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NASCAR 75th anniversary

By Mark Long Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — NASCAR's next 75 years almost certainly will include at least a partially electric vehicle turning laps at Daytona International Speedway.

It's unfathomable to some, unconscionable to others.

It's unlikely the sanctioning body would make the transition without at least trying to keep the heart-pounding sound of a throaty engine and the permeating smell of exhaust fumes - as much garage staples as sponsorship logos and haulers.

"Do I see us racing EVs down the road? Probably,' former NASCAR crew chief and longtime Fox Sports commentator Larry Mc-Reynolds said. "But I'm going to be very honest and very candid. I hope it's after I've left the sport. I like what we've got."

Even though the Next Gen car is entering its second NASCAR season - and already has been tweaked in hopes of preventing more head injuries like the one that sidelined 2004 champion Kurt Busch indefinitely - the evolution of the car has been an integral part of the sport since its debut in

The car has gone from "Strictly Stock" in its inaugural season to high-tech platforms distinguished solely by manufacturer stickers in the 1980s to something in between these days. What's next will be debated, but most believe a new engine will be introduced sooner rather than

"The electrification of the cars has to be on the horizon. Whether it's 50 miles on the horizon or 300 miles on the horizon, I don't think any of any of us know right now for sure," NASCAR historian Ken Martin said. "But I know there's talk about a hybrid component."

Getting there could be trickier to navigate than any road course on the 2023 schedule

"We might see the day



that we might go to a hybrid and use the electrical power for pace laps or pit stops," Martin said. "That would be a way to ease into it. We know that a huge component of our sport is the sound. It grabs you, and that's part of what our fans come to hear, come to see, the sights and smells and sounds.

"I think we'll be very, very careful about eliminating that sound. But we realize that if Detroit says, 'Hey, we're not making any fuelrelated engines,' we'd have to take a look at what would need to be done."

Even though EVs are becoming more common in driveways across the country, the elimination of gas engines is years, maybe decades, away. Maybe even longer for NASCAR, which has built an empire on squeezing every bit of horsepower from gas-powered cars since it started racing on the Daytona Beach sand.

Here's a look at that progression as NASCAR celebrates its 75th anniversary:

GENERATION I (1948-66)

The first cars debuted in 1948 and were nearly identically to those on the street. There were three rules: The back seat had to be removed, headlights had to be taped over and doors had to be secured.

Hall of Famer Hershel McGriff, for example, drove his race car from Portland, Oregon, to Darlington, South Carolina, for the 1950 Southern 500, finished ninth and then drove it back across the country.

"That's how stock the cars were back then," Martin said.

GENERATION 2 (1967-80)

As bigger and higherbanked tracks like Daytona started popping up throughout the South. NASCAR began allowing teams to



Cars take a turn during the first lap of a NASCAR Sportsman's stock car auto race in Daytona Beach, Fla., Feb. 24, 1954.

build cars that could handle speedway rigors. Teams were allowed to beef up hubs, gears and suspensions while bodies remained stock. The cars also no longer featured doors.

Those adjustments led to some of the most memorable winged cars in NASCAR history: the Dodge Charger Daytona and the Plymouth Superbird.

GENERATION 3 (1981-90)

Custom-built race cars no longer resembled their showroom counterparts. The cars became smaller -110-inch wheelbases -- faster and more aerodynamically sound. They also received support from manufacturers Chrysler, Ford and General Motors, which provided body panels and other

GENERATION 4 (1991-06)

Fiberglass `replaced steel bodies to reduce weight, and wind-tunnel time became commonplace to gain aerodynamic advantages. These cars are widely considered the most iconic in NASCAR history.

Three GM brands Buick in 1992, Oldsmobile in 1994 and Pontiac in 2004 - left the series. Dodge, however, returned in 2001.

The generation was marred by the on-track deaths of Dale Earnhardt, Kenny Irwin and Adam

GENERATION 5 (2007-12)

Toyota made its debut in 2007 along with the Car of Tomorrow, which was years in the making following Earnhardt's fatal crash at Daytona. The car was specifically designed to improve safety, with changes that included taller, wider and identical bodies, larger crumple zones and impactabsorbing foam built into both sides.

The most noticeable modifications were a front splitter and a rear wing that evoked so much fan vitriol it was replaced by a spoiler midway through 2010.

"It really got away from what we were doing on the highway," Martin said.
The COT proved to be

nearly indestructible on the track, evident by violent crashes involving Kyle Busch, Carl Edwards, Kasey Kahne, Michael McDowell and Ryan Newman.

GENERATION 6 (2013-21)

Dodge walked away from NASCAR after winning the 2012 Cup Series championship with Brad Keselowski, leaving Chevrolet, Ford and Toyota as the only manufacturers.

These cars were designed with manufacturerspecific bodies that better reflected showroom counterparts, and the chassis underneath had very little competitive wiggle room. They were bulkier and

NEXT GEN (2022-current)

NASCAR'S current car saw some of the biggest innovations in series history. The sanctioning body moved to an independent rear suspension, rack-andpinion steering, a five-speed sequential shifter, a transaxle, 19-inch wheels and a center hub instead of lug

"We did it all for the sake of being more relative to what the fan drives as a passenger car," McReynolds said.

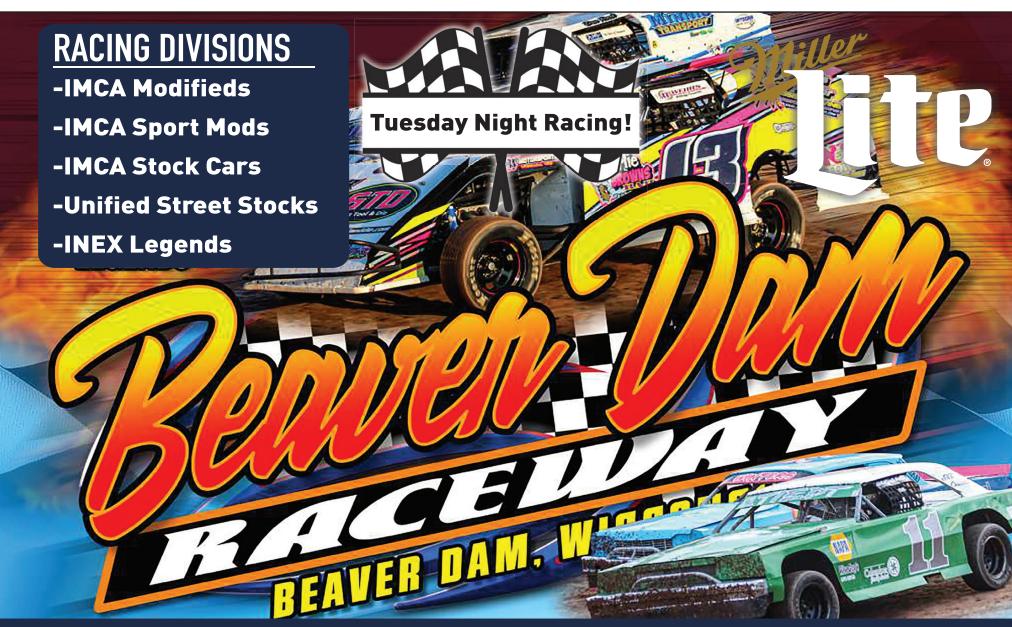
Following concussions to Busch and Alex Bowman. NASCAR adjusted the car

in hopes of reducing the amount of force delivered to drivers amid rear-impact crashes.

"It's automobile racing. and as much we'll always strive to be as safe as we can, we will never, ever make it completely risk free," McReynolds said. "I don't mean to sound morbid, but I don't think it needs to be risk free because that's one of the attractions."

The sound of the engines is another. And that could ultimately go the way of doors, splitters and wings.

"We'll probably see more of a hybrid-type engine," McReynolds said. "I think that's a few years down the road. You can't keep putting huge expenses on these owners or you're going to run them out of business. If you change the engine package like we just went through the car package, it's basically throwing everything out the window and starting from scratch again. No one is ready for that."



2023 BEAVER DAM RACEWAY SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, APRIL 1 PRACTICE AND INSPECTION 12:00-4:00 SATURDAY, APRIL 8 PRACTICE AND INSPECTION 12:00-4:00

5 DIVISION SEASON OPENER IMCA MODS, IMCA SPORT MODS, IMCA STOCK CARS, UNIFIED STREET STOCKS AND LEGENDS

SATURDAY, APRIL 15* IRA SPRINTS, STREET STOCKS AND LEGENDS (JIM WIPPERFURTH MEMORIAL) Non points night for legends and street stocks

TUESDAY, APRIL 18* 5 DIVISIONS (Vintage Car Night)

SATURDAY, APRIL 22* RAIN DATE FOR APRIL 15TH IRA SPRINTS, STREET STOCKS & **LEGENDS (JIM WIPPERFURTH MEMORIAL)** Non points night for legends and street stocks

TUESDAY, APRIL 25* 5 DIVISIONS Street Stocks \$750.00 to win

SATURDAY, APRIL 29* OPEN PRACTICE 12:00-3:00

TUESDAY, MAY 2* 5 DIVISIONS

SATURDAY, MAY 6* DEMO DERBY

TUESDAY. MAY 9* 5 DIVISIONS

SATURDAY, MAY 13* DEMO DERBY RAIN DATE FOR MAY 6TH

TUESDAY, MAY 16* 5 DIVISIONS (Legend National Qualifier) \$500.00 to win for Legends

TUESDAY, MAY 23* 5 DIVISIONS

TUESDAY, MAY 30* 5 DIVISIONS (A SALUTE TO OUR SERVICE PEOPLE) Free admission to all past and present military, fire, EMT and police personnel

TUESDAY, JUNE 6* 5 DIVISIONS, HIGH SCHOOL RACING ASSOCIATION MID SEASON CHAMPIONSHIP NIGHT

TUESDAY, JUNE 13* NO RACING

FRIDAY, JUNE 16*

WORLD OF OUTLAWS, LEGENDS, MINNESOTA MICRO SPRINTS

SATURDAY, JUNE 17*

WORLD OF OUTLAWS, LEGENDS, MINNESOTA MICRO SPRINTS

TUESDAY, JUNE 20*

5 DIVISIONS IMCA A-MODS ALL STAR QUALIFIER \$1500.00 TO WIN

TUESDAY, JUNE 27* 5 DIVISIONS, HIGH SCHOOL RACING ASSOCIATION DRIVER APPRECIATION NIGHT ullet 12 price PIT Pass for the Driver Plus Free ADMISSION TICKETS FOR FANS (See your favorite driver for free tickets)

TUESDAY. JULY 4* NO RACING

TUESDAY, JULY 11* 5 DIVISIONS IMCA B-MODS \$1000.00 TO WIN

TUESDAY. JULY 18* NO RACING

TUESDAY, JULY 25* 5 DIVISIONS. HIGH SCHOOL RACING ASSOCIATION

5 DIVISIONS, HIGH SCHOOL RACING ASSOCIATION BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

5 DIVISIONS IMCA STOCK CARS ALLSTAR QUALIFIER \$1000.00 TO WIN

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11* MONSTER TRUCKS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12* MONSTER TRUCKS

TUESDAY, AUGUST 15* NO RACING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22*

5 DIVISIONS, HIGH SCHOOL RACING ASSOCIATION-FAN APPRECIATION NIGHT (DICK BIEL MEMORIAL)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29* 5 DIVISIONS 2 FOR THE PRICE OF 1 SODA NIGHT

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5* 5 DIVISIONS (non-points night)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12* 5 DIVISIONS FINAL POINTS NIGHT

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19* 5 DIVISIONS FINAL POINTS NIGHT RAIN DATE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26* NO RACING

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7 FALL SPECIAL (more information to come)

5 DIVISIONS ARE: IMCA MODIFIEDS, IMCA SPORT MODS, IMCA STOCK CARS. UNIFIED STREET STOCKS AND INEX LEGENDS

Slinger Nationals preview

Daily News Staff

SLINGER — For the 44th year, some of the best racers around the country will converge on Slinger on July 11 for the Slinger Nationals at the Slinger Speedway.

One of the most famous short track races in the Midwest, the Nationals have seen many notable drivers fly around the track over the years, including Cambridge native Matt Kenseth, Kyle Busch and Wisconsin Rapids native Dick Trickle. Kenseth — an eight-time Slinger Nationals champion and 2022 NASCAR Hall of Fame inductee — returned to the track for last year's race where he finished in fifth place. NASCAR Cup Series driver William Byron claimed the Slinger Nationals checkered flag last year in his first-ever appearance

"We were catching them a little bit each lap, but not

enough to really pass," Byron told the Daily News following the race last year. "I thought when they got bottled up, I felt like I could just run the outside. I had really good drive off. I got in the wall a couple times, got squeezed a little bit, then got into it myself and kept bouncing off of it and dig-

ging."
"I was really slow off the truck here. I was having to work and get a feel for it. I felt like I got better at some things, and maybe some bad habits, too. In the race, I was able to work around some guys and figure out, OK, here's what I really need to do. It all kind of made sense once the race started, but it definitely took a while."

year's race there's no easy way of predicting who will end up crossing the finish line first. Kenseth was the last driver to win back-toback championships in 2008 and 2009, and over the past 10 years there have been

Looking ahead to this

eight different champions with Kenseth (2016, 2019) and Seymour native Ty Majeski (2018, 2020) the only two drivers to repeat in that

The three-day event begins on July 9 with the Prelude to the Nationals, which will feature the Midwest Truck Series and the 602 Late Models. July 10 is practice day and the Nationals kickoff party.

The first-ever Slinger Nationals was held in 1980. where Port Washington native Larry Detjens took the inaugural checkered flag. Detjens was killed in a racing accident the following year, and now the Slinger Nationals trophy is named in his honor.

Since 2016, the Chris McIntee trophy has been given out to the winner of the Nationals Qualifying race in honor of the longtime fan and crew member at the speedway who passed away in 2015 at the age of 42. Last season saw Brad Keith



Russ Pulvermacher/Special to The Daily News

Steve Apel (51) of West Bend races at the 2022 Slinger Nationals. He finished the race in 25th place.

receive the McIntee trophy.





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Leader of the track

Braun claims 2022 Elite Eight Super Late championship

By Michael Grennell mgrennell@conleynet.com 262-513-2667

SLINGER — For Wales resident R.J. Braun, racing is in his DNA.

His father, Rob Braun, started racing at age 18, and then after putting his time out on the tracks on hold, Rob returned to racing when R.J. was about 4 years old.

Very quickly, R.J. became enamored with the racing world.

"Ever since (2008) I've been helping him," R.J. Braun said. "My 8th birthday was my first time in the pits. So I was helping him in the garage and in the pits — pretty much everywhere — and that's where it took off."

Now more than a decade since his first days of working in the pits, Braun can now call himself a champion after claiming the 2022 Elite Eight Super Late pretty good. The car was Model Series championship at Slinger Speedway. pretty good. The car was handling really well," Braun said. "Near the end,

"Yeah it was pretty exciting. I didn't expect it to happen so quickly but yeah it just happened," Braun said. "It wouldn't have happened without Steve Apel and his crew. They helped me thrash out my car.

"The beginning of the year we started out pretty poorly — we pretty much wrecked the whole car. So we tore it down, got everything rebuilt and it was fast ever since.

"So yeah in the beginning of the year I wasn't expecting to win the championship, but hey, here we are. We won it."

Racing in the Carl Wegner Memorial 100 on Sept. 18, Braun found himself needing to finish close to fellow racer Jacob Nottestad in order to have a shot at claiming the championship.

"I started out the race

pretty good. The car was handling really well," Braun said. "Near the end, probably the last 50 laps, when the first caution (flag) was out I asked where (Jacob) Nottestad was — I knew I had to be within at least two cars of him to win — and they said he was falling back — he had some mechanical issues, which sucks for him, I was hoping for a good battle.

"But it was a handful near the end and I was just trying to hang on and when we finally finished I just didn't have much to say. It really didn't hit me yet."

And the man who inspired Braun couldn't be happier to see him bring home the championship.

"He said he would win either way. Either I went home with a Super Late Model championship or we would win it and he would be happy either way," Braun said. "I think he's pretty excited."

Braun talked about how as much as he's excited and thankful to have won the championship, he also still finds it hard to believe he's accomplished this feat so early in his career. After starting out racing in Slinger Bees in 201, Braun moved all the way up to the Super Late series in 2019.

And now three years later he's the king of the track.

"I was pretty much just a midfield car. We were winning semi-features and now we're winning features and it's awesome," Braun said. "I never expected it in the short time I've been racing Supers that we could win a championship. It's pretty much all thanks to Steve and my parents for allowing me to do this."

Truex brothers join NASCAR families as race weekend winners

DOVER, Del. (AP) — Oh, brother! Martin Truex Jr. and Ryan Truex were winners at Dover Motor Speedway and became only the fifth set of brothers in NASCAR history to win on the same race weekend.

Ryan Truex started the family fun when he won NASCAR's second-tier Xfinity Series race on Saturday. He won for the first time in 188 career NASCAR starts across all three national series.

Big brother Martin won the rain-delayed Cup Series race at Dover on Monday.

"Pretty cool to do that and get added to that list of brothers that have swept the weekend," Truex said.

They joined Kurt and Kyle Busch; Kenny, Rusty and Mike Wallace; Ward and Jeff Burton; and Darrell Waltrip and Michael Waltrip, according to NASCAR.

The Busch brothers did it in 2006, 2009 and 2010. Rusty Wallace won Cup



AP file photo

Martin Truex Jr., center, jumps from his car after winning the NASCAR 400 auto race at Dover Motor Speedway, Monday, May 1, 2023, in Dover, Del.

races at Dover and Bristol in 1994, while Mike Wallace won the second-tier race at Dover and Kenny Wallace did it at Bristol. The Waltrips did it in Darlington in 1992. Ward Burton won a Cup race in 2001 and Jeff Burton won the second-tier race at Darlington.

BIGGER, BETTER, FASTER April 23 Midwest Tour Season Opener 2pm **July 2 Independence Day Fireworks July 11 Cobblestone Hotels Slinger** May 21 Race Against Cancer 2pm **May 28 Memorial Day Fireworks** August 19 SlamFest 2 - Saturday evening June 18 PMF Scout Night - Scouts in uniform FREE! September 3 Labor Day Fireworks June 23 SlamFest 1 - Friday Evening **September 23 Monster Trucks** Racing every Sunday evening gates open at 5pm, racing at 6:30pm Memorial day to Labor Day. www.slingersuperspeedway.com 262-644-5921 WORLD'S FASTEST 1/4 MILE OVALL

Slinger Speedway schedule preview



Russ Pulvermacher/Special to The Daily News

John DeAngelis #7 of Hubertus at the 2022 Slinger Nationals.

Daily News Staff

SLINGER — Celebrating its 76th year of operation, Slinger Speedway is primed for yet another busy racing season with 22 events scheduled over the remainder of the

Fans will next get the chance to watch some of the best racers around hit the tracks on May 21 at 2 p.m. in the 6th Annual Keith's Marina Race Against Cancer, with the event benefiting Chix4ACause — a nonprofit organization based in southeastern Wisconsin that helps provide support to cancer patients. According to their website, West Bend is the city that they provide the most service to within their area of operation.

The following week will see the first night race of the season, as racers will hit the tracks on May 28 at 6:30 p.m. for a Memorial Day event that will also feature a fireworks display.

June will see the racing schedule kick into high gear with six events in the month, starting with the Uptown Motorcars Pro Late Models series on June 4, and then on June 9 it will be Marine Corps HSRA Night from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. June 11 will see another race for the Pro Late Models, and then on June 18 it will be Scout Night at the track with all uniformed Scouts and leaders receiving free admission to watch the Elite

8 Super Late Models. June 23 will be Slam-Fest 1, and then rounding out the month on June 25 it will be Johnson & Sons Paving Remembrance Night, where Slinger Speedway will honor members of its community that have passed away in the previous year.

The Elite 8 Super Late Models and Uptown Motorcars Pro Late Models will kick off the next month on July 2, and then on July 9 in the Prelude to the Slinger Nationals, fans will also get to see the Midwest Truck Series and 602 Late Models race. July 10 will be the Slinger Nationals practice day and kickoff party, and then the big event will take place on July 11.

The Small Car Nationals will be held on July 16, and then a week later the Pro Late Models will hit the tracks again. July 30 will be HOG Night and Bike/Backpack Night at the track, and then August 6 will feature the Alan Kulwicki Memorial race, as well as the Wall of Fame induction and alumni night.

The Memorial Go-Kart Tribute Night will be held on August 13, and then on August 19 SlamFest 2 will be held. The 5th Annual Carl Wegner Memorial race will be held on August 27th, and then the final Elite 8 Super Late Models race will take place on September 3. The Pro Late Models series will wrap up on September 10, and then the final event of the season at the speedway will be the Monster Truck Throwdown on Sept. 23.









THE MILWAUKEE MILE

ASA MIDWEST TOUR FATHER'S DAY 100 SUNDAY, JUNE 18



NASCAR CRAFTSMAN TRUCK & ARCA MENARDS SERIES SATURDAY, AUGUST 26 SUNDAY, AUGUST 27





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