

Devils unbeaten in soccer

Mooreville's varsity soccer team found a pair of numbers to its liking Wednesday night.

Tallying the same total of goals for the second straight time and second time within a three-night span, the Devils bagged a second straight win over a non-conference foe and first on the road with a 5-2 painting past Newton-Conover.

With the win, Mooreville now fields a 2-0 record as its continues on a current three-game road trip that will take it through all of next week as well. The loss came in host Newton-Conover's Red Devils' season debut.

The guests, who kicked off their season and made their home debut a success with a 5-1 taming of visiting Alexander Central Monday night, gathered in goals from as many sources as they had tallies to display a balanced offensive attack, one preferred under returning head coach Steve Stith's system.

Stith is back for a second stint as the Devils' coach after earlier leading the program to two state championships before leaving for another profession after the 1996 season.

Legging in single scratches apiece for

the visitors included three netting their first goals of the season. Senior Ian McNabb, a forward, junior Michael Campbell, also a forward, and freshman M.M. Montero, a midfielder, all found the opposing net for a first time. For the latter, it was also his first varsity goal of his career.

Joining them in the scoring column were both Mark Cheslak, a junior back, and Phillip Citroen, a junior midfielder, who had each also logged a goal in the season opener.

All of the goals came in the second half, following adjustments made after facing a 1-0 halftime deficit.

At the junior varsity level, the Little Blue Devils also improved to 2-0, getting the winning goal in the final minutes of a 2-1 win. It comes following a season-opening, 10-0 rout of Alexander Central that was previously erroneously reported as a 7-3 loss.

Mooreville stays on the road when visiting South Point Monday night to open a week of work that also includes a stop at Davie County two evenings later. The Blue Devils won't be back at home until hosting South Rowan Aug. 27.

Devilettes defeated in opener

A fast start didn't lead to a fast finish for Mooreville's volleyball team in its season opener earlier this week.

The Lady Devils, hit hard before the debut at home against Alexander Central by the loss of one of their seniors due to a practice injury a day earlier, picked up wins in the first two games of the best-of-five affair but then suffered close losses in the following three games to suffer the opening defeat, three games to two.

"Our legs just gave out," summed up Nancy Dilks, who used the debut to christen her 26th season as head coach. "When that happens, the momentum can shift in a hurry. It was a good learning experience for us, though."

Mooreville taught the lesson early, moving to the brink of a three-game sweep by scores of 15-12 and 15-10 in the first two contests. From there, though, the visiting Lady Cougars fought their way back, tying matters with wins by scores of 15-10 and 15-11 and then scrambling all the way back from the 0-2 deficit to win the match by a 15-9 score in the

decisive game.

"Our seniors, bless their tired hearts," noted Dilks, "played as best they could. They tried to keep the team together. We're going to be relying a lot on their leadership this season."

Some of that expected leadership was on the sidelines watching. Senior Stevi Kochalka rolled an ankle in the final practice session before the opener and is expected to miss the entire season, a crucial blow for a team that is already low in on-court experience.

In her absence, number-one, go-to net player Crystal Furmanluk joined classmates Alisha Leonard and Shalonda Alexander in helping lead the crew on the court with hits, assists and service points. Leonard racked up five service points alone in the second game.

The contest not only opened the season but also kicked off a three-game homestand. Mooreville stays put to host St. Stephens and closes out the stretch by entertaining East Lincoln Monday evening in the Senior High gym.

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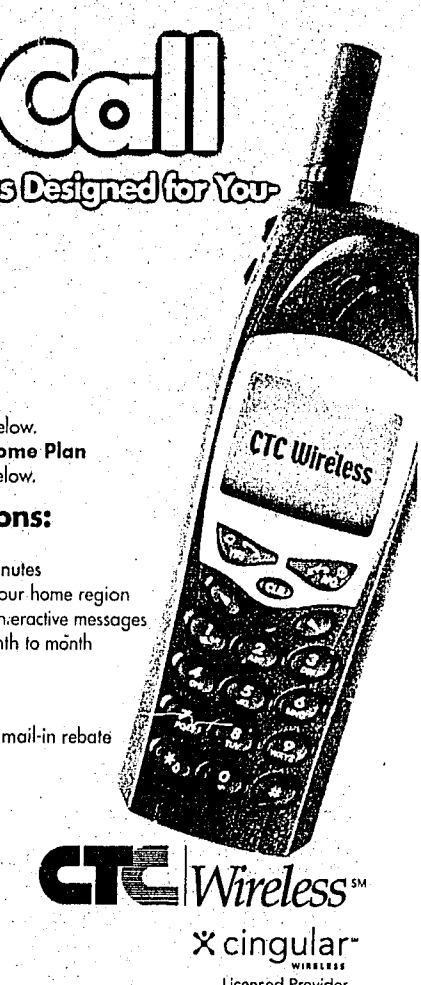
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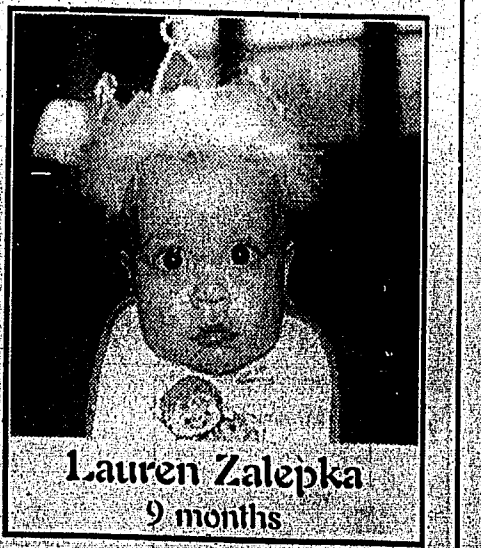
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Lapbylap

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Pit Stop

He won Rookie of the Year in 1977 and finished 17th in the points race. Can you name him?

For the answer, see next week's page or go to lapbylap.com.

Just the Stats

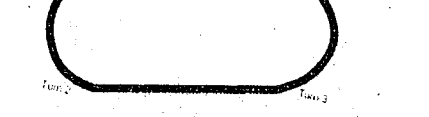
NASCAR POINTS LEADERS	
Winston Cup	Bush Grand Nat'l
1. Jeff Gordon 3,507 1/2	1. Dale Jarrett 3,248
2. Ricky Rudd 3,013 1/2	2. Greg Biffle 3,005
3. Dale Jarrett 2,942 1/2	3. Jason Keller 3,105
4. Sterling Marlin 2,792 1/2	4. Jeff Green 3,054
5. Tony Stewart 2,281 1/2	5. Elton Sawyer 2,650
6. Dale Earnhardt Jr. 2,119 1/2	6. Tony Ranes 2,646
7. Kevin Harvick 2,003 1/2	7. Mike McDougall 2,644
8. Bobby Labonte 1,979 1/2	8. Jennifer Johnston 2,620
9. Rusty Wallace 1,869 1/2	9. Chad Little 2,549
10. Johnny Benson 1,833 1/2	10. Kerry Wallace 2,507
11. Steve Park 1,570 1/2	11. Jeff Paves 2,475
12. Mark Martin 1,540 1/2	12. Randy LaJeune 2,441
13. Jeff Burton 1,458 1/2	13. Kevin Gault 2,383
14. Matt Kenseth 1,453 1/2	14. David Green 2,356
15. Jimmy Spencer 1,438 1/2	15. Scott Wimmer 2,338
16. Bill Elliott 1,423 1/2	16. Justin W. Murray 2,310
17. Elliott Sessler 1,395 1/2	17. Jay Sauter 2,289
18. Andy Hart 1,391 1/2	18. Mike McLaughlin 2,211
19. Bobby Hamilton 1,344 1/2	19. Rich Bickle 2,192
20. Ken Schrader 1,321 1/2	20. Lisa Frazier 2,105

For complete points standings and additional statistics, go to www.lapbylap.com

RACING THIS WEEK

- Pepsi 400**
- Where: Michigan International Speedway (Brooklyn, Mich.)
 - When: Aug. 19, 1:30 p.m.
 - On the air: TNT
 - Qualifying: Aug. 17, 3:05 p.m.
 - Distance: 200 laps, 400 miles
 - Track qualifying record: Dale Earnhardt Jr., 191.149 mph, Aug. 18, 1990
 - Track race record: Dale Jarrett, 173.977 mph, June 13, 1999
 - 2000 winner: Rusty Wallace

Michigan International Speedway



- Track: 2-mile oval
- Banking: 18 degrees

Busch Grand Nat'l

- Race: NAPAOnline.com 250 (Michigan International Speedway)
- When: Aug. 18, 1 p.m.
- On the air: TNT

Visit www.lapbylap.com for qualifying results and race-day coverage.

Who's Hot: Steve Park. After starting 37th and placing 10th at Watkins Glen, Steve Park is nearing the top 10 in points.

Who's Not: Dale Jarrett. Since his win at New Hampshire, Dale Jarrett has finished worse than 30th twice and fallen 265 points behind in the championship race.

On the Record

"NASCAR owes me one. We had the car."

— Robby Gordon after his TV telemetry unit caught fire

Last week's Pit Stop answer: Tim Richmond. He won seven races in 1986.

Jeff Burton hopes that his recent 2nd-place finish at Watkins Glen International means that things are looking up for his team

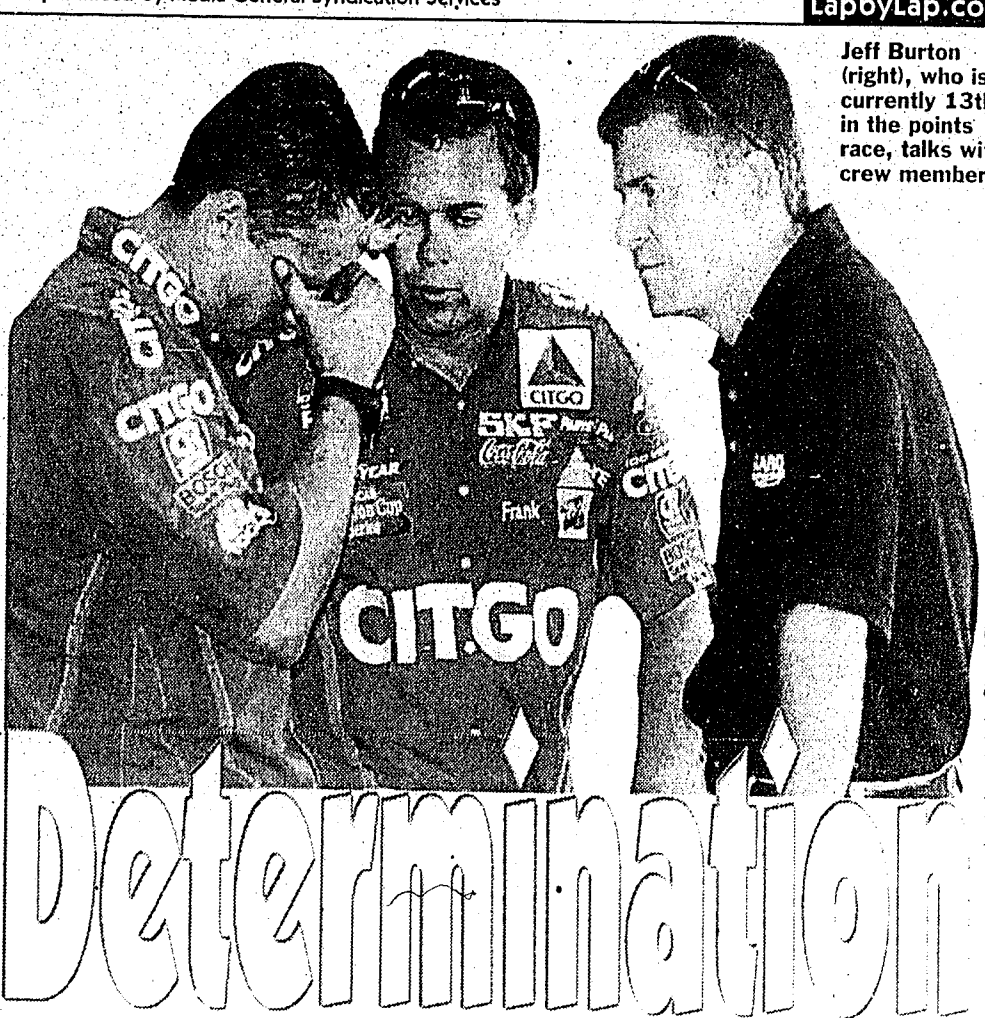
By Nate Ryan
LapbyLap

Struggling through his worst Winston Cup season since 1996 has been humbling for Jeff Burton, but it hasn't been totally humiliating. After managing a top-10 finish in nearly half of his starts (103 of 223) through the first eight years of his career, Burton didn't crack the top 10 until race No. 8 of 2001 and reached a low of 38th in points. Tabbed by several observers as a championship favorite, Burton's title hopes were cooked before the season hit the quarter-pole.

"Coming into this year, I didn't know if we'd win the championship — nobody ever knows," Burton said. "But I was pretty sure we'd lead a bunch of laps and have a chance to win a bunch of races, and that hasn't happened."

Burton has won only one race, but the will has still been present this season. With a new determination and resiliency, Burton steadily has climbed 25 spots in the standings. Crew chief Frank Stoddard and his team have maximized the No. 99 Ford's performance when

ON THE MOVE	
Jeff Burton has moved up to 13th in Winston Cup points with a series of solid finishes since winning the Coca-Cola 600 at Lowe's Motor Speedway in May.	
Race (Track)	Finish
Coca-Cola 600 (Concord, N.C.)	1st
MBNA Platinum 400 (Dover)	31st
Kmart 400 (Michigan)	7th
Pocono 500 (Pocono)	10th
Dodge/Save Mart 350 (Sears Point)	8th
Pepsi 400 (Daytona)	8th
Tropicana 400 (Chicagoland)	18th
New England 300 (New Hampshire)	11th
Pennsylvania 500 (Pocono)	36th
Brickyard 400 (Indianapolis)	16th
Global Crossing@the Glen (Watkins Glen)	2nd



Jeff Burton (right), who is currently 13th in the points race, talks with crew members.

Burton hasn't matched the contenders' pace.

So after placing a career-best second on a road course at Watkins Glen International on Sunday, Burton's post-race comments naturally wandered back to March. That's when rumblings began that Burton would leave Roush Racing for Richard Childress' new third team in 2002.

Burton still denies the rumor. "It's an honor to be a part of the team," he said. "That's why when all the rumors got started, I thought they were ludicrous. Why would you leave a team that tries so hard when you're doing so poorly? Anybody can try hard when you're doing well, but this team fights just as hard when we're not doing well. Actually, we've fought harder. We've been testing every week, and everybody is exhausted, and they keep coming back."

The tireless effort finally began paying off near the season's midpoint. After capturing his 16th career victory in the Coca-Cola 600 at Lowe's Motor Speedway in May, Burton seemed poised for his fifth consecutive multiwin season. But he led only six laps in the next nine races until leading a race-high 30 circuits at Watkins Glen on Sunday. Even though he hasn't contested for checkered flags as often, Burton has shaken the dark cloud that followed him when he finished 30th or worse in four of five races early this year. In the past 18 races, he has eight top-10 finishes. Perhaps more important, Burton has placed outside the top 20 only four

Nate Ryan covers NASCAR for the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

NASCAR NOTES Safety Trek: Driver believes NASCAR is making strides

Dale Earnhardt Jr. says he's convinced that a broken seat belt killed his father at Daytona, but he may be in the minority. Dale Jarrett and Jeff Gordon say they have never believed a broken belt was the cause of death. NASCAR plans to announce the results of its Earnhardt investigation Aug. 21.

Jeff Gordon is now NASCAR's all-time leading road-course winner, with his seventh victory. "The first time you come to a road course, you think you'll never be able to win one. Then... you start clicking and getting comfortable with shifting and braking... and you find yourself going to victory lane."

Tony Stewart finished 26th at Watkins Glen. He had an early bump with John Andretti and another one when Boris Said tapped him. Later, Stewart was running 30th when he hit some oil and skidded into the Turn 1 sand trap. A few laps later, Stewart was in the trap again trying to dodge a melee ahead of him.



MIKE MULHERN

"This is the best expedition that has ever been. That's what this is, an expedition. We are a group who have watched people trying to climb Mount Everest." — Jeff Burton

headed — from the top, over the last 12 months — has been extraordinary. It's not cutting edge by any means. But it's closer to cutting edge. "The philosophy has changed. First the philosophy must change, then comes the implementation. And the philosophy change has been extraordinary. And we are still creating that."

Now NASCAR may disagree with that and insist they've always been safety conscious. And they have always been safety conscious, but NASCAR has always been more of a reactive organization, and now they're out there being proactive. And that's a big difference. "Trying to prevent something from happening... rather than trying to prevent something from happening again. That's a big difference. And that's where we're getting."

Some people from NASCAR might be upset with me for saying that because I'm saying they weren't doing a good enough job before. But in my opinion it's all about what we're doing, and how do we make it better?

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