

Final Laps At Indy, Charlotte Leave Everyone Numb

by John Close

www.closefinishes.com

As it turned out, the final two miles out of a total of 1,100 were the ones that really counted Sunday.

Both the Indianapolis 500 and the Coca-Cola 600 were decided in the final mile, each a featuring a jolting finish that left drivers, team members and fans alike numb in victory and defeat.

While our NASCAR stock car readers will probably argue the point, the finish at Indy was way more dramatic than the one at Charlotte. Seeing Dale Earnhardt, Jr. win NASCAR's longest race - after an even longer personal victory drought - would have been the climax to a great day. But as climactic as Indy? No way. With his competition all sucking air with dry fuel cells, there was a reasonable expectation that Earnhardt would run out of gas too.

What happened at Indy was way different.

Few expected leader J.R. Hildebrand to crash coming off the final turn and in sight of an Indy 500 checkered flag. Only a rookie mistake - trying to move out of the groove to pass a lapped car on the final turn - prevented Hildebrand from racing glory. Instead, the vision of Hildebrand's crushed racer scrubbing its way along the outside retaining wall in a vain attempt to get to the finish line first will be a sports highlight that will live in infamy.

Earnhardt's fuel miscue can't compare to that.

While both Hildebrand and Earnhardt were obviously crushed during their interviews after they snapped defeat out of the jaws of victory, the beneficiaries of their misfortunes were also stunned by the chain of events.

Indy winner Dan Weldon, out of a ride heading into this year's 500 classic, sobbed in Victory Lane, overcome with the turn of events that took him from a spectator to race champion.

Meanwhile, Kevin Harvick spoke openly about how he hates racing at Charlotte and never expects to do well there - all as he was showered with his sponsor's beer in Victory Lane.



It was a curious way to end a great day of racing. Winners were rebuffed and unlikely victors wondered openly how the heck they got there. In the end, it was just another Memorial Day Weekend when auto racing at Indy, Charlotte and Monte Carlo (a great Formula One classic that was contested earlier in the day) reigned supreme.

We like that kind of party.

Last Call

Just about everybody has weighed in on the Kyle Busch speeding incident last week, so we will too.

While Busch showed extremely bad judgment piloting a sports car at nearly three times the posted speed limit, we also have to question the judgment of countless others who have pillared Busch because he wasn't arrested on the spot after the incident.

We're sick of the howling that Busch got preferential treatment by the authorities and was shown courtesies that a 'normal Joe' would not have received.

"If it was you or me who did that, we'd be in jail" they oink.

Bottom line - the decision to arrest was that of the officer making the traffic stop - it was his decision and his alone not to make an arrest. Busch had no say in that.

What was he supposed to do, beg to be arrested?

At the end of the day, it will be up to the magistrates to convict and pass sentence on Busch for what happened - his public, ill-advised high-speed antics. The rest of us also need to just stick to the facts and not convict Busch for what didn't happen.

It's a safe bet that he's in enough trouble the way it is.

Double-Package GMP and AMS Suite Contest Rules Now Posted

Since Gresham Motorsports Park and Atlanta Motor Speedway are the only two race tracks in Georgia that host NASCAR races, both tracks have teamed up to give one

NASCAR race.

The prize package will consist of two suite passes to the Slack Auto Parts 150 NASCAR K&N Pro Series East race at GMP on June 11th and two suite passes to the Labor Day NASCAR race on September 4th at AMS.

Contest rules and details have been posted on GMP's website. Please click the following link, www.GreshamMotorsportsPark.com

A Busy Week Of Testing At GMP

NASCAR teams have been keeping the track hot all week long at Gresham Motorsports Park! Drivers like Josh Wise, Max Gresham and Coleman Pressley have been busy preparing for upcoming races and making adjustments to their cars.

Gresham To Carry World Crown 300 Colors In NASCAR K&N Clash At 'The Madhouse'

One of short-track stock car rac-

ing's biggest events - The World Crown 300 - will be riding shotgun with Max Gresham this weekend as he takes on one of motorsport's greatest short tracks - the famed Bowman Gray Stadium in Winston-Salem, NC.

GMP Has So Much In Store For Fans At The Slack Auto Parts 150

June is quickly approaching and so is the return of NASCAR to Gresham Motorsports Park with the Slack Auto Parts 150 NASCAR K&N Pro Series East race on June 11th. GMP has so much going on with the Outlaw Late Models, Mini Stocks, Trucks, Renegades, Mini Cups and much more that this is sure to be an event that no one will want to miss!

As an early Father's Day gift on June 11th, GMP is allowing all father's in FREE with the purchase of at least one general adult admission. Adult general admission is only \$20 and kids 6-12 are only \$10!

Slack Auto Parts

150

June 11, 2011

NASCAR K&N Pro Series East Returns to GMP!

See Your Favorite Drivers:

Brett Moffett
Max Gresham
Chase Elliott
Brandon Haley
And MANY More!!!

FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL:

Buy one Adult General Admission Ticket and get your Dad in FREE!

Adult General Admission: ONLY \$20!

NASCAR K&N Pro Series Outlaws Trucks Renegades Mini Stocks & Mini Cups!

Gates Open at 11am

Opening Ceremonies at 6pm

Races Start at 7pm

Fan Night at Funopolis
Friday, June 10, 2011
6 PM - 9 PM

6:00 - 6:30 - Autograph Session
6:30 - 9:00 - Compete Against Drivers and Crews in Funopolis Video/Arcade Games, Go Kart Racing, Basketball, Bumper Cars, Laser Tag and More!

*Funopolis Located in Commerce, GA Off of I-85 at Exit 149-Only 15 Minutes from GMP!

706.367.9461 WWW.GreshamMotorsportsPark.Com