo code **ASA15** at checkout.

**PAYMENTS  
AS LOW AS \$10  
A MONTH WITH  
RACETEAMGEAR  
CREDIT PLAN!**

For more information about RTG Credit please see RaceTeamGear.com for details.

Cannot be combined with any other offers or promotions  
Discount amount is applied to value of merchandise and not to shipping, processing and tax (if applicable)

