

NASCAR THIS WEEK

SPEED FREAKS

A couple questions we had to ask — ourselves

What happened to rumors of Kevin Harvick to the No. 5?
GODSPEAK: Apparently, there is a racing blogger out there with a vivid imagination like George R.R. Martin.
KEN'S CALL: According to rumor, even things that make sense don't always pan out.

Does this mean Kasey Kahne can feel safe in the No. 5?
GODSPEAK: Kasey has a contract through 2018. He has got time to make this work.
KEN'S CALL: A bit safer, but not safe. A lot of quality racers would answer Rick Hendrick's phone call.

Can anyone watch all 600 miles of the Coke 600?
GODSPEAK: Good golly, 400 laps around a 1.5-mile track. We will see who is and who is not a true NASCAR fan this Sunday.
KEN'S CALL: A few crew chiefs and most of the drivers, but that's about all. Oh, and Mike Joy.

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Questions? Contact Godwin Kelly at godwin.kelly@news-jrnl.com or Ken Willis at ken.willis@news-jrnl.com

SPRINT CUP POINTS

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. Kevin Harvick | 418 |
| 2. Kyle Busch | 397 |
| 3. Kurt Busch | 386 |
| 4. Carl Edwards | 381 |
| 5. Jimmie Johnson | 370 |
| 6. Brad Keselowski | 368 |
| 7. Chase Elliott | 341 |
| 8. Joey Logano | 340 |
| 9. Martin Truex Jr. | 336 |
| 10. Austin Dillon | 315 |
| 11. Dale Earnhardt Jr. | 314 |
| 12. Matt Kenseth | 313 |
| 13. Denny Hamlin | 308 |
| 14. Jamie McMurray | 296 |
| 15. Ryan Blaney | 288 |
| 16. Kasey Kahne | 286 |
| 17. AJ Allmendinger | 283 |
| 18. Ryan Newman | 278 |
| 19. Trevor Bayne | 275 |
| 20. Ricky Stenhouse Jr. | 273 |
| 21. Kyle Larson | 243 |
| 22. Paul Menard | 232 |
| 23. Danica Patrick | 216 |
| 24. Greg Biffle | 215 |
| 25. Aric Almirola | 213 |
| 26. Clint Bowyer | 211 |
| 27. Landon Cassill | 202 |
| 28. Casey Mears | 184 |
| 29. Brian Scott | 178 |
| 30. David Ragan | 161 |

3 THINGS WE LEARNED FROM ALL-STAR RACE



GETTY IMAGES/BRIAN LAWDERMILK

Sprint All-Star Race winner Joey Logano does a victory burnout at Charlotte Motor Speedway. OK, that we can understand.

1. Too complicated

The rules for this edition of the Sprint All-Star Race at Charlotte were too complicated. Jamie McMurray's spin late in the first 50-lap segment had NASCAR officials scrambling. Race leader Matt Kenseth was put a lap down for failing to make a green-flag pit stop.

2. Kenseth explains

Kenseth, who is a Cup Series veteran, helped explain how the All-Star Race was conducted. "I hope everybody understands this race more than I did from the cockpit because ever since the first car pitted in that first segment, I have no idea what was going on. None," he said.

3. Junior finished third

Dale Earnhardt Jr. finished third in the final 13-lap segment. How? He had no idea. "Yeah, I didn't know what way up and what way was right and left. Lap-down cars, were pitting with lead-lap cars and wave-by cars were up front and in the middle," Junior said.

— Godwin Kelly, godwin.kelly@news-jrnl.com

3 THINGS TO WATCH

1. Stewart's finale

It's hard to believe, but Tony Stewart has never won the Coca-Cola 600. In fact, he has scored only one win at Charlotte in his career, the 500-mile fall race in 2003. This could be Stewart's fairy-tale moment, since he needs a win to get into the Chase playoffs. The All-Star fiasco may have sparked Stewart's competitive juices. "I'm glad it's my last one," Stewart said of the All-Star madness. "I'm just madder than hell."

2. Complete opposites

Last weekend's NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race was a relatively short race (113 laps) with no

championship points at stake, but paid \$1 million to winner Joey Logano. Now Cup teams will reload and come back for Sunday's Coca-Cola 600, which starts in daylight, ends in darkness and covers 400 laps. The teams that used the All-Star as a practice session will be in much better shape for NASCAR's marathon on Sunday.

3. Cover boy

Carl Edwards finished a distant fourth in the All-Star Race, but that was good enough to get him on the cover. The cover of what? As the highest finishing Toyota driver, Edwards will be featured in the new NASCAR Heat Evolution video game being released by Dusenberry



GETTY IMAGES/MATT SULLIVAN

Will the Coca-Cola 600 provide the fairy-tale moment of Tony Stewart's 2016 racing season? Maybe the magic wand with help.

Martin Racing. The game will be released Sept. 13 and will be available on PlayStation 4, Xbox One and Windows PC.

— Godwin Kelly, godwin.kelly@news-jrnl.com

GODWIN'S PICKS FOR COCA-COLA 600

WINNER: Chase Elliott
REST OF TOP 5: Brad Keselowski, Kyle Busch, Dale Earnhardt Jr., Carl Edwards
FIRST ONE OUT: Joey Logano

DARK HORSE: Trevor Bayne
DON'T BE SURPRISED IF: The rookie grabs his first career NASCAR Cup Series victory in this stock-car marathon.



Godwin Kelly is the Daytona Beach News-Journal's motorsports editor and has covered NASCAR for 30 years. Reach him at godwin.kelly@news-jrnl.com

QUESTIONS & ATTITUDE

Compelling questions... and maybe a few actual answers

How did Brad Keselowski get tire marks on his back?

Oh, those came from being thrown under the nearest Greyhound following last Saturday night's All Star Race in Charlotte. It's a shame, too, because of Kez thought he'd turned the corner and was ready to spread his particular brand of genius. But he seems to have outkicked the coverage with his recommendations to "fix" the All-Star-show.

No credit for the effort?

Sure, and it was an exciting finish so that's a good thing. But when you start mixing in too much calculus, you're inviting second-guessers. And many of his fellow drivers weren't the least bit hesitant to chuck him under the wheels. And to think, he was so accepted onto the Drivers Council.

What's his next trick?

He's heading to Vermont midweek to explain the delegate-redistribution system to Bernie Sanders. Then back through D.C. to work on the tax code before helping his parents restructure their cellphone plan.

Ken Willis has been covering NASCAR for The Daytona Beach News-Journal for 27 years. Reach him at ken.willis@news-jrnl.com



FEUD OF THE WEEK



Tony Stewart



Chase Elliott

TONY STEWART VS. CHASE ELLIOTT: Elliott was trying to pit early in the second segment. When he slowed his No. 24 Chevy down, it caused a chain-reaction crash that swept up Stewart.
GODWIN KELLY'S TAKE: "(Elliott) wrecked everybody," Stewart grouched. No driver wants to get in the crosshairs of this heading-into-retirement, three-time NASCAR champion.

WHAT'S ON TAP?

SPRINT CUP: Coca-Cola 600
SITE: Charlotte Motor Speedway (1.5-mile, quad-oval)
TV SCHEDULE: Thursday, practice (Fox Sports 1, 2 p.m.), qualifying (Fox Sports 1, 7 p.m.). Saturday, practice (Fox Sports 1, 1 p.m.). Sunday, race (Fox, coverage begins at 6 p.m., green flag at 6:15 p.m.)

XFINITY: Hisense 300
SITE: Charlotte Motor Speedway
TV SCHEDULE: Thursday, practice (Fox Sports 1, 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.). Saturday, qualifying (Fox Sports 1, 11:15 a.m.), race (Fox Sports 1, 2:30 p.m.)



KEN WILLIS' TOP 10 NASCAR DRIVER RANKINGS

KYLE BUSCH Wow, he lost a truck race?	MATT KENSETH Mr. Hunch likes Mild Matt this week	CARL EDWARDS Middle name is Michael	KURT BUSCH 31 Charlotte starts, one win	KEVIN HARVICK Soon trades free Silverado for free F-150	JOEY LOGANO Bumped up a few places with win	BRAD KESELOWSKI Mr. Fix-It	CHASE ELLIOTT Got his dad's popularity gene	JIMMIE JOHNSON 2015 at Charlotte: 40th, 39th	MARTIN TRUEX JR. Gremlins have 600 miles to get him
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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