



The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

Pit Report

January, 2012

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The Building of a Speedway—An Inside Story

Iowa Speedway is a state-of-the-art 7/8 mile asphalt paved tri-oval race track and motorsports facility located in Newton, Iowa, 30 miles east of Des Moines, Iowa. The track is owned and operated by U.S. Motorsport Corporation and designed by former NASCAR Champion Rusty Wallace, now an anchor and analyst for ABC-TV/ESPN. Iowa Speedway is designed for year-round use and includes 30,000 permanent grandstand seats. It was designed as the first track in the world to protect fans and drivers through the use of SAFER barrier technology surrounding the entire perimeter of the track.



January 4—Villages of Hemingway resident J. C. Miller, a participant in the development of Iowa Speedway, joined us at our 2012 kick-off meeting to review the history of the speedway's original construction. As many of you know, the track's 7/8 mile oval design was heavily influenced by NASCAR's Rusty Wallace, and was patterned after

Richmond International Speedway. Since its 2006 opening, the track has hosted events sanctioned by Indycar, Indy Lights, NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, NASCAR Nationwide Series, and ARCA. Majority ownership of the track currently rests in the hands of Featherlite, Inc., with Rusty Wallace retaining a minority stake in the facility.

J.C. delighted our full house with a review of the timeline for the track's construction, from initial planning discussions in 2004 to its inaugural race September of 2006. J.C. described many of his interactions with Rusty Wallace during the track's construction, including Rusty's "seat of the pants" style of surface testing. One particular anecdote centered on Rusty running a Corvette on the clay surface at full speed to check for problems and detecting a high spot in one of the turns (later to be known as "Rusty's Hump") that required a major overhaul. Another described Rusty's dissatisfaction with the location of the infield care center and his orders to have it moved closer to "where most of the action will be (turn 2)," at a cost of more than \$80,000. J.C. summed these anecdotes up with a simple explanation: "Rusty is a perfectionist."

J.C. also discussed many of the track's unique characteristics, like it's 7/8 mile size ("Rusty



J.C. Miller sharing Iowa Speedway stories.

The Building of a Speedway—An Inside Story (continued)

wanted it that way”), its being the first track to have SAFR barriers around the entire perimeter of the track (“Rusty is super safety-conscious”), its progressive (12-, 13-, 14-degree banking), and the cameras embedded in the track surface to provide a “coming and going” view of the racing action. J. C. also shared some anecdotes about Rusty Wallace’s “softer side”...like his interaction with fans and workers at the site.

As a side story, J.C. noted that club godfather Dick Anderson was on-hand at the speedway for its very first event. Dick later confirmed this, reporting that he was in fact at the track for the USAR Hooter’s Pro Cup event in 2006 and the second event, the ARCA event that followed it. At the time, Dick was serving as a consultant to Strong Racing, the race team owned by NBA star Derek Strong. Strong, the first NBA player to successfully transition into NASCAR racing, looked to Dick’s deep experi-

ence in car set-up to help him make the leap into higher competitive levels. “On occasion,” Dick commented, “Derek’s schedule required him to be away during testing times, so I got to drive the car. Man, that’s a fast track!”



Derek Strong's 6'8" frame added some complexity to the set-up.

Prelude to the Cup—A Visit from FASCAR Royalty



November 2— Two weeks before the 46th Annual Florida Governor’s Cup 200, we were treated to a visit from two of the most prominent fixtures in the operation of the Florida Association of Stock Car Automobile Racing (FASCAR). **Kim Brown** (front left in photo), and **Robert Hart** (front right), FASCAR’s President, gave us an overview of the history of what is regarded by many as Florida’s most prestigious local stock car racing event, and shared some of the insights into what to expect this year. Robert also discussed some of the happenings at the three race tracks he owns (New Smyrna Speedway, Orlando Speedworld, and Columbia Raceway Park), and fielded a number of questions from our group

about racing activities in and around Central Florida. For those of you not close to the organization and myriad details of our many trips to FASCAR events and the Governor’s Cup in particular, Kim Brown is the focal point for us, and has gone out of her way repeatedly to make sure our events run smoothly. Our Special Events committee has worked closely with her and has developed a great working relationship with her through the years.

A Northeast Racing Great Makes a Visit

November 2—Our November meeting also featured a guest visit from Carol Birchwale, all the way from Middletown, New York. Carol, a 15-year racing veteran who campaigned on New York’s famed Orange County Fair Speedway, is the daughter of club members Shirley and Arnold Birchwale, and brought with her a spectacular array of memorabilia from her racing career, including videos of her performances on Orange County’s super fast oval. Since many of our members are from that part of the country, it was a night of flashbacks as Carol narrated her accomplishments on the track at Orange County and other venerable New York tracks.



The Reutimanns at Ocala—Youth Over Experience!

November 26— With the two cars sitting on the front row at the start of the August 26 UMP DirtCar Open at Bubba Raceway Park in Ocala boasting a combined age of over 120 years, the stage was clearly set for a battle of experienced Open-Wheel Modified drivers in pursuit of the \$4000 prize. Zephyrhills, Florida's 70 year-old venerable Buzzie Reutimann had the pole, with a cagey veteran (Wayne Hammond) on the outside and Reutimann's son, NASCAR pro David Reutimann, directly behind him, and it was shaping up to be a battle of experience. And what a battle it was!

On the first lap, Hammond grabbed the top spot from the elder Reutimann, who was being dogged closely by the younger Reutimann. For the first 23 laps of the 50 lap feature, it was an absolute mêlée among Hammond, the Reutimanns, and one of Bubba Raceway Park's consistently fastest drivers, Kyle Bronson, until a wreck prompted a competition caution and brought the field to a halt. On the restart, the younger Reutimann grabbed the lead from Hammond and quickly built an impressive lead.

Meanwhile, Buzzie Reutimann, who had started fourth on the restart, fell as far back as sixth as a result of a rear-end collision that ejected his right rear spring onto the track. The ensuing handling problems caused him to sacrifice horsepower in favor of cornering, although he never lost sight of the leaders. Up front, David Reutimann, Hammond, and Bronson waged



David Reutimann preparing to take the track in his D00 at Ocala

a thrilling three-way fight that produced some of the best open-wheel dirt racing of the season, with Hammond lap after lap closing in turns one and two only to succumb to Reutimann's horsepower as he exploded full throttle down the backstretch.

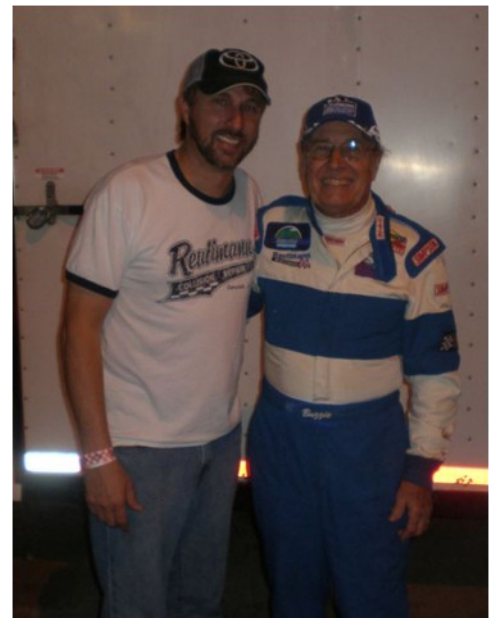
In the end, it was David Reutimann by a car length over



Top—David getting set to run his heat race while Buzzie gets last minute instructions; Bottom—Buzzie's car showing some damage

Hammond, while Buzzie Reutimann rebounded to an impressive fifth-place finish.

In his winner's circle interview, David Reutimann thanked the fans at Bubba Raceway Park for their dedication to the sport. "You fans understand what real racing's all about," he said, and joked that "this is the only thing I've won all year!" Proud father Buzzie, always a crowd favorite, joined David in the winner's circle to share in the moment. It was another satisfying night for the Zephyrhills racing contingent! In fact both of the Reutimanns were viewing the event as a bit of a tune-up for a November 26 David Reutimann Foundation event down at their "home track," East Bay Speedway in Gibsonton, FL (Tampa area).



David and Buzzie Reutimann share a post-race moment

Also with us January 7...Matt Vaughn and Josh Todd

January 4—Our kick-off meeting for 2012 also featured visits from long-time club affiliate Matt Vaughn and up-and-coming driver Josh Todd.

Matt, pictured in Winston West action in the upper photo at right, shared his racing history with the audience, as well as current activities in the area of race team/driver promotion. His current pro-several young race teams in the North Carolina area, along with his other pursuits in the area of under water rescue.



Josh, pictured at right, is a proven racer in the modified ranks, having won track championships at several tracks within the past year. He's also become affiliated with Dick Anderson, and produced a respectable showing Dick's famous No. 92 Super Late Model in the November 19, 2011 running of the Florida Governor's Cup 200 at New Smyrna Speedway.

Al Stone Captures 2011 Prediction Row Crown

November 20— If you happened to be tuned in to the final race in the 2011 Chase for the Sprint Cup, you know how dramatic it was. That drama was evident at Colony Cottage, as about 30 club members gathered to watch the event (and, of course, engage in a bit of spirited trash talk!)

After sitting through a few rain delays, and after watching Tony Stewart's winning probability come and go at several points in the race, everyone held their breath as the Stewart/Grubb combination executed a brilliant fuel strategy to outpoint Carl Edwards, tie him in Chase points, and win via tie-breaker.

Perhaps nobody was more tuned into the drama than Al Stone, who quietly watched the laps tick off and then went home with the crown!



Clockwise from top left: Jim Dunaway watches his title slip away; The crowd watches pit action; Tony Stewart's biggest fan celebrates early; some intense fans watching the action.

Local Racing Corner

Here are the web addresses for these local (and relatively local) tracks. Within each website, you can browse to a "Schedule" page to see what shows they have planned for the month.

THE "ORIGINAL" SPEEDWAY PARK

<http://originalspeedwaypark.com>



<http://www.ocalaspeedway.com>



<http://www.ocalamicrospeedway.com>



<http://www.citruscountyspeedway.com>



<http://newsmyrnaspeedway.org>



<http://orlandospeedworld.org>



<http://thevolusiaspeedway.com>

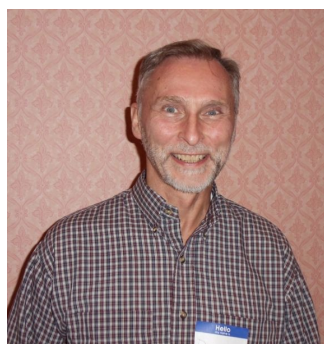
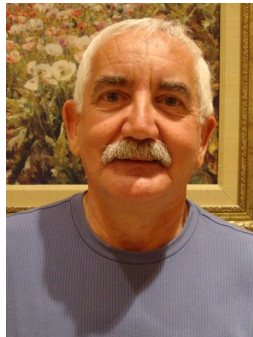


<http://auburndaleracing.com>



<http://www.eastbayracewaypark.com>

Welcome, New Members



At our November and January meetings, we welcomed these new members (clockwise from top left): Mike Anderson, Bill Clements, Chuck Vitrano, J. Richard and Linda Dunham, Dan Schaubert, and Barb and Jim Pappas. Be sure to look them up at a future meeting and engage them in a chat about racing!



Special Events Roundup



We are really off and running in 2012! Just take a look at the list below and you'll see that we've got a lot planned already and, as you know, we just keep adding stuff as the year progresses.

Our meeting line-up for 2012 is also shaping up nicely, and our January kick-off meeting was a huge success, with J.C. Miller covering the Iowa Speedway, and Matt Vaughn and Josh Todd spending time with us. Eileen Daniels from NHRA will join us at February's meeting to help us get in the mood for the Gatornationals trip. Other possibilities for the coming month include Daytona Antique Auto Racing association, Bubba Raceway Park, and possibly even an active NASCAR Cup-level driver.

Wendy

Date/Event	Event Details
Saturday, January 21 Original Speedway Park	Opening night at Original Speedway Park in Fruitland Park (our local go-kart track). See www.originalspeedwaypark.com for details.
January 24—29 Kissimmee, FL	Mecum Auto Auction Call Jim "Ringmaster" Hedlund at 352-245-0275 for information.
February 17-25 New Smyrna Speedway	46th Annual World Series of Asphalt Stock Car Racing (see http://newsmyrnaspeedway.org/?page_id=10 for information)
February, 2012 Daytona International Speedway	Lake Limo will be running busses to the Bud Shootout (Feb.18), the Gatorade Duel (Feb. 23), the Camping World Truck Series event (Feb. 24), and the Daytona 500 (Feb. 26). Call Lake Limo at 352-742-2808 for details. Flyers for all these events can be downloaded from our website's homepage.
Sunday, February 26 Colony Cottage	We'll be showing the Daytona 500 on the big screen at Colony. Come on out and join us...BYOB and a snack to share!
Monday, February 27 Colony Cottage	We'll be hosting a bingo fund raiser, with "Big Dave" Bockman again calling the numbers for us. Stay tuned for details!
March 1-4, 2012	U.S. Vintage Oval Track Nationals, Orlando Speedworld (See website Schedule page for details)
Friday, March 9, 2012	Bus trip to NHRA Gatornationals at Gainesville (Call Wendy for details)
May 3, 2012	Nighttime Golf Scramble at Saddlebrook Executive Golf Course (Details TBA)

Your Pit Crew

Gerry Hafer, President (751-3643)
 Mike Touchette, Vice President (430-0239)
 Silky Meegan, Corresponding Secretary (259-2029)
 Gerry Greim, Recording Secretary (215-630-1402)
 Tom Horrmann, Treasurer/Official Photographer (430-0195)
 Wendy Touchette, Special Events (430-0239)
 Bob & Camille Sherman, Membership (751-1771)
 Dave Bockman, Member at Large (751-0381)
 Wayne Nolan, Member at Large (750-9082)
 Buster Burt, Technical Consulting (751-4643)
 Peter Tetrault, Member at Large (205-8503)
 Glen Carter, Immediate Past President (751-6442)
 Ed and Janet Ott, Hospitality Coordinators (753-6872)
 Buster & Zoe Ann Burt, Honorary Members (751-4346)

R/C Group Update

Our radio-controlled racing group is in the midst of a reorganization, with Dave Allen and Mike Roemer stepping in to take what Bob Giles has built to the next level. Working from Bob's foundation, the group held a discussion and brainstorming session on Wednesday, January 11 at Colony Cottage, with twelve of the 31 members on record sitting down for a frank dialogue on the program's past and future. The meeting was fruitful, with several positive steps defined to improve the program for the 2012:

- The group resolved to be more diligent with its reminder emails about upcoming practice and race sessions. Dave volunteered to be responsible for broadcasting messages to all involved parties shortly before each scheduled session so that everybody is reminded.
- Regular sessions will now be held on the second Wednesday and fourth Saturday of each month on the side lot at Colony Cottage. The advertised time will be 9:00 am to Noon.
- As a way to encourage club-wide interest, it was agreed that the regularly-scheduled sessions should be reported in the weekly Recreation News, just as regular club meetings are. Gerry Hafer volunteered to investigate this possibility.
- Although the current racing spot serves the group's needs, it was resolved that there needs to be a constant search for options that could serve better.

Conkle's Corner...

The club is in full swing for the New Year, and of course so is our resident comedian/philosopher Jerry Conkle. Those of you who spend any amount of time in Jerry's company know full well that he can just keep peppering the air with bits of poignant, emotional, moving, and (sometimes) useful information. Here's a sampling....



- A young lawyer and a senior citizen were riding on an airplane. The young lawyer asks if the senior would like to play a game. The old man said he would, so the lawyer said I will ask you a question and if you don't know the answer, you give me \$5. Or, you can ask me a question, and if I don't know the answer, I'll give you \$500. The lawyer told the senior to go first, so the senior asks, "What has three legs going up a hill and four legs coming down?" The lawyer first checks his smartphone, then moves on to his laptop computer, but can't come up with an answer, then gives up and says, "Here's your \$500." As the senior is pocketing the cash, the lawyer says "Just out of curiosity, what has three legs going up a hill and four legs coming down?" The senior says, "I don't know...here's your \$5." (These are the kinds of things you do when you're on a fixed income.)
- A ventriloquist was performing in Sweden, telling a lot of "dumb blonde" jokes. A blonde stood up and said "I'm so tired of people telling dumb jokes about blondes!" The ventriloquist stopped his act, and said, "I apologize if I offended anyone in any way." Still angry, the blonde responded, "I'm not talking to you...I'm talking to the little guy in your lap!"
- Of all the race cars I've seen run at the Indianapolis 500 over 60 years, the only one that stood out as the most different was the turbine in 1967. It was driven by Parnelli Jones, and was so quiet the only sound was the sound of the air. Jones nicknamed it "Silent Sam."
- Witnessing the Republicans and the Democrats bicker over the U.S. debt is like watching two drunks argue over a bar bill on the Titanic
- A Tennessee State trooper pulled over a pickup on I-65. The trooper asked, "Got any ID?" The driver replied, "Bout whut?"
- Evidence has been found that William Tell and his family were avid bowlers. Unfortunately, all the Swiss league records were destroyed in a fire...and so we'll never know **for whom the Tells bowled**.
- Help a man when he is in trouble and he will remember you when he is in trouble again.