



The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club

Pit Report

June—2015

Next *Regular* Meeting—Wednesday, July 1, 2015

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Hearing from a Champion



June 3—Take a walk through the pits at New Smyrna Speedway (or Five Flags Speedway if you happen to be up that way) and mention the name David Rogers. Guaranteed, you'll hear comments like "one of the greats," or "solid ambassador of the sport," or "love watching him wheel a car," or maybe something as simple as "good guy" or "love watching him race." The closest thing to a negative comment you'll hear

is something like "he's tough to beat."

Many members of our group have had the opportunity to watch David in action over the years, and have had the pleasure of witnessing his capturing the Florida Governor's Cup just a few years ago. We've also followed his visits to the Snowball Derby up in Pensacola, where last December he made his 30th consecutive start (he needs just two more to tie Charles "Red" Farmer at the top of this list, and he assures us he'll do that). Ironically, David was the winner at one of our historic bus trips down to USA Speedway in Lakeland (2008), the final event at this epic race track, so it was bittersweet to be there.

With a racing history as rich as David's, it's not surprising that we jumped at the opportunity to invite him to join us on June 3 to share his thoughts on a career now in its fifth decade. And we were not disappointed as he led us through the early years, from his first race back in 1973 at Ocala, to his first win at Florida State Fairgrounds in 1974 in a dirt late model, to his years in the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series (where he was National Champion in 1994), to his Busch Series competition in the 1980s and 1990s, to his present continued successes in Late Model racing in Florida.

During his remarks, David entertained us with a complete recap of that first race in 1973, the magnificence of his \$90 share of the purse, and the beginning of a celebrated racing career. He discussed the "old days" of racing, like back in the day when New Smyrna Speedway ran 52 weeks a year, and recounted a year in which his family team won 42 of the 52 ==>



Hearing from a Champion (cont'd)

races only to finish second in the points as a result of missing one race to compete in the Snowball Derby...the champion that year, of course, made all 52 events.

Perhaps the most fascinating story of the night was David's step-by-step analysis of his experience driving for the Finney Family race team in their ARCA superspeedway car at Talladega. He stepped us through his nearly 200mph airborne qualifying accident, complete with a description of his assumption that he had in fact died during the wreck, along with an analysis of his experience in the track's infield care center. With his superior storytelling skills, David made what was a rather grave situation into an interesting and amusing tale for us! (For a limited time, a recording of the full story will be available. Contact the newsletter editor.)

David also shared reminiscences of racing against Dale Earnhardt back in the day, especially at tracks like Savannah and Myrtle Beach, where they shared crew members (and food), and recounted an experience in which he and Earnhardt raced at Auburndale (FL) Speedway, with an anecdote about David "saving his life" at this local short track. (Again, you need to listen to it to get the full flavor.)

As a conclusion to his remarks, David displayed a fire suit that he'd brought with him, and discussed how driver protection has progressed through the years. He also discussed the background on his long-time sponsor TM Ranch, explaining that they've been with him for more than 25 years, and closed with analysis on the costs and politics associated with racing today.

Overall, a great night for our group, and a great addition to our list of club favorites!



Update on Brew Crew Racing, Sneak Preview of July Meeting

Plans for our July meeting are coming together nicely under the guidance of Mike Anderson and his talented team of picnic planners. The gala affair, complete with a prime rib dinner (well, hot dogs and hamburgers, anyway) and a close-up look at some awesome racing machines, is scheduled to commence at 5:00 pm on July 1 outside picnic pavillion at Colony Cottage Rec Center, followed by our regular meeting in the Parlor at 7:00 pm.

As we've been reporting, our featured speaker will be Mike Brewer of Brew Crew Racing. During the picnic event, Mike will be giving us the opportunity to examine two of the team's mini-sprint cars up close...one race ready, the other with a look at what's under the skin.

We also reported previously that Mike would be accompanied by his son Kenny, the team's primary driver. Unfortunately, Kenny was seriously injured in a racing accident at North Florida Speedway on June 13, and is recovering from surgery to repair broken bones in his arm. The accident happened in turn 3 of the final lap of the feature race, just after Kenny had executed a successful pass for 3rd place. Preliminary reports are that Kenny will be sidelined for up to eight months...Mike will give us an update on Kenny and Brew Crew's racing plans for the remainder of 2015 at the July 1 meeting.

So, it looks like we'll have several cars on display at Colony for the meeting—the Brew Crew mini-sprints, and possibly one of Jake Perkins Motorsports' cars. There's also a possibility that we may be able to talk Club Godfather Dick Anderson to haul his re-built Open Wheel Modified No. 7 racing machine—the entry now driven by Josh Todd and tearing up the Modified ranks in Florida.



Our Second Half of the Year Promises To Keep the Bar Up High!

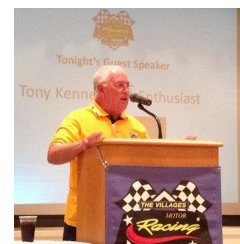
This has been another great year for our group, with a schedule of speakers that has brought a wealth of racing experience to us each month. We've heard from some of the giants in the sport, and we've been able to once again experience the ability to get to know these racing icons on a personal level. As we approach the mid-point of 2015, your Pit Crew is pleased to announce the speaker schedule for the remainder of the year, and we know we have a lot to look forward to! Here's the line-up for August through December as it stands right now:

August 5 Meeting—Chuck Kidwell, 2009 Nebraska Auto Racing Hall of Fame inductee, will tell us some stories of his days racing with (and against) our own Hall of Famer Grady Wade. Kidwell raced all kinds of cars during his long career. He became involved with racing for kids and was among the first to build a caged kart with seat belts. Kidwell was also involved in the development of the Junior Dragster program and the Junior Sprint class for the National Modified Midget Association. Kidwell is the current President of the NMMA (Info from narhof.com)



2009 Nebraska Auto Racing Hall of Fame inductee Chuck Kidwell (left) receives his award from NARHOF board member Ray Valasek.

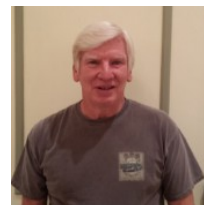
September 2 meeting—Our own Tony Kennea will once again take the podium for us, this time to share insights into the world of land speed records, including discussions on Bonneville and other similar venues. Many of you will recall Tony's September, 2014 spell-binding presentation on the intricacies of Formula 1 racing, and his insights into the issues of car design, safety, and road course racing "across the pond."



October 7 meeting—Noted racing historian and author Ford Easton will share stories of racing in the northern states, and will discuss his recent book **Stock Car Racing in the '50s**. The book is a representation of the great era of racing in the 1950's containing pictorials and memories of those involved with the cars, tracks, stories, fans, heroes and the ups and downs of probably the best time in the history of stock car racing not only in Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania but also in the whole country and Canada.



November 4 meeting—Art "Fireball" Fehrman, Founder of the Illinois Stock Car Hall of Fame and the Illinois Vintage Racing organization, will discuss activities at these two venues. He will be assisted by Paul O'Connor and Jim O'Connor, both well-connected in the racing community. Jim is currently the owner/operator of Kokomo Speedway in Kokomo, Indiana.



December 2 meeting—We're planning to break new ground with this one...it's going to be another great night of stories about racing and real-life racing situations, but with a different twist. Most of our presenters through the years have been the male drivers, good storytellers for sure, but we've often been left wondering how much of it is really true. Well, with this meeting, we're going to get the "other side" of the racing life through a "racing wives panel discussion." So far, we've enlisted Mary Anderson, Pat Brack, and Kim Garcia to add their two cents, and by December we're hoping to have a few more. This is gonna be a fun night and, by the way, Wendy T. has volunteered to moderate (imagine that).



The NASCAR Hall of Fame—Who's In So Far

The inaugural class in the NASCAR Hall of Fame, inducted in 2010, contained no real surprises. The class included the sanctioning body's originators, Bill France Sr. and Bill France Jr., and three of the biggest names in the sport—Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt, and Junior Johnson. Succeeding years required more deliberation and a more thoughtful nomination and election process, since there were so many great names to be considered from the ranks of drivers, mechanics, promoters, and car owners. As described in last month's article the annual balloting involves input from a select group of the sport's authorities and spokespeople, all with an eye toward achieving a balanced recognition of NASCAR's contributors through the years.

Here is a year-by-year recap of the individuals who have been named to the Hall's growing list inductees:

Year 1 (2010): Bill France Sr., Bill France Jr., Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt, and Junior Johnson

Year 2 (2011): David Pearson, Bobby Allison, Lee Petty, Ned Jarrett, and Bud Moore

Year 3 (2012): Cale Yarborough, Darrell Waltrip, Dale Inman, Richard Evans, and Glen Wood

Year 4 (2013): Buck Baker, Cotton Owens, Herb Thomas, Rusty Wallace, and Leonard Wood

Year 5 (2014): Tim Flock, Jack Ingram, Dale Jarrett, Maurice Petty, and Fireball Roberts

Year 6 (2015): Bill Elliott, Fred Lorenzen, Wendell Scott, Joe Weatherly, and Rex White

Year 7 (2016): Jerry Cook, Bobby Isaac, Terry Labonte, O. Bruton Smith, and Curtis Turner

The 30 inductees and five scheduled inductees include 27 drivers, 5 crew chiefs/mechanics/owners, one track owner/promoter, and the two who launched the NASCAR franchise—Bill France Sr. and Bill France Jr.

Jake Perkins Selected as Club's 2015 Scholarship Recipient

Our Scholarship Application Review Committee has concluded its work for the year, selecting Jardine "Jake" Perkins as our 2015 recipient. Perkins, also known in racing circles as "No Brake Jake," graduated this year from Bellevue High School with an outstanding academic record (4.91 weighted GPA) and an equally impressive record of participation in high school sports programs (specifically golf and tennis).

But we know Jake as a racer, and he's distinguished himself in that field as well, from karting (where he captured multiple championships) to Legends (where he also grabbed a few championships) to Super Late Models (where he was 2011 Rookie of the Year in the FUPS series) to the United Dirt Late Model Challenge Series, with plenty of other accomplishments in between.

Jake will be officially recognized as our 2015 scholarship recipient at our July 1 meeting.



Prediction Row—2015 Edition



Our Spring Segment ended with a yawner at Dover (although Johnson's win did allow Tony Kennea to go out with a flash). When the 48's donut smoke cleared, it was Jim Pappas, Darren Ivey, and Lois Taylor earning their spot in the Chase Round when it kicks off September 20 at Chicagoland Speedway.

So it's on to the Summer Segment, with two races now in the books and Sonoma looming. Our predictors for this segment are: Don Day, Tina Ivey, John Kitowicz, Dave Monahan, Wendy Touchette, and Bob Woodsford. Although no winning predictions have yet been scored, Bob Woodsford has forged out to an early lead with his picks of Jeff Gordon (Pocono) and Denny Hamlin (Michigan). Follow the stats in pretty close to real time on the front page of our website...with timely input from Silky Meegan Webmaster, Mike Anderson does a great job of keeping us up-to-date!

Spring Segment Final Results		
Predictor	Points	Wins
Jim Pappas	464	5
Darren Ivey	486	4
Lois Taylor	471	4
Dan Gammon	410	4
Kim Garcia	453	3
Tony Kennea	420	2

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

Who has won the most NASCAR Cup-level points races? Championship Points Races?

Just about everybody who has paid attention to NASCAR for a few decades knows that Richard Petty (“The King”) has recorded 200 wins in point races at the highest level—the “Cup” level. Nobody’s even close to that total—David Pearson is next in line with a “mere” 105 Cup-level wins. But most racing historians are quick to point out that Petty’s win total includes 140 recorded before what is referred to as NASCAR’s modern era, 1972 forward. Discounting those wins, then, The King falls to 6th on the Modern Era all-time list.

For racing purists, here are the top ten winners of all time, dating back to NASCAR’s birth in 1949, along with the top ten winners of NASCAR’s modern era:

All-Time (1949 – present)*	Modern Era (1972 – present)*
Richard Petty (200)	Jeff Gordon (92)**
David Pearson (105)	Darrell Waltrip (84)
Jeff Gordon (92)**	Dale Earnhardt (76)
Bobbie Allison (84)	Jimmie Johnson (74)**
Darrell Waltrip (84)	Cale Yarborough (69)
Cale Yarborough (83)	Richard Petty (60)
Dale Earnhardt (76)	Bobbie Allison (55)
Jimmie Johnson (74)**	Rusty Wallace (55)
Rusty Wallace (55)	Tony Stewart (48)**
Lee Petty (54)	David Pearson (45)

(*) these statistics are current as of the June 14, 2015 race at Michigan International Speedway.

(**) These drivers are still active, and are likely to move further up this list during the remainder of their careers. The still-active driver with the next highest total wins is Matt Kenseth (32)

R/C Car Club Continuing to Flourish

Despite a rash of rumors to the contrary, the Radio Controlled Race Car Club is continuing its forward momentum. The rumors no doubt stemmed from the Club’s recent decision to head away from their regular racing venue at Seabreeze Recreation Center and take up residence at 301 Raceway in Wildwood. Club Event Coordinator Dave Allen attributes the move to a number of issues, one of which was parking lot logistics at the Rec Center and another the need for a place to store the group’s equipment trailer.

In any event, they are still alive, well, and strong, with roughly 90 active members. They meet the third Tuesday of each month at Canal Street Rec Center starting at 6:45 pm, and newcomers are welcome. Find out more at their website (rc-cars-thevillages.com) or call Dave Allen at 205-7985 or Mike Roemer at 633-0134.



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 Coordinators (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)

Here's an Idea for The Villages

Over the years, The Villages has accumulated a number of memorial benches around the lakes, ponds, and common areas. In many cases, the benches have been financed by friends and loved ones of those who have passed on, and serve as a permanent tribute to their lives.

So, here's a thought...since we're really just old "motor heads" at heart, wouldn't we want to be memorialized with the type of item that so prominently defined us? Well, here's just the thing that can get that done for you..."Blue Color Benches!" Built from discarded vehicle parts, these magnificent pieces of furniture can really tell a story about who you were and how you want to be remembered. Here's a photo of one popular model offered by the company, and you can find information on other models on the internet at yesterdayreclaimed.com.



This bench is made from a 1960's Chevy tailgate framed in square tubing steel and skinned with antique barn wood. This relic came from an era when trucks were worked hard and worked to the bone. Check them out!

Conkle's Corner...



Hard to believe, but we're just about at the mid-point of 2015, and it's been a kind of up and down year. We've had some good NASCAR races, quite a few messed up by rain delays, and some generally boring events. But we also had one of the best Indy 500s in a few years, even though there weren't any "Do the Double" racers in it. As the Chase qualifications wind down, I think we'll see a pick-up in racing excitement, or at least some desperation moves by drivers trying to get in with a win. Hang on to your hats.

Anyway, one of our members shared a thoughtful item with me that I thought I'd pass on. I won't mention his name, since some of our readers might not take too kindly to it, but here goes...

It just dawned on me why Mayberry was so peaceful and quiet**nobody** was married.

Here are the single people that come to mind. Andy, Aunt Bea, Barney, Floyd, Howard, Goober, Gomer, Sam, Ernest T Bass, the Darlin family, Helen, Thelma Lou, Clara...

in fact, the only one married was **Otis** and he **stayed drunk**.

And here's another one someone passed on to me...

This happened to an Englishman in France who was totally drunk. A French policeman stops the Englishman's car and asks if he has been drinking. With great difficulty, the Englishman admits that he has been drinking all day, that his daughter got married that morning, and that he drank champagne and a few bottles of wine at the reception, and many single malts scotches thereafter.

Quite upset, the policeman proceeds to alcohol-test (breath test) the Englishman and verifies that he is indeed totally sloshed. He asks the Englishman if he knows why, under French Law, he is going to be arrested.

The Englishman answers with a bit of humor, "No sir, I do not! But while we're asking questions, do you realize that this is a British car and that my wife is driving on the other side?"