

## NASCAR Expands Concussion Protocol

New features include consistent screening tool, additional neurological support

NASCAR announced updates to its concussion protocol for competitors, adding a consistent screening tool for all venues and increasing available neurological support for race event weekends through its new partnership with AMR

“NASCAR has worked very closely with the industry to ensure our concussion protocol reflects emerging best practices in this rapidly developing area of sports medicine,” said Jim Cassidy, NASCAR senior vice president of racing operations. “We will continue to utilize relationships we’ve had for years with leaders in the neurological research field who helped to shape these updates.”

NASCAR’s protocol now includes:

- As part of the new rule regarding damaged vehicles, a driver whose car sustains damage from an accident or contact of any kind and goes behind the pit wall or to the garage is required to visit the Infield Care Center to be

evaluated.

- The medical portion of NASCAR’s Event Standards now require that Infield Care Center physicians incorporate the SCAT-3 diagnostic tool in screening for head injuries.

- AMR will provide on-site neurological consultative support at select NASCAR events during the 2017 season and will work directly with NASCAR in the continued development of concussion protocol.

The new protocol goes into effect immediately for all NASCAR national series.

Right: A crash at Michigan International Speedway in June of 2016 is believed to be the cause of Junior’s injury. After rehabilitating from a concussion and its lingering symptoms, Dale Earnhardt Jr. was medically cleared to compete in NASCAR’s premier series in 2017.



## AMS PRESIDENT ED CLARK MAKES ANNUAL PREDICTIONS FOR 2017 NASCAR SEASON

The 2017 NASCAR season kicked off in February and Atlanta Motor Speedway president Ed Clark has offered his annual predictions on what to expect during the 2017 NASCAR season.

“It’s that time again. Another season of racing is upon us, and everyone here at Atlanta Motor Speedway worked hard on getting ready for an exciting Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500 weekend.

“Now, let’s get down to predicting the 2017 season. I was a little off-base with my 2015 expectations, but rebounded nicely in 2016. In fact, the only one I really missed was my prediction that Erik Jones would win the XFINITY Series championship, but even that came down to the last few laps.

“So without further ado, here are my predictions for the 2017 season.”

### 1. Chase Elliott defies the “sophomore jinx”

The so-called “second-year curse” won’t impact Chase Elliott in 2017. He’ll follow

up last year’s strong rookie season with an even better one this year. I see him winning multiple races and getting past at least the second round of the The Playoffs.

### 2. Another great rookie battle

It was easy to get excited about NASCAR’s rising talent last year with a crop of rookies in the top series that included Chase Elliott, Ryan Blaney and Chris Buescher. Look for another showcase of talent with Ty Dillon, Erik Jones and Daniel Suarez each moving up to the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series. When you combine the talent of these drivers with the organizations and support that they will be linked up with, each of them will be in position to emerge as the top rookie. In the end, Erik Jones will win a very spirited Rookie of the Year battle.

### 3. RCR gets back into Victory Lane

Richard Childress Racing will find its way into Victory Lane for the first time since 2013 this season. Between Austin Dillon and the No. 3 team continuing to gel

and Ryan Newman along with Paul Menard putting together solid performances, the stars are aligned for RCR to get at least one win this season.

### 4. Logano wins his first title

Joey Logano’s gotten the whole deal of being in position to win a title down pat. This year, he’ll take the next step to bringing a championship home to Team Penske. The No. 22 team is no stranger to high-pressure moments and has won on multiple types of tracks. Sometimes, all a driver needs is a bit of good fortune at the right time for a championship. This year, I predict five wins and the law of averages will catch up to Joey Logano and result in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series title.

### 5. Record number of green-flag lead passes

It’s pretty simple. With NASCAR’s new stage-based format, we’ll see some of the most exciting racing moments in years. With points being at stake in all stages of the race,



there will be more reason than ever before to gain as many spots as possible, and drivers will be eager to make as many passes as they can. As a result, there’ll be a significant increase in lead passes under green-flag conditions.



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