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Category: A - Z of NASCAR

Subcategory: A - C

Tip: Air Dam

The air dam is made of Kevlar and extends from the front bumper of the vehicle downwards to only inches above the ground, stabilizing the front end of the car. Blocking the air from flowing under the car prevents a reduction of speed.

Tip: Air Pressure

Ever since radial tires with stiffer sidewalls have been used, changing the air pressure within the tires is used as another setup tool when adjusting spring rates in the vehicle's suspension. If the air pressure is increased, the "spring rate" in the tire will raise. This changes the car's handling characteristics. For example, if the racecar is "tight" coming off a corner, the driver might request a slight air pressure increase in the right rear tire to "loosen it up."

Tip: Banking

The angle of the racetrack's surface is known as the banking. The angle is lower on the frontstretch and backstretch than in the turns.

Subcategory: D - F

Tip: Drafting

When drivers race single file and share air flow among them, they are drafting. The first car creates a vacuum that pulls the cars behind it. Together, the cars can travel much faster than they do separately.

Tip: Drag

Drag is caused by air flowing around the car and can hinder a race car as it cuts through air. A car with less drag can accelerate faster because the car needs less horsepower.

Tip: Frontstretch

The section of race track between the fourth and first turns is known as the frontstretch. Typically located in the center of this section is the flagstand and start/finish line.

Subcategory: G - L

Tip: Getting Hung Out to Dry

A driver that loses his race position because he lost the draft is sometimes referred to as getting hung out to dry. When this occurs, the driver needs to get back in line with the other cars where he can go faster.

Subcategory: Q - S

Tip: Roll Bars

Roll bars, also known as the roll cage, are made of strong steel tubing. They are a part of the car's protective frame and safeguard the driver and important components of the car from the impact of a collision.

Tip: Series

The three major series found in NASCAR are Winston Cup, Busch and Craftsman Truck. The other nine series include the NASCAR Weekly Racing Series and the following Touring Series: Busch North, Featherlite Modified, Featherlite Southwest, Goody's Dash, Hills Bros. All Pro, Raybestos Northwest, RE/MAX Challenge and Winston West.

Tip: Short Track

Race tracks measuring one mile or less in length are known as short tracks. At these tracks, aerodynamics and horsepower aren't particularly important in winning the race. Three examples of short tracks are Bristol Motor Speedway, Martinsville Speedway and Richmond International Raceway.

Subcategory: T - Z

Tip: Victory Lane

The circle or square in a fenced-in area where a driver celebrates a winning finish is known as Victory Lane. He celebrates with his family, car owners, crew and sponsors.

Category: Before Race Weekend

Subcategory: Buying Tickets

Tip: Daytona 500

If you are planning to go to the Daytona 500, be sure to buy your tickets a year in advance. Tickets to this race sell out fast, and scalpers tend to raise the ticket prices four or five times their original value for this weekend.

Category: Drivers: M - P

Subcategory: McLaughlin, Mike

Tip: Champion: Mike McLaughlin - 1988

Driver: Mike McLaughlin Series: Featherlite Modified Series Year: 1988 Wins: N/A Top-5s: N/A Top-10s: N/A Money Earned: N/A Achievements: Won Featherlite Modified Series Championship in 1988.

Category: In the Garage

Subcategory: Do's and Don'ts of Autographs

Tip: Do - Bring a Pen

Make sure to bring your own pen when searching for autographs. A black felt-tipped marker is your best choice.

Tip: Do - Team Haulers

Do wait outside a team hauler when looking for an autograph. Since the driver will not be around his car, he probably won't be distracted. Just be sure not to go into the hauler because this is where the teams and drivers hold meetings.

Subcategory: Types of Cars

Tip: Chevrolet

In the 2002 season, Chevrolet won 10 Winston Cup Series, 12 Busch Series and 11 Craftsman Truck Series events. Chevrolet also won the Craftsman Truck Series' Manufacturer's title in 2002. The first Chevy driver to win a NASCAR event was Fonty Flock in 1955. Since then, Chevrolet has captured a hundreds of Winston Cup wins. Chevrolet drivers to compete in the 2003 season include: Dale Earnhardt Jr., Jeff Gordon, Robby Gordon, Jeff Green, Kevin Harvick, Jimmie Johnson, Bobby Labonte, Terry Labonte, Joe Nemechek, Steve Park, Tony Stewart and Michael Waltrip.

Category: In the Grandstands

Subcategory: The Do's and Don'ts

Tip: Do - Wear Sunscreen

Because fans are sitting in aluminum grandstands for hours during the middle of the day, they have a good chance of getting a sun burn. For this reason, it is a good idea to wear sunscreen.

Tip: Don't - Bring Large Coolers

Do not bring any coolers larger than 14 x 14 x 14 inches into the grandstands because they are not allowed.

Subcategory: Watching the Race

Tip: Bathroom Breaks

Between the driver introductions and the start of the race, use the bathroom one last time. Unlike watching a race on the TV, there are no commercials in NASCAR. NASCAR races can take as long as five hours without breaks (except for the caution periods when the bathroom lines will undoubtedly be long). Also, it might be a good idea to limit your fluid intake.

Category: Merchandise

Subcategory: Accessories

Tip: Crew Chief Watches

For around \$70, you can purchase a Crew Chief Series watch from your favorite driver. On the face of the watch is the driver's car number and a replica signature on a team-colored background. Both styles for men and women are available.

Tip: Flags

For around \$20, you can purchase a flag featuring your favorite Winston Cup driver. The flags come in a variety of styles and typically feature a picture of the car, driver's number, driver's photo and/or a replica autograph.

Subcategory: Books

Tip: NASCAR® For Dummies®

This would have to be one of the best books about NASCAR out there that I have found to date. It is filled with information on everything that you could ever want to know about the sport like what makes the series differ, the rules, several top-10 lists, information on every track and so much more stuff than I could possibly do justice for. NASCAR® For Dummies® is a great tool for old and new fans alike. This paperback book is written by one of the Winston Cup's best drivers, Mark Martin and comes complete with pictures, charts and the highest quality of information I have been able to find to date.

Tip: Wide Open: Days and Nights on the NASCAR Tour

I bought the book called, "Wide Open: Days and Nights on the NASCAR Tour", about a year ago. I had fully expected this book to be a tough read, because being the kind of person I am, I read very little more than the writing on the outside of my cereal box in the morning. That said, I can honestly say that I enjoyed reading through this book. It was fast paced, but what I think gave this book its extra flair was the fact that it was written by someone who didn't start with a particularly large interest in NASCAR.

Subcategory: Clothing

Tip: Socks

Socks, featuring many of your favorite drivers are available in a variety of sizes for around \$5 a pair. Available in both men and women's styles, the socks typically include the driver's car number.

Tip: Tee Shirts

Available in a variety of colors and styles, NASCAR tee-shirts cost usually around \$20. Typically, a picture of the driver, car, car's number and/or a replica autograph will be found on the shirt. A range of styles are available for both men and women.

Subcategory: Home & Office

Tip: Bed in the Bag

For around \$130, you can purchase a complete bed in the bag for your favorite driver. The sets include a reversible comforter, fitted sheet, flat sheet, bedskirt, two shams and two pillowcases and are typically decorated with a picture of the car, the car's number, NASCAR logo and/or replica autograph. Available in most bed sizes.

Tip: Nascar Facts & Fun Daily 2003 Calendar

I just purchased the Nascar Facts & Fun Daily 2003 Calendar before the new year and was not disappointed. Inside it were several driver's biographies, information on every track, a description about each of NASCAR's series and top-10 lists that feature the top ten drivers from each year dating back to 1949. The part that I find best about this calendar, is that I can learn a little piece of information each day and it doesn't require me to spend more than a minute to do so.

Category: On the Track

Subcategory: Flags

Tip: Blue Flag with Orange Diagonal Stripe

The blue flag with an orange diagonal stripe is shown to let the slower driver(s) know that one or more faster drivers are about to lap them. This flag is optional, and the driver may choose to ignore it if he/she wishes. Even though this flag is optional, NASCAR prefers that the slower driver move aside so that the leading drivers may still race.

Tip: Yellow

The yellow flag is also known as the caution flag. The yellow flag indicates that the drivers must slow down and proceed around the track with caution. During a caution, the pace car will come on to the track and lead the cars until the race is ready to be restarted.

Subcategory: Rules

Tip: Bonus Points

Each race, five bonus points are given to any driver who leads a lap and an additional five points are given to the driver who leads the most laps. The points count toward the championship, and may end up the difference between a Champion and the second place finisher.

Category: The Basics of NASCAR

Subcategory: The Basics of NASCAR

Tip:

Ten sections, ten questions. This has ten questions.

Tip: More Than Just a Team

A team is a part of an organization and is comprised of the actual car, the crew chief, the pit crew and the hauler used to transport the team to the track. The organization provides the support services that the team uses; the chassis shop, the engine shop, the body shop, engineering and logistical services. Smaller organizations may outsource some or all of the support services to other companies. Robert Yates Racing, which currently fields two teams the No. 88 and No 38 Fords, for example provides engines to several other teams outside their organization. Larger organizations can perform all the needed support functions 'in-house'. Roush Fenway Racing is such an organization. Roush-Fenway Racing is currently the largest organization in NASCAR. Roush-Fenway fields five full time Nextel Cup teams, along with five Busch series teams and three Truck teams.

Tip: NASCAR Sponsorships

Sponsors are the lifeblood that makes NASCAR go, literally. Corporate sponsors provide the financial support that keeps the individual NASCAR teams competitive. The money they provide allow the teams to buy parts, build racecars and pay the salaries of the drivers and team members. In return for their investment, sponsors choose the overall team colors and the paint schemes used on the racecars; this is where the term 'rolling billboard' comes from. The sponsors product or brand will be visible to millions of fans in person and on television. The TV exposure can actually be measured; a firm called Joyce-Julius & Associates provide weekly reports to sponsors. These reports will tell the sponsor how much TV time they received the week prior and how much in actual dollars that TV team was worth. For the sponsor the benefits that come from a NASCAR sponsorship go beyond just TV time. NASCAR fans have been shown to be the among the most loyal sports fans in the world. They will often go out of their way to support a brand that sponsors their favorite driver. According to NASCAR, sponsors gained a record \$5.2 billion in sponsorship exposure in 2006. "NASCAR sponsorship is the best buy in marketing," according to Larry DeGaris former Director for Sports Sponsorship at James Madison University. "The combination of awareness, favorability and effectiveness is unparalleled in the sports world or anywhere else." There are three main levels of sponsorship, Primary, Major Associate and Associate. A Primary sponsor normally funds the entire team operation and will have say over team colors, uniforms and racecar paint schemes. A Major associate sponsorship will normally have a spot on the rear deck lid or rear quarter panel of the racecar and a prominent logo on the team's uniforms. An associate sponsor will get the 'A' or 'B' post on the racecar (the area just behind the driver or passenger side windows), or the lower quarter panels depending on their agreements. Because the economy and corporate revenues have changed in the past few years, teams are being forced to become more creative in seeking funding. Some teams are using more then one primary sponsor throughout the season. Still other teams have agreements to run a primary sponsor part of the season and another

the rest of the year. Some even share primary sponsors, with one sponsor as a primary for certain races and another for other races. There are also contingency sponsors. These are sponsorships normally set up through NASCAR. The small decals framing the front wheels on racecars are all contingency sponsorships. The team is paid a certain amount to display the decals.

Tip: The Basics of NASCAR

NASCAR is an acronym that stands for the National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing. Founded in 1947, NASCAR is the world's largest stock car racing sanctioning body. From its humble beginnings in the American south when cars were driven off the street and onto the track, NASCAR has grown into the largest spectator sport in America. Owing mainly to safety advances through the years, the 'stock' cars are now some of the most technologically advanced racing machines in motorsports. And its fanbase has grown from a few thousands people attending races held mainly in the south, to a fanbase estimated at 75 million people, one in three adults. NASCAR is the second most watched sport in America on television. The most popular of NASCAR's national series is the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series; the Series stages 36 points races at 22 racetracks in 19 states over the course of the 10-month season. But through all its series NASCAR's reach extends to over 1300 events at 95 tracks in 33 states, along with Mexico and Canada.

Tip: The Divisions of NASCAR

NASCAR consists of three national series: The Nextel Cup Series, The Busch Series and the Craftsman Truck Series. NASCAR also oversees four regional series as well. The NASCAR Grand National Division, which is divided into the Busch East and West Series race cars similar to the Busch Series. NASCAR also sanctions two open wheel series: the Whelen Modified Tour and the Whelen Southern Modified Tour. There is also the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series, a local grassroots division. The Nextel Cup Series is the most popular and is known as the 'top-tier' series. Nextel Cup racecars are based on newer model cars. The Busch Series is akin to a triple 'A' baseball team. The Busch Series is currently the second most popular form of motorsports in America behind the Nextel Cup series. The Craftsman Truck Series has the shortest season of all the National touring series and a small but ever growing loyal fan base. The racecars used in the Busch Series are similar to those of the Nextel Cup series with the biggest differences being a short wheelbase and a larger spoiler. The Nextel Cup series is transitioning to the Car Of Tomorrow and when that happens, most likely in 2008, the Busch Series cars will truly be in a league of their own. The Craftsman Truck Series race newer model pick-up trucks, highly modified, naturally, for racing.

Tip: The NASCAR Points System

Points in all three of NASCAR's major system have all been awarded the same way

since 1975. Bob Latford, who was a public relations official at what was then known as Charlotte Motor Speedway and now known as Lowes Motor Speedway, developed the system. The system awards points from first place to 43rd, or 36th in the Craftsman Truck Series. The number one finisher is awarded 185 points. Second place 170 -15 points back. From the third to the sixth place positions the separation is five points (sixth place is awarded 150). From seventh to eleventh the separation is four points. Three points separate positions twelfth until the end. Five bonus points are also awarded for leading a lap and leading the most laps during a race. NASCAR determines who is leading each lap at the finish line. In other words, a driver who makes a pass for the lead along the backstretch must still be leading when they cross the finish line in order to be credited with leading a lap and gaining the five bonus points. Only the driver who starts the race is awarded the points for that race. Several examples of relief drivers have appeared through the years. In 2006, two-time champion Tony Stewart who had sustained an injury the week prior, started a race at Dover International Speedway. Early in the race, driver Ricky Rudd replaced Stewart. Stewart was awarded the points for the race as if he had finished Rudd was not. In addition to driver points there are also owners points. Owner points are scored the same as driver points, the exception being that the owner keeps the points the racecar scores no matter who drives it.

Category: Tracks

Subcategory: A - C

Tip: Chicagoland Speedway

New to NASCAR racing in 2001, Chicagoland Speedway includes 75,000 spectator seats, 37 luxury suites and on-site camping areas. This 1.5 mile tri-oval shaped racetrack is found in Joliet, Illinois, and contains 18 degree banking in the turns. Also, for the fan who prefers to attend a race in their RV, there is long-term parking areas reserved for recreational vehicles.

Subcategory: D - F

Tip: Darlington Raceway

With the nickname "Too Tough to Tame", it is no wonder that all racecar drivers dream of a win at this track. This 1.366 mile oval-shaped track, which is found in Darlington, South Carolina, is considered one of the toughest and most desirable to win. It has 25|23 degree banking in the turns.

Subcategory: G - L

Tip: Homestead-Miami Speedway

1995 saw its first NASCAR race at Homestead-Miami Speedway in Florida. Each year, this 1.5 mile oval-shaped track draws more than 300,000 race fans to the area and in turn has an annual impact of \$100 million for the local economy. It has six degree banking in the turns.

Subcategory: M - P

Tip: Mesa Marin Raceway

Mesa Marin Raceway, located in Bakersfield, California is the birthplace of the Craftsman Truck Series. It had hosted a roll-out event in 1994 featuring the now famous trucks. This 0.5 mile track is oval-shaped and features 17 degree banking in the turns.

Tip: Michigan International Speedway

It is the wide racing surface and the high banking that made Michigan International Speedway one of motorsports' premier facilities. Because of these features, it is common to see three and even four wide racing. This two mile tri-oval shaped course is found in Brooklyn, Michigan and has 18 degree banking in the turns.

Tip: Milwaukee Mile, The

Racing at what is now known as the Milwaukee Mile is not a new thing. Originally, back in the 1870s, the land was used as a place to train and race thoroughbred horses. In 1903, the track held its first auto race and by 1954, the track had been paved. Now, this one mile oval-shaped track is home to some of the greatest racing in America. This racetrack is located in West Allis, Wisconsin.

Tip: New Hampshire International Speedway

Being just an hour from Boston and two from Portland, Maine, and Providence, R.I., New Hampshire International Speedway is easily accessible from Vermont and Canada. For this reason, the racetrack boasts the largest crowds in New England with 101,000 spectators in attendance at each race. This 1.058 mile oval-shaped course has 12 degree banking in the turns.

Tip: North Carolina Speedway

The first race held at North Carolina Speedway was back in 1965 as a joint venture between Darlington Raceway builder Harold Brasington and Bill Land, the land owner. Then, L.G. DeWitt took control of the track and in 1969 the racetrack became the 1.017 mile oval-shaped track that we know today. Nicknamed "The Rock" because of its

Rockingham location, the speedway has 22|25 degree banking in the turns.

Subcategory: Q - S

Tip: Richmond International Raceway

Originally, the site where Richmond International Raceway sits today hosted dirt auto races on a half-mile track. That had been back in the 1940s. By 1966, the track was paved and then later, in 1988, the course was redesigned and became the 0.75 mile oval we know today. Recently, additional renovations have been made creating one of the most modern speedways in the Virginia area.

Subcategory: T - Z

Tip: Talladega Superspeedway

Talladega Superspeedway, which happens to be the biggest motorsports facility in the world, was built at a cost of \$4 million. Originally opened in 1969 as Alabama International Motor Speedway, this 2.66 mile track, which shape is a tri-oval, is found in Talladega, Alabama. It has 33 degree banking in the turns and is the fastest superspeedway in the world, holding the records for both speed and competition.

Tip: Texas Motor Speedway

Found along the Chisholm Trail in Fort Worth, Texas Motor Speedway is a motorsports haven with seating for 150,061 fans. This 1.5 mile quad-oval shaped track is the ultimate in luxury for auto racing fans because of its 194 skybox VIP suites.

Tip: Watkins Glen International

Since 1948, Watkins Glen International helped to create a road-racing tradition like no other. Previously hosting the F1 United States Grand Prix, this track is one of the most respected in the northeast. The road course is 2.45 miles long and is located in Watkins Glen, New York.

Category: Watching a NASCAR Race

Subcategory: Watching a NASCAR Race

Tip: It's the Pits

A pit stop is the process during a race that the team uses to service their racecars and make adjustments in performance. Fuel is added, tires are changed and small

modifications are done, all between 13-15 seconds. The number of pit stops that take place during a race are based on factors such as race length, the number of caution periods, tire wear and fuel mileage. A pit stop can be used as race strategy as well. A crew chief can elect to keep his car out on the track while most others are pitting in order to gain valuable track position in hopes that a caution flag will wave soon or that his cars' fuel or tires can make it to the end of the race.

Tip: The Yellow Flag Waves

Think of it as a 'time-out' during the race. Several things can cause a caution period during a race; an accident, debris on the track or for any reason that NASCAR decides they need to slow the field down and cease competition. NASCAR can also choose to throw out a 'competition' yellow. This is a planned yellow that NASCAR will tell teams about in advance, and is most often used to check tire wear on a new or repaved track surface.