

Racing Reporter

A whining Waltrip gets Talladega victory

By Gerald Hodges/
the Racing Reporter

Michael Waltrip emerged victorious over his teammate, Dale Earnhardt Jr., in a furious four-lap shootout in Sunday's Winston Cup EA Sports 500.

Waltrip had taken the lead on lap 189 of the 188 lap race at Martinsville, Ky. Busch, who was running second at the time, attempted to block polester Elliott Sadler.

Sadler swerved left to avoid Earnhardt Jr. and brushed the fender of Kurt Busch's No. 97. Sadler's No. 38 M&M's went into the air and, and then rolled over five times before coming to rest on the infield apron on its wheels.

Sadler pulled himself from his turn up race car, but was airlifted to the hospital as a precautionary measure.

NASCAR displayed the red flag to the race would not end under yellow.

When green flag racing resumed, there were only four laps left at the 2.66-mile track.

The top-five leaders were: Waltrip, Earnhardt Jr., Ward Burton, Jeff Gordon, and last week's winner, Ryan Newman.

Waltrip got a good jump on the start and pulled away. On the next lap, Gordon passed Burton for the third spot, and closed in on Earnhardt Jr. and No. 6, who began to block him.

As the cars took the white flag, signifying free lap, it was Waltrip, Earnhardt Jr., Gordon, Newman, and Tony Stewart.

Gordon made a move to the outside on the back straightaway, but in doing so, he lost ground, and both Tony Stewart and Ryan Newman were able to move under him.

Earnhardt Jr. did not press his teammate for the lead, and appeared to be content with blocking the other drivers. At the finish line, it was Waltrip by two car-lengths.

"What a day," said Waltrip. "I was worried about the restart, but I fought that off. Then I saw Gordon trying to go on the outside of Junior, and he fought him off. Then I wondered where I was going to park my No. 15 NAPA Chevrolet after I won the race."

"I didn't like the car all day. And I told them so. I guess you could say I was winning. In the back it was no good, but when we got to the front, it

was all right. After it crossed the finish line it was a great car."

Waltrip's teammate Dale Earnhardt Jr. finished second.

"He had a great car," said Earnhardt Jr. "Mikey (Waltrip) was my toughest competitor, because he knows all my tricks. It just didn't work out today, and we wound up second."

"Cars were bumping into everybody. Some could handle them and some couldn't. I think I had something to do with Sadler crashing."

Point's leader Matt Kenseth has his first DNF of the season. His team had a now 354 points over Kevin Harvick.

Finishing order: 1. Michael Waltrip, 2. Dale Earnhardt Jr., 3. Tony Stewart, 4. Ryan Newman, 5. Jeff Gordon, 6. Kurt Busch, 7. Ricky Harvick, 8. Ricky Craven, 9. Rusty Wallace, 10. Mike Wallace, 11. Bobby Labonte, 12. Robby Gordon, 13. Bill Elliott, 14. Ward Burton, 15. John Andretti, 16. Jamie McMurray, 17. Dave Blaney, 18. Jeff Green, 19. Dale Jarrett, 20. Kenny Wallace, 21. Ken Schrader, 22. Terry Labonte, 23. Mark Martin, 24. Greg Biffle, 25. Joe Nemechek, 26. Juan Keller, 27. Mike Skinner, 28. Christian Fittipaldi, 29. Jason Jarrett, 30. Elliott Stryker, 31. Tony Rynes, 32. Jeff Burton, 33. Matt Kenseth, 34. Jimmie Johnson, 35. David Green, 36. Ricky Rudd, 37. Casey Mears, 38. Jeremy Mayfield, 39. Sterling Marlin, 40. Buckshot Jones, 41. Johnny Benson, 42. Jimmy Spencer, 43. Larry Foyt.

Top 10 points leaders after 29 of 36 races: 1. Kenseth-4227, 2. Harvick-3873, 3. Earnhardt Jr.-3843, 4. Johnson-3751, 5. Newman-3738, 6. J. Gordon-3707, 7. B. Labonte-3638, 8. Busch-3527, 9. Stewart-3456, 10. T. Labonte-3396.

Kerry Earnhardt wins at Mobile
Meanwhile down in Mobile, Alabama, Kerry Earnhardt won an exhibition race over several other Winston Cup drivers.

Earnhardt overcame a bad start in the second segment of the Driven To Rock race Thursday night at Mobile International Speedway to beat out Kenny Wallace by one car-length.

Michael Waltrip finished two more car-lengths further back in third-place.

"The last second I had some junk on my tires on the restart," said Earnhardt. "I thought I had a flat there

for a while on the right rear."

"But after they showed that caution the car started coming around. I got just enough momentum going into turn three to catch and then pass Kenny before we got to the finish."

Flagman Jimmy Spencer threw the yellow flag on lap three of the 10-lap second segment for what he said was debris on the front straightaway. But after careful inspection by MIS safety crews, no debris was found.

Kenny Wallace won the first 10-lap race, followed by Waltrip, and then Earnhardt. Spencer, who had been, slated to race, had problems with the seat in the car he was assigned, so he went to his backup, which was a motorcycle.

The MIS race director promptly disallowed the race.

After the disqualification, Spencer climbed into the flagman's tower and served as flagman for the race.

The field was inverted for the second race which meant Earnhardt was the leader. He lost the lead in turn two to Waltrip. Earnhardt then almost slipped off the back straightaway.

Waltrip began to gain on Waltrip, and soon they were racing side-by-side around the track.

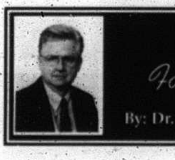
During lap three, Wallace got under Waltrip for the lead.

At the end of lap three was when Spencer showed the yellow flag. It was bunched the cars up and Earnhardt, who had apparently been able to clean his tires by this time, was able to keep up with the other two drivers, and had just enough speed for the win.

"It's going to be a long ride back to the other two guys listening to young Earnhardt," said Spencer. "To me, he does a smart race and just beat their pants off."

Neither Wallace nor Waltrip seemed to be too upset that they had lost the race.

"Heck, I had a lot of fun," said Wallace. "I thought it was a great race. To lose by just a few feet is like a win to me."



By: Dr. Roy Don Whitehead

Do You Want to Live Longer?

I heartily recommend to you a new book, Emotional Longevity: What Really Determines How Long You Live by Norman B. Anderson. Especially if you are work in the field of health care, this book is for you.

Dr. Anderson was the associate director of the National Institutes of Health before accepting a teaching position at Harvard University. The NIH, the medical research arm of the federal government, is made up of twenty-seven institutes that conduct research into all manner of diseases.

In his book Dr. Anderson has gathered information from the latest medical research. Here are some of his conclusions.

1. Optimists live longer than pessimists. As with all of his conclusions, Dr. Anderson cites research studies to support this claim. "How you perceive both the past and the future affects longevity. If you tend to blame yourself for past mistakes or if you see the future as dark and bleak, your chances of living longer decrease."

2. People with multiple social ties live longer than loners. The frequency of contact that you have with family and friends affects how long you live. A study using mice found that when a certain mouse was depleted, the mice sought contact with others. That contact with other mice then increased the amount of that hormone that was present.

3. People who go to church live longer. This may be for a multitude of reasons but one reason is that these people have a way to understand life's tragedies that helps them to cope. They may believe it was God's will that a certain event happened or they may explain it in some other way. The important fact is that they find an explanation that satisfies them.

4. People with more education and/or higher income live longer. Many studies have shown this but the reasons why they live longer are not clear. Certainly the rich can purchase better health care, live in safer neighborhoods and (sometimes) have less financial stress. This does not explain why someone who makes a million dollars a year lives longer than someone who makes a half a million a year. Research into this is

Gaughan wins at Las Vegas
Top 10 Craftsman Truck series points leaders after 20 of 25 races: 1. Gaughan-3151, 2. Kvapil-3083, 3. Musgrave-3051, 4. Setzer-3015, 5. Wood-2866, 6. Hamilton-2856, 7. Crawford-2813, 8. Edwards-2683, 9.

Cook-2606, 10. Chaffin-2537

The Busch series had an off week. Winston Cup racing.

The Winston Cup and Busch teams are at Kansas City, while the Craftsman Trucks are at South Boston, VA.

Saturday, Oct. 4, Busch Series: Mr. Goodcents 300, race 28 of 34. Starting time: 2 p.m. (EST). TV: NBC.

Distance: 200 laps/300 miles. Defending champion: Jeff Burton, Ford.

Saturday, Oct. 4, Craftsman Truck 250, race 21 of 25. Starting time: 4:30 p.m. (EST). TV: Speed Channel. Distance: 250 laps/400 miles. Defending champion: Mike Bliss, Chevrolet.

Sunday, Oct. 5, Winston Cup Banquet 400, race 30 of 36. Starting time: 12:30 p.m. (EST). TV: NBC. Distance: 267 laps/400 miles. Defending champion: Jeff Gordon, Chevrolet.

Kansas Speedway track information: Date opened: 2001; size: 1.5 mile; tri-oval; Banking in turns: 15 degrees; Banking on frontstretch: 10 degrees; backstretch: 5 degrees; Grandstand capacity: 78,000.

Racing-Trivia Question: Who is the crew chief on Jimmie Johnson's No. 48 Lowe's Chevrolet?

Last Week's Question: How many points does a driver earn for leading a Winston Cup or Busch series race?

Answer: A driver receives five points for leading at least one lap. The driver that leads the most laps receives 10 points.

Gerald Hodges' 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: bodgesnews@earthlink.net

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It's forest fire season

Season runs Oct. 1 thru Dec. 15th

It's forest fire hazard season again in Kentucky; the fall forest fire hazard season began Oct. 1 and runs through Dec. 15. During this time it is illegal to burn anything in or within 150 feet of any woodland or brushland except between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

"This year, more than ever, citizens who live in and around our state's woodlands should take extra precautions to ensure their property is safe from wildfire," said Leah MacSwigs, director of the Kentucky Division of Forestry. "Current budget constraints have impacted the division's resources, both in personnel and equipment. We have fewer resources available than in previous years but we will provide the best protection and fastest response possible with the resources we do have."

Citizens and communities can take steps now to "Firewise" their homes and communities. Firewise is a national program designed to reduce the wildfire danger to homes and communities. Some of the simple things that the Firewise Communities Program recommends are keeping at least a 50-foot mowed buffer area (defensible space) around your home, having water hoses that reach all the way around your home, enclosing decks so leaves can't blow up under them and stacking firewood away from the house. For more information on the Firewise Communities Program, visit their web site at www.firewise.org.

Another way citizens can reduce the wildfire threat to their homes is by reporting arsonists. Arson is the leading cause of forest fires in Kentucky. Wildland arsonists have burned nearly half a million acres of Kentucky's forests in the last four years. The Kentucky Division of Forestry needs your help in stopping this senseless crime. Call the Target Arson Hotline at 1-800-27-ARSON. You may qualify for a cash reward if your information leads to an arrest and indictment.

Accidental fires are the second leading cause of forest fires in Kentucky. Safety precautions should be taken and weather conditions considered before conducting any outdoor burning and remember to check with the Kentucky Division for Air Quality and Division of Waste Management to make sure you are in compliance with their outdoor burning regulations.

For more information on the forest fire hazard season, burning laws call Kentucky Division of Forestry at 1-800-866-0555.

"Petition to Kentucky Transportation Cabinet for Safety Devices at the following locations"

We, the undersigned, residents of Rockcastle County do hereby petition the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, through the Hon. James C. Codell, III, secretary of the cabinet, to make provisions for the following highway dangers:

1) On Ky-461: Lower speed limit to 45 mph from 1-75 at the intersection of U.S. 50.

2) Traffic Control-Signals at the intersection of Ky. 461 and Ky. 1326 (Old Broadhead Mt. Vernon Road).

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about the little girl over and over by people in Iraq," he said.

Ryan's unit was one of those which helped reestablish the police force in Iraq and he was very adamant about the fact that the U.S. has Iraq and the entire region's best interest at heart."

Ryan also said he thought it would take up to ten years for the problems in Iraq to be somewhat solved. "It is not going to happen overnight," he said. "But it is my belief that the U.S. will do everything in our power to see another country see from a tyrant and I think the region will be much better off for our efforts," he said.

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