

# The Villages Racing Fan Club

January, 2007



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## Message from the Crew Chief/President



Last month I told you we were nearing the 100 member mark. Well, we blew through that with the addition of 17 new members at the December 6 meeting, and all signs are that the growth will continue. This is great...we're filling the stands—front stretch and back!

Even more exciting than our growth in numbers, though, is the pace of development that we're experiencing during this start-up phase. As you heard at the December meeting, our Special Events Committee is developing a list of truly great activities for 2007, our website has been launched, we've had some great speakers so far, and some unique occasions (like "The Villages Month" at Daytona USA) have taken shape.

All of this is happening because of the reception and level of interest that all of you have shown. As your Pit Crew, we recognize that your level of interest in the Club is genuinely strong, and that makes our job much more meaningful. As always, we welcome any suggestions that you have, and we ask that you feel free to contact any of us with comments or advice. Thanks for making this a great club!

*Glen*



## December's meeting speaker...the "inside story"

December's meeting once again featured a speaker who held us spellbound as he described the backroom details of the sport of motor racing. **Buzz Wilkie** treated us to an insider's perspective of the administrative side of racing and, more specifically, the many details and nuances of managing the details of racing venues. As an Account Manager for International Speedway Corporation (ISC), Buzz provided an informative narrative of racing as a business, including the many interactions between ISC and NASCAR.

In addition to discussing the many details associated with ISC's corporate structure (the management of race facilities on the Nextel Cup circuit, the operation of broadcast facilities like MRN, and the control of a variety of race-related enterprises like Motorsports Images and Archives), Buzz described the fine points of working with racing's major corporate sponsors. It was interesting to hear about the exchanges that occur between ISC, NASCAR, and sponsors like DeWalt Tools, Pepsi, and so on.

To most people, racing only takes place on the track. Having heard "the rest of the story" from Buzz, we now have a better appreciation for the behind-the-scenes work that must be done before (and while, and after) the cars are on the track.

Thanks to Buzz for a fascinating and informative discussion.

## Special Events Committee Report



Our Special Events Committee has been actively planning a number of events for the early part of 2007. At our February 7 meeting, tickets will go on sale for the raffle to win a “Richard Petty Driving Experience”...those of you who have done this or something similar can attest to the level of excitement that goes along with it. Once you’ve done this, watching a race takes on a whole new dimension for you!

Also in February, we expect to begin taking orders for club shirts and hats. This is your chance to gear up to help give “The Villages Racing Club” a complete team appearance! Look for a display of samples at the January meeting...they’re pretty spectacular!

At our February 7 meeting we will also judge the painting expertise of those six talented members who volunteered to detail the cut-out race cars. Best Appearing and two runner-up cars will receive prizes, and the cars will then be impounded for use later in the year at our “Villages Day at the Races” event. Stay tuned for more info on that event later.

## January Meeting Special Guest



Our January 10 meeting (**REMEMBER...THIS MEETING WILL BE ONE WEEK LATER THAN USUAL**) will feature a review of racing operations at Ocala Speedway. Our special guest and speaker will Mr. **Lou Tremblay**, the Speedway’s General Manager. Many of you know that Ocala is a 3/8 mile semi-banked asphalt tri-oval located at 9050 N. W. Gainesville Road (just north of Rt. 326 along Rt. 25a) northwest of Ocala. It’s an excellent spectator track and an easy drive up I-75 from The Villages (Exit 358). As those of you who have been there can attest, this is a fan-friendly track with excellent visibility and plenty of good ‘ol time stock car racing.



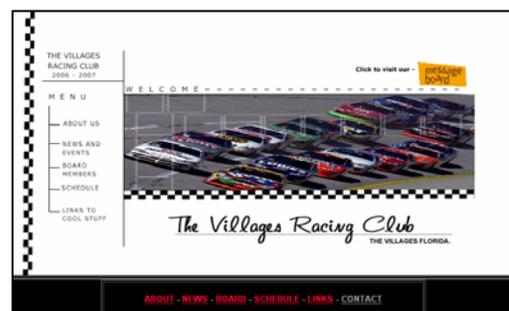
Mr. Tremblay, a former racer with roughly 40 years of involvement in motor racing at many levels, will provide an overview of Ocala Speedway’s operations and upcoming events, along with some of his own personal anecdotes about the racing business both on and off the track.

Knowing more about Ocala Speedway will help get us all prepared for potential tailgating ventures to this exciting local track.

## Website Launched in late November

Most of you are aware by now that our Club’s website is now available ([www.villagesracingclub.com](http://www.villagesracingclub.com)), thanks to the efforts of Matt Vaughn. Although portions of the site are still under development, it promises to be one of the primary methods of communication to members between regular meetings. Remember to check the message board at regular intervals for alerts and comments from your Pit Crew, and watch for additions and enhancements over the next few months.

If any of you have suggestions for content on the website, feel free to let us know and we’ll try to accommodate it. In the meantime, we plan to continue posting the monthly newsletter on the site (click on the “News” button on the home page, then click the “Newsletter” highlight), although we will continue to email it separately to members.



## Local Racing Corner

We're sort of in the "off season" of stock car racing, but here in Florida that's a pretty brief period of time. While most of the local tracks have not yet updated their online schedules for 2007, we were able to track down one January event that may be of interest to Club members. You'll recall that one of the Club's objectives is to provide a gathering point for tailgating trips to racing venues close to The Villages, and this item provides an excellent opportunity for that:

- **Third Annual Speedfest Event at USA Speedway, Lakeland - January 25-27**

*From the press release posted at [www.usaspeedway.com](http://www.usaspeedway.com)....* Officials from the Midwest-based Champion Racing Association (CRA) Super Series, the Southern-based FASCAR/Sunbelt Super Series and USA International Speedway in Lakeland, Florida have combined to announce the dates for "SpeedFest 2007" at the beautiful central Florida facility. Super Late Model teams and fans will gather for the third annual event, January 25-27, 2007. In January of 2006, 57 teams took part in the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual "SpeedFest" that brought the countries top teams together. The North and South had their own 100-lap qualifying features on Friday, which transferred teams to Saturday's 200-lap main event. "Super Mario" Gosselin won the South qualifier, while Eddie Van Meter won the North qualifier, taking his first ever super late model victory of any kind. The following night, 41 cars took the green flag for the SpeedFest 200, and when the dust settled it, was one of Florida's toughest competitors, Mike Fritts, standing in victory lane and \$10,000 richer.

USA Speedway is located on State Route 33, just west of Polk City and just east of Lakeland. It's a fairly easy drive from The Villages (about 60 miles or so). The three-day event begins Thursday January 25, with practice sessions from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Qualifying and racing events begin Friday at 4:00 pm, with the Speedfest 200 and FASCAR Protrucks 50 events scheduled for Saturday beginning at 8:00 pm. Additional detailed information about this event and the scheduled competitors is available at [www.usaspeedway.com](http://www.usaspeedway.com).



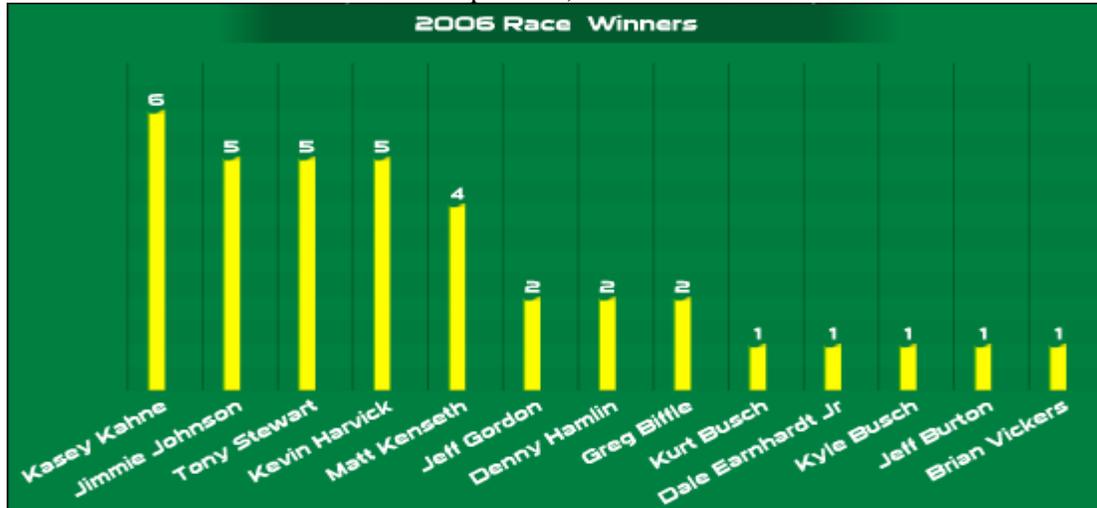
- **Daytona Test Sessions – Either January 8-10 or January 15-17**

As Crew Chief Carter mentioned at the December meeting, tentative plans are being made for the Club to attend team testing sessions at Daytona in January. Watch for further announcements via email.

If we learn of any more local events scheduled for January, they'll be announced at the January meeting. As mentioned in previous newsletters, events like this represent excellent opportunities for Club members to tailgate and experience local racing at its best.

## So You Don't Need to Look it up!

Well, the 2006 Nextel Cup season is over, and the Club offers congratulations to 2007 Champion Jimmie Johnson and his Lowe's Team for a well-crafted campaign. It was a long season and, since many of us may have difficulty remembering back to last February's opener, we thought it would be good this month to recap the winners' list for the year. The chart below shows the 13 drivers who divided the 36 point race wins (two of them—Hamlin and Vickers—were first-time winners on the Nextel Cup circuit).



Courtesy [www.theinsidegroove.com](http://www.theinsidegroove.com)

The Next chart provides a race-by-race list of the 36 individual events, beginning with the Daytona 500 at the top-left, and ending with the Ford 400 at Homestead.

Daytona	Jimmie Johnson	New Hampshire	Kyle Busch
California	Matt Kenseth	Pocono	Denny Hamlin
Las Vegas	Jimmie Johnson	Indianapolis	Jimmie Johnson
Atlanta	Kasey Kahne	Watkins Glen	Kevin Harvick
Bristol	Kurt Busch	Michigan	Matt Kenseth
Martinsville	Tony Stewart	Bristol	Matt Kenseth
Texas	Kasey Kahne	California	Kasey Kahne
Phoenix	Kevin Harvick	Richmond	Kevin Harvick
Talladega	Jimmie Johnson	Louden	Kevin Harvick
Richmond	Dale Earnhardt Jr	Dover	Jeff Burton
Darlington	Greg Biffle	Kansas	Tony Stewart
Charlotte	Kasey Kahne	Talladega	Brian Vickers
Dover	Matt Kenseth	Charlotte	Kasey Kahne
Pocono	Denny Hamlin	Martinsville	Jimmie Johnson
Michigan	Kasey Kahne	Atlanta	Tony Stewart
Sonoma	Jeff Gordon	Texas	Tony Stewart
Daytona	Tony Stewart	Phoenix	Kevin Harvick
Chicago	Jeff Gordon	Homestead	Greg Biffle

Courtesy [www.theinsidegroove.com](http://www.theinsidegroove.com)

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