

# Despite back pain, Hamlin shines at Watkins Glen

BY JONATHAN INGRAM  
THE SPORTS XCHANGE

One way to get Denny Hamlin to victory lane is to have him drive hurt. **NASCAR** Suffering from back spasms, the Joe Gibbs Racing driver finally won his first road course victory in the Sprint Cup at Watkins Glen, succeeding where teammates Carl Edwards and Kyle Busch squandered opportunities. Last year, despite suffering from a torn ligament in a knee injured in a basketball game, Hamlin won the first round of the Chase at the Chicagoland Speedway. Even when he broke his back in a crash at the Auto Club Speedway in 2013 and missed four races, Hamlin managed to come back and win the season finale at the Homestead-Miami Speedway to sustain his streak of at

least one win every season since joining the Sprint Cup full time in 2006. Another way to get Hamlin fired up is to suggest he might have to leave the Gibbs team, which continues to be the dominant force in the Sprint Cup with 10 wins this year and where Hamlin has all 28 of his career wins. Although it was subsequently extended through 2017, Hamlin entered 2016 as a contract year and won the Daytona 500 with a brilliant move on the final lap. In June, Hamlin lost at the Sonoma Raceway on the last lap to Tony Stewart, losing the lead in the final corner while in pursuit of that elusive road course win. This time, he made the right moves at the right time and it was Busch and Team Penske driver Brad Keselowski who overcooked corners, handing the opportunity to Hamlin.

“I felt like Sonoma was a heartbreak to go to the last corner and lose the race out there on a road course,” said team owner Joe Gibbs. “Then to bounce back and come back here and race like he did today, they were big hitters up front that were great road racers. For him to come out on top here, I think that says a lot about Denny.” Hamlin took the lead when front row starters Busch and Keselowski ran wide at Turn 1 on a restart with 10 laps to go. Initially, it appeared that Hamlin might not have been able to start the race due to the back spasms, apparently a holdover from his head-on meeting with the wall inside Turn 4 at the Auto Club in 2013, which had no SAFER barriers at the time. “I got the text this morning when he woke up,” said crew chief Mike Wheeler. “He was in trouble. He said it. It was like, you know, not



TIMOTHY T. LUDWIG | USA TODAY  
Sprint Cup Series driver Denny Hamlin celebrates a win at the the Cheez-It 355 at Watkins Glen International on Sunday.

something you really want to hear (the morning of the race). You know you got good cars, good teammates, track position to start. “But end of the day I know (Denny) mans up when he needs to. I almost want to say if he knew he didn’t have a

winning car, he might do something different. But I know he definitely gets that attitude going in the car when he has a winning car, can run up front and tough it out.” Hamlin said he would not have gotten in the car had it

been a practice day. “No doubt if it was Friday or Saturday, no question I wouldn’t have turned one lap today,” he said. “It was by far the worst conditions I’ve ever had to drive in, over the knees, anything else. This was by far the worst pain-wise I’ve had to go through.” One of the question marks hanging over this season was where Erik Jones, the 20-year-old sensation from Michigan, was going to fit into the scheme at JGR, which put Hamlin on the hot seat among the team’s four veteran drivers due to his contract situation. That question was answered on the morning of the race at the Glen when it was announced Jones would drive a second Toyota for Denver-based Furniture Row Racing, which is in its first year as an affiliate with the Gibbs team.

## UMaine

Continued from Page B5

them make plays in space,” said Coen. “They have to be better decision-makers and distributors.” Collins and Belcher know what is expected of them, and they know what they need to improve in order to win the job. “I need to get better all-around,” said Collins. “I hold myself accountable for

everything I’ve done the past two years. “I’ve forced some balls, I’ve tended to settle back on my arm strength and stuff like that. I’ve got to concentrate more on accuracy, and I also have to work on pre-snap stuff. I have to know what the defense is doing so I’ll be able to make checks [audibles],” he said. Belcher said he need to keep improving as a passer. “We have a new offense, so I have to master it and

work on my footwork so I can become a better passer,” he said. Both quarterbacks said the Black Bears will be less predictable on offense this season. “We’re definitely going to be more imaginative,” said Collins. That could help the Black Bears in several areas. UMaine was last in the 12-team conference in red zone touchdown conversion and mustered just 13 touchdowns in 33 forays into the

red zone (inside the opponents’ 20-yard line). “That has been our No. 1 focus this spring and in training camp,” said Coen. “We have to think touchdowns. We need to be explosive. We need to be special with the ball in our hands. “We can’t just catch a hitch pass and fall down. That’s not good enough. My little cousin can do that. After we catch a hitch, we need to go score. That will come with confidence,” said Coen.

A hitch pass is when a receiver takes a some quick steps downfield before abruptly stopping and turning back, facing the quarterback, who delivers him the ball. “And we need to game plan in those situations better,” said Coen, who intends to use a variety of different looks in the red zone to confuse the defense. “We need to put more points on the board in those situations,” said Collins.

“We will demand more of ourselves.” The quarterbacks will benefit from a more experienced offensive line and receiver corps. Wide receivers Micah Wright and Jordan Dunn said the team feels both of them can get the job done. “We’re definitely confident with either one of them,” said Wright. “We’re comfortable with either one,” said Dunn.

# Arizona football player dies in his sleep

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Arizona Wildcats coach Rich Rodriguez announced Monday that offensive lineman Zach Hemmilla died in his sleep sometime Sunday night or early Monday. The cause of death was not immediately known. Rodriguez made the tearful announcement along with Arizona athletic direc-

tor Greg Byrne, who said the school was notified of the death of the 22-year-old Hemmilla on Monday morning. “The only thought on my mind right now is with Zach Hemmilla’s family,” Rodriguez said. “We lost a great, young man. Everybody in our program is hurting. I don’t know any of the details.” Hemmilla and Rodriguez

had spoken just after a meeting Sunday night. The Chandler, Arizona, native played in all 13 games last season, including six starts at left guard, and was considered the favorite entering fall camp to win the starting center job. The Wildcats practiced Monday morning, with players informed of Hemmilla’s death at the conclusion of practice. Rodriguez said he

had spoken with Hemmilla’s father, Joel, and that grief counselors would be made available to players and coaches. “As Coach said, he’s a great young man,” Byrne said. “We’re just so deeply saddened. Our deepest thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends, the team, his teammates, the coaches and everybody involved.”

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN  
**CLINICAL MENTAL  
HEALTH COUNSELING**

**Classes meet one weekend a month in Brunswick**  
Preparation for Licensure as a Clinical Professional Counselor and certification as a substance abuse counselor.  
**Accepting applications. Students may begin classes in September 2016 or January 2017.**

Specializations offered in Integrated  
Mental Health and Addictions  
Treatment for Children, Youth and Families or Adults  
**For more information:**  
[www.snhu.edu/pcmh](http://www.snhu.edu/pcmh)  
**Contact us at: 1-800-730-5542 or pcmhadmissions@snhu.edu**

**Southern  
New Hampshire  
University**

**25%  
OFF**  
Regular Prices

**1 YEAR OF WEDNESDAY  
HOME DELIVERY FOR \$39\*†**

\*PER SELECTED PUBLICATION

**AROOSTOOK  
AND  
THE STAR-HERALD  
HOULTON PIONEER TIMES**

**REPUBLICAN  
NEWS  
St. John Valley  
TIMES**

CALL: 1-800-432-7964 x8040 (OR) VISIT: [bdnoffers.com/special](http://bdnoffers.com/special) PROMO CODE: COUNTY (OR) MAIL THE FORM BELOW

☐ AROOSTOOK REPUBLICAN  
☐ HOULTON PIONEER TIMES

☐ ST. JOHN VALLEY TIMES  
☐ THE STAR HERALD

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYTIME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
For access to our online edition, please provide your email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Payment Enclosed ☐ Charge ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ DISCOVER ☐ ☐ Debit Card Amount: \_\_\_\_\_  
Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Requested Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (subscription must be received at least 1 week prior to start date.)  
Would you like a gift card sent? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
Message on gift card: \_\_\_\_\_  
Send gift card to (Choose one): ☐ Purchaser (I would like to give the card myself) ☐ Subscription Holder (send directly to address above)  
Purchased by: \_\_\_\_\_ DAYTIME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Within  
Aroostook County  
~~52 weeks \$54.86~~  
**LIMITED  
TIME ONLY!  
NEW SUBSCRIBERS  
52 WEEKS FOR \$39.  
(PER SUBSCRIPTION)**

Within Maine outside  
Aroostook County  
**52 weeks \$64.78  
26 weeks \$32.39  
13 weeks \$16.19**

Out of State  
**52 weeks \$63.60  
26 weeks \$31.80  
13 weeks \$15.90**

MAIL TO: BANGOR DAILY NEWS, PO BOX 116, BANGOR ME 04402

**THAT'S NOT ALL!**  
**NEW SUBSCRIBERS SAVE**  
**\$7 ON A TICKET TO THE**  
**Foliage MUSIC FEST**  
**Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> • Fort Kent Outdoor Center • Noon to 7:30 p.m.**  
*with music from* **The Ghost of Paul Revere, Soggy Po' Boys, Dark Hollow Bottling Company, & Ellis Paul**

**We bring Maine  
together**

**† Some restrictions apply. \$39 Per Year Per Publication. Price does not include tax. Offer good for Home Delivery only. Must not have been a subscriber in the last 30 days. Expires 12/31/16. Subscription will continue at regular rate after promotion.**