

The Racing Reporter

Bobby Labonte wins after Nadeau runs out of gas

By Gerald Hodges
The Racing Reporter

Bobby Labonte inherited victory in Sunday's NAPA 500 at Atlanta Motor Speedway when Jerry Nadeau ran out of fuel half a lap from the checkered flag.

Nadeau had earlier passed Labonte on Lap 307 of the 325-lap race and pulled away to a big lead. But he ran down the backstretch on the final lap, Nadeau started wiggling his No. 25 Chevrolet.

He was out of fuel.

The car slowed entering Turn three and Bobby Labonte, who was over 2-seconds behind kept digging in his No. 18 Pontiac. He caught and passed Nadeau on the frontstretch, just a few hundred yards from the finish line for his second victory of the season.

"We've had some unseasonable bad luck, but finally it came our way," said Labonte.

Labonte, who led only 13 laps, came from the 29th starting position.

"It's amazing," said crew chief, Jimmy Makar. "We didn't have the best car. Maybe the Good Lord smiled on us. Maybe this is what we need to turn us around."

Both Sterling Marlin and Kevin Harvick passed Nadeau before he coasted across the finish line.

Nadeau, who wound up fourth had to be pushed into the garage area by a wrecker.

"We just didn't get fuel mileage today," said Nadeau. "I don't know why, half a lap to go and I run out of fuel. I've seen it happen to others, but you never think it can happen to you, but we've got to go on to New Hampshire." Ward Burton came in sixth.

Finishing order: 1. Bobby Labonte, 2. Sterling Marlin, 3. Kevin Harvick, 4. Jerry Nadeau, 5. Ward Burton, 6. Jeff Gordon, 7. Dale Earnhardt Jr., 8. Dale Jarrett, 9. Tony Stewart, 10. Jeff Burton, 11. Hut Stricklin, 12. Kevin LePage, 13. Rusty Wallace, 14. Mike Wallace, 15. Bill Elliott, 16. Bobby Hamilton Jr., 17. Todd Bodine, 18. Matt Kenseth, 19. Stacy Compton, 20. Casey Atwood, 21. Robert Pressley, 22. Mark Martin, 23. Johnny Benson, 24. Elliott Sadler, 25. John Andretti, 26. Michael Waltrip, 27. Kenny Wallace, 28. Bobby Hamilton, 29. Jimmie Johnson, 30. Kyle Petty, 31. Ken Schrader, 32. Terry Labonte, 33. Buckshot Jones, 34. Jeff Green, 35. Ricky Rudd, 36. Brett Bodine, 37. Hermie Sadler, 38. Ricky Craven, 39. Joe Nemechek, 40. Jimmie Spencer, 41. Dave Blaney, 42. Lance Hooper, 43. Carl Long.

Gordon clinches his fourth championship

Jeff Gordon, who finished sixth ran strong early in the race but was back in 12th shortly after the final pit stop. But he still wrapped up the 2001 Winston Cup Championship, the fourth of his nine-year Winston Cup career.

Ricky Rudd, who came into the race in second in the points, needed a good finish, but he finished 35th, dropping to third behind Tony Stewart in the standings. Gordon leads Stewart by 376 points going into Friday's postponed season-ending race at New Hampshire. Rudd is now 402 behind with Marlin 418 back.

"I'm just blown away," said Gor-

don. "It's the fourth time, but it seems like the first, and it gets sweeter each time."

"I want to thank Dale Jarrett, Ricky Rudd and all the other great competitors that raced against us."

"We are all honoring heroes, and I would like to honor one. Dale Earnhardt is the one that taught me how to race for a championship. He was my hero."

Top-10 Winston Cup points leaders as of 36 events: 1. J. Gordon 4984, 2. Stewart 4608, 3. Rudd 4582, 4. Marlin 4566, 5. Jarrett 4488, 6. B. Labonte 4391, 7. R. Wallace 4369, Earnhardt Jr. 4369, 9. Harvick 4316, 10. J. Burton 4282.

Gordon's other three championships came in 1995, 1997, and 1998.

Kerry Earnhardt wins last ARCA race of season

The results of the ARCA RE/MAX Series, "Pork, The Other White Meat 400," run Saturday, Nov. 17: 1. Kerry Earnhardt, 2. Shane Hmiel, 3. Frank Kimmel, 4. Stuart Kirby, 5. Tim Steele, 6. Jason Jarrett, 7. Ed Berrier, 8. Damon Lusk, 9. Robert Burroughs, 10. Rick Thoenes, 11. Doug Stevens, 12. Bob Aielo, 13. Bill Conger, 14. Kevin Belmont, 15. Ron Cox, 16. Shane Davis, 17. Emerson Newton-John, 18. Darrell Basham, 19. Norm Benning, 20. Todd Bowsher, 21. James Hylton, 22. Richard Mitchell, 23. Brad Smith, 24. Chase Montgomery, 25. Robbie Gewart, 26. Andy Belmont, 27. Mark Gibson, 28. Donny Morelock, 29. Justin Labonte,

30. Shelby Howard, 31. Jason Hedlesky, 32. Vern Slagh, 33. Carl McCormick, 34. Brent Sherman, 35. Keith Murt, 36. Billy Venturini, 37.

Greg Sarff, 38. Todd Antrican, 39. Chuck Weber, 40. Eric Martin.

Dodge teams turn to Veterans

Two major Dodge teams announced over the weekend they would replace their rookie drivers with seasoned veterans.

Jimmy Spencer, who has driven the No. 26 Kmart Ford the past several years replaces Jason Leffler in Chip Ganassi's No. 41 Dodge.

The car, which carried the number 01 during this season, is in the same shop as the No. 40 Dodge driven by Sterling Marlin.

Ray Evernham replaced 21-year-old Casey Atwood in the No. 19 Dodge with Jeremy Mayfield.

Atwood will move to the No. 7, owned by Jimmy Smith, which is switching from a Ford to Dodge.

In another move, Richard Childress announced a deal that will keep Bobby Gordon in the No. 31, along with new sponsor Cingular Wireless.

Kenny Wallace signed a one-year contract with Dale Earnhardt Inc. that will make him available to fill in for at least a year for injured Steve Park in the No. 1 Chevrolet.

Bill Lester, an African-American will drive Bobby Hamilton's Dodge in the Craftsman Truck Series. He replaces Willy T. Ribbs.

Weekend Racing:

Friday, Nov. 23, Winston Cup New Hampshire 300, event 36 of 36 events: Starting time: 12 noon (EST); TV: NBC; Distance: 300 laps/317.4 miles; Defending champion: Jeff Burton, Ford; Postponed from Sept. 16-Jeff Gordon on pole; Field set on points as of Sept. 9.

New Hampshire International Speedway track facts: Location: Loudon, NH; Distance: 1.058 miles; Banking in turns: 12 degrees; Banking on straights: 2 degrees; Length of front/backstretch; Grandstand capacity: 91,000.

Racing Trivia Question: Who was the first driver to win a race this season in a Dodge?

Answer To Last Week's Question: Sometimes NASCAR stops a Busch or Winston Cup race with just a few laps remaining when there has been a wreck on the track in order to insure a competitive finish.

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 160711, Mobile, AL 36616, or e-mail it to:

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On September 22nd, Kandi Compton represented Eric Bullock's Mt. Vernon Shaolin Karate Club at the National Shaolin Tournament at Lexington Catholic High School. Kandi won first place in sparring in her division. She is shown here receiving her trophy from Grandmaster Sin The', left, and her instructor, Eric Bullock, right.



On September 23rd, John Wells tested before Grandmaster Sin The' and a committee of higher ranking black belts and was awarded his second degree black belt. He is shown here in the center with head instructor at the Lexington Shaolin Karate School and seventh degree black belt Master Bill Leonard, left, and his instructor at the Mt. Vernon Shaolin Karate Club fourth degree black belt Eric Bullock.



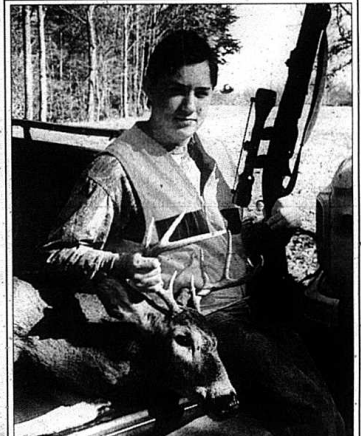
On September 23rd, Eric Bullock's Mt. Vernon Shaolin Karate Club had three students who tested and received higher ranks. They are shown here after being awarded their new ranks from Grandmaster Sin The', far left. The students from left are: Kandi Compton who double tested from white to yellow; Robbie Miller tested from white to yellow and Jonathan Rader tested from white to yellow. Instructor Eric Bullock, far right, accompanied his students to the test. Eric can be reached for information about classes at 256-2354 or 758-4744.



Mark Miller killed this ten point buck while hunting in Rockcastle Count on November 13th. Also shown is his son, Anthony Miller, with the deer.



Sharon Lovell, co-owner of Lovell's Gun Repair and Sales in Orlando, got this nice doe in Carter County during the recent modern gun season. Also pictured is her son, Michael, with his 9-point buck.



Michael Anthony Lovell, 14, got this large 9-point buck in Carter County during the modern gun season. Michael is the son of Mike and Sharon Lovell, owners of Lovell's Gun Repair and Sales on Maple Grove Road in Orlando.



Johnny Baldwin, of Brodhead, killed this 5x5 Elk with a bow in north-western Colorado in September.



Lee Bullock, of Orlando, killed this Cow Elk with a Long Bow in north-eastern Colorado in September.

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