

Harvick, Rudd make major moves in first Chicago race

Mooreville area drivers or those with direct ties to it made some major moves in the NASCAR Winston Cup circuit's debut at Chicagoland Speedway earlier this month.

Ricky Rudd, a former car owner/driver whose team was based here and now a driver for a Robert Yates Racing outfit that is housed in that same Mooreville Lakeside Business Park venue, parlayed a third-place finish in Sunday's Tropicana 400 into a mirror-image, third-place standing in the updated and tightened championship points standing, making the latter department virtually a three-drive feud.

Meanwhile, Cup rookie Kevin Harvick, put on the spot by Richard Childress Racing as the fill-in for the late Dale Earnhardt of Mooreville following the latter's death in the season-opening Daytona 500 in February, posted his second win of the season that basically sews up his status as the circuit's top rookie.

Rudd, also a previous winner this season that accounted for his first win with RYR, qualified third and was able to take the lead once, succeeding in his bid to secure five additional bonus points. Rudd was able to make a late move that locked up his third-place finish and served to keep the heat on the two co-leaders in the points standings.

The effort kept Rudd as one of the series' currently most consistent entries, extending a streak of no worse than 14th-place finishes since April and padding a streak of six top-five showings within the 11 races during that span. It also shot him to within spotting distance of just 18 of the points championship leaders entering this weekend's race.

As for Harvick, despite entering the pressure cooker of, assuming the role left vacant by fan-favorite Earnhardt, he has continued to respond. He sewed up his second win following a sixth-place start but wound up leading a field-best 113 of the race's 267 laps, including 101 of the last 130. He also upped his points lead in the series' rookie points standings, making him a near runaway leader in that category.

Other entries with area ties also made the most of inaugural appearances at the new mile-plus track.

Among the top five, Jasper Motorsports Robert Pressley fashioned his best perfor-

mance of not only the entire season but also his career in surprising fashion behind the wheel of his team's Ford. He started 13th and was never able to take the lead, finishing second to pick up 170 points in the single race. It allowed him to improve one position in the points standings.

"This was something the team really needed," praised Pressley, whose best previous finish was a third. "Anytime you can get a top-10, or a top-five, it's something. We were the first loser, but we'll take it."

Chip Ganassi Racing's Sterling Marlin maintained his own consistent season by posting a ninth-place finish, exactly where he started. Finishing matters in his team's Dodge that was the highest finishing of that make in the field, Marlin made a one-spot jump in the points standings into fifth place, one of the highest positions for him at this stage of the season in a number of seasons.

Logging second-10 showings featured Dale Earnhardt Jr., coming off an emotional win the previous weekend in the series' first return to Daytona since the death of father. Earnhardt Jr. started back in 36th-place but weaved his way through the pack to place 11th, accounting for the largest improvement from start to finish of any other pilot in the field. As reward, he also leaped one rung in the points standing ladder, where he now stands eighth.

Penske South Racing's Rusty Wallace chopped eight legs off his 21st-place starting assignment to place 13th at race's end, also on the lead lap. He, too, upped his placement in the points standing by a spot, assuming fourth heading into this week's event.

Mooreville's Joe Nemecek again fashioned a top-five qualifying effort, earning a fifth-place start, and settled for a 16th-place finish overall, doing so on the lead lap. He was also one of the 10 different drivers to take at least one turn as a race leader, netting bonus points in the process, that also helped contribute to his one-spot improvement in the points standings.

Also, DEI's Michael Waltrip, a one-time winner and runner-up this season, wound up 22nd, still 17 spots better than his start, one of a number of entries placing a lap back. Mooreville's John

nized accordingly.

Absolutely no late sign-ups will be accepted. Entry forms are available in the Mooreville Recreation Department office and from Rudy's Sports Locker.

Cage camp gets down to Basics on Thursday

It's getting down to the basics in more ways than one for the upcoming Mooreville Basic Fundamentals Basketball Camp. Registration for participation in the camp drew to a close as of early this week. With sign-ups now completed, camp officials are limiting the field to the first 60 who register. There still remains some room, but spaces are filling fast, according to organizers.

The camp is open to boys and girls ages five through 13. Cost of attending the camp is \$25.

Area school and recreational level coaches will be on hand to provide instruction. That instruction will, as the camp's name implies, place emphasis on the basics of basketball, such as ball-handling, passing, shooting, dribbling, and rebounding as well as defensive stances.

The camp will be held tomorrow (Thursday) through Saturday in the Mooreville Middle School gym.

Camp hours will be 5:30-9 p.m. each of the first two days, and from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. on the final day. Games and contests will also be conducted, with winners recog-

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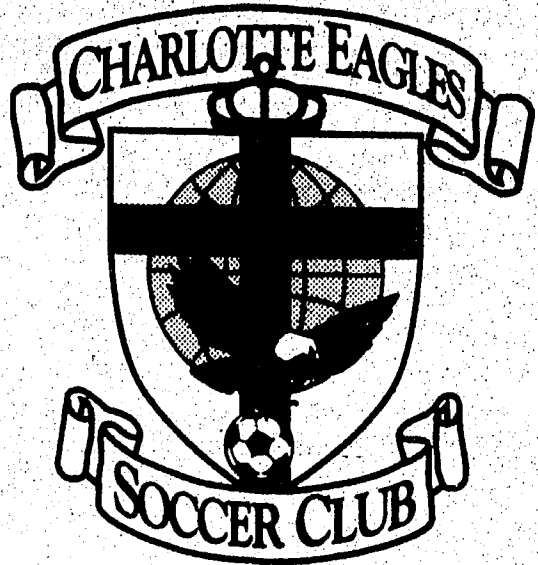
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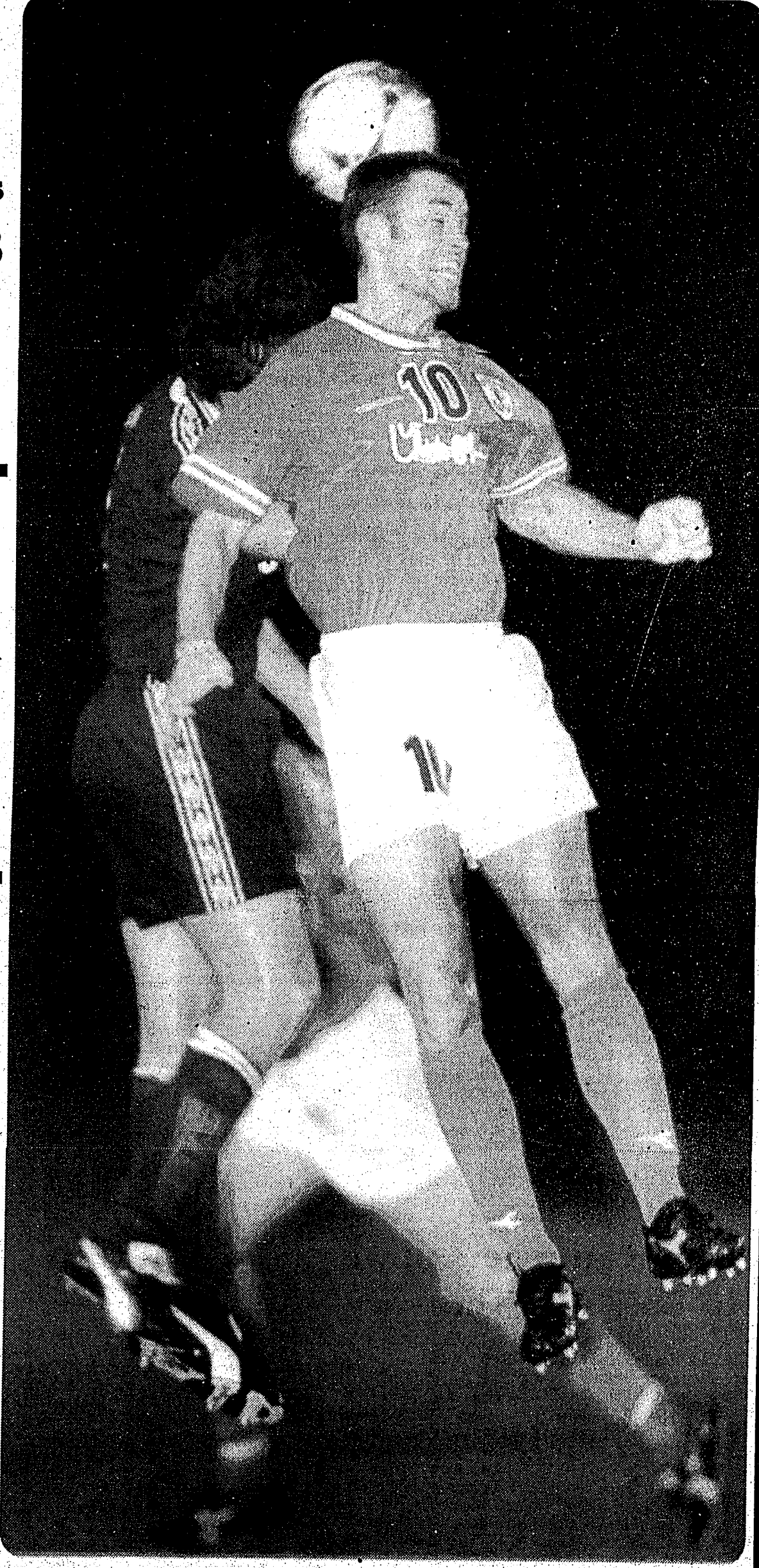
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