

Seasonal trout streams open March 26th

It is time for pre-season trout stocking and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plan to stock more than one million trout in Georgia streams, rivers and small lakes by the end of the year. Many streams will be stocked by the end of the month and in time for opening day for seasonal trout stream fishing - Sat., March 26th.

"Our goal is to replenish all of our stocked streams before the end of the month," says Perry Thompson, trout stocking coordinator for the Wildlife Resources Division. "Since stream flows are up, we'll have an opportunity to spread our fish out well. Flow can drop quickly though, and we'll manage accordingly."

Anglers anxious to fish the seasonal trout streams can do so beginning Sat., Mar. 26th. Some popular seasonal streams include Cooper Creek in Union County, Wildcat

Creek in Rabun County, Dicks Creek in Lumpkin County and Johns Creek in Floyd County.

"If you want to fish for trout before opening day, visit one of the state's many year-round trout streams," says Thompson.

In north Georgia, Rock Creek in Fannin County, Tallulah River in Rabun County or Holly Creek in Murray County are recommended, while the Chattahoochee River at Buford Dam Park and Jones Bridge are excellent nearby destinations for metro Atlanta anglers.

"These sites are well-stocked and provide great angling experiences for someone new to the sport," explains Thompson.

Anglers must possess both a current Georgia fishing license and a trout license to fish in designated trout waters and to fish for or possess trout. Licenses can be purchased online and at various local sporting good dealers. The daily

limit is eight trout on general regulation trout waters. Anglers are reminded to respect private property rights along streams flowing through private lands and to obtain permission before fishing on private property. Buy a license online (www.gofishgeorgia.com), by phone (1-800-366-2661) or at a retail license vendor (list of vendors available at website).

For those seeking additional county-specific trout fishing information, visit www.gofishgeorgia.com where current Georgia Sport Fishing Regulations, a complete list of stocked streams, a Northeast Georgia fishing guide, and the award-winning Trout Streams of Georgia map are available. Printed copies of the regulations and trout stream map are available at all Wildlife Resources Division Fisheries Management offices and at some official fishing license dealers. NT(Mar23,21)CA

North Georgia Rapids update

Eight members of the North Georgia Rapids swim team recently traveled to Dalton, Georgia to compete in the 17th Annual Mako Mania Trophy Swim Meet. The team brought home ten trophies and numerous ribbons to make an impressive showing among ten participating teams from three states.

Gracie Weldon, swimming in the girls 10 and under age group earned four personal best times and brought home her first ever trophy, a third in the 50 yard backstroke. Megan Foster, 11, also had personal best times in each of her four races which is extremely difficult to achieve given the number of years she has competed and her level of competition.

Two of the team's newest members, Lindsey Robertson and Austin Norton (a Union County High School team member) swam personal best times and earned ribbons in their events.

Anna Knight, Jennifer Chinnici and Courtney Marshall, making up the team's veteran



Members of North Georgia Rapids swim team

girls component, earned five trophies among them. Tanner Gay in the boys senior division, had three personal best times and continued his presence as one of the region's better male swimmers.

The team members made a great showing with twenty-three personal best times achieved out of twenty-nine en-

tries. The team members should be extremely proud of their accomplishments - way to go!

The North Georgia Rapids Swim Team practices year round at Union General Wellness Center's State of the Art heated pool. Those interested in competitive swimming should contact Barry Gay (706) 835-1662. NT(Mar23,21)SH

T-Ball and Farm League registration

The Towns County Recreation Department will be holding registration for T-Ball and Farm League March 12 through March 26.

T-Ball is for boys and girls ages 4 and 5. Farm League is for boys and girls

ages 6,7 and 8. The age control date will be prior to May 1 for boys and girls. Boys and girls ages 6 may play in either the T-Ball or the Farm League programs.

Cost for these programs will be \$35 per participant. All

registration will be held at the Recreation Department. Our hours of operation are: Monday through Friday 9 AM until 9 PM and Saturday from 9 AM until 7 PM. For more information please call the Recreation Department at 706-896-2600. TM(Mar23,21)SH

Bass Tournament 2011



Photos by Lowell Nicholson

Rollins Planetarium Presents "Laser Beatles" and "Laser Pop" Cosmic Concerts featuring hit music

Young Harris College's O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium will present the two exciting, full-dome, cosmic laser concerts "Laser Beatles" and "Laser Pop" on the following Friday evenings: April 1, 8 and 15. Planetarium admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for students and free with YHC ID.

Scheduled for 7 p.m., "Laser Beatles," will feature a tribute to the legendary British rock band including chart-topping favorites such as "Magical Mystery Tour," "I Wanna Hold Your Hand," "A Hard Day's Night," "Help!" and "Nowhere Man."

"Laser Pop," will follow at 8 p.m., featuring popular hits from a variety of artists including "Pop" by N'Sync, "Get This Party Started" by Pink, "Desert Rose" by Sting, "Kryptonite" by 3 Doors Down and many others.

This laser light extravaganza features SkyLase, the only full-dome, full-color solid-state laser projection system

for an intense and exciting experience of laser light. Viewers will experience the thrill of spinning stars, computer animations, laser graphics and more, all synchronized to an engaging mix of popular tunes. This show pushes the limits of sight and sound creating an out-of-this-world experience to keep the audience talking long after the show ends.

Cosmic laser concerts contain loud music, flashing lights, spinning stars and other effects that some may find disruptive and are not recommended for those who may have conditions that could be aggravated by this experience.

Ranked third largest in Georgia by dome size, Rollins Planetarium features a state-of-the-art GOTO Chronos Space Simulator star projector with a state-of-the-art full-dome digital projection system, the Sky-Skan Definiti, in a 40-foot dome theater. In addition to a full annual schedule of evening public shows, it

offers daytime educational opportunities for school groups throughout the year. Located in the Maxwell Center on the campus of Young Harris College, Rollins Planetarium will be the host of the 2011 Southeastern Planetarium Association Conference in June, making it only the third planetarium in Georgia to host the event since it began in 1970.

If skies are clear, the Young Harris College Observatory is open immediately after the second laser concert. The observatory features a Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope and is located about 1.5 miles from campus at Brasstown Valley Resort. Maps are available at the planetarium. Observing sessions last up to one hour and include a guided tour of the constellations. The observatory is open on the same dates as Rollins Planetarium.

For more information about planetarium and observatory events, call (706) 379-5195 or visit www.yhc.edu. NT(Mar23,21)CA

NASCAR 2011

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Kyle Busch sweeps Bristol

It was all Kyle Busch this past weekend at Bristol Motor Speedway. First, he won Saturday's Nationwide Series race, then on Sunday, he held off Carl Edwards, the pole-sitter to win the 500-lap Sprint Cup race.

"It was a hard race," said Busch. "Carl kept the pressure on me. I made a couple mistakes. I just had to be patient. The guys really got me out in front on that last pit stop."

"My car was better on the long runs, so I knew the longer I could hold Carl off, the better my chances of winning would be."

Edwards, who won two weeks ago at Las Vegas, passed Busch with about 15-laps remaining, but Busch regained the lead on the next lap.

"I really thought that once I got by him, I could stay ahead of him," said Edwards. "But I found out his car was a little better at the end." Jimmie Johnson finished third, Matt Kenseth was fourth, and Paul Menard was fifth.

"I had a really fast race car today," said Richard Childress driver Paul Menard. "The cars they have been giving me have been great. We've been to four race tracks and had good runs at all of them."

Kevin Harvick finished sixth, despite being booted from behind by Mark Martin, with a big wreck ensuing. Kurt Busch, Greg Biffle, Kasey Kahne, and Ryan Newman were the remaining top-10 finishers.

The wreck that took out Harvick also claimed Trevor Bayne, Clint Bowyer, and Juan Montoya.

Dale Earnhardt Jr. finished 11th and moved up to 9th in points.

Jeff Gordon never led a lap and finished 14th.

Tony Stewart's team never got the handle on his car. He was 19th.

Top-12 Chase leaders after 4 of 36: 1. Kurt Busch-150, 2. Edwards-149, 3. Stewart-138, 4. Newman-138, 5. Menard-136, 6. Kyle Busch-133, 7. Johnson-130, 8. Montoya-126, 9. Earnhardt-124, 10. Truex-123, 11. Martin-123, 12. Kahne-122

KYLE BUSCH REACHES MILESTONE

Kyle Busch hit another milestone in the Nationwide Series on the way to his Saturday's win at Bristol Motor Speedway.

The victory was Busch's second of the year and the 45th of his career, leaving him four behind Mark Martin (idle Saturday) for the career lead.

Even more impressive was that he led his 10,000th lap in the series. No one else is close.

"Anytime you're able to break any kind of series record with the likes of Sam Ard and all the guys who made this series what it is, it's big," Busch said. "Kevin Harvick in his heyday was really good, and that was just a couple years ago."

"Of course, Mark Martin in his time, and all the guys - (Larry) Pearson and (Tommy) Houston and all those boys. It's cool and I enjoy it. There's still plenty more time, hopefully, to make some more records."

Kasey Kahne finished second, .524 seconds behind Busch, followed by two-time series champion Dale Earnhardt Jr., Elliott Sadler -- the highest-finishing driver championship contender -- and

Joey Logano. Danica Patrick finished 33rd after wrecking late in her Bristol debut.

On Lap 248 Danica Patrick's Chevrolet tangled with the Toyota of Ryan Truex, spun and slammed nose-first into the Turn 1 wall. Patrick, who was running two laps down in 17th at the time, thought Truex moved off the frontstretch wall into her racing line.

"It felt like to me that I came out of the corner, and I was running down the straight, and I felt like he came off the wall. ... I know I was running him early, and he just runs hard. He's run hard every time I've been around him, and it just seems like overkill."

Top-10 leaders after 4 of 34: 1. Leffler-142, 2. Stenhouse-140, 3. Allgaier-124, 4. Sorenson-121, 5. Almirola-119, 6. Bayne-112, 7. K. Wallace-111, 8. Sadler-110, 9. Patrick-109, 10. Scott-107

Commentary: Like most of you, I have watched in awe at the incredible images of the massive destruction in Japan. Those images have left me feeling weak and hurting.

I visited Japan three times when NASCAR went over to race in 1996, '97, and '98.

The Japanese seemed like they were always in a hurry, but they were gracious, kind, and enjoyed being around the race car teams.

The first two races were held in Suzuka City, about an hour's plane ride south of Tokyo. In 1996, I had arranged to take a tour bus ride from my hotel to Kyoto. Also taking the tour was Mike Skinner, Ernie Irvan, and several Richard Childress employees.

Japan was not like I expected. Instead of the massive factories, our bus passed mostly small shops and businesses. There were no large tractor-trailer rigs like we have in the U.S. Instead there were hundred of smaller trucks. I was told by our guide that most of the smaller businesses operated with just a four-hour inventory. If a truck didn't arrive on time, they would have to shut down.

When the bus stopped at one market-place and temple, we were surrounded by perhaps a hundred teenage school children, mostly girls. They wanted to communicate with us, and asked for autographs. Our bi-lingual guide explained things about NASCAR racing to them, and they would ooh and aah, when they heard those new things. After getting an autograph, they would bow, and give thanks in Japanese

They were on a tour of the local shrine and temple, but the guide said they wanted to know more about the Americans. The shrine they were to visit wasn't as interesting as learning new things from the



Kyle Busch, winner of both Bristol races

Americans. Perhaps the most questions were about American cowboys and Indians.

Of course traffic drove on the opposite side of the road, and would have been difficult for an American to adjust to. The busses and taxicabs were very clean. The bus driver was always a man with white gloves on. Assisting him would be a young lady that spoke fairly good English. All the driver did was handle the bus. His female assistant did all the work, including loading and unloading the luggage. Can you imagine a 90-pound woman wrestling with an American's large suitcase?

Once in a restaurant, I attempted to find out what kind of relish was used on some meat I had ordered. The little waitress couldn't understand a word I was saying, but after being gone for a few minutes, she came marching back into the dining room, holding a large, fresh, white radish, it had been made from. What a pleasant surprise.

That's the way it was on my three trips. I found everyone to be friendly and wanting to please.

I guess it's harder to accept terrible events when they happen to someone you like and respect, than when the same thing happens to people that do not concern you.

At any rate, I've prayed for the Japanese. I hope the ones I came in contact with during my visits have survived, and can somehow come through this thing fate has dealt them.

Weekend Racing: It's on to Fontana, California this weekend for the Cup and Nationwide teams. The Truck series is off until April 2.

Sat., Mar. 26, Nationwide Series race 5 of 34, Starting time: 5:30 pm; TV: ESPN.

Sun., Mar. 27, Sprint Cup Auto Club 500, race 5 of 36, Starting time: 2 pm; TV: Fox.

Racing Trivia Question: Who is the actual car owner of Jimmy Johnson's No. 48?

Last Week's Question: In addition to his NASCAR racing teams, Joe Gibbs has also coached two NFL teams. Who are these two teams? Answer: The Atlanta Falcons and Washington Redskins.

You may contact the Racing Reporter at: hodges@race500.com. NT(Mar23,21)CA



A Japanese race fan shows off her western pistol to Rusty Wallace and Dale Earnhardt at Suzuka Race Track in 1997

1st annual Fishing For a Cause

Calling all Anglers in the Tri-State area! Come out to the First Annual Relay For Life Fishing For a Cause bass tournament. Join us on March 26 at the Ledford Chapel Boat Ramp for a day of good fishing, food and fun. Breakfast and sign-in will begin at 5:30 a.m. and blast off will be drawn at 6:50 a.m. - boats will launch at 7 a.m. There is a \$50 per boat entry fee, and anyone who registers early will receive 5 door prize tickets for themselves and their partner. There

will be trophies awarded and there will be a 50% payback among the winners. Don't like to fish? Well, we've got you covered... There will be silent auction items, door prizes, a 50/50 raffle, food and games. All items have been donated from local businesses.

So come on out for a day of great fun - in the name of a good cause. All proceeds from the event will go to the Towns County Relay For Life which will be held this year on August 19th on the Square in

downtown Hiawassee. Last year, the Towns County RFL raised \$20,000 in the fight against cancer. With your help, we can do it again this year!

If you are interested in participating in the First Annual "Fishing For a Cause" or if you would like to volunteer at the event or Relay, please contact Erin Smith-Cross at 706-897-3228 or you can email her at crossfam27@gmail.com. Remember, a world with less cancer is a world with more birthdays! TM(Mar23,21)SH

Tri-County Racetrack opener this Friday

Following a successful practice session, which included a total of 31 race cars, the Tri-County Race Track in Brasstown, North Carolina is gearing up for their 2011 season opener on Friday, March 25. All five classes (Super Late Model, Limited/Crate Late Model, Modified Street, Street Enduro, and Pony) will be in action this Friday night at the 1/4-mile bullring.

Grandstand and pit gates

will open at 5 p.m., with the driver's meeting scheduled for 7:30 p.m. and racing at 8 p.m. Adult grandstand admission is \$10, while Kids ages 6-12 is only \$5. Pit admission is \$22 for adults and \$10 for Kids ages 6-12. Small children under the age of 5 will be admitted into the grandstands and pit area for free. Everyone under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

In a promotion that will last all year long, the 53rd per-



son through the front gate will be admitted for free! Come out and visit the new Ray Cook-promoted Tri-County Race Track this Friday night. NT(Mar23,21)CA