



The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

Pit Report

October - 2014

Next *Regular Meeting*—Wednesday, November 5, 2014

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Author, Media Specialist Golardi Visits



October 1—At our regular October meeting, we had the opportunity to hear some fascinating stories about the glory days of Open Wheel racing in Florida. Richard Golardi has been an open wheel racing fan since attending his first race more than 50 years ago in June 1964 at Langhorne Speedway. He is currently a reporter for Hoseheads.com, writing a weekly column on Florida sprint car and open wheel racing titled "Florida Open Wheel". Prior to this column, he followed the IndyCar Series for OpenWheelRacers.com for three years, and has been with Hoseheads.com for five years. He has reported from such locations as

Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Daytona International Speedway, Homestead - Miami Speedway, and short tracks all over Florida and some in the Midwest.

Richard is currently writing his first book, which profiles Florida's sprint car racing legends. Having already conducted over fifty interviews for this book, he anticipates that it will be completed in 2015. Richard shared a number of excerpts from the book (which is yet untitled), focusing on the racing exploits of Danny Smith and our own Hall of Fame member Wayne Reutimann. In fact, he gave us another view of the details surrounding Wayne's 1979 win in the "Little 500" at Anderson (Ind.) Speedway. We heard two years ago from Wayne on his experience of winning the race even though he wasn't even at the track; now we know the rest of the story!

Richard promises to keep us up-to-date as his book nears publication...maybe we can arrange a book signing at some point!

Florida Open Wheel

November 5 Meeting Preview—The Promoters' Viewpoints

Our next meeting will feature remarks from Villagers John and Mary Ostdiek, former race track operators from the Great State of Minnesota. They'll share some of the experiences—both good and bad—they compiled during their years at the helm of two Minnesota racing venues, Elko Speedway in Elko, Minnesota and Raceway Park in Shakopee, Minnesota.

Raceway Park closed last year after a 60-year run, while Elko continues providing high speed entertainment for race fans in the colder climates to our north. Elko is a high-banked 3/8 mile paved oval, operating as one of NASCAR's "home tracks," while Raceway Park featured a 1/4 mile oval and hosted ASA Midwest Tour events during its years of operation.

We're looking forward to hearing from the Ostdieks, and hope to hear their thoughts and insights into what's happening here in Florida with the steady loss of race tracks.



Honoring a Retiring Pit Crew Member

October 1—A part of our October meeting included a formal (well, sort of formal) farewell to Peter Tetrault, a member of our Pit Crew dating all the way back to our start-up years in 2006-2007.

Most of you will remember Peter as one of Wayne Nolan's right-hand-men at the "Wayne Mart" apparel table in the rear of our meeting room. But what many of you will remember most about Peter's involvement with our team will probably be his many stints as Master of Ceremonies at our annual Hall of Fame events. Really, who could forget his full-dress appearances at these gala events, setting the stage in a tuxedo—that's something you don't see very often here in The Villages!

Those of us who served with him on the Pit Crew will also recall Peter's insightful discussions on our important issues, and his steadying influence as we approached new activities and events on our members' behalf. He was part of the team that made The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club what it is today...a well-respected voice in Florida motorsports.

By the way, Peter's not leaving The Villages, but he is "riding off in the sunset"—literally, on his brand new motorcycle! He also plans to remain active with us, and you'll definitely see him at future events and activities! He also plans to increase his involvement with Honor Flight, so he won't run out of things to do!



A Visit to The NASCAR Archives

October 2—For club members interested in knowing the history of NASCAR, there’s probably no better place than the sport’s archives headquarters in Daytona. And for the second time in our history, a group of our members made the trip over to this extraordinary destination to witness the sport from the inside out, so to speak.



For those of you unable to make the trip, rest assured—we’ll most likely schedule a repeat visit at some point. And to give all of you a better perspective on what the archives is all about, here’s an excerpt from an Orlando Business Journal report from last year:

“The archives building is a race fan’s paradise. Thousands of licensed retail products are arranged amid vintage photos, a car or three, and items from the early days of Daytona stock car racing on the beach. Wanna see a Dale Earnhardt Monopoly game? It’s there. How about the first engine to win a motorcycle race at Indianapolis Speedway? Yep, that too. The collection is not only eclectic, it’s astounding. There is a garage area — and it is really a garage, with bay doors and everything — that contains, among other things, the trophy from the 1961 Daytona 500 and the car that won it. And the winning driver, Marvin Panch is a frequent visitor.” (If you’re interested, you can access the full article here: <http://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/blog/2013/07/racing-down-memory-lane-a-look-at.html>. If you do access the article, you’ll see a photo of Dave Westerman and Eddie Roche...Eddie will be our Keynote Speaker at the 2014 Hall of Fame night in February of 2015).

Prediction Row—Getting Hot!



Whether you like this year’s Chase format or not, you have to admit it’s been a major departure from the days of pure “points racing.” At this point, the opinions are split, some love it, some hate it. But everyone seems to agree...it’s different! Our Prediction Row Team is working their way through it, and here’s where they stand through the first race (Martinsville) in the last elimination round :

Predictor	Total Pts.	No. of Winning Predictions
Shirley Birchwale	261	3
John Angiolo	273	1
Janine Woodsford	238	1
David Vanderwall	236	1
Mike Anderson	229	0
Syd Baker	209	0

Note: Highest number of winning predictions will determine winner, with total points used as the tie-breaker

Citrus County Speedway Update



Many of us were stunned a few weeks ago when Gary Laplant, Citrus County Speedway promoter, announced termination of the track's racing schedule for the remainder of the year. After all, it's our "home track" for local stock car racing, and it's a venue where you can typically find a cluster of "yellow shirts" in the grandstands on any given Saturday night. Since the Inverness track is a mere 26 miles from our normal car pool launch point at Laurel Manor, and since many of us know several of the regular competitors over there, this 3/8 mile asphalt "bull ring" has become a regular place for those of us needing a "racing fix."

But wait...it appears the tide has turned a bit since that announcement, and it looks like there will be some events in the closing months of 2014 and into 2015. A website posting reports that CCS is working with Bronson Speedway to develop a racing schedule for coordinated events next year. As of this writing, tentative events are scheduled for CCS on November 8 and December 13, and new rules packages are being developed for 2015.

We'll keep you posted through our website and our newsletter as things develop over there at CCS. In the meantime visit their website (www.CitrusCountySpeedway.com) to keep abreast of announcements. Most importantly, though, let's support CCS in any events they schedule. We can't afford to lose another track!

Local Racing Corner

As we've mentioned quite a few times in the past, these tracks represent the local roots of racing and they need our support! If you've been to an event at any of these tracks recently, you'll no doubt agree that attendance is down. Car counts are down as well, and it's easy to see that either of these facts represents a cause-and-effect situation. If the cars don't come, neither will the fans, and it's becoming a downward spiral that can only lead to the closing of tracks here in Central Florida. We've already lost two this year (Columbia and Putnam County), and most of the others are struggling. So, let's do our part to keep the sport alive! These tracks are where the future big-league drivers cut their teeth, and they need us in the stands. Remember...without these tracks, there'd be no NASCAR!

Track	Location	Telephone	Website URL
Original Speedway Park	Fruitland Park	352-348-4336	originalspeedwaypark.com
Citrus County Speedway	Inverness	352-726-9339	citruscountyspeedway.com
Bubba Raceway Park	Ocala (Zuber)	352-622-9400	bubbaracewaypark.com
New Smyrna Speedway	Samsula	386-427-4129	newsmyrnaspeedway.org
Orlando Speedworld	Bithlo	407-568-1367	orlandospeedworld.org
East Bay Raceway Park	Tampa (Gibson)	813-677-7223	eastbayracewaypark.com
Marion County Speedway	Ocala	352-812-3922	ocalamicrospeedway.com
Auburndale Speedway	Winter Haven	863-551-1131	auburndaleracing.com
Punta Gorda Speedway	Punta Gorda	941-575-7223	puntagordaspeedway.com
Desoto Super Speedway	Bradenton	941-748-3171	desotosuperspeedway.com
Bronson Motor Speedway	Bronson	352-486-2763	facebook.com/ bronson.speedway

Honoring Buddy Pearce

Photos from Steven Brack's post in Palm Beach Fairgrounds Speedway

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Driver Of The Week

BUDDY PEARCE

Buddy Pearce is originally from Butler, Pennsylvania having moved to the West Palm Beach area some 15 years ago. How old is he? You ask him because I couldn't find out. He did admit to being 27, but he does look a few years older than that. How long has he been driving? You'd better ask him that too. He told me it's been a long time. No yearly number, just a long time.



Buddy Pearce has become an institution over the years here at Palm Beach Speedway. Uncle Buddy, as he's often affectionately called (a name he says has followed him from a Pennsylvania dance studio), is one of the most competitive drivers to ever run here. Whether it's a Hobby car (which he is currently driving) or a Modified, Uncle Bud seems to bring what used to be a second rate car into a more competitive machine.

Buddy is married and he and his wife Darlene live in a mobile home with one of Buddy's favorite conversation pieces - his Siberian Huskie. "A perfect dog because it has no smell," states Buddy.

Buddy Pearce is always telling a joke or reciting an antidote. He is a most enjoyable person, the kind you can talk to forever.

The article shown above was posted by Steven Brack a few months ago on the Palm Beach Fairgrounds Speedway site...it's a good reminder of why we have so much respect for Buddy and his accomplishments!

Buster's Brick is in Place

It took a while to accomplish, but we can finally report that the final step in the on-going memorial to our late friend and hero Arthur "Buster" Burt has been taken. His commemorative brick in *The Veterans Memorial Park of the Villages* adjacent to Spanish Springs has now been placed, and we encourage all of those who knew Buster to stop by and pay your respects. Even if you never had the honor of knowing Buster, still visit and salute this absolute gem of a man that we all knew and respected. He was a friend and a strong member of our team, and we continue to think of him often.



(Photo courtesy of Tom Horrmann)

Dora Thorne Update

October 25-Our own Hall of Famer (Class of 2013) Dora Thorne has a new ride...take a look at the beautiful machine pictured at right. It's the new No. 48 Sportsman car that she put into action at Auburndale Speedway on October 25 Here's an excerpt from her Facebook post that summarizes how the night went:

"Well, I qualified 15 out of 22 at Auburndale Speedway 75 lap Sportsman race. My first Sportsman race. I like to call it the "Baptism by fire" approach Lol... Started 15th and finished 10th. Got knocked around quite a bit, put to the rear a couple of times and put a few "wrinkles" on her but overall I think I will get a handle on this class in time.



I was surprised by the compliments I received from other drivers after the races, don't usually hear that.... I also was surprised by the fans that came out on the track during trick or treat festivities that have shown me great support..

I'm glad there are still people out there that are all about "The spirit of racing", win some, lose some, wreck some but, by far we couldn't do it without each other. If we didn't have competition, there wouldn't be races, fans or friends that are 'like minded people'."

We all continue to wish Dora well as she pursues her career, but we miss her over at Citrus County Speedway. Proving she can drive anywhere, though, she occupies ninth place in the Street Stock standings at Auburndale, and will undoubtedly make a dent on the Sportsman ranks as the season winds down.

Your Pit Crew

Jerry Conkle, President/Crew Chief (750-1185)
 Wendy Touchette, Vice President (303-9734)
 Silky Meegan, Corresponding Secretary (259-2029)
 Mike Anderson, Webmaster (217-714-2245)
 Gerry Greim, Recording Secretary (215-630-1402)
 Tom Horrmann, Treasurer/Official Photographer (430-0195)
 Gary Civiletti, Special Events (751-4030)
 Bob & Camille Sherman, Membership (751-1771)
 Wayne Nolan, Member at Large (750-9082)
 Syd and Nancy Baker, Hospitality Coordinators (750-2126)
 Gerry Hafer, Immediate Past President /Newsletter (751-3643)
 Glen Carter, Past President (751-6442)

Welcome, New Member



Welcome **Steve Griffiths**, from Indianapolis, Indiana. As he reported, they have a race track there...he lived five miles away from it!

From the Vault



Photos courtesy of Henry McKenzie

Conkle's Corner...

Greetings friends...a lot going on as we close in on the end of the racing season for 2014. The Chase has been interesting so far, but whether that's in a good way or a bad way is up to you. I'd like to hear your comments and thoughts on the format, so I can chat with Brian France next time we sit down for a drink and give him your thoughts!



Anyway, here's a something to perk you up a bit, compliments of Jim Boyd...

You may have heard on the news about a Southern California man who was put under 72-hour psychiatric observation when it was found he owned 100 guns and allegedly had 100,000 rounds of ammunition stored in his home. The house also featured a secret escape tunnel. By Southern California standards, someone owning 100,000 rounds is considered "mentally unstable."

- In Michigan, he'd be called "The last white guy still living in Detroit."
- In Arizona, he'd be called "an avid gun collector."
- In Arkansas, he'd be called "a novice gun collector."
- In Utah, he'd be called "moderately well prepared," but they'd probably reserve judgment until they made sure that he had a corresponding quantity of stored food."
- In Kansas, he'd be "A guy down the road you would want to have for a friend."
- In Montana, he'd be called "The neighborhood 'Go-To' guy."
- In Idaho, he'd be called "A likely gubernatorial candidate."
- In Georgia, he'd be called "An eligible bachelor."
- In North Carolina, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky and South Carolina he would be called "A deer hunting buddy."
- In Texas he'd just be "Bubba, who's a little short on ammo."
- In The Villages, he just might be called your next door neighbor.

And how about this?

At breakfast, the husband says to his wife, "What would you do if I won the Lotto?"

"I'd take my half and leave you" she says.

"Great" he says. "Here's \$6. I won \$12 yesterday! Stay in touch."