

NASCAR 2020

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Three NASCAR Races In One Day At Pocono

LONG POND, PA - NASCAR held three races Sun., June 28 at Pocono Raceway. It was the first time three NASCAR series races were raced on the same day at the same track.

Denny Hamlin won Sunday's Cup Series race, with Chase Briscoe getting the Xfinity Series race. Brandon Jones was victorious in the Truck race. There was also a Saturday Cup Series race won by Kevin Harvick.

Hamlin led 49 laps of Sunday's 140-lap race, but was running behind Harvick, who decided to pit with 36 laps remaining. Hamlin took the lead, but waited for about 10 more laps before he entered the pits. He was able to get out of the pits and back on the track in front of Harvick. From then on, it was Hamlin's race to lose, and he took the checkered flag 3.068-seconds ahead of Harvick.

"Yeah, we had great strategy," said Hamlin. "Today's race was really won in the shop. It's unreal the way this car performed. There at the end all I had to do was work my way through traffic."

Hamlin was second to Harvick on Saturday, so their 1-2 finish was reversed a day later.

For Harvick, finishing second was bittersweet.

"Our Ford was fast," said Harvick. "We got caught up in lap traffic there at the end and wasn't able to catch Denny. Maybe we should have pitted differently. We just didn't get it done."

Erik Jones was third, followed by Chase Elliott, Aric Almirola, Matt DiBenedetto, William Byron, Clint Bowyer, Alex Bowman, and Martin Truex Jr.

Kurt Busch was the winner of Stage 1, while Brad Keselowski took Stage 2.

Kyle Busch is still winless. He was tapped from behind by Ryan Blaney on lap 74 and hit the wall. His car was damaged too much for him to continue and he finished 38th.

Top-10 leaders: 1. Harvick-581, 2. Blaney-529, 3. Keselowski-514, 4. Elliott-510, 5. Hamlin-506, 6. Logano-500, 7. Truex Jr.-500, 8. Bowman-464, 9. Almirola-431, 10. Kurt Busch-430.

Results of the NASCAR Xfinity Series race, held Sun., June 28 at Pocono: 1. Chase Briscoe, 2. Ross Chastain, 3. Jeremy Clements, 4. Myatt Snider, 5. Michael Annett, 6. Justin Allgaier, 7. Brett Moffitt, 8. Timmy Hill, 9. Riley Herbst, 10. Jesse Little.

Top-10 leaders: 1. Briscoe-499, 2. Gragson-496, 3. Chastain-466, 4. Cindric-453, 5. H. Burton-404, 6. Haley-401, 7. Allgaier-386, 8. B. Jones-376, 9. Annett-339, 10. Sieg-301.

Results of the NASCAR Truck Series race, held Sun., June 28 at Pocono: 1. Brandon Jones, 2. Austin Hill, 3. Sheldon Creed, 4. Todd Gilliland, 5. Ben Rhodes, 6. Ross Chastain, 7. Brett Moffitt, 8. Stewart Friesen, 9. Tyler Ankrum, 10. Derek Kraus.

Top-10 leaders: 1. Hill-252, 2. Rhodes-202, 3. Enfinger-192, 4. Creed-187, 5. Gilliland-187, 6. Eckes-179, 7. Z. Smith-177, 8. Ankrum-174, 9. Moffitt-170, 10. Sauter-168.

"HAPPY" HARVICK HOLDS OF HAMLIN

Kevin Harvick took advantage of a two-tire pit stop with 36 laps left to hold off Denny Hamlin over the final green-flag run to win for the first time at Pocono Raceway.

Harvick crossed the finish line in Saturday's Cup Series race just .761 seconds ahead of Hamlin to post his third victory of the season.

"We weren't where we



Kevin Harvick, Winner Of Saturday's Cup Race

needed to be to start the race and lost a bunch of track position, but we came back and made some great strategy calls to get in clean air and get out front and make some good laps," said Harvick. "It's great to finally check Pocono off the list."

Aric Almirola, who led the most laps (61 of 130) was third, followed by Christopher Bell, Kyle Busch, Martin Truex Jr., Clint Bowyer, Michael McDowell, Brad Keselowski, and Chris Buescher.

HOW WILL JOHNSON GO OUT

Jimmie Johnson has announced this will be his last season in NASCAR racing.

Right now, it seems as though Johnson has either a mental block or lost confidence.

"I'm human," Johnson said. "I would assume every athlete would ... it's easy to have your confidence shaken. When you get on a roll and feel that momentum on a positive side, it works for you."

"And then when it goes the other way, if you shank a ball in a golf tournament, and you go, 'Oh, no. I've got the shanks.' If you're not performing well on the race track, you go, 'Man. Am I a part of this problem?'"

During the Talladega race, Johnson had a fast car. He was making his way to the front when he was bumped by Kevin Harvick and sent spinning. Had he not wrecked, he would have gotten a good finish and maybe a win. But that's racing. To win or finish well, you've got to be there at the end.

After winning his record-tying seventh Cup Series championship in 2016, Johnson picked up the following year right where he left off. He began the 2017 season by winning three of the first 13 races, ending with his most recent Cup Series win at Dover International Speedway on June 4, 2017.

Since then he has been on a career-long 111-race winless streak. Could it be his team?

Two other Hendrick drivers, Alex Bowman and Chase Elliott each have wins.

Despite having won only two of 13 races, Hendrick Motorsports has already proven to be more competitive than it was at any point during the past two seasons.

Hendrick drivers have led 931 laps through the first 13 races this year rank second, and are more than the team had led in the first 13 races of 2018 and 2019 combined. HMS also leads all Cup Series teams (by five) with 11 stage wins, signaling that perhaps the best is still yet to come.

But no matter where he finishes this season, Johnson will end his career as one of the sport's best. His seven career Cup Series titles are matched only by Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt. Johnson is still the only racer to win the Cup Series five consecutive years (2006-2010).

Racing Joke: One eve-



Denny Hamlin, Winner Of Sunday's Cup Race

ning Richard drove his secretary home after she had worked late at the race car shop. Although this was an innocent gesture, he did mention it to his wife because he knew her jealous nature.

Later that night Richard and his wife were driving out to dinner in Charlotte. Suddenly he noticed a high-heeled shoe half hidden under the passenger seat. Not wanting to be conspicuous, he waited until his wife was looking out her window before he scooped up the shoe and threw it out the car.

With a sigh of relief, he pulled into the restaurant parking lot. That's when he noticed his wife squirming around in her seat.

"Honey," she asked, "have you seen my other shoe?"

Weekend Racing: IndyCar and NASCAR will race July 4 weekend at Indianapolis Motor Speedway as part of a rescheduling of events at the speedway.

IMS moved its GMR Grand Prix from May 9 to July 4. It will run on the road course at Indianapolis Motor Speedway before the NASCAR Xfinity Series runs on that course that same day. Cup cars will race on the oval on July 5.

Saturday morning, IndyCar will give its teams a 30-minute warmup period starting at 9 a.m. The 80-lap road course race is scheduled to begin at noon and will be broadcast on NBC. After finishing the weekend's open-wheel racing portion, the Xfinity cars will take to the same circuit for the Pennzoil 150 at 3 p.m., also on NBC.

On Sunday, the NASCAR Cup Series race will start at 4 p.m. on NBC.

Racing Trivia Question: Who won the first NASACAR Cup Series race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway?

Last Week's Question: Red Farmer has always been dubbed as part of the Alabama Gang, but is he a native Alabamian? Answer: Red was born in Nashville, Tennessee sometime between 1928 and 1932.

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Hill... continued from Page 4C

ris was where I wanted to go. NGN: Why did you start taking a harder look at Young Harris? Was there something that changed your mind during those last few weeks?

AH: Not really. Well, maybe kind of. I guess it was just a combination of being out of school and the basketball season coming to an end. I really missed playing ball and being around my friends and teammates.

I started talking it over with my family and came to the conclusion that that's what I wanted to do.

NGN: Would you say your family was in the pro-Young Harris camp? If it were me, I would want my son/daughter to stay nearby so I could see them and attend every home game.

AH: That was a big thing for me; that was a big thing for all of us. Being able to stay close to home and having my family come to all of my games is important. I also wanted to stay in

a small town and was looking for a school that had a small-town, Blairsville-like feel.

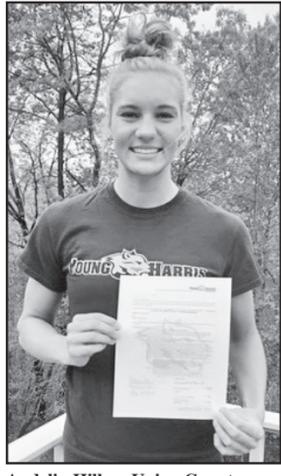
NGN: Did you consider any other schools?

AH: I spoke with Shorter quite a bit but eventually turned them down. That was a little too far from home, especially when I had Young Harris as an option. I'm also more familiar with (Coach Huffman) than I am with the Shorter coach. Plus, I know her a lot better.

NGN: You posted your announcement on social media. But now that you've had time for the decision to marinate, is there anything you would like to add to it, anyone you want to mention?

AH: I would like to thank everyone that helped me along the way - all of the camps I've attended, my travel-ball teammates, coaches and everyone that hosted camps for us.

I'm also thankful for everyone at the high school, like



Andelin Hill on Union County High's virtual signing day.

Isaac Peugh, for filming and doing the videos for the school. And people like you that covered us, took pictures and always got our names out there to help promote us.

Sanchez... continued from Page 4C

since my 400 times had come down.

NGN: How do you stay motivated to win another championship when you're already won State three times.

ZS: I feel like I have something to prove to myself. I'm not concerned with what other people think, but I have to show it to myself. It's a battle with myself. Whenever I go out there, my head tells me that I can't do it, and that's what motivates me to prove that I can.

NGN: Another secret you need to share is how you stayed healthy while competing in all those different events for four years?

ZS: Well, it helps to be a hypochondriac. If I start having any pain, I freak out and everyone is like, it's alright; you're fine. So I guess it just helps to be that way.

NGN: How and when did you find yourself on Mercer's radar?

ZS: I had a profile on the NCSA (Next College Student Athlete) website, and I got an email from Mercer. At first (my family and I) just blew it off and said 'no thanks' because they didn't offer my major, and second, we thought it would be way too expensive.

So he emailed me back, and this time I spoke with him, which was probably around late-February or early-March. He was able to get (tuition) down to where it was affordable for me. He worked really hard with the admissions office to bring the cost down, and that really proved just how much he wanted me on the team. I felt really wanted there, so that's why I chose Mercer.

Unlike some other sports, you don't get a lot of money for cross country or track-and-field scholarships. The most anyone usually gets is about \$4,000.

NGN: Was there anything else that sold you on Mercer?

ZS: Other than the coach, it was probably the fact that they accepted all of my dual-enrollment credits. They also have an excellent medical program, which is what I'm going into. So I would have to say it was all of those things.

NGN: You said earlier that Mercer didn't have your major. What was your original major and what changed?

ZS: At first, I wanted to major in Microbiology, but now I'm going to major in Biology with a focus on microbiology, which I can do at Mercer. Then I hope to go on and do my Graduate Degree.

NGN: What will you do when you're all done with school?

ZS: Well, it's kind of a big word, but I want to be a Parasitologist. It's a person who studies parasites. I will be on the clinical side, so I'll offer treatment and provide aid to those with parasites.

NGN: Did you consider any other schools?

ZS: I talked to Columbus State and Kennesaw, but both of them sort of fell by the wayside once I started talking with Mercer.

NGN: Did you two discuss running both track and cross country at Mercer, or will you focus on one sport?

ZS: I'm going to run track and indoor and outdoor cross country. I'm actually looking at the steeplechase (a long-distance race that includes barriers and jumps). I'm talking with coaches about doing that and maybe some other events.

NGN: What are your expectations for year one? How much of a contribution do you

hope to make as a freshman?

ZS: I am really hoping that I can (contribute). Mercer signed a really strong class for cross country, and we're also bringing in a transfer, so I'm excited to see how I stack up against all the other new girls. I also hope that I can make an impact overall because most of the older girls have been together for a long time.

NGN: Is there anything that worries you about competing at the next level?

ZS: Not really. I trust my training, so I'm not very worried about the step up in competition. My biggest concern is balancing sports and academics and being able to focus enough on each one. But I think once I get there, I'll be fine.

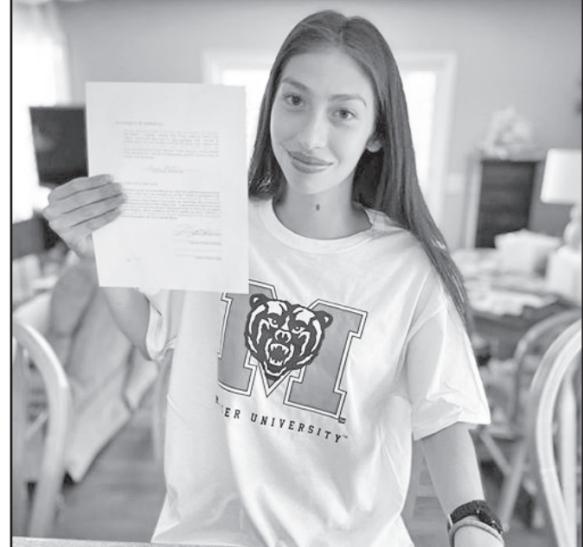
NGN: Is there anyone you want to mention or thank?

ZS: I want to thank my team, my parents and my coaches. My mom would always drive me and show up at my meets. Even when she couldn't make it, she would call right away, asking how I did. It was a long journey and I want to thank everyone that helped me along the way.

NGN: What will you miss most about high school?

ZS: Seeing everybody. All of my friends. That's the main reason I went to school a lot of times.

I probably shouldn't have said that.



Zoe Sanchez on Union County High School's virtual signing day.

Old Union WGA First Annual Flag Day Tournament

The Old Union WGA held their 1st Annual Flag Day Tournament on Monday, June 22. It was great to see all of the American Flags throughout the golf course! We had some great scores on Monday! Congratulations to Jinna Wheeler for her Eagle on hole #8! Two birdies were made as well by Jinna Wheeler and Cappie Harper and Chip-ins were made by Cappie Harper and Pat Westbrook.

We had 4 closest to the pins, one for each flight. Jinna Wheeler and Shelia Baggett won an American Flag ball marker each, and Martha Quijano won the free round of golf.

The rankings for the Flag Day Tournament were as follows: Flight A: Jinna Wheeler 1st place, Betsy Hyde 2nd place; Flight B: Bonnie Shore 1st place, Nancy Hamilton 2nd place; Flight C: Cindy Flanders 1st place, Martha Quijano 2nd place; Flight D: Connie Dockery 1st place, Marilyn Lipira 2nd place.

Congratulations to all the winners and we hope everyone had a fun filled day of golf and friendship!

Next week is our Scotch Golf, 2-man team event. We will play in four flights and pay 1 place per flight. However, if we do not have an even number, we will play a different team event where we can use a blind.

Next week is also Birthday Celebration week. We will



Flag Day Tournament

be celebrating Gwen Gibson, Jinna Wheeler, Connie Dockery and Martha Quijano. We will be celebrating with cake and candles and encouraging everyone to bring birthday cards to the birthday girls to make their special day a little more special!

Thank you to everyone for supporting our league!

Since May 27th, Mary Holmes has been offering Golf Clinics at Old Union Golf Course. The cost is \$20 plus range ball. Max number in a group is four and the clinics are an hour long. Mary teaches

two classes on Wednesdays... the first one at 8 AM and a second clinic at 9 AM. You must sign up on the website to participate in the clinic. Mary Holmes was the ladies' golf coach at LSU, and we are delighted with her offer to lead the Golf Clinics. Sign up soon as the classes will fill up quickly!

If you are interested and would like to come as a Guest, or for more information, visit our website at www.OUWGA.com or call/text Karen at 352-638-3649 or Cynthia at 706-633-7587. NOAH ZIJOCA

Summer Session 2020 Fitness Family Zumba Class

Union County Recreation Department
Ages: 18 and over

**With Summer here, we want you to stay fit. Beth Schakat, our new instructor for our Fitness Family, will be offering a late afternoon Zumba class! This class will run for the Summer session from July 14 through August 27. The class is on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 4:30-5:30 PM. Cost is only \$25 for this session!

*Summer Session Zumba Registration begins on June 29, 2020 and ends July 10, 2020 (or until class fills to capacity) at the Recreation Office (310 Wellborn Steet). Registration and class payment must be done in person and distancing will be in effect during the registration process and in person classes.

If you have any questions, you can call (706) 439-6074 and ask for Jennifer.

