

# Stewart ready to roll in Chase

BY GEORGE DIAZ  
ORLANDO SENTINEL

Tony Stewart insisted he wanted no bouquet of roses, m u c h less po- COMMENTARY nies, on his farewell tour in his final NASCAR season. Cue awkward scene from Texas Motor Speedway, where Jeff Gordon received two ponies as a parting gift in 2015. Stewart always has found enough giddy-up getting behind the wheel. “I want to enjoy driving the race car every weekend,” Stewart said, way back in January. The quiet and smooth ride is officially over for Anthony Wayne Stewart. Terrible Tony is back, just in time for the Chase. And it’s business as usual for him, caught up in another anger-management controversy after his dust-up with Ryan Newman in Richmond. “I would hope that Tony breathes a little bit and stops this retaliation stuff,” said Larry McReynolds, Fox Sports NASCAR analyst. “I know he’s trying to make a statement but you got a chance at a championship in your last year on the circuit.

Don’t blow it by getting caught up in getting people back.” This is twice in as many weeks for Stewart. He spun out Brian Scott at Darlington, which was just a setup piece for his deal with Newman. By intentionally wrecking Newman as payback for aggressive driving — and taking a lot of others for a spin — Stewart conjured up all the elements that make him: a) a wonderfully combative competitor or b) an insufferable jerk. There’s not a lot of in-betweens if you have followed Stewart’s career, marked by moments of greatness and sullied by moments of a temper that gets in the way. “Google Tony Stewart; you’ll see all kinds of things he’s done,” Newman said. “Look it up. YouTube and everything else. Quite the guy.” Erstwhile employee and pal Newman also added the piece de resistance that made this spat go viral, calling Stewart out for “having anger issues” and “being bipolar.” Stewart brings out the pop psychologist in everybody. He is a tremendous driver and a three-time NASCAR Cup



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Tony Stewart greets fans during driver introductions before the Federated Auto Parts 400 at Richmond (Virginia) International Raceway on Sept. 10.

season champion who also quietly has done a lot of good charitable and philanthropic work behind the scenes. He also is a guy with anger issues and whose life will forever be marked by an incident in a sprint-car race in New York, resulting in the death of Kevin Ward Jr. after the 20-year-old Ward got out of his car to confront Stewart in August 2014. Ward was hit by Stewart’s car and died. Stewart was understandably shaken by this tragedy. Unfortunately the clash over the weekend will do him no favors with people who have marked Tony as an incorrigible hothead. Newman, whose outside shot at making the Chase

was ended by Stewart, didn’t do himself any favors either with his over-the-top remarks. “We’re going to take a look at that now that we’ve got some time and certainly talk to both drivers before heading into Chicago and go from there. We’re still looking through everything to review the data and then have conversations with the drivers,” Steve O’Donnell, NASCAR executive vice president, told SiriusXM NASCAR Radio. Let’s hope the conversation leads to radio silence from both guys. Stewart, in particular, doesn’t need the controversial crossfire, even if he doesn’t get to ride off in the sunset with a pair of ponies.

# Gordon’s dad killed wife, self in murder-suicide

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

The father of former NASCAR and IndyCar racer Robby Gordon allegedly strangled his wife and then fatally shot himself in their Southern California home. According to the Orange Police Department on Thursday night, the deaths of Robert “Baja Bob” Gordon, 68, and 57-year-old Sharon Gordon — the father and stepmother of Robby Gordon — were an apparent murder-suicide.

No further details on the motive or circumstances were released. Robby Gordon said earlier Thursday that his family is in shock and grieving the loss of his father and stepmother. “I’m so sad and I can’t believe it,” Robby Gordon told reporters, fighting back tears, near the gated house where police discovered the bodies Wednesday. “This is devastating. He taught so many, and I want everyone to know what a good man he was. ... This is

very tough. Not only for me, but for my sisters.” One of Robert Gordon’s daughters, Beccy Hunter-Reay, is married to IndyCar driver Ryan Hunter-Reay, who won the Indianapolis 500 in 2014 and posted on Instagram on Wednesday that his wife had given birth to a son, the couple’s third child. Robby Gordon, 47, is scheduled to run a race at an event in nearby Costa Mesa this weekend. He started the Indianapolis 500 on 10 occasions, competed in the NAS-

CAR circuit for over 20 years and also participated in off-road racing events. “I grew up on this property my whole life,” Robby Gordon said Thursday. “I learned everything about motorsports out in this tiny little barn over here.” He said his father, a former off-road racer, also had a love of horse racing. “He told me at a young age that ‘One horsepower wasn’t going to be enough, go do something different,’” Robby Gordon said.

# Larry Holmes set for Portland show

Berry to miss Nov. 12 fight card

BY ERNIE CLARK  
BDN STAFF

PORTLAND — Former world heavyweight champion Larry Holmes will be the featured guest as the Portland Boxing Club stages its 103rd show on Nov. 12 at the Portland Exposition Building. Holmes, now 66, competed professionally from 1973 to 2002. He won both the WBC and IBF heavyweight championships and made 20 successful title defenses during his career.

## BOXING NOTEBOOK

The native of Easton, Pennsylvania, known for having one of the best jabs in boxing history, is one of just five pro fighters to defeat Muhammad Ali. Holmes scored an 11th-round knockout of Ali on Oct. 3, 1980, in Las Vegas, Nevada, after Ali’s corner asked that the fight be stopped at the end of the 10th of 15 scheduled rounds. Holmes, who won his first 48 pro bouts before being defeated, finished his career with a 69-6 record. The International Boxing Hall of Fame and World Boxing Hall of Fame inductee will be available for pictures and autographs at the Portland show, according to promoter Bobby Russo. Several Portland Boxing Club fighters will headline the card, led by middleweight Russell “The Haitian Sensation” Lamour Jr. of Portland. Lamour is 14-2 with seven knockouts after his first-round stoppage of Roberto Valenzuela at a June 18 New England Fights show in Lewiston. Also representing the PBC at the Expo will be super bantamweight Jorge Abiague (9-2), middleweight Jason Quirk (5-0) and super

welterweight Casey Kramlich (5-0-1). Tickets will be available in early October at PortTix.com and Bruno’s Restaurant at 33 Allen Ave., Portland.

## Berry undergoes shoulder surgery

One fighter who won’t be competing on the Nov. 12 card in Portland is super welterweight Brandon “The Cannon” Berry of West Forks, who underwent surgery in Portland on Thursday to repair an injured left shoulder. “Surgery went great,” reported Berry in a Facebook post after the procedure at the OA Centers for Orthopaedics in Portland. “I’m officially on the road to recovery. Every day that passes is one step closer being back in the ring,” he added.

Berry (11-2-1 with seven KOs) suffered a torn labrum in the shoulder for the second time during his June 18 loss to James Lester at the Androscoggin Bank Colisee in Lewiston. Lester won the rematch of an earlier draw between the fighters by seven-round unanimous decision. Berry said a different procedure was used during his most recent surgery than after the labrum was torn for the first time during his only other professional loss, to Freddy Sanchez by technical knockout on Nov. 15, 2014, at the Portland Exposition Building.

Berry underwent surgery and didn’t fight again for eight months after that initial injury, but he said the recovery period this time should be shorter and he hopes to return to action by early spring of 2017. “I’m very confident that the end result will be me fighting at 100 percent of my ability,” he said.

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