



# The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club Pit Report

## June/July, 2013

Next *Regular* Meeting—Wednesday, August 7, 2013

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### Meeting A Rising Star!



**June 5**—Thanks to our Dick Anderson connection, we've uncovered another super-star-to-be, this time a 20-year old driver from what we consider to be the "World Center of Speed"—Zephyrhills, Florida. We're referring, of course to Devin McLeod, a rising young star on the Florida racing circuit. As is the case with most of the younger drivers these days, despite his age Devin already sports an 11-year racing career, starting in Champ

Karts in 2002, then moving to Mini-Cup cars in 2006, then Legends Cars in 2009, Pro Late Models in 2012, and Super Late Models in 2013. He also races Open Wheel Modified.

His honors so far include multiple championships in the Jr. Sportsman Kart ranks, a Mini-Cup Pro Division Championship, multiple Legends series Championships, and a Florida Pro Late Model Challenge Championship. One of the highlights of his racing career to-date, he reported, was the opportunity to compete this year in the World Series at New Smyrna, where he stunned the local motorsports world with a feature win in only his second night in a Super Late Model. This win was made even more significant by the level of talent in the field, including former NASCAR Nationwide competitor Stephen Wallace, Camping World Truck series competitor Joey Coulter, and a host of Florida standout drivers like Steve Nasse, Anthony Sergi, and the wily veteran David Rogers. By the way, Devin finished second to David Rogers in the opening night feature, and logged two more top-ten finishes during the series, so it wasn't a fluke!

Devin shared with us many other highpoints of his career to-date, emphasizing his appreciation to his dad, Derick, and to the legendary Anderson for making it possible for him to get seat time in the No. 92. Looking ahead, Devin plans to continue to develop his driving skills on a number of levels, including Super Late Models, Open Wheel Modifieds, and Legends Cars, and reported that he plans to return to Citrus County Speedway several times this year to compete. He also hopes to compete in the Florida Governor's Cup 200 at New Smyrna later this year, so let's keep our fingers crossed for him.



## August Meeting Preview—The Feel of Racing

**August 5**—Our next regular meeting (**don't forget we're off for the Independence Day Holiday in July**) will be a lively one! With the assistance of member David Vanderwall, we've made arrangements to have a representative of Fast Track Sims, a major player in the rapidly growing field of "I racing."



According to Wikipedia, **iRacing.com** is an online, subscription-based racing simulation service for Microsoft Windows created by iRacing.com Motorsport Simulations. In addition to accurately modeled vehicles and tracks, iRacing provides servers on which to race and practice and a sanctioning body to organize and oversee competition within the service. I Racing's objective is "to cater both to real-world racers and racing simulation enthusiasts by offering a realistic simulation of motorsport with accurate track, vehicle and physics modeling.



Fast Track Sims is a manufacturer of full-size simulators (pictured at right), as well as a catalog of associated gear and peripherals. We're hoping to have an actual simulator on-hand at the meeting, so this is going to be a wild one! Come on out and find out what a "butt kicker" really feels like! You may even want to order your own simulator...we can help you with that!

A complete multi-screen simulator rig. Got a spare bedroom?

## Syd Baker Captures First Round of Prediction Row 2013

The only drama in the final race of segment 1 involved the last transfer spot, and that was a shocker (at least for Gerry Hafer, who saw a sure thing with Hamlin evaporate with only 20 laps to go). So, when the smoke cleared, Syd Baker, Gary Civiletti, and Al Stone stood poised to enter the Chase Round in September.

Segment 1 produced some impressive stats, with five winning predictions, and 26 podium finishes (33%), 33 top five predictions (42%), and 45 top ten predictions (58%). Overall, the drivers picked by the segment one experts compiled a 10.6 average finish. The qualifying positions for these drivers was even more impressive, at 10.2. Over the,

13 races, the panelists predicted the pole winner eight times.

Jimmie Johnson was the most frequent pick (no surprise there!), picked 24 times. Jeff Gordon was a distant 2nd at 8, followed by Kyle Busch with 8.

Meanwhile, the segment 2 predictors are in action. They are: Mike Anderson, Jim Carter, Jim Dunaway, Corky Eck, Jon Neville, and Wendy Touchette. You can follow their progress on our website by clicking on the "Prediction Row" tab in the menu bar on the home page.

Going into the fourth race (Kentucky) in segment 2, Eck holds a two-point lead over Carter, while Anderson and Touchette battle for the final transfer spot and Neville and Dunaway slug it out for the basement. But it's not over for segment 2 until the final lap at Richmond!

Final Standings-Segment 1			
Predictor	Points	Behind	Rank
Baker, Syd	470		<b>1</b>
Civiletti, Gary	461	9	<b>2</b>
Stone, Al	453	17	<b>3</b>
Hafer, Gerry	433	37	<b>4</b>
Nolan, Wayne	430	40	<b>5</b>
Conkle, Jerry	318	152	<b>6</b>

## Larry Croom's Awesome Mustang Makes a Visit

**May 1**—If you were able to make our May meeting, you got a look at club Hall of Famer (class of 2007) Larry Croom's 1973 Mustang Mach I. As anyone who had the opportunity to check it out will attest, this is a classic ride, arguably one of the hottest in The Villages area!

With its high-performance Cleveland 351 c.i. power plant, Holley 800 carb, and 3-inch headers, Larry's chariot puts out an estimated 450 horsepower...just about enough to get him to work at

The Daily Sun on time. The car is custom-built for drag racing, with its C-6 three-speed automatic transmission, competition shifter, and positive traction rear end.

Like most true classic car owners, Larry's named the car: El Diablo Rojo, and its custom black Maaco paint job and subtle custom pin striping make it a real head-turner. Being the romantic that he is, Larry has his wife Gigi's name lettered on the car four separate times.

And, proving that he's a racing



aficionado, Larry's also lettered nicknames above the doors, just like on real race cars! Larry's *El Diablo Rojo* is a result of his passion for cars and speed, and reflects a dedication to the hard work of restoration. He's been rewarded with multiple car show trophies...now we just need to get him to put our logo decal on it!

## Remembering Fallen Motorsports Personalities Marty Ruser and Jason Leffler

**June 12**—for the second straight month, race fans locally and nationally are mourning the loss of two great names in the racing world. On Sunday, June 2, Original Speedway Park's long-time Race Director Marty Ruser (pictured below left) lost his lengthy battle with cancer. Marty was a member of our Hall of Fame (Class of 2010) and a true friend of the club. Through his hard work and dedication, we built a tremendous relationship with OSP, one of our "home tracks."

Then, on June 12, the racing world was stunned by the death of Jason Leffler (below right) in a Sprint Car wreck at Bridgeport Speedway in New Jersey. Jason was a NASCAR veteran, having competed at the sport's top three levels, where he is credited with three wins in over 400 starts.



## June 13 Night Golf—Another Great One!

June 13—Guest columnist and former Special Events Coordinator Wendy Touchette provided this recap of our Spring, 2013 Night Golf Extravaganza:

Night golf at Saddlebrook golf course was another successful event for the race club. We had 31 members show up for the putting contest at 7pm. They all wanted to practice putting so they were out there looking so serious. Jerry Conkle and Silky Megan helped out with this part of the Night Golf. After all were registered Silky made the announcement that the putting contest would be starting and for everyone to get there drivers for the contest. What?????? Yep, they were taken by surprise. I was asked how come the driver and I said, My event, my rules and the driver it is!!!! Only fitting for the race club don't you think?

The winner of the first round was Nancy Baker with a hole in one on her last try. Winner of the second round Left Handed Putting Contest was Fred Coenen.

Tee off was around 850pm. It was dark, it was very, very dark. It was a fun night of golf for all. You couldn't see anyone on the course except for the glow necklaces and the markers on all the tee boxes. Heard lot's of laughter and celebrating.

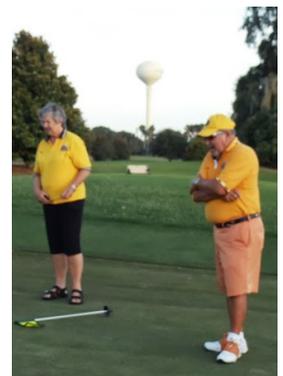
After golf we gathered in the Saddlebrook parking lot under the lights to announce the winners.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place team, Mac Ingalls, Pete Tetrault, Bob Bowden 27
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place team Don Day, Jonathan Day, Bea & Jerry Conkle 29
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place team Silky Meegan, Wendy Touchette, Glen Carter, Jim Carter
- Highest Score Syd & Nancy Baker, Woody & Jane White ☺

Thanks you to my helpers Silky Meegan, Jerry Conkle & Peter Tetrault.

(We had about 25 for the Pot Luck picnic on the original night (May 2), with a great selection of pot luck dishes and a 50/50 won by Bob Watson)

Here are a few action shots from the event...Clockwise from top left: Syd & Nancy Baker, Highest Score; Peter T. and Glen C. Cooling off; the full field of putting contestants; Silky M. and Jerry C. watching an incoming putt; Fred C. getting serious about a putt; Jerry C. explain a judging call to Don D.; Silky studying the green; Fred C. getting ready.



## 2013 Fund Raiser—We're Having a Yard Sale!

You may have noticed on the website a "Save your stuff!" note from Webmaster Anderson. It makes notice of our 2013 fund raising venture—a yard sale to be held this fall. The Pit Crew is still working out the details, so in the meantime, we need to all start accumul-

ating saleable items. As soon as the details are available, we'll let you know.

Of course, there are some items we won't be able to accept: clothing, old tube-type televisions, and large furniture. If you have any questions about "your stuff" give any Pit Crew member a call.



## Thank You, Janet and Ed Ott!

It's something that frequently gets taken for granted, but what would our meetings be without the refreshment table there in the back corner? For the past several years, after taking over the monthly chore from **Buster and Zoe Ann Burt, Janet and**

**Ed Ott** have been faithfully maintaining the inventory, transporting everything to Colony Cottage each month, and cleaning up after the meeting. The Otts retired from this post after the May meeting, and we thank them sincerely for their dedicated and valued

service. But don't despair! The refreshment baton has been handed off to **Syd and Nancy Baker**, starting with the August meeting, so our meeting-goers will not go hungry!



## 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 one this year (Columbia), 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. Without local 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	N/A

## Welcome, New Members

We welcomed two new members at our May meeting, and Club Photographer Tom Horrmann was able to grab them both for snapshots. Here they are:



David Vanderwall—Muskegon, Mich.



Ron Sanders—Springfield, IL.

Next time you run into either of these gentlemen, be sure to “chat them up” about motorsports. As you may recall from their self-introductions, they are both quite engaging and conversational!

## The Suggestion Box—A Way to be Involved

If you’ve been involved with our group for any length of time, you know that we tend to cover a fair amount of ground in the motorsports world. From our monthly speakers, to our activities, to our trips, your Pit Crew has tapped into a wide variety of racing-themed subjects, with an objective of always trying to deliver what our members want. Our Special Events group is always open to suggestions, and we welcome input from all of our members.

To make it even easier for members to advance suggestions, Webmaster Mike Anderson several months ago added an online suggestion box to our website. Accessing the suggestion box is simple—just click on the “You Can Help” button on the left-hand navigation panel on our site’s homepage, and you’ll be magically transported to a page on the site that looks like the snippet above.

Suggestion Box - Volunteer Form

Contact

My idea is... VOLUNTEER!

Our Club members enthusiastically share an interest in many forms of motorsports. We have been able to organize many enjoyable activities, trips and events.

HAVE A SUGGESTION? We are always interested in fresh ideas for speakers at club meetings, activities that members can enjoy and interesting events that members can attend. If you have a suggestion, use the form below and let us know about it. A board member will respond to you. Simply use the Subject: I HAVE AN IDEA.

CAN YOU HELP? Just like most residents of The Villages, our Club members show a willingness to get involved and offer their services and support. It's especially fun when you do so with like-minded supporters of motorsports. Volunteers help improve the Club and make it more enjoyable for all. Please don't hesitate to use the form below and contact us. A board member will respond to you. Simply use the Subject: I CAN HELP WITH \_\_\_\_\_.

LET ME KNOW HOW I CAN HELP

Feel free to use this feature to suggest trip destinations, activities, or speakers...anything you’d like the Pit Crew to consider! You can even volunteer for activities via this feature.

We’ve done a lot in six and a half years, but we can do more. But your Pit Crew wants to be sure we’re hitting the stuff members want. So, here’s your chance to help steer the ship!

## Club Contingent Travels to Daytona to Celebrate with Ray Fox



Crew Chief Conkle, Tom Horrmann, and Ringmaster Jim Hedlund having a chat with the legendary Fox

A delegation of club representatives made the trip over to Daytona on May 28 to participate in the celebration of famed NASCAR engine builder and car owner Ray Fox's 97th birthday. A former modified driver himself, Fox is best known for building the power plants for a number of early-NASCAR starts, including Fireball Roberts, Tim Flock, and Buck Baker, to name a few. One of his best-known accomplishments occurred in a Daytona Beach Course race in 1955, when he built the engine for Roberts' car literally overnight, starting at 8:00 pm the night before the event. Roberts went on to qualify fourth for the event, and subsequently winning by a 76-second margin over Flock, the only other driver on the lead lap. (Source—Wikipedia).

As a car owner, Fox fielded rides for many of NASCAR's greats, including Buck Baker, Buddy Baker, Darel Dieringer, Junior Johnson, Fred Lorenzen, Fireball Roberts, Cale Yarborough, and LeeRoy Yarbrough. In the 1990s, Fox joined NASCAR's technical staff as an engine inspector,

and later became president of the Living Legends of Auto Racing. He is a member of International Motorsports Hall of Fame, Jacksonville Florida Raceway Hall of Fame, the Oceanside Rotary Hall of Fame, National Motorsports Press Association Hall of Fame, the Oceanside Rotary Hall of Fame in 1999, and the Western Auto Mechanics Hall of Fame.

## Ernie Battee's Day Gets a Little Brighter

Most of our members are aware of Ernie's recovery from massive injuries in his December 2 accident, and many of us have made the trip down to Lake Harris Health Center to help cheer him as he deals with the challenges. What has amazed all of us who have spent time with him is his incredible attitude given the hand he's been dealt, and his positive outlook despite being paralyzed from his neck down. Ernie's remarkable story was covered in a June 9 Daily Sun article, where his daughter Lisa's dedication to him was featured as a main ingredient in his convalescence.

As many of you know, Ernie is a devoted NASCAR fan. That's logical, since his son-in-law, Lisa's husband, Randy LaJoie is a former NASCAR Busch Series Champion and Cup-level competitor. But that was then and this is now, and the "now" is his grandson Corey LaJoie. Corey is a rising star in the NAS-

CAR ranks, and was a frequent winner last year in the K&N East series.

What's really brightened Ernie these days is the announcement earlier this month that Corey has been signed as a development driver by Richard Petty Motorsports, along with Ryan Truex. Future racing for Corey will be the ARCA series, followed by potentially the Nationwide Series or the Camping World Truck Series. The details are being worked out, but Ernie's confident he'll have further opportunities to follow Corey's progress via televised racing. That's probably the best therapy anyone could hope for!



## Special Events Roundup



Well, here we are in the “dog days of summer” and, unfortunately, the days when the probability of rainouts at racing events is high. We’ve seen NASCAR events plagued with this problem, and we’ve seen it on the local level as well. We’ll keep trying to get car pool trips off the ground, but just make sure if you plan to join us that we have a cell phone number we can call if we find out the event is cancelled. Sometimes, though, the cancellation doesn't happen until we’re already there (like June 8 over at Citrus County Speedway), but that’s just the way things go!

Here’s a list of planned events for the next few months. As always, if you have any suggestions or interests that we’re not touching on, just give me a call or an email and we’ll check into it!

*Gary*

Date/Location	Event Details
Month of July/August Colony Cottage and Seabreeze Rec Centers	R/C racing on the second Wednesday and fourth Saturday at Colony Cottage, and every Sunday except the fourth Sunday at Seabreeze (Call Dave Allen (205-7985) or Mike Roemer (633-0134) for details
Wednesday, July 3 New Smyrna Speedway	15th Annual Clyde Hart Memorial—125 Super Late Model event. Program includes E-modifieds, Sportsman, and Super Stocks ( <a href="http://newsmyrnaspeedway.org">http://newsmyrnaspeedway.org</a> )
Wednesday, July 3 No Meeting	There will be NO July Club Meeting this month, next meeting will be Wednesday, August 7 <sup>th</sup> .
Thursday, July 11 La Hacienda Rec Center	9:00am – 12:00 noon, “R/C Cars for Camp Villages” at La Hacienda Recreation Center. Set-up will be on Wednesday night, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm, volunteers needed both days, <u>call</u> Don Day at #(508)954-8762 or e-mail at <a href="mailto:fsu-fan1952@yahoo.com">fsu-fan1952@yahoo.com</a>
Saturday, July 27 Citrus County Speedway	Florida United Promoters 100-lap event (Powell Memorial). This is the event postponed from June 8, and will feature a segment honoring our own Buster Burt!
Wednesday, August 7 Colony Cottage	Regular monthly meeting—See preview on page 2. Going green at 7:00 pm
Saturday, October 19 Colony Cottage	“The Villages 2nd TECH – Know How – EXPO” at Colony Cottage Recreation Center with set-up on Friday, October 18th from 4:00pm – 9:00pm, more details to follow.
Saturday, October 26 New Smyrna Speedway	48th Annual Florida Governor’s Cup 200...details to follow

From the vault



## Your Pit Crew

Jerry Conkle, President/Crew Chief (750-1185)  
 Dave Allen, Vice President (205-7985)  
 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)  
 Buster Burt, Technical Consultant (751-4346)  
 Peter Tetrault, Member at Large (205-8503)  
 Syd and Nancy Baker, Hospitality Coordinators (750-2126)  
 Gerry Hafer, Immediate Past President (751-3643)  
 Glen Carter, Past President (751-6442)

## Amanda Ferguson News

Hi Gerry! I just wanted to give you a quick update that you can read to the club at your next meeting if you would like. I am living up in WI now and will be coming home in mid August when it's time for school to start again. I spend a lot of my time working in the shop with the crew guys, but I do get to spend a little time exploring up here and having fun too! I'm learning a lot up here and when my crew chief Frank races I get to crew for him and be on the radio which is hard, but a lot of fun at the same time. My first three races were cancelled due to rain and snow... In may its crazy! Lol.. So after a slow start to the season we are racing three times a week almost every week due to all the rescheduled races. In the four races I've ran so far I have finished 5,6, had a not so good race where we didn't make it in to the feature and then came back Friday night to redeem myself and win the race! Last night we got rained out again which is no surprise to us anymore. Anyways just wanted to give you a little update and I would love to come back and talk to the group again when I'm back home for good!



## Conkle's Corner...

A couple of months into my new position as your Crew Chief, I'm starting to feel pretty comfortable with the role. I want to say thanks to all the members who have offered support to me, and I want to say thanks to everyone for putting up with my off-the-wall brand of humor. Let's start this edition off with a quickie poem...



There are a lot of empty spaces,  
 At the nascar races.  
 They are starting to get smart,  
 Staying at home and watch the start.

I was out walking with my Grandson. He picked up something off the ground and started to put it in his mouth. I took it away from him and I asked him not to do that.

"Why?" my Grandson asked. "Because it has been on the ground; you don't know where it's been; it's dirty and probably has germs, and sometimes germ's make little boys sick and not feel good." I replied

At that point my Grandson looked at me with total admiration and asked, "Grandma, how do you know this stuff? You are so smart."

I was thinking quickly and said to him. "All Grandmas know stuff. It's on the Grandmas Test. you have to know it or they don't let you be a Grandma."

We walked along it silence for 2 or 3 minutes, but he was evidently pondering this new information. "Oh... I get it He beamed, So if you don't pass the test you have to be the Grandpa."

"Exactly." I replied with a smile on my face.

And we're thinking about creating yet another spinoff racing league here in The Villages. Stay tuned!!!

