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NOVEMBER 30, 2007

Evel Knievel's Indy car

Evel Knievel was
daredevil jumps
landmarks such a
Palace in Las Veg
more well-known
jump over the Sn
Idaho.
What most might
that Knievel had
Indianapolis 500
He didn't drive it
Bettenhausen wa
wheel of the No.
Agajanian/Evel K
Dragon/Offy.
Bettenhausen started 21st and finished 16th withdrawing with clutch problems
Knievel died Friday. He as 69.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 5:59 PM | Perm

Drag racers

The NHRA implemented a new playoff format called the Countdown to determ
in its four national touring divisions: Top Fuel, Funny Car, Pro Stock and Pro St
The top-eight drivers and riders qualified for the Countdown to Four. The top-
for the Countdown to One, which consisted of the final two races of the year a

would Dale Earnhardt do?

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for the Countdown to One, which consisted of the final two races of the year a

Pomona. The nominees also include racers from the IHRA.

Greg Anderson won eight races and finished second in the NHRA Pro Stock divis 50th race of his career at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma.

Jeg Coughlin won the NHRA Pro Stock championship, the third of his career. He races, including the season-finale at Pomona, and the 50th race of his career a Minnesota.

Dale Creasy Jr. won the IHRA Funny Car championship, his second. He won six fast qualifier three times.

Bruce Litton won the IHRA Top Fuel championship. He won three races and wa twice.

Tony Pedregon won the NHRA Funny Car championship, the second of his caree as owner of his own team. He won four races including the Countdown races at Vegas.

Tony Schumacher won the NHRA Top Fuel championship, the fifth of his career the first driver to win four NHRA Top Fuel championships in a row. He won six the U.S. Nationals at Indianapolis and the season-finale at Pomona.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 3:58 PM | Perm

Kyle Busch and the top 10

I've been catching a little grief for being critical of Kyle Busch's driving style la new there. I catch grief for the things I writer from time to time.
But it got me thinking: Where does Kyle Busch rank among current drivers in th Nextel Cup Series?
He finished fifth in the Chase for the Nextel Cup, but that doesn't necessarily r fifth best driver out there right now.
Jimmie Johnson and Jeff Gordon are clearly 1-2 and probably interchangable. 26 races of the year, Gordon was by far better than Johnson. But Johnson turn stellar Chase and won another Cup championship. After that, it's a toss up.
Here is my top 10:
1. Jimmie Johnson - Two straight Cup titles are hard to ignore.
2. Jeff Gordon - If not for the Chase, Gordon might have six Cup championship
3. Tony Stewart - He will probably be the first driver to win a race for Toyota.
4. Matt Kenseth - Consistent. When he does win a Chase, it will be with 10 stra
5. Carl Edwards - Destroyed Busch Series compeition, except for that pesky 29
6. Kurt Busch - Made the Chase with clearly inferior equipment and won a coup boot.
7. Kyle Busch - Young and talented a volatile combination. Experience will onl better.
8. Mark Martin - Would have been in the Chase if he wanted to race a full sche
9. Kevin Harvick - Daytona 500 winners are hard to ignore.

10. Jeff Burton - Like Kenseth, consistent every week, doesn't wreck many car
in contention.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 11:58 AM | Perm

NOVEMBER 29, 2007

Road racers

There are essentially two sports car racing series in America: The Grand-Am Rc
Series and the American Le Mans Series. With the number of manufacturers in
makes both fun to follow. But each series has as many as four classes of cars th
together, and actually watching a race can be painful.
The American Le Mans Series races in Long Beach. It made its first appearance
Prix of Long Beach in 2007 and will be back in 2008. The closest the Grand Am
L.A. is Laguna Seca in Monterey and Infineon Raceway in Sonoma.
Here are the nominees.

Max Angelelli won two races in a Pontiac-Riley in the Daytona Prototype class c
Series and was third in the series standings. He teamed with Jan Magnussen to
Montreal, Canada. His teammates this year included Jeff Gordon and Memo Gi

Olivier Beretta and Oliver Gavin won nine races driving for Corvette Racing in t
the American Le Mans Series. They won the season opening 12 Hours of Sebring
and finished on the podium (top-three) in all 12 races. Beretta became the firs
five ALMS championships. It was the third straight ALMS championship for Bere
and the seventh straight manufacturer's championship for Chevrolet in the ALM

Timo Bernhard and Romain Dumas won eight races in Porsche Spyder for Pensk
LMP2 class of the American Le Mans Series. They beat the more powerful LMP1
of those races. Prior to this year, an LMP2 class car has won only two races. Th
poles and 11 podium finishes in 12 races.

Rinaldo Capello and Allan McNish, driving for Audi Sport North America, won th
straight LMP1 class championship in the American Le Mans Series. They won nir
the ALMS record for most wins in a season. It was the third championship for M
second for Capello.

Jon Fogarty and Alex Gurney, racing a Pontiac-Riley, were the Daytona Prototy
in the Grand-Am Series. They won seven races, including Infineon Raceway, an

Scott Pruett in a Lexus-Riley for Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates won tw
Prototype races in the Grand-Am Series. He teamed with Juan Pablo Montoya a
Duran to win the 24 Hours of Daytona. He also had eight podiums and was seco
Am Series Daytona Prototype standings.

Tomorrow: Drag racers

Posted by Tim Haddock at 1:13 PM | Perm

Year in review

Ron Hornaday Jr. has been around long enough to know that it takes more thar
driver to win a championship.
His most recent championship started years ago with a man named Wally Roge
Hornaday credited Rogers, the former crew chief on his NASCAR Craftsman Tru
for Kevin Harvick Inc., for laying the foundation for his championship run in 20
Rogers has since moved on to KHI's Busch Series team. Rick Ren is Hornaday's
but it was Rogers who started it all.
"It's kind of ironic," said Hornaday, a former Saugus Speedway champ from Pa
used to work for Bill Davis and took a lot of good notes and put it to ours, and
seemed to work out."
It was Hornaday's third Truck Series championship and his first with Kevin Harv
four races and had 22 top-10 finishes in 25 races in 2007. His 33 career wins ar
any driver in the history of the Truck Series.
"I mean, this is cool," Hornaday said. "We've won at some race tracks that Ric
won at and he's won at race tracks I've never won at. I won the championship
Kevin Harvick Incorporated. This is just really special."
Hornaday was the only driver with local ties to win a championship at the natic
year.

NHRALarry Dixon, a Van Nuys High graduate, and Jack Beckman, of North Hills
the first-ever Countdown, the six-race playoff devised by the NHRA.
Dixon, an NHRA Top Fuel driver, went in to the Countdown to One, the final fo
playoff for which only the top four drivers qualified, as the top-seeded driver.
fourth place.
Beckman, perhaps the most unlikely qualifier in the NHRA Funny Car division,
place before the Countdown to One started to fifth place and out of the Count
started. Beckman ended fifth in the final Funny Car standings.

American Le Mans Series
Santa Clarita-based Honda Performance Development and its Acuras made thei
American Le Mans Series. Three teams — Andretti Green Racing, Lowe's Fernar
Highcroft Racing — used Acura-powered cars in the LMP2 division of the Americ
Series.
Valencia's Bryan Herta was part of the Andretti Green Racing team that won th
of the season-opening 12 Hours of Sebring.
Robert Clarke, the outgoing president of Honda Performance Development, sai
Sebring was the highlight of his 15 years with the company, which included prc
and support for teams in the Indy Racing League and the old CART Series.
Highcroft Racing's David Brabham and Stefan Johansson had four podium finish
was third in the final LMP2 team championship.
In addition to winning at Sebring, Herta, a Hart High of Newhall graduate, had
at the Lone Star Grand Prix in Houston and the Grand Prix of Mosport, just out
Ontario, Canada.
Lowe's Fernandez Racing, with drivers Adrian Fernandez and Luis Diaz, had thr

finishes.

Irwindale Speedway

Elsewhere, Rip Michels of San Fernando added to his legend at Irwindale Speed
races and his third NASCAR Super Late Model championship. Add his Grand Ame
championship and Michels has four track championships. His 55 career wins at
the most of any driver.

Tim Huddleston of Agoura Hills put together a four-car team, High Point Racing
the NASCAR Late Model division at Irwindale Speedway. He won the Late Mode
the second of his career at the track.

He and his drivers — Jace Meier, Chris Carmody and Scott Jenkins — all finishe
in the Late Model division standings. The four drivers combined to win six of th
races at the track.

Meier, a driver from Las Vegas, ended up second in the Late Model standings w
Carmody, from Valencia, won two races and was fifth in the Late Model standi
from Portland, Ore., had six top-five finishes and finished was eighth in the La
standings.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 10:32 AM | Perm

Five questions for 2008

1. Can Toyota win a race?

They better. Toyota made its debut in the Nextel Cup Series in 2007. The Japa
provided engines for three teams: Michael Waltrip Racing, Bill Davis Racing an
Bull. None of the teams had much success. They struggled to qualify for races
times when none of the Toyota teams were in the top 35 in owners points. The
earned at least provisional starting spots for every Cup race.

But the stakes will be raised in 2008. Toyota is teaming with Joe Gibbs Racing
Tony Stewart, Denny Hamlin and Kyle Busch. All three drivers are used to qual
Chase for the Nextel Cup and winning races. Toyota better provide both if it w
Gibbs and his drivers happy.

2. Will Dale Earnhardt Jr. be a championship contender with Hendrick Motorsp

There's no reason he shouldn't. Hendrick Motorsports got three of its four driv
this year. Jimmie Johnson and Jeff Gordon are clearly the class of the team. B
moving from Hendrick to Gibbs next year, and his team did just fine in the sha
and Gordon. A little more experience and patience and Busch might have been
of the championship chase. Johnson and Gordon are still the stars at Hendrick
that might be just what Earnhardt Jr. needs. Perhaps he can slip into Johnson'
shadow and turn his attention to just winning races.

3. Can Johnson win three Cup championships in a row?

No one's done it since Cale Yarborough. Not Richard Petty, not Dale Earnhardt
Gordon. Still it's hard to say no to Johnson. He seems to have a knack for putti
best races at the end of the year. To win a Cup championship these days, that
needs to happen. If Johnson can pull off four or five wins in October and Nover
in the thick of it again.

in the thick of it again.

4. Is it a smart move for Sam Hornish Jr. to move into NASCAR?
No. A worse move is Roger Penske giving the owner's points he earned from Ku
to Hornish next year. Because of his Cup title in 2004, Busch can fall back on a
provisional to qualify for races, once or twice or six times. Ask Dale Jarrett hov
out. Hornish, who had trouble qualifying for Cup races this year on speed, has
provisional. But he would have guaranteed starting spots with Busch's points. I
like a desperate move from an owner who is used to winning races and champi
Indy Racing League. NASCAR is a different animal, one that requires patience,
money. Penske has the resources and money, but moving Hornish into NASCAR
impatience.
5. Will Chevrolet dominate again?
Absolutely not. Ford drivers, especially at Roush Fenway Racing, made significa
the end of the year. Matt Kenseth won the season finale at Homestead-Miami S
Biffle won the race at Kansas Speedway, although there are those in the Clint I
who would still say otherwise. More importantly, Ford won some races with NA
Tomorrow. That trend will only increase next year. Toyota will be better and s
race or two. Dodge, well ... Kurt Busch and Ryan Newman are the best chance
Montoya will win another road course race. Outside of that, it will be another
Dodge.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 9:28 AM | Perm

NOVEMBER 28, 2007

Who would you vote for?

As a member of the American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Associatio
on the All-America team every year. We select the top drivers in a variety of d
wheel, road racing, drag racing, short track, stock car and touring series. Ther
category as well for drivers who don't quite fit into the other categories.
Six drivers are nominated in each category. This year in the open wheel catego
Bourdais, Scott Dixon, Dario Franchitti, Tony Kanaan, Will Power and Justin Wi
nominated. That's right, no Formula One guys. Here are the nominees:

Sébastien Bourdais won the Champ Car World Series championship. He won eig
poles and became the first driver to win four straight Champ Car World Series
addition, he was second in the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

Scott Dixon won four races and two poles in the Indy Racing League IndyCar Se
second in the IRL IndyCar Series championship standings.

Dario Franchitti won four races, including the Indianapolis 500, and four poles
Racing League IndyCar Series. He was the IRL champion scoring a record 637 p

Tony Kanaan won five races in the IRL IndyCar Series, the most of any driver in
had two poles. He led the most laps in the Indy 500 and finished third in the IR
standings. He was also part of the winning team from Andretti Green Racing in
portion of the 12 Hours of Sebring in the American Le Mans Series.

Will Power won two races and five poles in the Champ Car World Series. He set records and was fourth in the Champ Car World Series drivers standings.

Justin Wilson won one race and was second on the Champ Car World Series dri

Tomorrow: Road racing.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 1:41 PM | Perm

Jack Beckman: A Racer Who Cares

As part of the Racers Who Care program, NHRA Funny Car driver Jack Beckman at the YMCA in Santa Monica on Friday.
Beckman will talk about his pursuit of becoming a professional drag racer and t campers about the importance of following your dreams. The presentation is o public.
Beckman drives for Don Schumacher Racing and was fifth in the Funny Car star He won two races and was part of the NHRA's first Countdown, which included drivers in the Funny Car division competing in a playoff format over the last six year.
The YMCA in Santa Monica is at 1332 6th Street, between Wilshire and Santa M boulevards.
The presentation begins at 4 p.m.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 12:43 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 21, 2007

Turkey Night Grand Prix

Talk about old school. No one was able to accurately gauge who had the fastes Wednesday night's practice for the Turkey Night Grand Prix at Irwindale Speed None of the cars had transponders on them. Crew members, wives, girlfriends, spectators were calculating times and speeds with stopwatches throughout the Everyone was pretty much in agreement that Jason Leffler, Bobby East and Da the fastest cars in the USAC Midget practices. Not many surprises there.
Leffler and East are mercenaries from NASCAR with extensive USAC experience USAC veteran with two Silver Crown series championships and more than 50 US

> "He's been fast for the past 10 years," Midget driver Brady Bacon said al Steele.

Kody Swanson was reportedly turning laps in the 16.8 second range in his Sprin half-mile oval. He was one of the few drivers who was able to break the 17 sec

Two Sprint cars that will undoubtedly be fast for the Turkey Night Grand Prix v Kasey Kahne and Tracy Hines.
Kahne, a NASCAR Nextel Cup Series driver for Gillett Evernham Motorsports, w

two of the three races for Turkey Night. He will be racing one of his own Kasey Midgets and a Sprint car for Zarounian Motorsports.

> "I haven't done either one in a while," said Kahne, whose last Turkey N Grand Prix was in 2002. "I thought it would be fun to race in both cars."

Kahne finished second in a Turkey Night Grand Prix race for owner Steve Lewis remembers finishing second twice and third once in the Turkey Night Grand Pr Lewis.

> "He's almost won this race, but he hasn't won this race yet," said Baco year-old driver from Broken Arrow, Okla., who races for Kasey Kahne Ra I'm sure he'd love to win Turkey Night."

Kasey Kahne Racing will have three cars, driven by Brad Sweet, Bacon and Kah Midget portion of Turkey Night. Tony Stewart Racing has three cars in the race

> "We're going to try and win them both," said Kahne, who won a Sprint on Turkey Night in a car owned by Gary Zarounian. "If we don't, we don it's the only reason we're here."

Sweet is fairly new to the team. The 21-year-old from Grass Valley, Calif., is m second start for Kasey Kahne Racing. His first start for the team came two wee Manzanita Speedway in Arizona. He's been racing in USAC since 2004.

> "So far so good," Sweet said. "I'm new to the pavement, learning a lot.

What he's not new to is seeing Kahne at the race track. But being teammates

> "He's here a lot, not always on my side," Sweet said. "It's good to have my side now."

Tracy Hines, one of the drivers for Tony Stewart Racing, will also be in car fam fans. Hines will be racing the Tamale Wagon in the Sprint car portion of the Tu Grand Prix. The car has been racing in USAC events for the Morales family for t years.

Andy Morales owns the most recent version of the car now. The Tamale Wagon number of race cars, and there was a time when it was one of the most feared race track.

Alex Morales, Andy's father, used to race versions of the Tamale Wagon mostly in the 1940s and '50s. It has been driven by Davey Hamilton and J.J. Yeley, am throughout the years.

The Tamale Wagon hasn't made any starts this year. Turkey Night will be its fi particular car was built in 2000 and Morales said if Hines didn't agree to drive have remained idle until the end of the year.

"Tracy's raced for me for years," Morales said. "I've won here with him

Hines was turning laps in the Tamale Wagon in the 17.1 second range. Morales
to get into the 16s before tonight's qualifying session and be in the top four to

Posted by Tim Haddock at 10:39 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 18, 2007

Taking the Earnhardt out of DEI

Dale Earnhardt Jr. raced what many think is his last race for Dale Earnhardt In
way he wanted to end this part of his career with the team his late father four
Earnhardt Jr. finished 36th in the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series season finale at H
Speedway. After the race, he was asked how he felt about racing his last race
Earnhardt Inc. in the team's No. 8 Chevrolet.
"I guess I thought I would be sadder, but I am not," Earnhardt Jr. said. "I still ha
guys as friends, that is even better than the working relationship. Now, I am re
work."
After the race, Earnhardt Jr. had to say good-bye to his teammates and crew.
and cousin, Tony Eury Jr., is going with Earnhardt Jr. to Hendrick Motorsports.
the team is expected to remain with DEI.
"It wasn't emotional. It wasn't as emotional as I thought," Earnhardt Jr. said. "I
might be emotional and tough but it wasn't really that bad. Those guys are goi
and I am going to get to see them an awful lot more than we assume. It is not
see each other again. We will, and it is just the nature of the business. You ge
coming and going from day one when get you get started working in this busine

Posted by Tim Haddock at 10:20 PM | Perm

Gordon comes up short

Jef Gordon set the NASCAR modern era record for most top fives and top 10 fir
season. He finished fourth in the season-ending NASCAR Nextel Cup Series race
Miami Speedway and finished second in the Chase for the Nextel Cup standings
Gordon has to feel a little cheated.
Another era in NASCAR ended Sunday night. It was the last race for the car of
NASCAR's Car of Tomorrow will be used in every race next season.
But along with the introduction of the Car of Tomorrow, another era ended as
was a sport that rewarded its champions for consistency rather than streaks of
more.
Drivers like Jimmie Johnson, who can rattle off four wins in the last five races
win the Cup championship over drivers like Gordon who set records for top five
Maybe that's the way it should be. But Gordon had another one of the best sea
history and has little to show for it.
Not that Gordon is complaining.

"I'm a big believer on when it's meant to be, it's meant to be," said Gordon, dri
24 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "You've got to work hard. You've got to
yourself and your team. And you know what? Jimmie and Chad and all those gu
phenomenal job."
Chad Knaus is Johnson's crew chief. They teamed to win 10 races and their sec
championship in a row.
"I know how good my team was this year," Gordon said. "They're one of the bes
ever been a part of. And for them to come out 77 points ahead over 10 races is
impressive. We're certainly extremely proud of what we've accomplished this y
great year. But we want another championship and we know we've got to beat
guys like Matt Kenseth and Tony Stewart and a lot of other guys if we're going
another one. So when it comes time to step up, we've got to be the ones stepp

Posted by Tim Haddock at 7:49 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 17, 2007

What would Dale Earnhardt do?

It seems there are quite a few reporters who want to know how the late Dale E
react to the Chase system, how he would race Jimmie Johnson at Homestead-M
and how he would respond to his son leaving Dale Earnhardt Inc. for Hendrick M
Dale Earnhardt Jr. addressed some of those questions Saturday before the NAS
Series season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway.
On leaving Dale Earnhardt Inc. for Hendrick Motorsports, Earnhardt Jr. said he
his father that things aren't different.
"I'm sad for him, not for me or anybody else," said Earnhardt Jr. "I'm just sad be
was different. He was such a great person and his visions were great and worth
realized. That'll be a shame."
Earnhardt Jr. said the support he has received from Rick Hendrick, the owner o
Motorsports, has been incredibly valuable and it will make the transition easier
"He knows exactly what I'm thinking and what I'm going through, he knows exac
of guy I am and the things that matter to me," Earnhardt Jr. said. "He's just gre
people. He'll be great support for me as we move from one thing to another an
very anxious and nervous about the challenges I face going over to Rick's and tr
asset to that company and trying to be everything I can be, be impressive and
done. I'm anxious to get going on that and make those things happen. But, ther
to finish and we'll get them finished."
As for how Earnhardt would race Johnson, Earnhardt Jr. said "real hard."
"He raced real hard all the time," Earnhardt Jr. "That whole group, they didn't
were. They ran the heck out of you all the time and still do. That generation, t
and a lot of it rubbed off on some of us because it's good. He would race hard,

Posted by Tim Haddock at 5:15 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 16, 2007

Hornaday wins Truck Series title

Hornaday wins Truck Series title

A seventh-place finish was enough for Ron Hornaday Jr. to win the NASCAR Cra
Series championship at Homestead-Miami Speedway.
It was the third career Truck Series championship for Hornaday and his first sir
also won the Truck Series championship in 1996.
His first two Truck Series championships came when he was driving for the late
Earnhardt. Hornaday was in the No. 33 Chevrolet Silverado for Kevin Harvick In
Truck Series championship.
"Coming to the race track with a truck like we've got every weekend, these guy
awesome job with this Chevrolet truck," said Hornaday. "I think the whole char
Camping World came on board. I won a lot of races with that blue and yellow a
back right now. So this is really cool."
For Harvick, it was his first Truck Series championship as an owner. He was in t
season finale and finished fourth in the team's No. 2 Chevrolet Silverado.
"It's taken us six years to get the truck team to where it's at and we have a gre
Hornaday," said Harvick, a driver in the Nextel Cup Series for Richard Childress
hard to race and race in that position and try to win the race and that's what w
there at the end. I was a little tough on my truck, but man, the coolest part ab
thing is just being able to stop and be the first one to congratulate Ron Hornac
straightaway. He's done so much for my racing career and to be able to win a c
with him and a lot of the guys that grew up with me in my racing career is som
forget. So that makes it pretty special."
Rick Ren, Hornaday's crew chief, won his first Truck Series championship.
"Well, you know they don't give these things away and we've been trying for an
time," Ren said. "I told Ron Hornaday earlier this year, I said, 'I know you've got
rings but I don't have one and I think we need to work really hard to get one,' a
what else to say. This is what we do this for and it's like a dream come true."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 10:11 PM | Perm

No. 1 - Jimmie Johnson

By winning the NASCAR N
race at Phoenix Internatio
last weekend, Jimmie Joh
with Fireball Roberts for
Cup wins. They have 33. I
is Mark Martin with 35.
Since Martin might have a
in him before he calls it c
a while before Johnson ca
After that, Bobby Isaac is
wins and Tim Flock is 15th
Johnson is still well behin
Motorsports teammate Jeff Gordon, who has 81 career Cup wins. Gordon is fift
Barring disaster, Johnson will win his second career Cup championship after th

Nextel Cup Series race at Homestead-Miami Speedway. If he doesn't win the ch
only Gordon can catch him.
"No matter what happens, we know the Nextel Cup trophy will be at Hendrick
that's a great thing for our organization," said Johnson, driver of the No. 48 Ch
Hendrick Motorsports. "The lead that we have, it's a nice, comfortable position
we've got to go down there and run 400 miles. That's bottom line. If we don't r
distance of the race then we're in trouble."
Johnson probably doesn't have a lot to worry about. The car his team is taking
a three-time winner. It won races at Las Vegas, Atlanta and the Labor Day race
Speedway. It's a good car and it will be the last time Johnson will be able to dr
year, all the Cup races will be with NASCAR's Car of Tomorrow, meaning Chevr
be running the new Impala model and putting the Monte Carlos on the shelf.
But it doesn't look like Johnson is putting too much thought into what car he is
Homestead.
"The lead takes some pressure off, but we're going to go down there and try to
like we've done," Johnson said. "Go out there, run our race, do our thing. I'm ju
keep it simple and not get caught up in things. Last week was a good example
and going on vacation for a couple days. Not reading or seeing any highlights o
was completely out of the loop. I hope I can do that this week. Show up, keep
get in the race car and go. I don't want to act like it's our championship yet. W
margin in the points right now. But 400 miles, that's my goal. I have to run 400
and we'll get nuts after that."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 6:18 PM | Perm

No. 2 - Jeff Gordon

Jeff Gordon looks like he will fall short of winning his fifth Cup championship.
behind Hendrick Motorsports teammate Jimmie Johnson with one race to go, t
Homestead-Miami Speedway.
Gordon was asked by reporters at Homestead how the late Dale Earnhardt wou
last race of the year if he was trailing Johnson by 86 points in the NASCAR Cha
Nextel Cup standings.
Gordon said Earnhardt would probably take the same approach Ron Hornaday
against Mike Skinner in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series.
Hornaday is 29 points behind Skinner in the Truck Series standings. It's not as n
as Gordon's, but still a challenge to make up that many points in one race.
Gordon said he thinks about how Earnhardt would react to the Chase and the n
system NASCAR has implemented recently.
"How would Dale be influencing things happening in this sport today, how woul
track, how would he compete against some of the drivers that are out there to
Gordon, driver of the No. 24 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "The only rea
battled him for the championship was in '95 and while he taught me some lesso
putting the bumper to me several times, in '95 that rarely ever happened in co
Gordon said he learned how to race Earnhardt, mainly knowing when to challe
when to stay out of his way.

when to stay out of his way.

"You knew he was going to lean on you and you had to be ready for that," Gord think of a time when we were battling for a championship that he just intently dirty. He might have raced hard but that's about it."

But that doesn't necessarily mean Gordon will use some of the tactics Earnharc Earnhardt might have been known as the Intimidator, but Gordon said there ar than driving aggressively to intimidate.

"I've always said the most intimidating thing is a guy in your mirror that's runni Gordon said. "You don't have to drive a black car and rough guys up to do that. style and the competitiveness, I think the microscope that we're under has cha a bit over the years and the way NASCAR handles things, you can't do some of t you used to be able to do. I don't even know if Dale would be able to get away those things today."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 3:36 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 14, 2007

No. 3 - Clint Bowyer

No matter where Sunday at Homes Speedway, Clint consider this yea successful one. H with the best tea NASCAR Nextel C will in all likeliho to Jimmie Johnsc Gordon. That's nc ashamed of, espe Johnson and Gorc combined to win this year. Add the wins by Kyle Busch and Casey Mears, and the four Hendrick drivers won half of the Cup races this year. That didn't leave many opportuniti drivers and teams. Bowyer is coming off an 11th-place finish at Phoenix Interna Raceway. Like most drivers, he fought braking problems throughout the race a with the Car of Tomorrow. "Just frustrating, we fought brake problems all day weren't really a factor," said Bowyer, driver of the No. 07 Chevrolet for Richarc Racing, after the race at Phoenix. "Our goal for Homestead is to finish. It woul another win, but we just have to finish the year strong and not give up anythin and we will be fine."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 8:22 PM | Perm

No. 4 - Kyle Busch

Kyle Busch's record at Homestead-Miami Speedway has been mixed. He has qualified well there in his

has been mixed. He has qualified well there in his

two previous NASCAR Nextel Cup Series starts. But
his finishes have been poor. He qualified third in his first Cup race at Miami an
in the race.
The following year, he qualified fourth, and ended up 41st.
The car his team is bringing to Miami for the season finale has a similar history
eighth at Kansas Speedway only to get caught up in accident and finish 41st.
It's been indicative of his season. Busch is fourth in the Chase standings and ha
shot of moving up to third.
"It's been a good and exciting year, but it's been frustrating, too," said Busch, c
5 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "I feel like we could have won so many n
because either I did something or we were involved in someone else's mistake
to get the finishes we deserved. It's a product of racing, and we can always say
done better because we only won one out of 36 races."
This will also be the last race for Busch with Hendrick Motorsports. He is movir
Racing in 2008 and Dale Earnhardt Jr. is moving from Dale Earnhardt Inc. to He
Motorsports.
"It's probably going to hit me really hard when the checkered flag drops that I
car next year," Busch said. "I owe Rick Hendrick so much for getting me into th
bringing me along, dealing with the ups and downs and just being a great perso
altogether. Winning that Busch race last week in Phoenix was emotional. All of
emotional. This is where I started; I have a lot of friends here and it's going to
leaving, but I'm also excited for a new beginning. I'd love to go out on top just
5 car, Kellogg's and CARQUEST one final celebration."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 6:21 PM | Perm

No. 5 - Tony Stewart

Tony Stewart fini
the race at Phoer
Raceway and mo
in the NASCAR Ch
Nextel Cup stand
and can move up
fourth before the
this weekend at
Miami Speedway.
He can also drop
Stewart would ra

contention for the championship. He was asked if the pressure isn't as high sinc
chance of catching the top three drivers, Jimmie Johnson, Jeff Gordon or Clint
Cup standings.

"Trust me, I'd much rather have the pressure of being the point leader, or eve
close to the point leader," said Stewart, driver of the No. 20 Chevrolet for Joe
"But being where we are does take a little bit of that edge off. Still, I'd much r
there in the middle of the championship knowing that we've got a shot of winr
is a part of this business, and we're all used to it by now."
The car his team is bringing to Miami won its first two starts. It is the car that
at Chicagoland Speedway and Indianapolis Motor Speedway.
It is also the car that probably should have won the race at Kansas Speedway.
car that blew a tire and got tagged by Kurt Busch and Carl Edwards at Kansas.
been repaired and made two trips for testing in the wind tunnel before headin
the season finale.
"We're just going out there to try and win the race," Stewart said. "That's all
We're not in a championship battle, but we're still in a battle for points. We s
out and do the best we can to get as many points as we can."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 4:20 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 13, 2007

Kasey Kahne will be at Turkey Night

Kasey Kahne will be one of the NASCAR drivers entered in the Turkey Night Gra
Irwindale Speedway, the traditional night of USAC races. He may be the only C
entered in this year's races.
His people said this will be the first time in at least five years that Kahne has r
Night and he is really looking forward to it.
Kahne has his own USAC team and is expected to race one of his own cars.
Tony Stewart has his own USAC team as well, with Sprint Car champion Levi Jo
his drivers. Stewart raced in last year's Turkey Night Grand Prix, but he has no
this year.
Casey Mears was also at last year's Turkey Night Grand Prix, but he will skip thi
too.
Kahne is expected to announce his plans for the Turkey Night Grand Prix after
Nextel Cup Series season ends on Sunday at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 7:38 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 12, 2007

Hornish to NASCAR, Briscoe to IRL

In the wake of Sam Hornish Jr. moving from Indy cars to NASCAR, Penske Racin
Monday that Ryan Briscoe will race the team's No. 6 entry in the Indy Racing Le
Series.
Briscoe raced primarily in the American Le Mans Series for Penske Racing in 20
three races and finished second in the ALMS driver standings. He was also in th
500 in the No. 12 Symantec Luczo Dragon Racing entry, with equipment that w
Penske Racing. He finished fifth in the Indy 500.

"I am very excited to race for Team Penske, it's a dream come true," said Bris
want to thank Roger (Penske) and Tim (Cindric) for believing in me and giving
opportunity. Racing for Penske's ALMS program in 2007 has been a highlight in
open-wheel racing is where my heart lies, and I can't wait to race full time in t
Series for one of the best teams in open-wheel history."
Hornish, a three-time IRL IndyCar Series champion and Indy 500 winner will dri
NASCAR Sprint Cup Series in 2008. He was entered in the most recent Cup race
International Raceway. He started 26th and finished 30th.
Briscoe will be teamed with Helio Castroneves in the two-car IRL Penske Racin
"Ryan has been a great addition to our organization. He did a terrific job at In
year, and delivered for us in our ALMS program," said Penske. "Obviously he h
fill with Sam moving over to our NASCAR team, but he has shown us that he ha
win in the IndyCar Series."
Hornish will be teamed with drivers Kurt Busch and Ryan Newman on the Cup t

Posted by Tim Haddock at 8:59 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 11, 2007

The next Jeff Gordon

The comparisons are there. No driver since Jeff Gordon in 1998 has won back-t
championships. Jimmie Johnson is on the verge of ending that streak.
Johnson is on the verge of having a Gordon-esque season, the likes that were t
over.
He is already the first driver since Gordon to have 10 wins or more in a season.
at Phoenix was his 10th of the year. Gordon won 13 in 1998.
Johnson won his fourth straight race. The last driver to win four races in a row
1998. After the race at Phoenix, Johnson was asked if he thinks he is turning ir
Gordon.
"Well, first of all, he would say it, too, and I don't want to be called the next J
said Johnson, driver of the No. 48 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "I'm Jim
I've always done it my way. You talk to him, you look at our driving styles and
we're on opposite ends."
Johnson doesn't want to hear the comparisons, even though the numbers he is
year are the type that made Gordon a legend and a nemesis early in his career
"So we do have some common interests. We've been close friends, but I'm not
Johnson said. "So get that part out of the way. He has, I think when business m
maybe with your career, you look at the guy that gave you that first chance."
That's how Johnson views Gordon: a mentor and a visionary.
"It wasn't really my first chance, but it was my chance," Johnson said. "It was n
Jeff. And Jeff was put in a position by Rick (Hendrick) to say I want this guy to
cars. They were talking about the fourth team and what was going on. And Ric
and said you believe him that much, put some skin in the game. Let's start up
put some partners in it and get Jimmie Johnson and put him in the car."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 7:36 PM | Perm

Gordon: It's over

Jimmie Johnson won again. Jeff Gordon finished 10th. With one race left in th
Johnson has an 86-point lead over Gordon in the NASCAR Chase for the Nextel
Johnson won the Cup race at Phoenix, his fourth in a row, and extended his le
Hendrick Motorsports teammate, Gordon. The season ends at Homestead-Miam
next weekend, but it will be more of a victory parade than a race.
"It's over. Even if we win it, it's because they had problems," said Gordon, drive
Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "And while we'll accept it, we don't want t
way."
Johnson won last year's Chase, the first of his career. Gordon entered the Chas
Johnson in the standings, but Gordon was clearly the dominate driver of the re
But Johnson was the leader in the standings because he won one more race th
before the Chase started.
No one has been better than Johnson's team in the last four races, though.
"And those guys have flat-out killed everybody," Gordon said. "You've got to giv
credit's due. Those guys deserve a lot of credit. We didn't step up and win the
needed to. We gave them a run for a while and now we've got to figure out ho
best finish we can at Homestead and end this season off on a positive note goi
season."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 7:02 PM | Perm

Hornaday second at Phoenix

Ron Hornaday Jr. finished second in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series race a
International Raceway and is still in second in the Truck Series standings.
He trails Mike Skinner by 29 points with one race to go -- next weekend at Hom
Speedway.
"Cool. It is another race for us at Homestead," said Hornaday, driver of the No.
Silverado for Kevin Harvick Inc. "That is all we can do, is keep doing what we a
racing hard."
Hornaday said even before the race at Phoenix was over, his team was develop
for the race at Homestead.
"We are doing everything we can," Hornaday said. "We are bringing the truck w
Texas. They went home and fixed it, put a new horn on it and everything. It is
piece. Some of the guys got it at the wind tunnel right now."
Hornaday wrecked late in the Texas race and posted an 18th-place finish. It pu
behind Skinner for the lead in the Truck Series standings.
But his second-place finish at Phoenix, couple with Skinner's 10th-place finish,
Homestead race interesting.
"I have a team that never says die and they work their guts out to figure out m
trucks and they have been bringing them back," Hornaday said. "We are going t
we have to do, run like we did and hopefully Skinner has problem in the pits a
jackman was jacking his kneecaps or something I heard."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 4:26 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 8, 2007

No. 1 - Jimmie Johnson

Just because Jimmie Johnson has won three races in a row and is in the lead ir
Chase for the Nextel Cup standings, it is no time to relax. Sure it took a lot of
pass Jeff Gordon for the lead, but Johnson said one race can change everythin
"We have momentum going our direction right now but it's only 30 points and i
the last two weeks, I've been able to make up roughly 60 points," said Johnson
No. 48 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "Jeff hasn't had bad races the last t
had strong he finishes. So it's not like he's had bad nights. I can finish 10th, he
I'm back in second."

Johnson sounds like he is approaching the last two races of the year realistical
three races in a row is a rare feat, especially in this era of NASCAR Cup racing,
not be enough to secure a Cup championship.

Johnson will have a fairly new and winning race car at Phoenix International Ra
weekend's race. The car his team is bringing to Phoenix is the same car that w
Martinsville Speedway on Oct. 21. It was the first of his three straight wins in t
Further, it was a car that dominated the Martinsville race, leading 147 laps. In
Atlanta and Texas, Johnson led a total of 17 laps.

Phoenix will be a crucial race in deciding the Cup championship. Johnson can s
strong finish. Gordon can close the gap and make the season finale at Homeste
interesting.

"So we have a lot of work ahead of us and are happy to be in a position to race
championship," Johnson said. "With good race tracks coming up for us, good ra
lineup and momentum from the victories, and our guys are showing up hungry
we're trying to get as many points as we can."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 11:37 AM | Perm

No. 2 - Jeff Gordon

This is unfamiliar territroy for Jeff Gordon. He started the NASCAR Chase for tl second place, after spending a majority of the regular season in first, but quicl deficit and reclaimed the top spot in the standings.

That was until his Hendrick Motorsports teammate, Jimmie Johnson, won three and took over first place in the Chase standings.

Gordon said he doesn't like getting beat by Johnson, especially now, so late in with the Cup championship at stake.

One thing in Gordon's favor is that he won the April race at Phoenix Internatior site of this weekend's Cup race. Johnson, driver of the No. 48 Chevrolet for He Motorsports, has yet to win a Cup race at Phoenix in eight career starts at the

"Performance-wise, I think we have a little bit of an advantage over the 48 tea Gordon, driver of the No. 24 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "But Jimmie' and that team has shown they can step it up when they need to. It's only a ma before he gets his first win here."

Gordon enters the Phoenix race trailing Johnson by 30 points. Clint Bowyer, th driver in the Chase standings, is 151 points behind Gordon. Barring disaster, Gc Johnson will be fighting for the Cup championship at Phoenix and the season fi Homestead-Miami Speedway.

"The best way for us to make sure they don't get that win this weekend is to b across the finish line," Gordon said. "It's hard for anyone right now to step up We're just going to keep playing it smart and being consistent – just keep doin we've done all year. If it comes down to being smart and staying out of trouble still have a great shot at the championship."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 10:23 AM | Perm

NOVEMBER 6, 2007

No. 3 - Clint Bowyer

If there is anything playing into Clint Bowyer's favor for the NASCAR Nextel Cup Phoenix International Raceway it is that his only Cup win has come at a track t similar to Phoenix.

Bowyer started the NASCAR Chase for the Nextel Cup by winning the race at Ne

International Speedway, a 1.058-mile oval and one of the tracks for NASCAR's C
Tomorrow.
Phoenix is a 1-mile oval and another race for the Car of Tomorrow. But he finis
April race at Phoenix.
"I like Phoenix, I think it is a perfect race track," said Bowyer, driver of the No.
for Richard Childress Racing. "I like mile race tracks, I don't know if it fits my d
differently, just really enjoy driving on mile race tracks. It is just big enough w
aerodynamics are things that are a little bit of an issue, but you can also beat
each other a little bit. If you knock a fender in, you can beat it out and still ha
day."
Bowyer is third in the Chase standings and 181 points out of first. His team is b
same car to Phoenix it raced at New Hampshire.
"Phoenix is a fun race track," Bowyer said. "I am looking forward to it. We are l
we won with at New Hampshire. I have a lot of confidence in that car, in the e
looking forward to having a good day at Phoenix."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 9:30 PM | Perm

No. 4 - Kyle Busch

Kyle Busch moved up two spots in the Chase standings and is in fourth place wi
go. He is 339 points behind Jimmie Johnson, the leader in the NASCAR Chase fo
Cup standings, and has little chance of catching him.
But since he is still in the Hendrick Motorsports camp -- and only for the next t
was asked during the NASCAR teleconference on Tuesday to handicap his team
next two races.
Johnson drives the No. 48 Chevrolet for Hendrick and Jeff Gordon, second in th
standings, is in the No. 24 Chevrolet for Hendrick. The final two races in the Cu
Phoenix International Raceway and Homestead-Miami Speedway. The next race
"Well, Phoenix, Jimmie is always going to run well at Phoenix, and it's a COT (C
Tomorrow) race, so it's going to be a pretty good deal for us because Hendrick
done really, really well and Gibbs has done well, too," Busch said. "So they are
fast."
Johnson has won three races in a row. Gordon won the race at Phoenix in April
"Jeff, he's finally got a win at Phoenix I believe earlier this year, and you know
achieve that," Busch said. "So I think you're going to see Phoenix be a good rac
of the Hendrick cars, and Jeff and Jimmie especially."
If Gordon can repeat his performance at Phoenix, it will make for an interestin
Miami.
"Of course, Homestead, I think besides Jimmie's bad luck at Homestead, they c
they do finish well, they do finish in the top five," Busch said. "I don't foresee t
finishing outside of the top five there these next two weeks."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 9:16 PM | Perm

No. 5 - Carl Edwards

Carl Edwards finished 26th at Texas Motor Speedway, but it was enough to mov
the NASCAR Chase for the Nextel Cup standings. He passed Tony Stewart for fif
standings. With two races left, Edwards can realistically move as high as fourth
season ends. He has almost no shot of catching Jimmie Johnson, who is in first
ahead of Edwards.
Edwards will have a brand new chassis for this weekend's race at Phoenix Inter
Raceway. In his five previous starts at Phoenix, Edwards has finished in the top
the top 10 four times.
"I am excited to go to Phoenix; I like Phoenix a lot," said Edwards, driver of the
for Roush Fenway Racing. "It is the first place that I raced on pavement back in
went and raced in the USAC Silver Crown race. I loaded up everything I owned
truck that I borrowed from one of my buddies and headed out to Phoenix. It wa
a very monumental experience and a turning point in my career."
HIs Cup record at Phoenix is pretty impressive, but he has yet to win a race the
need to win to move up in the standings. He trails Kyle Busch by 18 points for t
And even though he hasn't won a Cup race at Phoenix, he did win a Busch Serie
"Since then I've been back to Phoenix a number of times and enjoyed racing th
time," Edwards said. "My Busch Series win there was a great win for me and we
well there in the Cup car. My Office Depot team has a great Car of Tomorrow p
especially on the short tracks and I am looking forward to a great race this wee

Posted by Tim Haddock at 3:46 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 5, 2007

Been here before

During last year's NASCAR Chase for the Nextel Cup, Jimmie Johnson went into
Motor Speedway trailing Matt Kenseth by 26 points and left with a 17-point lea
standings.
This time around, Johnson headed into Texas trailing Jeff Gordon by nine point

a 30-point lead in the standings.
Johnson was asked if this year feels any way like last year's Chase.
"It's more of a coincidence than anything," said Johnson, driver of the No. 48 C
Hendrick Motorsports. "This year is so much different than last that it's tough t
similarities or parallels to the racing as what's gone on."
Johnson didn't lose his lead in the Chase standings after the Texas race last yea
to win his first Cup championship. There are two races left in this year's Chase
after winning three races in a row, looks like he is about to repeat history, alth
isn't exactly convinced of that yet.
"So it's tough to say," Johnson said. "If it all works out, I guess we can look back
yeah, this is like 2006 but it's such a different year and different team that's ra
championship. It's just totally different."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 3:32 PM | Perm

End of the line for Bowyer

The race at Texas Motor Speedway was probably the one that ended Clint Bow
winning the NASCAR Chase for the Nextel Cup.
He lost two laps at one point in the race and posted a disappointing 19th-place
Texas. He is still in third place, but he is 181 points out of first with two races
"I am disappointed and frustrated for everybody on this Jack Daniel's Chevrolet
have fought hard all season," said Bowyer, driver of the No. 07 Chevrolet for R
Racing.
Even though Bowyer is in a deep hole with only two races left in the season, he
give up.
"We are down but not out in the Chase," Bowyer said. "There is no give up in th
going to take it a lap at a time, race at a time and keep fighting until the chec
at Homestead."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 9:58 AM | Perm

NOVEMBER 4, 2007

New No. 1

Jimmie Johnson won his third race in a row. Jeff Gordon finished seventh at Te
Speedway. Now there is a new leader in the NASCAR Chase for the Nextel Cup
Johnson has a 30-point lead in the standings with two races to go. Gordon said
much -- he had a nine-point lead heading into the Texas race. Getting beat thr
row is a problem.
"We've got to go put some pressure back on them and outperform them," said G
of the No. 24 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports. "We thought our qualifying r
was going to get us the track position we needed but we just couldn't maintain
is a good track for us and we'll go there and fight hard just like we did tonight.
can get those points back."
The last two races on the Cup schedule are at Phoenix International Raceway a

Miami Speedway. The next race is at Phoenix.
The championship race is still pretty much a two-car race. Clint Bowyer is in th
181 points out of first. He came into the Texas race 111 points out of first.
Gordon said after the Texas race that Johnson's team is "spanking" his.
"They're putting it to us. I don't like it," Gordon said. "We're very competitive a
getting beat. We've got to go to work. We've got to get it back. Those guys hav
excellent job coming from behind there a little bit when we won those couple
now here they are with three in a row and they're on a great roll. We've got to
That's all there is to it."

1. Jimmie Johnson (6,382 points, -0) +1
2. Jeff Gordon (6,352 points, -30) -1
3. Clint Bowyer (6,201 points, -181) 0
4. Kyle Busch (6,043 points, -339) +2
5. Carl Edwards (6,025 points, -357) -1

Posted by Tim Haddock at 7:44 PM | Perm

Cruz Pedregon

Cruz Pedregon, carrying the Haddock in the Paddock logo on his Funny Car, str
the final day of qualifying for the Auto Club of Southern California Finals at Po
not make the field, the top 16 drivers in the NHRA Funny Car division.
But he did score a big win for his USAC Midget team.
Tony Hunt, a five-time USAC champion whose most recent title came in 2006 w
Western Sprint championship, will race one of two entries for Cruz Pedregon R
Turkey Night Grand Prix at Irwindale Speedway.
Josh Wise, another USAC champion driver, will be in the other Midget car for C
Racing at the Turkey Night Grand Prix on Thanksgiving night at Irwindale Speec
"Two chances to win one of the biggest races of the year is a big thing for me,"
Pedregon, who races his own Midgets cars from time to time, will not be enter
Turkey Night Grand Prix as a driver. But he is planning on racing at Ventura Ra
making a run at the Chili Bowl in Tulsa, Okla., in January.
"Pavement is not my forte," Pedregon said. "I've done a lot of dirt racing in my
be fun, but dirt is what I prefer to race on. I think I'm pretty good on the dirt.
there and win the race. It's a big enough race. I think it would be great for all
could have a team win the Turkey Night Grand Prix."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 12:07 AM | Perm

NOVEMBER 3, 2007

Tony Pedregon

Would Haddock in the Paddock be a curse or a blessing for the Pedgregon Raci

the second race in a row, Haddock in the Paddock was riding along with the Pe
in the NHRA Powerade Drag Racing Series.
The extra weight didn't seem to bother Tony Pedregon in Las Vegas last week.
won the Funny Car division and extended his lead in the standings, but saw the
drivers in the Countdown to One, the new NHRA playoffs, lose in the first roun
Pedregon a very comfortable lead in the Funny Car standings with one race to
Brother Cruz, who also was carrying the Haddock in the Paddock logo, wasn't s
was one of the 10 drivers who did not qualify for the elimination rounds at the
NHRA Finals in Pomona.
Tony made it in the field, but it wasn't exactly the way he planned it. He was t
last driver to qualify for eliminations.
He said qualifying Saturday was very stressful.
"I don't like fishing, but I'm thinking there's gotta be a better way to make a liv
Pedregon, who can all but wrap up the Funny Car championship with a first-rou
Jeff Arend. "Typically, we don't qualify 16th; we don't qualify 15th. Normally,
part of the season, we qualified up in the top half. The last few races, we qual
three."
If Tony Pedregon can work his way through the field and win the last race of th
qualifying 16th, it would make for quite a story. He said Vince Lombardi, the l
football coach of the Green Bay Packers, had a philosophy that fit into that ca
"Anytime anything's harder to achieve, I think it's a little more gratifying," Ton
"I hope I can say that tomorrow.
"I would love to determine the outcome of this championship by winning the fi
instead of getting beat and waiting all day to see if these guys win or see if the
record. I'd like to put this thing to bed."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 10:45 PM | Perm

No. 1 - Jeff Gordon

Teammates Jeff Gordon and Jimmie Johnson are locked in a tight battle for th
for the Nextel Cup. Gordon leads his Hendrick Motorsports teammate Jimmie J
points with three races to go.
Gordon said this year reminds him a little bit like it was in 1996.
Back then, Terry Labonte was Gordon's teammate. Labonte won the Cup cham
year in cars that were very similar to Gordon's.
The past three years have been like that 1996 for Gordon. The cars Johnson an
raced have been very similar, but Johnson has been the one winning the most
most recent Cup championship.
"It is and it is probably one of the things I have beat myself up the most about
or four years is the fact that I have pretty much known that we are getting our
the No. 48 team," said Gordon, driver of the No. 24 Chevrolet for Hendrick Mot
Johnson drives the No. 48 car.
"You can have the exact same equipment and if you don't have the chemistry o
the confidence and support surrounding you and vice versa, then you are not g
full benefits of that," Gordon said. "Right now, those two teams are as tight an

full benefits of that," Gordon said. "Right now, these two teams are as tight an
having all those ingredients that I have ever seen since we have had both cars
Anything coming out of Hendrick Motorsports, it is pretty incredible what we h
to achieve there, we are having a lot of fun and enjoying this success and this
chemistry and I think it has made for a great -- call it rivalry or whatever -- it i
competitiveness among the cars and teams at Hendrick that is fantastic and ex
When Labonte's was Gordon's teammate, the difference in the teams was the c
Gordon said Gary Dehart made the difference for Labonte's team.
"Although, I will say that because Jimmie's driving style is different enough, th
car only, because you can't do it on the Car of Tomorrow, to make differences
is different from what we do," Gordon said. "So each car is still, the capabilitie
they are a little bit different in the setups, which is typical for us."

Posted by Tim Haddock at 9:48 AM | Perm

NOVEMBER 2, 2007

Hornaday sent spinning at Texas

Ron Hornaday Jr. looked like he was on his way to his first NASCAR Craftsman T
Texas Motor Speedway. But instead he was sent spinning late in the race and f
That coupled with a third-place finish by Mike Skinner and Hornaday heads into
races of the year with a 57-point deficit in the Truck Series standings.
"Is that all? That is good," said Hornaday, driver of the No. 33 Chevrolet Silvera
Harvick Inc. "I see the way they are playing games right now, Bill Davis had anc
there and it seemed like all he wanted to do is block all day. We know how to
are going to have fun."
Skinner drives one of the Toyotas for Bill Davis Racing in the Truck Series.
Hornaday is second in the standings and trails Skinner. The next race is at Phoe
International Raceway, followed by the final race of the year at Homestead-Mi
Hornaday had the lead before the second-to-last restart of the race. He was cc
late-race collision and suffered severe front-end damage to his truck.
"It was NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series racing at its finest," Hornaday said. "We
and I didn't know the 8 truck (Chad McCumbee) was coming up there to make i
and I knew Mike was going to get a good run on me cause he laid back. I thougl
enough start, but when you lay back you are going to get a good run and that's
Two trucks slow each other down and the eight truck got a run under us as anc
wide in there and I don't know if Mike's truck sucked me around or the 8 or wha
wrecked."

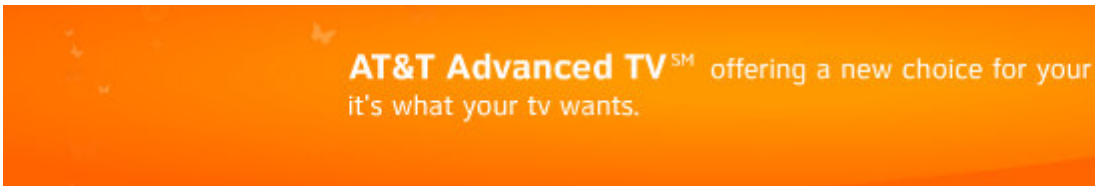
Posted by Tim Haddock at 10:37 PM | Perm

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

No. 2 - Jimmie Johnson

It's Jimmie Johnson's turn to try and win three races in a row. Jeff Gordon put
to-back victories to build his lead in the NASCAR Chase for the Nextel Cup stan
used back-to-back wins to climb within nine points of the lead.
If Johnson, the defending Cup champion, can win at Texas Motor Speedway thi
can pass Gordon for the lead in the standings.
"It's being in the right frame of mind and having the patience for the season a
Chase; you only learn that from experience," said Johnson, driver of the No. 48
Hendrick Motorsports. "And that experience of really the last five seasons, incl
year's Chase and championship, have just continued to make me smarter and s
the same for the team. Experience is everything. You can talk to anyone in spo
take experience over age regardless of the discipline."
Johnson will have a good car at Texas. It won at Atlanta in March, Las Vegas ar
Day race at California Speedway. It also won the All-Star Challenge at Lowe's M
in 2006.

Posted by Tim Haddock at 4:34 PM | Perm



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