

# The Daytona 500

The NASCAR Circus was Back in Town

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by Rocky Sinyard

New year—same pathetic, disgusting NASCAR! The “two-car-tango”? Might as well been watching the bumper cars at Six Flags! Anyone could have predicted the record amount of cautions—16 for 60-laps!

Does Brian France, and the NASCAR executives, have a clue? It is suppose to be about RACING! Friends, let’s explain it to NASCAR’s misconstrued-decision-makers.

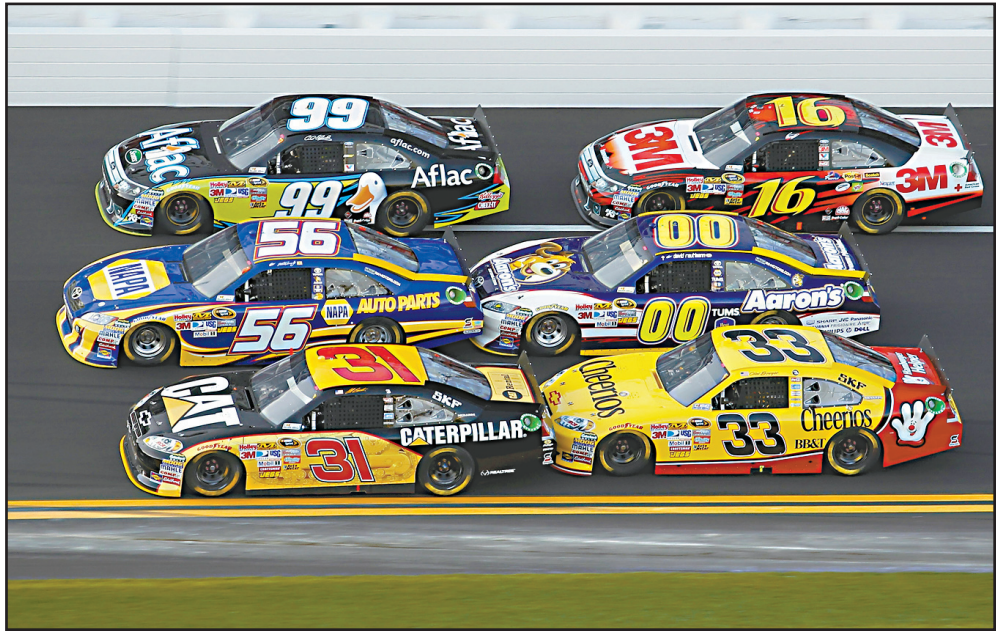
Racing—A sport race is a competition of speed, against an objective criterion (decisive factor), usually a clock or to a specific point. The competitors in a race try to complete a given task in the shortest amount of time. Typically, this involves traversing some distance, but it can be any other task involving speed to reach a specific goal. (Wikipedia definition.)

Where was the pure competition of speed at Daytona this year—and recent years for that matter? The teams were drafting at speeds over 205 MPH on the new surface. What did NASCAR do? Hoping to slow the field by breaking up the two-car-tango, they mandated smaller grill openings on the nose of the cars. Theoretically, this would cause the push-cars to overheat and consequently break the draft to cool their engines.

Race fans, how does slow the field, fit into—a competition of speed? We should ask NASCAR that question.

And friends, please tell me if any other principal racing organization uses a term like two-car-tango. Indy Car, Formula One, USAC, Grand AM, SCCA? None! NASCAR has made a joke out of superspeedway racing with their restrictor plates and their COT cars! We will get back to this point.

Back to the definition; a race should be to a specific point—to reach a specific goal. The historic, momentous Daytona 500—once called the Great American Race—should end at the completion of 500-miles! NASCAR’s decision to introduce their green-white-checked finishes to racing has made their biggest race event of the year somewhat trivial and insignificant—as there is not a specific, defined goal—but a variable, moving target somewhere at the end.



Race fans, there is no room for green-white-checked finishes in real racing. The green-white-checkeders (along with double file restarts) promote wrecking—not racing! We witnessed that in this year’s event.

Friends, NASCAR has spoiled the DAYTONA 500—perhaps irreparably. It began years ago with their restrictor plates. The development of the COT cars simply “drove the last nail in the coffin” as their bumper-to-bumper alignment—in the absence of pure speed—dictates the two-car-tango driving styles!

A couple of suggestions for NASCAR, should they attempt to revive the Daytona 500. Imme-

diately, they need to bring pure speed back into the equation. Throw the restrictor plates away and set engine compression ratio standards that will allow the cars to qualify at 220-225 MPH on their own. Get back to racing! How fast can you go?

And race fans—I do not want to hear anything about spectator safety! First, I believe that the racing would be safer at higher speeds as the cars could spread out and separate from each other—not run in one big pack. And secondly, I would sign a release to attend a show—a superspeedway race—where the focus was on raw speed! Put the race back into the driver’s hands!



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