

The Talladega Experience by Misty Baker

Let me tell you the story of Talladega. My name is Misty Baker, my husband is Billy Baker, and he takes photographs for Motorsport America from time to time.

I've always been a fan of NASCAR but have never had the opportunity to be in the pits during a race. That all change during the Talladega race weekend, I had my notepad and started taking notes. I got to see the drivers close up. I got to see my favorite driver Martin Truex.

You might ask why is Martin my favorite driver. It's simple, Martin's girlfriend went through cancer just like I did and Martin stood by his girlfriend throughout the entire treatment. Which is an extremely hard thing to do and I think he's one heck of a driver and one heck of a man.

My husband and I stayed across the street in the campground next to Talladega and I have to say that in itself was an experience I wasn't prepared for. Don't get me wrong, I had a wonderful time but if you've never had the experience of the Talladega infield or across the street in the campgrounds it's a must for you to attend.

The Arca race on Friday was my first

up close experience with professional racing. Saturday during the Xfinity race it topped the previous day. After Saturday's Xfinity race we returned to our camper, I found a party near our campsite hosted by the Talladega Speedway. It was a college only event.

I couldn't believe my eyes when I look out and Eric Jones was only feet from my camper! He was helping MC the event and handed out prizes to the college students. This event went on for about an hour and I was impressed with what Talladega had done here.

My husband and I went riding Saturday night up to the hill in the campgrounds to experience the entire Campground party needless to say I was amazed. On Sunday, the day of the Monster Energy Cup race, the day started early and lasted till late but that only made things a hundred times better.

I took notes, my husband took photographs. I saw the pits in action with the most professional Crews in the world: guys able to change 4 tires and fill up the car with gas in 12 seconds. Guys that could drive on that track at 200 miles per



PRACTICE STARTED A BAD WEEKEND FOR JAMIE McMURRY

hour: it was breathtaking.

When this race weekend began I was merely a fan and now I truly understand the hard work. All the effort put in by all the reporters and photographers that cover a Nascar event.

I too, am still a fan but I'm also hooked on the NASCAR Experience. I will be reporting in future races, so this is my first story—be kind to me, I promise I will get better.

I want to send out a special thanks to Fred Hanyon, publisher of Motorsport America, and my husband Billy Baker the photographer for Motorsport America. They both watched over me and made sure I didn't get in anybody's way. The track personnel are extremely professional and needless to say awesome. It takes a lot of people to put on an event like this. I was so happy to be included in part of that group.

For now that's all I have, but I promise the next race I will go in with my eyes wide open and a better understanding of what's coming.



FRIDAY ARCA



THESE ARCA BUGGIES WERE TRASHED



ARCA'S ZANE SMITH SURVIVED 87 LAPS AT DEGA

Photos: Billy Baker & FL Hanyon, MSA



3 WIDE WAS THE NORM DURING THE X-FINITY RACE

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