



# The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

## Pit Report

May—2015

Next *Regular* Meeting—Wednesday, June 3, 2015

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## A Triple-Header Look at Racing History

**May 6**—Our May meeting was one for the ages...a trip back through the history of stock car racing up and down the eastern portion of the country. Beginning with the always entertaining Charles Poindexter from Gainesville, Florida, we were updated on the fantastic work this noted historian is doing to document one of the eras that shaped racing today—the 1955-1980 years that produced so much great history. Charles gave us an overview of his work with race tracks like Tennessee's Ashway Speedway and Florida's Gainesville Speedway, as well as his work with the Living Legends of Auto Racing and the Jacksonville Stock Car Racing Hall of Fame, where he is a 2013 inductee.



Following Charles' remarks, we heard from Jim "Jimbo" Chadwick from New Smyrna Beach, widely regarded as one of the most authoritative voices of Florida Stock Car Racing. Whether it's the old days at Palm Beach Fairgrounds Speedway or Hialeah Speedway, or whether it's Orlando Speedworld or New Smyrna Speedway, Jimbo is the "go to" guy for questions about who did what when. He shared a wealth of experience with us, including the time he's spent with the likes of Robert Hamke, Gary Balough, Bobby Brack, and of course, Dick Anderson.

"Dynamite" Dave Dion capped off this incredible night of racing tales with a review of his decades in motorsports, from his entry into the sport until his retirement just a few years ago. Dave's anecdotes were the stuff of legends, and we got a good assessment of how a family team could survive "back in the day." He shared some great stories about his Northeast racing, as well as his occasional ventures into the NASCAR world. In fact, one of his many



(Continued =>)

## A Triple-Header Look at Racing History (cont'd)

amusing stories involved his appearance in the Delaware 500 at Dover International Speedway in 1978, made even more amusing by his tales of arriving in the team's modified school bus hauler and needing to convince the parking attendants that they were in fact entered in the event. Dave laughingly pointed out that the problem was magnified by being parked between the haulers of "King" Richard Petty and Benny Parsons. But, as Dave put it, such was the life of an independent family race team.

Here are just a few of the accomplishments of this rugged and determined race team:

### Five Series Championships:

- 1976 Northern NASCAR Championship
- 1977 Oxford Open Series
- 1978 Oxford Open Series
- 1989 ACT Coors Tour American Champion
- 1996 NASCAR Grand National Division, Busch East Series

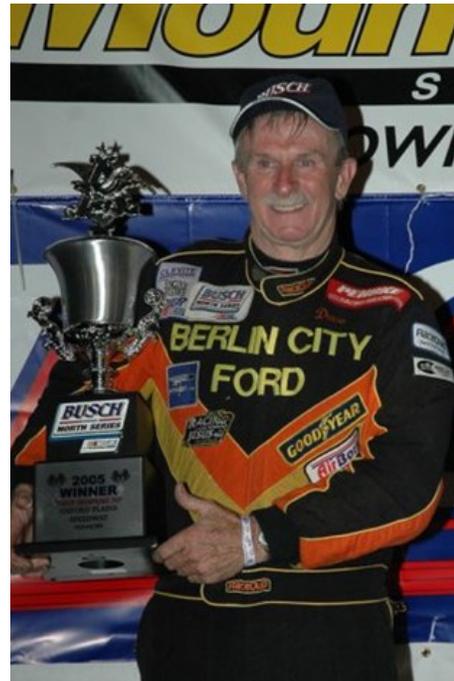
11 Track Championships from 1972 to 1991 at these tracks:

- Norwood (MA) Arena
- Thunder Road (VT)
- Catamount Stadium (VT)
- Thompson (CT) Speedway
- Dover Downs (DE) Int'l Speedway
- Waterford (CT) Speedbowl

Dave and his team also logged over 75 major event victories in the 70s, 80s, and 90s, and Dave was named **NASCAR Busch East Series Most Popular Driver** in 1999 and **NASCAR Busch East Series Busch Pole Award Champion** in 1997 and 2004. In addition to his northeast accomplishments, he competed in the NASCAR Xfinity and Sprint Cup series, with 21 starts, and the K&N East Pro series, with over 200 starts.

And that's just some of the stats!

Dave was inducted into the New England Auto Racing Hall of Fame in 2007, and is a Board Member of the Living Legends of Auto Racing.



## Our June Meeting—Another Legendary Visitor!

The hits just keep coming! On June 3, we'll hear from yet another racing veteran with a resume that is firmly etched in the record books. Orlando's **David Rogers** will be with us to share his racing history, and to regale us with a few stories of things he's run into along the way. With a racing career spanning more than 40 years, he has competed against the likes of Dale Earnhardt Sr., David Pearson, Harry Gant, Jack Ingram and Bob Pressley. Rogers' NASCAR Whelen All-American Series success in the 1990s established his stature among his peers. He won the NASCAR Weekly Series national championship in 1994. Driving his own late model, Rogers won all 22 races at Volusia County Speedway, making him the first and only NASCAR Weekly Series national champion to complete a season undefeated.



Many of us have had the opportunity to watch David in action over at New Smyrna Speedway, where he's a regular competitor in the annual Florida Governor's Cup 200 (where he recorded a win in 1997). He's also a regular competitor in an event that's on many of our members' "bucket lists"...the Snowball Derby, where he's entered 30 times. Only one other driver has more entries—Red Farmer, with 32.

So, once again our group will be honored to welcome one of the country's all-time great short track racers! This is gonna be another one you don't want to miss.

**Quick Editorial Update**—David raced in the Southern Super Series Saturday, 5/23 at Five Flags Speedway, starting 22nd, finishing 7th in the 26-car field. He's scheduled to run Saturday 5/30 at New Smyrna.

## Hall of Fame Trophy Gets a Facelift We can now add 8 more classes of racing luminaries!



**May 6**—If you were there for our May 6 meeting, you had a chance to take a close-up look at our newly refurbished Hall of Fame Trophy. With the induction of our Class of 2014, we filled up the space on the trophy base, and Tom Horrmann stepped in to solve the problem. In the photo at left, you can see two major enhancements: the addition of a new, additional base that gives us room to double the number of members in our Hall, and the addition of an acrylic insert commemorating the trophy and its purpose.

Our Hall of Fame trophy now has 105 names inscribed on it, ranging from NASCAR greats to local journeyman drivers, and including track owners, promoters, and media personnel. There are a number of special-interest names on it as well...people who have shared their unique stories with us and who we were honored to host.

By the way, let's not forget that the trophy itself has a pedigree...it was Dick Anderson's winning trophy from the 1981 Space Shuttle 100 at Orlando Speedworld!



## Skip Bryan Takes 1st in Class at Summit Point

**May 15-16**—Club member and Hall of Famer (Class of 2014) Skip Bryan continues to carry our colors prominently in the Sportscar Vintage Racing Association (SVRA) ranks. Competing earlier this month at Summit Point Raceway in West Virginia, Skip's 1972 BMW 2002 finished no lower than second in class on the 1.7 mile Jefferson circuit, taking "best in class" honors in the May 16 sprint race with a time of 1:32.741 (a mere seven seconds off the best time recorded in the race). In that race, he was eighth overall in the field of 32 cars. In his final race of the competition, Skip logged his best time of the weekend with a 1:31.819.



Keep on truckin' Skip! You're making us proud! By the way, if you want to get a feel for competition at Summit Point, check out this Youtube video in-car—<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yLhQNRyAXE>—it's not Skip, but it shows you the course.

## Devin McLeod Had a Pretty Good May!

**May 9**—Club Hall of Famer (Class of 2013) Devin McLeod was the class of the field—twice—on May 9 down at Showtime Speedway in Pinellas Park. First, in the Open Wheel Modifieds, Devin started outside row 4 but quickly moved to the front and battled Seth Adams and LJ Grim for the win. Later, he took a third place start in the Legends Car feature to the front, making it a two-win night for this rising Zephyrhills star.



And it's like we were there, since Devin was once again sporting our club logo. By the way, Devin is currently sitting atop the championship leader board in the Modified class at Showtime, with a six point lead over Wayne Jefferson. With the consistency he's been showing lately, it looks like a track title might be in the cards for this club favorite. We're hoping in the near future to organize a trip down to Showtime to cheer for one of our club favorites!



## The NASCAR Hall of Fame—Class of 2016

In case you missed it, NASCAR last week announced its list of inductees for 2016. They include Modified legend Jerry Cook; NASCAR Cup-level veterans Bobby Isaac, Curtis Turner, and Terry Labonte; and promoter and track owner O. Bruton Smith. With the addition of these five inductees on January 26, 2016, the Hall will include 35 NASCAR greats.

With the media attention focused on the five who will join the Hall next year, the remainder of the nominees are sometimes forgotten. So that their names don't just fade until the next round of nominations, we thought we'd include them here. You'll most likely see these names popping up in future nominee lists, but for now they get to stand down for a few months:

Name	Function
Buddy Baker	Driver
Red Byron	Driver
Richard Childress	Driver, Team Owner
Ray Evernham	Driver, Crew Chief, Team Owner
Ray Fox	Car Owner, Engine Builder
Rick Hendrick	Car Owner, Team Owner
Harry Hyde	Car Owner, Crew Chief
Alan Kulwicki	Driver
Mark Martin	Driver
Hershel McGriff	Driver
Raymond Parks	Team Owner
Benny Parsons	Driver
Larry Phillips	Driver
Mike Stefanik	Driver
Robert Yates	Engine Builder, Team Owner

The Landmark Award for Outstanding Contributions to NASCAR this year went to Darlington and Rockingham builder Harold Brasington. Also nominated for this prestigious award were broadcaster Ken Squier, Martinsville Speedway founder H. Clay Earles, early car owner Raymond Parks, and Winston marketing genius Ralph Seagraves.

## Prediction Row—2015 Edition



Charlotte was a rough race for our panel of racing experts, with no winning picks and a ninth place finish by Kevin Harvick being the highest of all six of the picks. Next stop is Dover, the thirteenth race in the 2015 season and the end of the Spring Segment. At this point, Jim Pappas continues to lead the way with 5 wins, while Darren Ivey and Lois Taylor have a comfortable point position to accompany their

four wins. Dan Gammon and Kim Garcia will need a win to stay in the hunt for a transfer spot. Tony Kennea, with a single winning prediction, is statistically out of the race.

The Summer Segment predictors are beginning to run warm-up laps for their stint, which begins June 7 at Pocono. The competitors for this segment are Don Day, Tina Ivey, John Kitowicz, Dave Monahan, Wendy Touchette, and Bob Woodsford. Betting lines will soon be open on the three from this segment who will join the Spring Segment transfers in the Chase Segment. Stay tuned!

Predictor	Points	Wins
Jim Pappas	424	5
Darren Ivey	453	4
Lois Taylor	445	4
Dan Gammon	397	4
Kim Garcia	413	3
Tony Kennea	373	1

## 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 our "home track" (Citrus County Speedway) seems to be in trouble. 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	Web Contact
Auburndale Speedway	Winter Haven	863-551-1131	Auburndaleracing.com
Bronson Speedway	Archer	352-486-4998	Bronsonspeedway.net
Bubba Raceway Park	Ocala (Zuber)	352-622-9400	Bubbaracewaypark.com
Citrus County Speedway	Inverness	352-726-9339	Citruscountyspeedway.com
Desoto Speedway	Bradenton	941-748-3171	Desotospeedway.com
East Bay Raceway Park	Tampa (Gibson)	813-677-7223	Eastbayracewaypark.com
Marion County Speedway	Ocala	352-812-3922	Marioncountyspeedway.com
New Smyrna Speedway	Samsula	386-427-4129	Newsmyrnaspeedway.org
Original Speedway Park	Fruitland Park	352-348-4336	Speedwaypark.biz
Orlando Speedworld	Bithlo	407-568-1367	Orlandospeedworld.org
Putnam County Speedway	Satsuma	386-649-6969	Putnamcountyspeedway.org
Showtime Speedway	Pinellas Park	727-561-9646	Showtimespeedway.us
Three Palms Speedway	Punta Gorda	941-444-9461	Threepalmsspeedway.com
Volusia Speedway Park	De Leon Springs	386-985-4402	Sportsvolusia.com

## Prehistoric NASCAR—The First Beach Course, and Growing From There

(Editorial Note: This is the second installment in the documentation of the years before there was a NASCAR. Future editions will chronicle the sport's development from the 1950s forward. Stay tuned...Gerry)

After losing the internationally-acclaimed beach speed trial circuit to the Bonneville Salt Flats, Daytona Beach recognized that something dramatic needed to happen to keep motorsports alive. What they did is the stuff of legends—they built a closed-course beach racing venue, 3.2 miles in length partly on sand and partly on paved road.

The first race conducted on the new beach course was won by Milt Marion in a Ford, but the real historic element of the event was the entry of William H. G. France, Sr. "Big Bill" finished 5th in the 250 mile event, which unfortunately was a logistical and financial failure for the city of Daytona Beach, so much so that it caused an immediate stop in racing activities.

Bill France saw the potential for organized racing, and his vision and persistence resulted in a second event on the beach course over a year later. This event, too, was not a financial success, but it fueled France's optimism enough to lead him to take over operation of the race course.

He organized and promoted two events in 1938, three events in each of the next two years, and four events in 1941. A true racing venue was born.

As 1942 approached, so did WW2, and racing had to take a back seat to larger world events. Bill France's driving career up to that point had been successful, with two wins and six top-five finishes in 16 races, but his view of the future took him out of the race car and into the promoter's chair, and he expanded his vision beyond the beach course to include promotion of two racing venues—Seminole Speedway in Orlando, Florida and Occoneechee Speedway in North Carolina.

The experience Bill France had accumulated combined with his natural business savvy allowed him to see that there was enormous potential in the sport of auto racing, and that organization, consistency, and ethics would be the keys to success. With this mindset driving him, he organized a series of discussions in late 1947 with drivers, car owners, and mechanics at the Streamline Hotel in Daytona Beach, and these discussions and planning sessions resulted in the official formation of NASCAR on February 28, 1948.

## How Many NASCAR Drivers Have Raced in the Indianapolis 500?

The 99th running of the Indianapolis 500 is now history, and unlike last year, there were no NASCAR drivers attempting "The Double." But one of the questions we were kicking around at our Thursday morning breakfast group a few weeks ago was along those same lines: "Over the years, how many *licensed* NASCAR drivers ever ran in the Indianapolis 500?" After doing some preliminary research through well-known statistical sources, an itemized list of 17 drivers meeting this criterion was found. But it seemed light, so our resident Indy expert (Crew Chief Conkle, of course)—stepped in to review the first list and—guess what—there are actually 30! So, here they are:

- Bobby Allison
- Donnie Allison
- AJ Allmendinger
- John Andretti\*
- Mario Andretti\*\*
- Tony Bettenhausen Jr.
- Kurt Busch\*
- A.J. Foyt Jr.\*\*
- Dario Franchitti
- Paul Goldsmith

- Robby Gordon\*
- Janet Guthrie
- Dan Gurney
- Sam Hornish Jr.
- Jim Hurtubise
- Bobby Johns
- Steve Kinser
- Juan Pablo Montoya
- Danica Patrick
- Scott Pruett
- Dick Rathman
- Tim Richmond
- Johnny Rutherford
- Tony Stewart\*
- Marshall Teague
- Al Unser
- Al Unser Jr.
- Jacques Villeneuve
- Cale Yarborough
- LeeRoy Yarbrough

\* These four have run "The Double (Indy 500/Charlotte 600 same day)

\*\* These two Indy regulars won both the Indy 500 and the Daytona 500

## 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)  
 Darren Ivey, Special Events Coordinator (552-1977)  
 Bob & Camille Sherman, Membership (751-1771)  
 Wayne Nolan, Member at Large (750-9082)  
 John Angiolo, Member at Large (414-305-8094)  
 Mike Touchette, Member at Large (603-5077)  
 Syd and Nancy Baker, Hospitality Coordinators (750-2126)  
 Gerry Hafer, Immediate Past President /Newsletter (396-9961)  
 Glen Carter, Past President (874-8152)

## July Picnic Preview

As we've mentioned at the last several meetings, we're planning on having Kenny and Mike Brewer on hand at our July 1 picnic event, along with their Mini Sprint race cars. The Brewers are racing June 19 at BRP, so we're planning a trip up there to root for them. They'll be with us at the June meeting to talk more about their upcoming race.

Here's a glimpse of what you'll see on display in Colony Cottage Rec Center's picnic area...



Quote of the day:

"You haven't had enough coffee until you can thread a sewing machine while it's running."

~ Anonymous

## Conkle's Corner...

In the Indy 500 there were more lead changes in 50 laps than there were in 400 laps in the NASCAR Coca Cola 600. It's a shame that the NASCAR event was another fuel mileage race. I hope you enjoyed it more than I did.



I was so moved by the experience of first watching an exciting Indianapolis 500 and then shifting gears to the Coca Cola 600 that I felt compelled to capture my emotions in a poem:

There used to be great NASCAR races,  
 Now they only talk about the chases.  
 Now all the cars are the same,  
 The only difference is the name,  
 And that's an awful shame.  
 I hope things get a lot better  
 And I won't have to write another letter.

I'm sure I broke a few rules of poetry, so maybe I'll get called to the trailer for a consult!

On the lighter side,

A man and his wife walked into a Dentist's Office. The man said to the Dentist, "Doc, I'm in one heck of a hurry I have two buddies sitting out in my car waiting for us to go play golf, so forget about the anesthetic, I don't have time for the gums to get numb. I just want you to pull the tooth, and be done with it! We have a 10:00 AM tee time at the best golf course in town and it's 9:30 already... I don't have time to wait for the anesthetic to work!"

The Dentist thought to himself, "My goodness, this is surely a very brave man asking to have his tooth pulled without using anything to kill the pain." So the Dentist asks him, "Which tooth is it Sir?" The man turned to his wife and said, "Open your mouth Honey, and show him . . . ."

