

Lady Panthers... continued from 14A

provided enough offense to keep Social Circle at bay. She would finish with 17 points on 5-of-7 shooting from the floor, 2-for-2 from 3-point territory, and 5-of-7 from the foul line.

The senior duo of Coyne and Layne Colwell combined for 18 points (nine each), 7 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals, and a blocked shot.

Lawn led the Union County bench with 5 points, 7 boards, 3 assists, and a steal.

Meanwhile, Busse hauled in 10 boards to go with 4 points and Fair grabbed 8 boards to go along with 2 points.

Wishmeyer and freshman Adeline Dockrey scored two each with Dockrey pulling down 4 boards and dishing off 2 assists.

Up next for the Lady Panthers is the Bowdon Lady Red Devils from Region 5-AA on Tuesday. For the second straight year, Union will host the first round of State.

Over the past 35 years, the Lady Panthers have hosted the first round of State on three separate occasions prior to this year. In 1994 (GAC) and 2009 (Calhoun), Union was victorious in the first round at home. Last year, the Lady Panthers lost a nail-biter to Darlington.

Unlike those previous three teams, Bowdon will enter with a losing record, (10-15) but statistically, Union and Bowdon are very similar. Both average



Bailey Daniel prepares to knock down a trey. Photo/Todd Forrest

in the low 40's in the points-per-game column. Defensively, the Lady Devils allow 48-per-game, while Union allows right at 40-per.

Over the course of the season, Region 8-AA and 5-AA only met once when 5-AA Champion Heard County defeated 8-AA No. 3 Social Circle 32-28.

Heard defeated Bowdon twice by a 20-point average margin of victory, including a 25-point Heard County win on

Feb. 5th.

Union's three wins over Social Circle came by an average of 14 points. However, each time the margin shrank, from 23 to 12 to 7.

Tip-off is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Tuesday and the home crowd will get one more opportunity to see its Lady Panthers.

Be there to support our team and its seniors. Let's send them out with (at least) one State playoff victory.

Panthers... continued from 14A

Sweet 16.

Meanwhile, the Red Devils are coming off a 95-56 loss to Manchester in the 5-AA Region Championship game. Like the Panthers, Bowdon entered the tournament as the No. 3 seed but an upset of No. 2 Temple, who Union was expecting to play, sent them unexpectedly to the title game.

Bowdon is led by junior forward Octavius Meadows who averages 17 points and 7 rebounds a game.

Senior post, CJ Brewer, who was the captain of the Red Devil football team's defense. At middle linebacker, No. 52 was a dominating presence on the gridiron and on the hardwood he averages 13 points and 8 boards a night. He also leads the team at almost 2 blocked shots per game.



Sophomore Candler Colwell scores two vs Wilkes. Photo/Todd Forrest

Lady Panthers soccer opens with win



Janie Thomas (17), Brenna Innis (4), and Joanna Irvin (13) during Union County's 2-0 win over Fannin.

NASCAR 2016

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Chase Elliott Wins Daytona Pole

Daytona Beach, FL - Young Chase Elliott put his name at the top of the list.

The rookie driver of the No. 24 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet won the pole for Sunday's Daytona 500. His time of 45.845 seconds was the best of the field. The 20-year-old Dawsonville, GA driver and son of former NASCAR champion Bill Elliott became the youngest driver to ever earn a Daytona 500 pole.

Matt Kenseth who qualified second with a time of 45.910 seconds will join Elliott on the front row.

The remaining 38 starting positions will be determined after the Can-Am Duels, two qualifying races which will be held on Thursday, Feb. 19th, beginning at 7 p.m. ET on FoxSports1.

HAMLIN GETS SPRINT UNLIMITED WIN

Denny Hamlin won Saturday night's Sprint Unlimited at Daytona International Speedway, which is considered a prelude to the February 21st Daytona 500.

Hamlin led five times for 39 laps of the 79-lap race, which ended under caution. Despite leading the most laps, he had to come back from an early bumping incident with Ricky Stenhouse, which occurred on lap 7.

"This is a great start for our team," said Hamlin. "This was a leader driven race, and I was the leader when I needed to be. I feel as confident -- I always used to say the cliché that probably 80 percent of the drivers will say is that Daytona and Talladega is a crapshoot. I mean, but if it's a crap shoot, Dale Jr. is the luckiest guy in Vegas, because he finds a way to stay up front and win these races on a consistent basis, and I feel like I'm working my way to being able to say that, as well."

A major pileup of cars during lap 72 forced the race into overtime. On the restart, Hamlin was the leader followed by Joey Logano. The field completed one lap and received the white flag. As the leaders entered turn-2, another series of accidents happened behind them, forcing NASCAR to display the caution flag, and ending the race.

"The caution that came out at the end, if I was able to get that push from (Kyle) Larson before he got really loose, that may have gave me enough to push out in front of the 11 possibly, or at least to stay next to him for another lap and try to be door to door to cross the line," said runner-up Logano. "But you know, overall, speedway racing sometimes it's hard to pass for the lead for sure. I thought the restart was going to be a good opportunity to start next to the leader and try to jump out in front of him, and it just didn't line up perfectly tonight. But that's okay. Obviously, like I said, we're picking up where we left off from last year, so looking forward to the 500."

The remaining top-10 finishers: 3. Paul Menard, 4. Kyle Larson, 5. Casey Mears, 6. Ricky Stenhouse, 7. Kurt Busch, 8. Austin Dillon, 9. Brad Keselowski, 10. Greg Biffle.

The Sprint Unlimited was a non-points race.

VICKERS TO DRIVE NO. 14 AT DAYTONA

Brian Vickers will sub for Tony Stewart in the No. 14 Chevy for the Daytona 500. Vickers is a three-time winner in the Sprint Cup Series and was the 2003 NASCAR Xfinity Series champion. His best Sprint Cup finish at Daytona is a second-place result in the 2014 Coke Zero 400. An interim driver for the No. 14 team in the races following Daytona has not been determined.

While nothing is official, it sounds as though Stewart is likely to receive the same kind of waiver that Kyle Busch did, provided he

returns to racing before missing too many races.

"I think we're going to treat that just as we did Kyle Busch," NASCAR CEO Brian France said Wednesday. "There obviously is a balance ... you can't come in the race before the Chase starts and win that race and expect to cruise on in for the final 10 races. So there's some balance, but this is the beauty of the Chase. We have that ability to make some medical and other important exceptions for things like this. But you still have to compete at a high level over a number of events. We will cross that bridge when we can. I hope for his sake, just like I was hoping for Kyle's, that will be sooner rather than later. And the sooner the better in terms of making a decision on our end."

NEW CHARTER SYSTEM IN PLACE FOR NASCAR OWNERS

NASCAR has formed a new Charter or franchise system for 36 Sprint Cup teams.

A long term agreement was announced that grants Sprint Cup Series Charters to 36 teams, establishes a Team Owner Council that will have formal input into decisions, and provides Charter teams with new revenue opportunities.

"The new Charter program strengthens each of our businesses individually and the team model as a whole, which is good for NASCAR, our fans, drivers, sponsors and the thousands of people who we employ," said Rob Kauffman, co-owner of Chip Ganassi Racing. "This will give us more stability and predictability, and it will allow us to take a more progressive, long-term approach to issues."

"NASCAR and the teams share a desire to preserve, promote and grow the sport and ultimately produce great racing for our fans and partners. These common goals served as the foundation for discussions and helped bring us to this unprecedented agreement. This is a great step forward for the entire sport made possible. Everyone involved then compromised a bit to be able to come up with something that worked for all."

Each Charter is transferable, which will aid in the development of long-term enterprise value for Charter members.

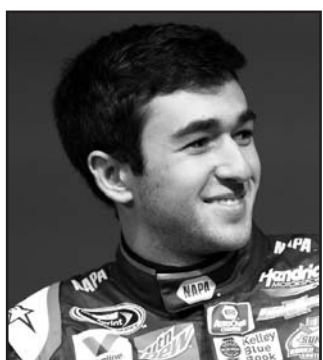
The system affords Charter teams that remain in good standing more predictable revenue over the nine years of the agreement. Along with improved financial certainty, the new framework is designed to increase the long-term market value of teams and provide the ability to plan farther ahead with existing, new and prospective partners.

It was not announced how much additional money teams could expect. NASCAR currently shares sixty five per cent of all television revenue with teams. Tracks receive fifteen per cent, with NASCAR getting ten per cent.

Each Charter team owner has a guaranteed entry into the field of every NASCAR Sprint Cup Series points race. The balance of the field will be open for team owners who do not hold Charters. These open team owners will compete for the four remaining starting spots and positions in the race, as each event in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series' starting lineup shifts in 2016 to a 40-car field.

There are 38 teams committed to full-time racing in 2016. Four weren't awarded charters -- Joe Gibbs Racing's No. 19-Carl Edwards (team started in 2015), Stewart-Haas Racing's No. 41-Kurt Busch (2014), HScott Motorsports' No. 46-Michael Annett (2015) and No. 21-Wood Brothers Racing's Ryan Blaney (formerly part-time team now going full time).

Former Michael Waltrip Racing owner Rob Kauffman, who has two charters from his teams that ceased operations after last



Chase Elliott

year, said he expects to sell his charters to JGR (for Edwards) and SHR (for Busch). The transfer of a charter must be approved by NASCAR, which will charge an administrative fee but not get a percentage of the sale. All NASCAR team owners will be allowed to see the transfer application, which would include the price of the charter sold. Charters can only be sold prior to the start of a season and can be transferred only once every five years.

According to Associated Press writer Lee Spencer, Jay Robinson (Premium Motorsports) has leased his charter to the HScott team for \$1.6 million.

Weekend Racing: The first NASCAR points races of the season will be held this weekend at the 2.5-mile Daytona International Speedway.

The Daytona 500 is a 500-mile-long NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race that NASCAR considers their "crown jewel". It is the first of two Sprint Cup races held every year at Daytona, the second being the Coke Zero 400. It is one of the four restrictor plate races on the Sprint Cup schedule. The inaugural Daytona 500 was held in 1959 coinciding with the opening of the speedway and since 1982, it has been the season-opening race of the Cup series.

Fri., Feb. 19; Truck Series race 1 of 23; Starting time: 7:30 p.m. ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sat., Feb. 20; Exfinity Series race 1 of 33; Starting time: 3:30 p.m. ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Sun., Feb. 21; Sprint Cup Series Daytona 500; Starting time: 1 p.m. ET; TV: Fox.

Racing Trivia Question: Who won last year's Daytona 500?

Last Week's Question: What year did Dale Earnhardt win the Daytona 500? Answer: It was 1998.

You may contact the Racing Reporter by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com. NTFFeb17.A2JCA

Biologist Kelly Taylor new manager at Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery

Almost two years following the April 2014 retirement of Fishery Biologist Deborah Burger from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as Hatchery Manager at Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery, the vacancy has been filled through a promotion of Fishery Biologist Kelly Taylor who had served in the Assistant Hatchery Manager position since 2006 and as Acting Hatchery Manager since Burger's retirement.

Taylor received his bachelor's degree in Biology from Georgia Southern in 1992 and began working at Bo Ginn National Fish Hatchery in Millen, GA, as an animal caretaker in 1994. In 1996, Taylor served as a tractor operator at Bo Ginn being employed half-time by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the other by the state of Georgia (wearing a federal uniform half of each week and a state uniform the other). Bo Ginn ceased operation in 1996 due to funding which resulted in Taylor's transfer to animal caretaker at Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery in Jamestown, KY, and then to Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery in 1999 where he has served as a Fishery Biologist since 2000. Since 2004, Taylor has served in management capacity and at a supervisory level since 2006. In 2008, Taylor was also delegated the task of temporarily serving as Acting Hatchery Manager for Erwin National Fish Hatchery, in Erwin, TN. Finally, Taylor has served as Acting Hatchery Manager at Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery since April 2014 leading to the official Hatchery Manager promotion effective January 10, 2016.

In addition to Taylor's 20+ years of experience, the hatchery team consists of other well-trained and educated



Kelly Taylor

professionals with a combination of more than 80 years of experience including Facility Operations Specialists Terry Callihan and Mitchell Pickelsimer, Program Assistant Crystal Thomas, and Animal Caretaker Jamey Mull. Taylor said, "We make a great team and after undergoing an extensive raceway rehab construction project at the hatchery and closure to visitors from August 2014 - September 2015, we are finally once again able to focus completely on serving the American people through trout mitigation, partnerships, and services."

Taylor encourages the public to, "Take advantage of all that the hatchery has to offer including the information kiosk located in the visitor parking area and free entry to the raceway area where visitors can walk through and get an up-close look at all the fish. Don't forget to bring your fishing gear and bait to enjoy fishing in Rock Creek which runs through the hatchery grounds."

The hatchery will host free fishing events this year beginning with the Veterans Appreciation Fishing Rodeo open to all U.S. military on May 6th; Special Kids Fish-

ing Rodeo open to a limited number of pre-registered participants with special needs on May 11th; Seniors Fishing Rodeo for adults ages 55 and older on June 3rd; and the June 4th Family Fishing Festival for youth ages 16 and under.

Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery is administered by the U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service. As one of sixty-nine National Fish Hatcheries across the country, it is dedicated to conserving, protecting and enhancing the Nation's fisheries for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information about the hatchery, please visit the station's official web page www.fws.gov/chattahoocheeforest/, call the hatchery office 706-838-4723, or check out and "like" our Just for Fun page www.facebook.com/RockCreekFishHatchery.

Bowling scores

Monday Night Ladies: Dana Gilbert 206, Sarah Chumbley 214.

Monday Night Men: Ron Wingate 213, 221, Keith Rhodes 238, 203, Tom Griffiths 234, 203, Taz Matetzschk 205, 232, 221, BJ Gilbert 212, Ernest Rice 213, Mickey Whatley 208, Derick Rice 237, Dewey Allen 208, Bonnell Thomas 207, Curtis Corn 223, Kevin Mohan 222, 222, 233, Chris Ellinwood 214, 202, Bill Cox 230, Steve Whittenburg 201, Greg Whittenburg 234.

Young @ Heart: Bart Rodgers 221, 211, Max Puett 201, Del Neiffer 214, 237, Sarah Chumbley 209, Ron Wingate 252, 200, 233, Series 685.

Thursday Night Fun Mixed: Tony Lynch 234, 202, Dewey Allen 223, Doug Roberts 215, Curtis Corn 222, Bonnell Thomas 236, 228.