

## Justin Haley Scores His First K&N Victory at Greenville/Pickens

Story & Photos: Phillip Prichard, MSA

Justin Haley and Kyle Benjamin battled for 150 laps in the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East Kevin Whitaker 150 race at the historic Greenville-Pickens Speedway on March 26. With seven laps to go, Justin Haley prevailed and sailed to his first career NASCAR K&N Pro Series East victory. This was Haley's, the 16-year-old from Winamac, Indiana, 23rd career NASCAR K&N Pro Series race.

Kyle Benjamin, whose hometown is Easley, South Carolina, was fastest in practice and winner of the 21 Means 21 Pole Award

Reid Wilson finished sixth, followed by Noah Gragson, Tyler Dippel, Kaz Grala and Hunter Baize. The race was slowed just twice by cautions, including the halfway break.

Only eight drivers from last year's Kevin Whitaker 150 returned to the historic South Carolina oval. Veterans Dillon Bassett, Ronnie Bassett Jr., Kyle Benjamin, Collin Cabre, Christian Celaya, Kaz Grala, Justin Haley and John Holleman IV were the sole 2015 competitors returning. 14 first-time Greenville-Pickens competitors, 11 of them are rookies vying for the Sunoco Rookie of the Year Award.

In the 2016 points battle,



**BURTON AND WIERINGER BATTLING FOR POSITION**

presented by Coors Brewing Company. He led a race-high 122 laps. Haley used lapped traffic to wrestle the lead away early in the race. But Benjamin took it back just before halfway and led until the closing laps when Haley edged by him to claim the checkered flag.

The top five were Kyle Benjamin finishing second, followed by Ronnie Bassett Jr., championship points leader Spencer Davis and Dillon Bassett.

Spencer Davis maintains a three-point lead over Benjamin, while Haley moved into third. Haley is one point behind Benjamin and one ahead of teammate Dippel. Ronnie Bassett rounds out the top five in points. The 17 year old Davis is a native of Dawsonville, GA.

The Kevin Whitaker Chevrolet 150 at Greenville Pickens Speedway was the third race of the 2016 NASCAR K&N Pro Series East season. It is the



**JUSTIN HALEY CLASS OF THE FIELD**



**KYLE BENJAMIN, POLE WINNER**

third of 10 oval track events and 14 races overall on the schedule. This is the series' 15th visit to the South Carolina oval.

Greenville-Pickens fairs well for future NASCAR K&N Pro Series East champions. The last three seasons the eventual season champion has picked up a win at the flat half-mile.

Greenville-Pickens Speedway is a half-mile asphalt oval

SCAR XFINITY Series, four NASCAR Convertible Series and two NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour events. The names of all of the past track championships are painted on the walls with the years of their championship. Visit <http://greenvillepickens.com/> for more information. The NASCAR K&N Pro Series East will return to the Greenville-Pickens on Labor Day, September 5th.



**VICTORY!**

with five degrees banking in the turns located in Easley, SC. It opened in 1946 with a dirt racing surface and was paved in 1970. It hosted 29 Sprint Cup Series races from 1951-71. It also hosted two NA-

The NASCAR K&N Pro Series East will be back in action on April 16 with the PittLite 125 at Bristol Motor Speedway. Benjamin is the defending race winner.



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