

NASCAR DODGE WEEKLY SERIES AWARDS BANQUET TO BE HELD NOVEMBER 11 IN LAS VEGAS

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (May 10, 2006) – One of America's premier destinations will host one of NASCAR's premier events in 2006. The NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series Awards Banquet will be held Nov. 11 at the Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas.

It is the first time this gala celebration, which honors the NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series national champion, Division champions, track champions and other special award winners, will be held in Las Vegas in the series' 25-year history.

"There is no question that the glamour and excitement of Las Vegas will be a great backdrop for the NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series Awards Banquet," said **Don Hawk**, NASCAR's director of regional racing development. "Our champions and guests will enjoy a spectacular week at one the finest resorts in America."

The NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series Awards Banquet is one of the largest post-season events hosted annually by NASCAR and attracts nearly 800 guests. Dodge and other participating sponsors will distribute nearly \$1.7 million in post-season awards.

Mandalay Bay Resort is tropically themed with lush surroundings. The site's 3,644 rooms and suites include 424 accommodations managed by Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. The property also has a House of Blues restaurant, concert hall and more than 100 House of Blues-themed rooms, decorated in the unique style for which House of Blues has become famous.

Mandalay Bay earned the prestigious AAA Four Diamond award and offers three AAA Four Diamond restaurants, Aureole, Fleur de Lys and 3950. The new Mandalay Bay Convention Center, which opened in January 2003, brings the total meeting space to nearly 1.5 million square feet and is the largest convention center on the Las Vegas Strip. Mandalay Bay's brands include: THEhotel, an all-suite hotel featuring 1,117 luxurious one-bedroom suites and Mandalay Place, a collection of 41 unique boutiques and restaurants.

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"LEICHT SHINES ON THE HIGH GROOVE AT HICKORY"

On Saturday, August 5th, Kevin Leicht, of Arden, NC, managed to do what so many others have wanted to do at Hickory Motor Speedway: beat Andy Loden to the checkers...in the high groove.

Loden has been able to pull away from the field on many of this season's races by using a high-line around the track. The high-groove has held much success over the years with racers like Harry Gant, and 2005 Track Champion Keith Bumgarner. Winning 8 of 14 races, Loden had been the only one to make the high-groove work for him this year.

However, Bojangles' Late Model Stocks points leader Leicht changed that. After working on his set-up in practice earlier in the week, he was able to beat Loden at his own game, and expand his extremely slim points lead over Loden in the season long chase.

Leicht started the night's 50-lapper from the front, after winning the Denver Marine Pole Award with a lap time of 15.339 seconds around the historic .363 mile banked asphalt oval. James Hansen, driving the Robert Hamke Racing #74, started outside front row and was looking for his best finish of the season when he tangled with #7 Ashley Huffman early in the event and had to restart from the rear. Huffman's car was damaged to the extent he could not continue, while Hansen was later sent to the rear again for jumping the restart, and still managed a respectable 8th place finish.

Loden, driving the #29, put on a great show trying to catch Leicht, while simultaneously holding off a strong field of contenders including #59 Coleman Pressley, #10 Andy Mercer, and #41 Jesus Hernandez.... all drivers contending for the close points chase.

Rookie #4 Chrissy Wallace wowed the crowd with her strong charge to the front after starting in 15th position in her second-ever Late Model event.

Leicht had this to say in Victory Lane "We came down here for two week's in a row and we were on the bottom there and the car was just about perfect, and I told the guys...I don't know what we're going to do to catch him (Loden). So we decided to come down here earlier in the week and test, and I never even looked at the bottom of the race track. We worked on the car and got it hooked up on the top and we really ran good tonight. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em!"

Leicht retains the points lead by four points over Loden, followed by Pressley in third, Mercer fourth, and Hernandez fifth.

The Top Four in Bojangles' Late Models points standings are separated by a mere 20 points, with only 4 points races left in the season.

Previous HMS Track Champion (2004) Matt McCall was welcomed back to his home track, but had a disappointing finish after his engine let go midway through the event.

Late Model racer Branden Bonnett won the "Tire Wars" relay race pitting HMS drivers and young fans, rolling tires around the track. Bonnett and his partner Steven Walker each took home a crisp \$100 bill, compliments of race night sponsor Sig's TireCenters.

Also racing on Saturday were the Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks, Hobby Stocks, J&J Roofing Street Stocks, with a special appearance by the Allison Legacy Series.

#24 Ben Stancill started from the Pole in the Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks for the fifth time this season, but #69 Trevor Hignutt was the class of the field. Hignutt logged his second victory of the year, followed by #16 Mack Little III, #6 Cole Miktuk third, #19 Jordan Anderson fourth, and #6 Waylon Flynn finishing fifth.

Stancill retains the points lead by 26 points ahead of #44 Ben Ebeling and Hignutt, tied for second place, #45 Kenneth Pardue fourth, and #6 Cole Miktuk fifth.

J&J Roofing Street Stocks saw a familiar face take the green and the checkers, after #32 Gary Ledbetter Jr. took the Pole Award and went on to notch his 6th win of the year. #03 Kevin Eby was second, followed by #54 Waylon Flynn in third, #13 Robbie Harrison fourth, and #64 Marshall Sutton fifth.

Ledbetter still leads Street Stocks points by 8 over Flynn, with Eby third, Sutton fourth, and Terrance Tucker fifth.

Hobby Stocks were featured in an on-track Autograph Session this week, and went on to put on a terrific show for their new fans and friends. #15 Stephen Clippard took his first win of the season, leading #5 Nikki Long to the checkers in his 2nd car. #21 Nick Maurer took third place, his best finish of the year, followed by #80 Caleb Roark fourth, and #90 Ronnie Sims fifth.

#3 Tim Reece hold his points lead by four over #11 Jimmy Whisnant in second place, followed by Sims in third, Roark fourth, and Long fifth.

The Allison Legacy Series returned to "The Birthplace of the NASCAR Stars" with a full-field of 26 young racers ready to do battle. After 50 laps of wild, wide-open racing, #68 Michael Cooper took the win, followed by #26 Nicholas Pope, #22 Casey Holt third, #1 Justing Allison fourth, and #27 Jason Connole fifth.

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