

Coach Garrett: I'm really excited for a promising basketball season

By Todd Forrest
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At the conclusion of the summer basketball camps last month, the *North Georgia News* spoke with first year head coach Corey Garrett regarding his early impressions of the squad, along with his takeaways from the Tennessee-Wesleyan and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes basketball camps.

NGN: The Tennessee-Wesleyan camp in early-June was your first real contact with the guys. What was your first impression of the team based on that camp?

CG: Things went pretty well considering we didn't have as many guys as we did at our second camp. We had a solid starting five with experience, but after that, it was all freshmen and sophomores. Overall things went well. Obviously, everything is still kind of new and fresh for everybody but a lot of the younger guys got some playing time and that's the main thing we were looking to get out of that camp.

NGN: What was the main thing that you were focusing on at that camp? Some of the players you've coached before but it's been a few years. Was it mostly a case of getting reacquainted with the upperclassmen and getting acquainted with the younger guys?

CG: Yes, getting familiar with the younger guys is important for me. Also trying to get some of the guys who haven't played in a few years back into basketball mode to see what they're capable of. We haven't put in a whole lot this summer and we didn't change a whole lot. We just tried to keep doing what Casey (Jones) has done in the past.

One thing we did focus on was transition and getting out and running. We have a lot of athletes on our team. We have a few wide receivers, a quarterback and a soccer player so we just tried to play to their strengths this summer.

NGN: That's quite a contrast in styles going from a girls team last season that slowed the pace, went inside



New head coach Corey Garrett and the Panthers during a break in the action vs Towns County at last month's Fellowship of Christian Athletes basketball camp. Photo/Todd Forrest

and tried to pound opponents into submission.

CG: We definitely want the guys to get out and run. I don't want to call it "run-and-gun" but I want to get out on the break and score layups. I think these guys are capable, and like I said, we have all those athletes and a lot of speed.

NGN: The second and final camp was the FCA camp. At that one you had a few more players show up and only lost one game. Was that due to, not only a better turnout, but everyone becoming more comfortable with you and

vice-versa?

CG: The only team that beat us was Gilmer, who is very good this year. But other than that, I thought it was a successful camp and things went pretty well.

I kept preaching to the guys all summer, "everything might be chaotic, you don't know what I want and I don't know what you guys can do, but you can still get out and run." We pushed it up and down the floor and scored on a lot of layups and that's what I want to see during the season.

I realize we're going to

have to score in the half-court too, but I want to see us to get out in transition, attack the rim and get to the free throw line.

NGN: Now that camps are over and a lot of the guys are shifting into full-time football mode, will you be hosting any workouts or opening up the gym for the non-football players?

CG: Starting this week we'll be in the weight room on Mondays and Wednesdays. We'll be in the weight room for an hour, then we'll shoot for an hour and play pick-up for an hour. We hope to get in three

hours-a-day, twice per week.

When school starts, we'll take off that first week before getting back in the gym for two or three days a week.

Official practice begins in October, but once school begins, the main thing is just getting reps. That's what it's all about at this point.

NGN: What is your overall impression of the team, so far? With two camps under your belt, how confident are you when looking ahead to the upcoming season?

CG: I think it was promising for sure. I think a lot

depends on who's healthy and who comes out. If a lot of these guys will stick it out and we can get our full team back in the gym, I think we could have a very promising season and I'm really excited about it.

We have a chance at winning region this year. Banks County will be the likely favorite but I see no reason why we can't be right there with them. Elbert County lost a lot and everyone else will be similar to what they were last year.

Banks will be good. But we can be pretty good too.

Color Run 5K to benefit MUSA

Go online and register for Blairsville's first EVER color run 5k. This is open to kids, adults, grandparents, runners, walkers, joggers - anyone who would like some exercise while getting showered in color!

You can register online now at <https://enduranceui.active.com/event-reg/select-race?e=63477154>.

Make sure to register by August 5th to assure you get a shirt and the size you would like as after that date it will be while supplies last! If you would like to sponsor and be on the shirt



message us and we will get you on there!

All monies will go to help kids with their individual registration costs.

NASCAR 2019

By Gerald Hodges/the Racing Reporter

Justin Haley Wins Coke Zero 400

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - Justin Haley was declared the winner of Sunday's postponed Cup Series race after an extensive rain and lightning delay ended the race on lap 127 of the scheduled 160 laps. The win came in only his third Cup Series start.

Haley led only one lap after inheriting the lead on lap 126 when Kurt Busch pitted under caution after a wreck. Busch was called into his pits, because his team thought green flag racing would continue. Just a few seconds after Busch pitted, lightning struck nearby and NASCAR put out the red flag.

"It's absolutely a blessing," Haley said. "It's pretty incredible that I have so many great people around me that have given me this opportunity to come here to this level and stage that we are performing on."

The 20-year-old was also the runner-up in Friday's Xfinity Series race.

William Byron was second, followed by Jimmie Johnson, Ty Dillon, Ryan Newman, Corey LaJoie, Aric Almirola, Matt DiBenedetto, Matt Tiff, and Kurt Busch.

About midway of Stage 2, the big wreck, or rather several smaller ones sent cars spinning and sliding into the outside wall and down into the infield grass. Kevin Harvick got into Brad Keselowski and knocked him into the wall. Keselowski's day was finished, while Harvick was able to continue. Also caught up were the cars driven by Daniel Hemric and Daniel Suarez.

Joey Logano and Austin Dillon won Stage 1 and 2 respectively, in a race highlighted by car manufacturers teaming up with one another. Driving became much more aggressive as Stage 2 went on, with drivers thinking the race may end due to approaching storms.

The Coke Zero 400 was originally scheduled for Saturday night, but weather forced NASCAR to move the race to Sunday. The race was moving along Sunday as scheduled until lightning struck nearby and cars were called down pit road.

Top-10 leaders after 18 of 36: 1. Logano-700, 2. Kyle Busch-682, 3. Harvick-625, 4. Keselowski-613, 5. Truex-597, 6. Hamlin-588, 7. Elliott-585, 8. Kurt Busch-564, 9. Bowman-534, 10. Almirola-512.

Sunday's race was the last time Daytona International Speedway will host NASCAR races on the Fourth of July weekend, a tradition dating back 61 years. In an effort to change up the playoff picture in 2020, NASCAR will begin and end its regular season at the iconic track. Daytona will play host to next year's regular-season finale on Aug. 29 and retain the tradition of holding the first race of the season in February.

CHASTAIN WINS DAYTONA XFINITY RACE

Ross Chastain held off teammates Justin Haley and AJ Allmendinger to win Friday night's rain-delayed Xfinity Series race at Daytona.

Kaulig Racing entered three cars in a race for the first time and had all three cars cross the finish line. Allmendinger, who made his first start of the year for the team, finished third, but was disqualified after his car failed post-race inspection and placed last.

"Oh my gosh, we did it!" Chastain said. "I sat here as a kid,



Justin Haley Wins Coke Zero 400

I watched these races as a kid every Fourth of July, never could come in the spring because we were growing watermelons. These guys right here gave me a race car that, oh my gosh, could win a race at Daytona!"

The top-10 finishers: 1. Chastain, 2. Haley, 3. Christopher Bell, 4. Austin Cindric, 5. Stephen Leicht, 6. Brandon Brown, 7. Jeff Green, 8. Gary Gaulding, 9. Jeremy Clements, 10. Matt Mills.

Top-10 leaders after 16 of 33: 1. Reddick-718, 2. Bell-642, 3. Custer-637, 4. Cindric-599, 5. Allgaier-573, 6. Gragson-526, 7. John Nemecek-504, 8. Haley-501, 9. Annett-500, 10. Briscoe-498.

PHELPS SPEAKS ABOUT NASCAR'S FUTURE

NASCAR president Steve Phelps spoke to a group of news journalists last Friday at Daytona.

He touched on numerous subjects from the fan reaction of the new aero-engine package to changing the NASCAR business model to future Cup Series schedules.

"I think the racing product has been exceptional," he said. "The good news is, it's not just me ... by and large the fans are incredibly excited about what they're seeing. From (a data perspective) I'm very pleased with what the 2019 racing has looked like."

"We are continuing discussions with our stakeholders about where we are going to race in 2021. Our broadcast partners have a voice. Our teams have a voice. All the stakeholders have a voice. The 2021 schedule is important to us. Our two largest voices are our fans and broadcast partners. We're going to continue and study it and figure out where to go. That dovetails into where we are going to go with our sanctions. It's very important to us to get this right. We normally announce our next schedule on (or about) April 1. We have some time here. We want to get this thing right."

Q: Is it fair to assume fans want more short tracks and road courses?

Phelps: "I think they've said that. We have to watch this. When I first came into this sport, fans didn't like road courses. They like it now. It's about the racing. Do we want to listen to what the fans have to say? We absolutely do. Are fans speaking loudly about seeing more short tracks and road courses? Yes."

Q: Will we see a reduction of races in the future?

Phelps: "The current thinking, the way I see it, is we will not reduce the number of races in 2021. I would say it's on the table. Part of it has to do with our broad-

cast partners. I would suggest that they would like to have more NASCAR content, more races, because it drives ratings."

Q: Do you feel your disqualification policy is working as it was intended?

Phelps: "The disqualifications we've had, we feel it's working the way it's supposed to work. I think it is a deterrent model that seems to be working. We've had none on the Monster Energy Cup Series side. We don't want to disqualify anyone, it's not the business we want to be in, but we need to make sure the rules are in place and that we are going to officiate this sport as fair as we can. Thus far, it has worked well."

Q: What is the feedback from race fans about the current package used in the Cup Series?

Phelps: "There are significantly more fans who like this package than who don't like it. Are we going to make every fan happy? We will not. I wish we could. People like different things, different styles of racing. The majority of races we've had this year have passed the eyeball test. They have for me and the majority of fans that we are talking to."

Racing Joke: Brad and Joey are leaving the race car shop and heading home. They are riding in Brad's car. Suddenly Brad pulls into a Starbucks and orders a cup of coffee. He asks Joey if he would like one, also.

"No, When I drink coffee I can't sleep," said Joey.

"Really? I have the exact opposite," said Brad.

"Wow, seriously?"

"Yes, when I sleep I can't drink coffee."

Weekend Racing: NASCAR's Cup, Xfinity, and Truck Series teams will be at the 1.5-mile tri-oval in Sparta, Kentucky for three night races.

Thurs, July 11; Truck Series race 13 of 23; Starting time: 7:30 PM ET; TV: FoxSports1.

Fri, July 12; Xfinity Series race 17 of 33; Starting time: 8 PM ET; TV: NBCSN.

Sat, July 13; Cup Series race 19 of 36; Starting time: 7:30 PM ET; TV: NBCSN.

Racing Trivia Question: Who is the current driver of the No. 3 Chevrolet made famous by Dale Earnhardt?

Last Week's Question: What year did Rusty Wallace win the Cup Series championship? Answer: It was 1989.

Gerald Hodges is a syndicated NASCAR writer and author. His books may be viewed online and ordered at Amazon.com. You may contact him by e-mail at: hodges@race500.com.

2019 Union County Softball Schedule

Date	Time	Opponent	Location
8/2	7:00	Pickens	Home
8/10	11:00	Habersham	Home
8/10	3:00	Commerce	Home
8/12	5:55	Lumpkin	Lumpkin
8/14	3:45	North Forsyth	North Gwinnett
8/14	5:40	Jackson	North Gwinnett
8/19	5:55	Gilmer	Gilmer
8/21	5:30	Pickens	Pickens
8/22	5:30	Monticello*	Home
8/24	11:00	East Hall	East Hall
8/24	1:00	Stephens .	East Hall
8/27	5:30	Elbert*	Elbert*
8/29	5:30	Putnam*	Home
9/4	5:55	Lumpkin	Home
9/5	5:00	Social Circle*	Social Circle*
9/10	5:30	Banks*	Home
9/12	5:30	Oglethorpe*	Oglethorpe*
9/14	11:00	Heard	UWG
9/14	1:00	Newnan	UWG
9/16	6:00	Madison	UNG
9/17	5:30	Rabun*	Home
9/18	5:55	Gilmer	Home
9/23	5:55	East Hall	Home
9/25	TBA	Region Playoff	TBA
9/26	TBA	Region Playoff	TBA

Union Co. Softball 2019 Summer Practice/Game Schedule

Date	Time	Event	Location
July 9	5:00	Summer League 5:00 v Lumpkin 6:30 v White	Lumpkin County
July 10	10:00	Summer Games 10:00 v White Co 1:00 v Lumpkin Co	UCHS Field
July 11	5:00	Summer League 5:00 v Habersham 6:30 v Commerce	Habersham Central
July 16	4:00	Summer League 4:00 v Flowery Branch 5:30 v Hart Co.	Flowery Branch
July 18	4:00	Summer League 4:00 v Jefferson 5:30 v Gainesville	Jefferson
July 22	11:30	Summer Slam	East Carroll Park
July 23	9:45	Summer Slam	East Carroll Park
July 24	10:00	Summer Games 10:00 v Lumpkin 11:30 v White	Lumpkin County
July 27	6:00	Alumni Game	UCHS Field
July 27	12:00	Midnight Madness	UCHS Field