

Continued from page 5 **MSA CONGRATULATES THE 2017 INDUCTEES OF THE GRHOF !!!**



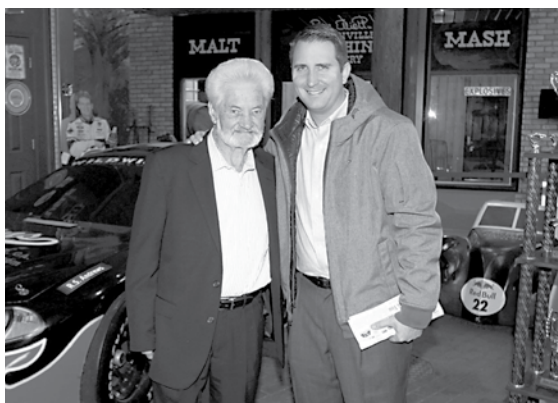
**REX WHITE (NASCAR HALL OF FAME RECIPIENT) HONORED THE LATE BOBBY JOHNS**



**DRIVER OF THE YEAR: CASEY RODERICK AND HIS SPONSORS AND CREW**



**EMCEE DOUG (HOT DOG) TURNBALL GETTING TIPS HOW TO AVOID CONSTRUCTION BARREL'S ON 400**



**GREAT JOB GORDON PIRKLE AND RUN LATE TURNBALL**



**PONDERING... WHO WAS FIREBALL?**



**CHECK OUT WILD BILL'S #9 AT GEORGIA RACING HALL OF FAME IN DAWSONVILLE GA**

## AMS TRACK MAINTENANCE RENEWS REPAVE DEBATE

As has been done for each of the past 20 fall seasons, operations crews were hard at work this week, implementing an annual heavy maintenance program on the aging 1.54-mile racing surface at Atlanta Motor Speedway.

Well beyond its predicted lifespan, the asphalt, originally lain at the same time the track was reconfigured into a quad-oval layout in the spring of 1997, is showing its age. Widening cracks, bumpy seams and asphalt aggregate – the “glue” that holds it all together – depleted to the point of near total nonexistence, may all sound like typical characteristics of a forgotten racetrack of the past.

But in reality? It's perhaps one of the most well-kept 1.5 miles of asphalt in the country and easily one of NASCAR drivers' most cherished venues. It's old, abrasive and slick, and it presents a difficult challenge for racers to find speed and keep their wheels spinning in the right direction. With its numerous racing grooves and characteristic bumps, race cars typically tread over every square inch – from the wall to the apron – over the course of a race as they try to defeat not only their competitors but the track itself.

Of course the historic racing surface, which has seen iconic moments in NASCAR history like Dale Earnhardt's 0.010-second

margin of victory over Bobby Labonte in 2000 and Kevin Harvick's emotional and record-setting 0.006-second margin of victory over Jeff Gordon in Earnhardt's Richard Childress Racing car the following year, wouldn't still be in “raceable” condition without the meticulous maintenance program employed by AMS over the years.

“This will be our 21st season racing on this surface,” said Clark. “That's pretty much unheard of as far as racing surfaces go. And I give the biggest part of the credit to the sealing program we've done year after year.”

Originally set to finally surrender to Father Time and be resurfaced after the conclusion of the speedway's annual NASCAR weekend this past March, the two-decade-old asphalt received a temporary reprieve after several drivers spoke up in a chorus of opposition.

“I think that's one of the reasons the drivers have really petitioned to not repave,” Clark said. “They know we've got this great program in place to seal the track up. We know we're going to have to pave very soon, but we're going to get at least one more year out of it – our 21st season – next February with the Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500.”

As for how much longer the track surface will last, Clark was willing to take a

wait-and-see approach going forward.

NASCAR racing returns to Atlanta Motor Speedway Feb. 23-25, 2017, featuring the Rinnai 250 and Active Pest Control 200 XFINITY Series and Camping World Truck Series doubleheader on Saturday, Feb. 24, as well as the Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500 Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race on Sunday, Feb. 25. For more information or to purchase tickets today, contact the Atlanta Motor Speedway ticket office at (770) 946-4211 or (877) 9-AMS-TIX, or visit [www.atlantamotorspeedway.com](http://www.atlantamotorspeedway.com).



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