

Mock Trial Team makes it six-in-a-row at Region



On the final weekend in January, the Union County High School Mock Trial team made history in Dalton with their sixth consecutive Region title. The team walked into the Whitfield County Courthouse at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 30th, and walked out 13 hours later having earned the Region Championship for the sixth year-in-a-row. The team's plaintiff and defendant groups also won an incredible 17 of 18 evaluator ballots and 6-of-6 courtrooms competed in throughout the day. Outstanding Attorney awards went to: Matt Peney, Marisa Evans, Brooke Hamby (two rounds), Sage Royston (two rounds), and Rachel Todd (all three rounds). Outstanding Witness Awards went to: Cody Short, Hannah Quigley, Abhy Kheepal, and Kat Capstick (all three rounds). Up next for the team is the Mock Trial District Competition in Dalton, GA, on Saturday, Feb. 28th, at the Whitfield County Courthouse. The squad will also be hosting its annual inner-squad scrimmage on Wednesday, Feb. 18th at the Union County Courthouse at 5 p.m.

NASCAR 2015

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Let's get ready to go racing

It's been a long winter, but the 2015 racing season is right around the corner. The first race of the season, the Sprint Unlimited will be held Sat., Feb. 14 at 8:15 pm on FOX. Qualifying for the top-two spots of the Daytona 500 will be held on Sun., Feb. 15, and can also be viewed on FOX, beginning at 1:00.

NASCAR announced that the season-opening 75-lap Sprint Unlimited, will be split into two segments. A competition caution at lap 25 will separate the segments in the non-points event. New this year, select fans will be paired with each crew chief for a random drawing to determine starting and pit road positions. The drawings will take place on Friday, Feb. 13 beginning at 3:30 pm.

The field of 25 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series drivers will include 2014 pole winners, former Sprint Unlimited race winners and Daytona 500 pole winners who competed full time in 2014, and all 16 Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup drivers from 2014. If an eligible driver does not enter the race, the open position will be filled based on 2014 Championship driver points.

The first five provisional drivers, respectively, are Clint Bowyer, Paul Menard, Marcos Ambrose, Casey Mears, and Ricky Stenhouse Jr.

AJ Allmendinger, driver of the No. 47 will not compete in the Sprint Unlimited because his team was unable to find sponsorship for the exhibition event. JTG Daugherty Racing co-owner Tad Geschickter told MotorsportsTalk that NASCAR's late decision to include all 16 Chase drivers in the Sprint Unlimited left his organization with little time to find a sponsor.

"It was nowhere on our radar until they changed the rules on it," Geschickter said. "If we had won a pole during the season and knew we were in it, I'm sure we would have been well prepared for it. We appreciate being grandfathered in, but, obviously, have to manage our resources to deliver the best year-end points finish we can for our sponsors."

Geschickter said he's not worried about missing additional track time at Daytona by skipping the race, because they are part of an alliance with Richard Childress Racing.

The following week there will be a full card of Camping World, Xfinity, and Sprint Cup races culminating with the Daytona 500 on Sunday, Feb. 22.

RAINBOW STEW FOR CHASE ELLIOTT
Chase Elliott's rise to the top of NASCAR's racing ladder has been phenomenal. He started off in the Truck series; after one year moved to the Xfinity series, and in 2016

will take over Jeff Gordon's vacated ride in the No. 24 Hendrick Chevrolet. His racing career is set.

How did he do it? Was his rise to stardom really that spectacular, or was every stage planned?

Remember Chase, whose real name is William Clyde Elliott II, is the son of 1988 NASCAR Winston Cup champion and Hall of Famer Bill Elliott.

In January 2013, it was announced that Elliott would compete in five ARCA Racing Series and nine NASCAR Camping World Truck Series events for Hendrick Motorsports during the 2013 racing season, driving in the latter series using trucks prepared by Turner Scott Motorsports. On June 8, 2013, Elliott became the youngest winner in ARCA history following his Pocono Raceway victory. In qualifying for the UNOH 200 Truck race at Bristol Motor Speedway, Elliott won his first career NASCAR pole position with a lap speed of 125.183 miles per hour, and became the youngest pole-sitter in Truck Series history. Elliott would win his first race at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park, in the first road course truck race outside the US; he was at the time the youngest winner in Truck Series history, at the age of 17 years, 9 months, and 4 days.

In January 2014, it was announced that Elliott would be competing full-time in the Nationwide Series in 2014, driving the No. 9 Chevrolet for JR Motorsports, with sponsorship from NAPA Auto Parts. On April 4, 2014, Elliott won the O'Reilly Auto Parts 300 at Texas Motor Speedway, holding Kevin Harvick and Kyle Busch off after taking the lead with 16 laps to go. On April 11, 2014, Elliott won the VFW Sport Clips Help a Hero 200 at Darlington Raceway by passing Elliott Sadler on the last lap after restarting sixth with two laps to go. Elliott won the EnjoyIllinois.com 300 at Chicagoland Speedway after holding off Trevor Bayne. At Phoenix, Elliott clinched the Nationwide Series championship with a 53-point lead over teammate Regan Smith, becoming the first rookie and youngest driver to win a NASCAR national series title.

On January 29, 2015, Hendrick Motorsports announced Elliott will make his Sprint Cup Series debut in 2015, running in five races at Martinsville, Richmond, Charlotte, Indianapolis, and Darlington. The team also announced that he will take over Jeff Gordon's No. 24 starting in 2016.

Forbes Magazine list's the net worth of the 18-year-old at \$2-million.

Quite an accomplishment for anyone by any



Chase Elliott at Charlotte's Fan Appreciation Day, Jan. 31, 2015.

means.

But is this young man really such a heroic driver.

Did he come by his talents through hard work and hands-on experience, or was much of what he acquired ready made for him?

To say he is not a good driver wouldn't be fair. He is a good driver. But I've seen and known dozens of drivers racing late models, Trucks, and Nationwide cars that have just as much talent as he does, but never made it out of their hometown because of money.

There are several ARCA Series drivers that barely make it from race to race. Unlike the Elliott family, their family and friends don't have the financial means to support them or provide them with decent racing equipment. They continue to struggle with what they are able to afford. For most it means their racing talents will never be allowed to develop.

But wait, in America everyone has the same opportunity.

Right?
No, wrong.
Chase Elliott is a great example of what happens when a young kid has everything he needs to develop his talent and skills. Elliott had the encouragement, training and money to pursue his dreams.

It reminds me of a song by country music singer, Merle Haggard, "Drinkin' Free Bubble Up and Eating Rainbow Stew." It goes like this:
"One of these days when the air clears up,
And the sun comes shining through.
We'll all be drinking free bubble-up
An eatin' that rainbow stew with a silver spoon."

For most young drivers the air will never clear up enough for them to follow their racing goals and dreams. But for a lucky few like Chase Elliott who are born with a silver spoon, their sky will always remain blue.

That's just the hard facts of life and NASCAR racing.

Racing Trivia Question: Who won the 2014 Daytona 500?

Last Week's Question: How many Cup wins did Richard Petty have during his career? Answer: 200, the most of any driver.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at: www.hodges@race500.com.

No Greater LOVE

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5K RACE & 1 Mile Walk
February 14, 2015

Start this Valentine's Day giving the gift of love. Join "TEAM TRICIA"

Tricia Spear has been giving back to this community, day after day for over a dozen years. Now she is fighting a serious illness and she needs all of us to help with her recovery.

Join us and participate in the 5k Race or the 1 Mile Walk
Place : Meeks Park, Blairsville 9am/Registration 10am/Race-Walk

Registration Fees RUN \$25 WALK \$20
All registrants will get a free Race T-Shirt, while supply lasts.
Pre-register by January 27th to be guaranteed a Race T-shirt
Registration Forms available online at Active.com or pick one up at Blairsville Chamber of Commerce, Seasons Inn, Mountain Shelter Thrift Store (Blairsville) or the Union General Wellness Center
Interested in being a sponsor and having your business listed on the T-Shirts? Call the Thrift Store at 706-745-0033 by Jan. 27th

The monies raised at this event will go to the Tricia Spear Recovery Fund.

Visit our event Page. No Greater Love 5k

Odom homers as YHC opens with sweep of Shorter University

Young Harris - Young Harris College opened its home baseball schedule at Zell B. Miller Field Saturday (Feb. 7) with a sweep of Shorter University.

The Mountain Lions, who improved to 3-2, won the opener 11-7 before taking the nightcap 6-5 over the Hawks, who fell to 0-2. The two teams wrap up the three-game series Sunday (Feb. 8) with a 1 p.m. contest.

After Shorter took a 4-0 lead through its first three at-bats, the Mountain Lions took control of the opener as they scored five runs in the bottom of the third. Blake Suggs got the Mountain Lions started with a bases-loaded walk before Troy Kizer smacked a grand slam over the left-center field wall to give Young Harris a 5-4 lead.

The Mountain Lions added a run an inning later on Kizer's RBI-single before scoring four times in the fifth to open a 10-4 lead. Zach Wall and Spencer Thomas hit back-to-back homers in the sixth. Wall's blast to left drove in three runs.

Young Harris scored its final run in the seventh on a RBI-single by Suggs.

The Mountain Lions banged out 13 hits that saw Suggs and Kizer collect three apiece while Jimmy Pinakidis and Wall had two each.

Justin Cooper (2-0) struck out five in six innings to pick up the win, while William Leatherwood earned the save with three innings of relief. Colton Cross (1-0) took



Zach Odom

the loss for Shorter.

With the score tied at 4 in the nightcap, the Mountain Lions took the lead for good in the sixth as Pinakidis drove in two with his triple down the right field line to give Young Harris a 6-4 lead. Shorter got a sacrifice fly in the eighth, but Cole Amtmann earned a save with three innings of relief.

Nick Sexton led YHC batters with three hits while Zach Odom and Brett Westmoreland each had two hits. Odom drove in two in the first with his homer to left field while Westmoreland had two RBI with his third-inning single.

Aaron Barfield (1-0) threw three pitches in relief and earned the win for YHC while Russell Crosby absorbed the loss for the Hawks.

Bowling scores

Monday Night Men: Ernest Rice 207, Richard Tanner 254, Joe Teague 202, 201, Derick Rice 204, 246, DJ DeJoseph 204, 211, Brett Hogsd 254, 233, Michael Whitehead 210, Kirk Bass 212, Taz Matetzschk 210, 258, 222, 708 Series BJ Gilbert 212, Steve Brandt 207, Ray Everett 208, 205, Jeb Plott 217, 222, 236, Jason Swanson 234, Bill Cox 211, Jim McCreary 204, 205.

Monday Night Ladies: Inez Bergstrom 191, Peggy Kidder 204, Susanna White 200.

Hazel Farmer Senior League: Ernest Rice 202, Bart Rodgers 216, Mel White 212, Bruce Burnett 206, Del Neffer 210, Ron Wingate 204, Dewey Allen 202, Ken Thigpen 205, Mike Newsome 234.

Thursday Night Fun League: Mike Davis 206, 245, 236, Larry Canaan 237, 200, Jim McCreary 248, 211, Jay Burrell 210, 202, 223, Bill Cox 203, Jason Swanson 203, 224, Taz Matetzschk 213, 214, Johnathan Everett 238, Tony Lynch 213, 247, Ray Everett 201, DJ DeJoseph 204, 208, Doug Roberts 232, John Moore 214, 213, Zach Moore 222, 244, Tim Moore 226, 231, Daniel Brown 221, 263, Jerry Thomas 236, 214, Tim McVay 226, Kirk Bass 210, Bonnell thomas 212, 211, Bill Smith 205, Jordan Moore 225.