

NASCAR diversity driver Davis wins second race at Hickory

SPECIAL TO THE POST

Drive for Diversity rookie Marc Davis continued his impressive start to the 2006 season by earning his second career win in the Limited Late Model division recently at Hickory Motor Speedway.

Davis, 15, who began the night on the pole, negotiated his No. 92 Levi Strauss Signature Chevrolet through the .363-mile, 36-lap oval to claim his second checkered flag in five weeks for Joe Gibbs Racing. The Mitchellville, Md. native won the season-opening Limited Late Model race at Hickory last March. Davis now holds a six-point lead over his nearest pursuer, Matt DiBenedetto, in the



Davis

series' points standings. "My crew gave me an awesome car," said Davis, just a few weeks away from finishing his sophomore year at Lake Norman High in Mooresville.

"It feels great to perform well each week and have such a great team and sponsor behind me."

In a telephone call to his young driver, Joe Gibbs Racing President J.D. Gibbs congratulated Davis and his crew.

"We're pleased with Marc's progress and have high expectations for him at JGR," Gibbs said.

"The Levi Strauss Signature brand is proud to support Marc and congratulates him on reaching victory lane for the second time this season," said Scott LaPorta, president, the Levi Strauss Signature brand. "Marc is a

great competitor, a first-class young man, and we are proud to partner with him."

The rookie's on-track success continues to pay dividends for the Drive for Diversity program.

"Davis opened the 2006 season with a victory and has continued to race with great passion and determination," said Bryan Kryder, program director of the Drive for Diversity. "It has been a fun, action-filled season already with Marc, and we wish him the best."

Also present to support Davis was mentor Wendell Scott Jr., along with drivers Chris Bristol and Jesus Hernandez, who participated in the NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series Late Model division race at Hickory. Davis will continue his season at Hickory for the remainder of the year.

For Bonds, chasing home run mark an 'overwhelming' exercise

Continued from page 1C

Babe before a crowd that isn't quite sure how it should feel.

The blast is so mammoth even the guys dressed in inflatable Bonds muscle suits watch with jaws open. Some stand and cheer, others simply stand mute as the ball bounces off a fast food sign hanging off the upper deck at Citizens Bank Park.

Before the sixth inning of the final game on the road, the trip had been a disaster. Now Bonds is at No. 713 with a bullet and headed home.

Philadelphia fans quickly recover. They boo Bonds lustily when he comes up one last time, erupt in a standing ovation when he strikes out, and a few even beat it for the exits when he's replaced in the eighth inning.

The Phillies win 9-5, sending the Giants to their fourth straight loss. Afterward, Bonds opens up. Not about steroids, but about baseball. For the first time, he acknowledges that chasing a legend is a tough thing to do.

"It's overwhelming right now," Bonds says. "It's a little bit larger than a single-season home run record. It's big. It's really, really big."

He's soft-spoken, almost humble. He talks about his mother, his teammates and how it would be a lot more gratifying if the Giants had won.

He acknowledges the greatness of Babe Ruth, but makes it clear that his name deserves to be listed among the all-time greats.

Asked if he is better than the Babe, Bonds says: "I don't know yet, but the numbers speak for themselves."

It will be a long, quiet flight home. Bonds will be able to sleep before resuming his march into baseball history.

Sleeping is something Bonds does well, perhaps because he dreams of a day when he won't be asked about steroids. Back in Milwaukee, where the Giants started this road trip, the feared slugger has been sacked out on a green leather couch in the visitors

clubhouse at Miller Park for more than an hour.

Another player might have gotten a shaving cream pie in the face or his hand dipped in water from playful teammates. No one messes with Bonds, though.

The night before, Bonds took a foul ball on his head while leaning against the batting cage and then went 0-for-4, with his last out punctuated by a giant whiff on a fastball. Afterward, he's not in a good mood, a trend that will continue on this five-game trip as he chases Ruth's mark of 714 home runs.

A group of reporters wants to know how he feels.

Apparently not well.

"No, not today," he says. "Get ... out."

The trip started with Bonds coming off home run No. 712, a blast over the center field wall in San Francisco on a 96 mph fastball from San Diego's Scott Linebrink. That sparks hope on the Giants that he is working out the kinks in his swing and blocking out the controversy that swirls around him.

In the locker room before the first game against the Brewers, Bonds talks to a woman while his personal videographer from "Bonds on Bonds" films away. He tapes his bat and tries to ignore a crowd of reporters, but there are too many of them.

"You don't want to talk to me. No you don't," he says. "Just say 'Barry sucks, he's a jerk,' he's this, he's that," and just put it in the paper. It's freehand. That's freehand. You don't even need me to talk for that. And yet you still keep coming over here. Why?"

Actually, Barry, it has something to do with you approaching the Babe's mark. Oh, yeah, and that steroids thing.

By the way, what do you think about Major League Baseball not celebrating the mark, and Bud Selig not bothering to drive 10 minutes to the ballpark to watch?

"That's just a slap in my face, that's all this is with you guys," he says. "That's not fair to M.L.B. or Bud. This is slapping me down again."

CIAA rivals won't schedule game

My mother, God rest her soul, had a sick sense of humor.

Whenever one of her daughters would get in deep doo-doo, she'd make us go in the backyard, break a switch off one of the trees - and it'd be better to be a BIG switch - to get our whupping. Those weren't spanking back then but whuppings. Sick, sick sense of humor.

But as I grew up, I came to appreciate those rare times for me (cough, cough.) Neither I nor any of my other sisters will ever forget her words: "As long as I'm alive, you'll never be too old for a beating."

After what I learned this week, other people should never be too old.

With that said, I'd like to extend an invitation to football coaches Michael Costa and Deondri Clark.

Gentlemen, come and get your whupping.

You first coach Costa since you outrank Clark by a year. I was there the day you were named head coach to revive St. Aug's football program in 2002. For over three decades, St. Aug's fans had suffered before you came on board to put the spark back into campus life.

I watched you suffer that first year of conference play when you didn't win a game. Still, we knew you were the right man for the job. OK, most of us did. And we were right.

A 5-5 season the following year had campus spirits soaring. You dipped to 4-6 in 2004, but your win over Shaw saved Falcon pride, and probably your job.

Last season, however, with your first recruiting class hitting senior status, you proved your mettle by winning your first eight games and finishing 8-2.

Coach Clark, you took the helm under awkward and embarrassing circumstances for Shaw. Previous head coach Gregory Ruffin had been suspended and subsequently fired for conduct unbecoming...something.

And right before the 2003 coaches luncheon at that. But there you were - cool, calm and collected - as you began your bowtie-wearing reign.

After a successful 7-3 club season by Ruffin, you led the Bears to a 7-3 conference season, the 2004 CIAA championship and thence to a repeat last year. All with a recruiting budget about the size of my monthly salary.

Kudos to both of you, now come get your whupping.

How can two otherwise intelligent men be such...such...boneheads?

How could you? How could you not schedule each other for the 2006 football season?

And your pathetic "It's his

fault" excuses are worthy of double switches.

Did you two forget somewhere along the way that St. Aug's vs. Shaw is one of the best rivalries in all of sports?

Coach Costa, you have a two-game win streak over Shaw.

Coach Clark, don't you want revenge?

Costa: "They'd rather play North Carolina Central, so let them play NCCU in a classic."

I said SHADDUP!

I'm not going to blame your athletic directors who probably had some hand in making the schedules. You two could have pushed the issue if you wanted.

But hey, I'm not one to stay mad. I'll feel much better just as soon as you both find the nearest tree, break off two switches - BIG switches - head on up I-40 to Durham, step into my office and get your whupping.

BONITTA BEST is sports editor at The Triangle Tribune.

City Manager Recommends Budget of Basics

On Monday, May 8, City Manager Pam Syfert recommended a budget to Charlotte City Council that emphasizes safety, streets and service.

The City can cover current services, including higher costs for them, without additional revenue. The budget does include a proposed 4.5% increase in the property tax rate to pay for new police officers, needed road improvements, revitalizing neighborhoods, and increasing the availability of affordable housing.

The proposed increase would fund the following:

- Capital Investments (Allocation of 3.25%)
 - Transportation Projects (i.e. roads, sidewalks and bike lanes)
 - Neighborhood Improvements
 - Affordable Housing
 - Fire Stations

Public Safety (Allocation of .75%)

Includes the addition of 55 sworn Police positions and other civilian positions including a Gang of One coordinator and crime lab technicians.

Street resurfacing (Allocation of .50%)

Allows City to resurface streets every 18 years instead of every 28-31 years.

House Value	Impact of Proposed 4.5% Increase			
	Annual	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
\$150,000	\$27.5	\$6.3	\$1.3	\$1.1
\$210,000	\$38.5	\$9.2	\$1.8	\$1.2
Average	\$27.5	\$6.75	\$1.33	\$1.1



User Fees

Water and Sewer Service

Residential water and sewer customers will see an increase of 6.5% in water and sewer rates. The increase will help fund capital investments such as additional water and sewer lines and facilities. The average monthly water/sewer bill for residential customers will increase \$3.08 from \$47.39 to \$50.47.

Storm Water

To support growth in the City's aggressive storm water management program, storm water rates will rise 7%, increasing the average fee 34¢ from \$4.81 to \$5.15.

What's Next?

- Council Budget Adjustments
- Public Hearing (including storm water)
- Adjustments and straw votes
- Budget Adoption

- May 17th
- May 22nd
- May 31st
- June 12th

Want More Information?

Visit citybudget.charmeck.org or tune in to *City Source*, the City's weekly news show, which airs Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. on The Government Channel-Cable 16.

Clip here

Have Your Say on Proposed Budget

On May 22 at 7 p.m., Charlotte City Council will conduct a public hearing for residents to offer feedback on the budget recommendations. In addition to that forum and also for your convenience, we have developed this form to gather public input.

1. To what extent do you believe these additions are important? Rate on a scale of 1-10 by circling your responses. 1=not all important and 10=very important.

Capital Additional Fire Stations

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Capital Affordable Housing

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Capital Neighborhood Improvements

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Capital Transportation Projects

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Additional Police Personnel

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Repaving Streets

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. I am willing to pay more for additional police, road improvements and capital investments. Please circle your response:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| Additional Fire Stations | Yes | No |
| Additional Police Personnel | Yes | No |
| Affordable Housing | Yes | No |
| Neighborhood Improvements | Yes | No |
| Repaving streets, pothole repair | Yes | No |
| Transportation Projects | Yes | No |

3. If these additions are important, but not enough for an increase, what services would you reduce or cut to achieve funding?

5. Are you a property owner? Yes No

6. Where do you live? (Circle one)
Inside Charlotte's City limits
Outside Charlotte's City limits

7. If you reside in the City limits, for how long have you lived there? Please circle your response:

0-2 yrs 3-5 yrs 6-10 yrs 11-15 yrs 15+ yrs

Please clip and fax your completed form to 704-336-6587 or mail it to City of Charlotte, Corporate Communications, 600 E. 4th Street, Charlotte, NC 28202.

