

The Racing Reporter

Rusty Wallace gets first Winston Cup win of 2001

By Gerald Hodges
Rusty Wallace moved to the front on lap 157 of the 250-lap NAPA Auto Parts 500 and never looked back. The only time he relinquished the lead after that was during a pit stop. Wallace's No. 2 Miller Lite Ford Taurus was clearly the dominant car in the last half of the race.

Jeff Gordon made a challenge late in the race but came up short as Wallace earned his first Winston Cup victory of the 2001 season and 54th of his career.

After taking the checkered flag, a crewman handed Wallace a flag bearing the No. 3 insignia of Dale Earnhardt. Wallace held the flag out the window as he took his victory lap. "I would like to have had Richard Childress ride with me," Wallace said. "But it took too long for me to win it."

Pole-sitter Bobby Labonte, the defending Winston Cup champion, spun twice, the last time on lap 223. He finished 22nd.

Points leader Dale Jarrett lost a cylinder in his No. 88 UPS Ford but managed to stay on the laps lead and finish 24th.

Dale Earnhardt Jr., who came in third, had his best run since finishing second in the Daytona 500. He finished 11th. Johnny Benson, 2nd; Jeff Gordon, 3rd; Dale Earnhardt Jr., 4th; Tony Stewart, 5th; Jeremy Mayfield, 6th; Ricky Rudd, 7th; Jimmy Spencer, 8th; Jerry Nadeau, 9th; Sterling Marlin, 10th; Robert Presley, 11th; Johnny Benson, 12th; Hut Stricklin, 13th; Kurt Busch, 14th; Bill Elliott, 15th; Steve Park, 16th; Wallace, 17th; Matt Kenseth, 18th; Jason Leffler, 19th; Andy Houston, 20th; Joe Nemechek, 21st; Jeff Green, 22nd; Bobby Labonte, 23rd; Elliott Sadler, 24th; Dale Jarrett, 25th; Kevin Harvick, 26th; John Andretti, 27th; Brett Bodine, 28th; Todd Bodine, 29th; Dave Blaney, 30th; Jerry Labonte, 31st; Jeff Burton, 32nd; Mike Skinner, 33rd; Ken Schrader, 34th; Ron Hornaday, 35th; Kyle Petty, 36th; Bobby Hamilton, 37th; Kenny Wallace, 38th; Stacy Compton, 39th; Casey Atwood, 40th; Mark Martin, 41st; Ricky Craven, 42nd; Ward Burton, 43rd; Michael Waltrip.

Jarrett's point lead dwindles

The top-10 points leaders after 10 of 36 events: 1. Jarrett 1441, 2. J. Gordon 1375, 3. Benson 1330, 4. R. Wallace 1322, 5. Marlin 1291, 6. Rudd 1251, 7. Hamilton 1230, 8. Park 1227, 9. Stewart 1207, 10. Earnhardt Jr. 1150.

Gas strategy pays off for Hank Parker, Jr.

Hank Parker's team gambled on fuel and won Saturday's Busch Series Auto Club 300 at California Speedway.

While most of the other teams stopped for fuel, Parker ran the final 62 laps on one tank of fuel. He beat runner-up Jeff Purvis by 4.588 seconds.

It was Parker's first career Busch victory. "I don't know how those guys ran that far on gas," said Jeff Green, who finished third. "They don't have the same fuel cell I've got. I'm just proud of my Nesqueguy guys. We made adjustments and it was so good there at the end I was able to get around those guys. We had good pit stops, but I just couldn't get on the outside of Greg (Biffle) there. He was protecting his position, but it's another good day for us. We wanted to come out here and win, but Hank Parker did a good job and they played the strategy right."

Finishing order: 1. Parker, 2. Purvis, 3. Jeff Green, 4. Kevin LePage, 5. Kevin Harvick, 6. Greg Biffle, 7. Jimmy Spencer, 8. Tony Raines, 9. Joe Nemechek, 10. Mike McLaughlin, 11. Tim Fedewa, 12. Elton Sawyer, 13. David Green, 14. Bobby Hamilton Jr., 15. Jason Keller, 16. Jimmie Johnson, 17. Todd Bodine, 18. Chad Little, 19. Scott Wimmer, 20. Matt Kenseth, 21. Larry Foyt, 22. Ashton Lewis Jr., 23. Mike Skinner, 24. Christian Eldred, 25. Tim Sauter, 26. Kevin Grubb, 27. David Donahue, 28. Jay Sauter, 29. Rich Bickle, 30. Randy LaJoie, 31. Mike Wallace, 32. Marty Houston, 33. Shane Hall, 34. Kelly Denton, 35. Robby Faggett, 36. Jeff Streeter, 37. Jamie McMurray, 38. Kenny Wallace, 39. Stanton Barrett, 40. Ryan Woodside, 41. Brendan Gaughan, 42. Jeff Fuller, 43. Mike Chag.

Biffle continues to lead points
The top-10 Busch Series leaders

after 10 of 33 events: 1. Biffle 1454, 2. Harvick 1451, 3. J. Green 1410, 4. Keller 1358, 5. McLaughlin 1327, 6. Purvis 1240, 7. T. Bodine 1215, 8. Johnson 1190, Raines 1133, Little 1103.

Fanfare: Who Splits The Big Money in NASCAR Racing

Live of Cere Gordo, North Carolina said, "When a car wins, what percent of the purse does the driver, owner, crew chief and pit crew get?" "NASCAR teams are like any other employer. Each employee hired agrees to sign a contract before going to work. Driver's contracts are rarely divulged. There can be clauses in driver contracts that pay them in excess of \$1 million. Normally, a driver will get a set annual salary. That bonus for things like the number of races won, and for his finish in the final points standings. Some drivers get a basic salary plus a percentage of each race purse."

I can only guess, but Jeff Gordon is probably the highest paid Winston Cup driver, because in 1999, Rick Hendrick cut a lifetime deal with Gordon giving him part ownership in the No. 14 Dupont team.

In my opinion, all the drivers that run in the top-10 earn in excess of \$1 million. Some earn considerably more. A fill-in driver that signs on for a one-race deal may get as little as \$5 or \$6,000 or a percentage of the purse.

Crew chiefs usually have the same type of bonus arrangements as driver, but their pay is less.

All Winston Cup teams have two crews: a shop crew that works during the week and a race crew that only works at the track on Sunday. The weekday or shop team is skilled in engine development, body and chassis engineering, and many other technical skills.

The Sunday teams are hired for their quickness and the ability to work under pressure. You won't see any older guys on the Sunday crews because speed is one of the most important assets for a Sunday crew member. The older guys have the brains, but there is no substitute for when quickness is required.

The lesser players are paid by variable checks. A shop engineer probably earns between \$25,000-\$50,000 per year. Those that have mastered the trade and work for the larger team earn more. Fabricators,

the ones who build the bodies and put the sheet metal on take home considerably less. There are many shop employees that do less technical jobs, that probably earn no more than \$300-\$500 per week. These are the guys that are still learning. Practically all Winston Cup teams work in excess of 50 hours per week, some 60-70.

Sunday only crew members receive from \$200-\$750, depending on their skills. Tire changers are usually the best paid. Their pay is in direct proportion to their speed.

Many fans ask where the money comes from. There are three primary sources and all it is funneled to the car owner. From there it drifts down to pay expenses and employees.

Each team has a primary sponsor. This can bring in from \$6-\$15 million. There are usually several associate sponsorships on each team that range from \$50,000 up to several million.

Each team that makes the field for a race receives a percentage of the purse. If they don't make the field, they go home empty-handed. NASCAR's policy is to give teams 65 percent, tracks, 35 percent, and they keep the other 10 percent.

There is a formula that NASCAR uses to distribute the 65 percent to owners. In the April 22, Talladega 500, Kurt Busch, who finished third, received \$107,780. Fourth place driver Mark Martin received \$126,126, while fifth-place finisher Bobby Labonte took home \$128,442.

It doesn't seem fair, does it? But that's the way NASCAR's program works. Teams that are higher in the points get a larger share of the split. Defending Winston Cup champions also get proportionately more.

At the end of the season NASCAR splits up the television revenue the same way 65/35/10. However, not all teams share in this. NASCAR has a formula that hands out this money to the top-20 teams. This is to insure the continuance of the top teams and drivers. Years ago, tracks would pay cash to the big-name drivers in order to use them as a drawing card for their race. This is basically what NASCAR continues to do. The big get more and the lesser get none.

There are also certain awards and points money teams receive if they use a particular manufacturer's product that figures into the money scheme, but it is minor in comparison to the television revenue.

We might not be 100 percent accurate on everything we have stated, but we have presented a basic layout of how the big money is divided and who gets what.

Weekend Racing: All three of NASCAR's major touring series are in action this weekend. The Winston Cup and Busch drivers go to Richmond, Va., while the Craftsman Truck Series is at Gateway International Raceway in Madison, Ill. Richmond Track Information: Size: .750-mile oval; Banking in frontstretch: 8 degrees; Banking on backstretch: 2 degrees; Length of frontstretch: 1,290 feet; Length of

backstretch: 860 feet; Grandstand capacity: 105,000.

Friday, May 4: Busch Series: Hendrick 250, event 11 of 33 events; Daytona 250 laps/187.5 miles; TV: Fox Sports Channel; Starting time: 7:30 p.m. (EST); Defending champion: Jeff Green.

Saturday, May 5: Winston Cup: Pontiac Excitement 400, event 11 of 36 events; Distance: 400 laps/300 miles; TV: Fox Sports Channel; Starting time: 7:30 p.m. (EST); Defending champion: Dale Earnhardt Jr.

Sunday, May 6: Craftsman Truck Series: Ram Tough 200, event 5 of 24 events; Distance: 200 laps/200 miles; TV: ESPN; Starting time: 2 p.m. (EST); Defending champion: Jack Sprague.

*Gateway track information: Size: 1.25 mile; Banking in turns: 1 and 2: 13 degrees, turns 3 and 4: 9 degrees; Length of frontstretch: 1,922 feet; Length of backstretch: 1,976 feet.

Racing Trivia Question: Richmond International Raceway is one of the oldest NASCAR tracks. What year did it open?

Answer: To Last Week's Question: Jeff Gordon won the 1997 inaugural race at California Speedway.

Gerald Hodges/The Racing Reporter is a syndicated NASCAR columnist. If you have a racing question that you would like answered send it to The Racing Reporter, P.O. Box 160411, Mobile, AL 36616, or e-mail it to: 110335.405@compuserve.com

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Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children
Charity Golf Tournament
Seven Regional Tournaments Across Kentucky
Louisville: Olympic Country Club, Monday, May 14, 1:00 p.m.
Caldwell: Arrowhead Club, Monday, May 21, 1:00 p.m.
Lexington: Glenhurst Country Club, Monday, June 4, 1:00 p.m.
Richmond: Glenhurst Country Club, Monday, June 11, 1:00 p.m.
Owensboro: The Strand, Monday, June 11, 1:00 p.m.
Bowling Green: Bowling Green Country Club, Monday, June 11, 1:00 p.m.
Nashville: Highland Country Club, Monday, June 11, 1:00 p.m.
Top Two Teams from each regional event to the final round Monday, August 6, 2001 at Persimmon Ridge Golf Club in Louisville with no additional fee.
Individual Entry \$100 Team Entry (Foursome) \$400
Four persons accepted Combined Team handicaps maximum 40

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Babe Ruth Sign-ups
Thacker Little League Field
Saturday, May 5th
5 to 7 p.m.

"Track"
(Cont. from A9)
2nd - 5:12.6, 3200-meter run - 2nd - 11:30.9
Andrew Nelson - 1600-meter run - 3rd - 5:13.5, 3200-meter run - 1st - 11:27.15
Elijah Lumsford - high jump - 5th - 4'4", 100-meter hurdles - 1st - 19.71, 300-meter hurdles - 1st - 50.95, 400-meter dash - 4th - 1:00.3
Derrick Baker - 200-meter dash - 6th - 31.2
Matt Whitaker, Bill Burdett, Brandon Cole, Andrew Nelson - 1600-meter relay - 2nd - 4:35
The middle school teams will next compete at the Lake Cumberland Jr. High Classic on Monday, May 7th.

Fenton Art Glass Open House
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