

SPORTS

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Bad Boy Off Road 300
Sunday, 2 p.m. (NBCSN)

No penalty for infractions by Truex, Johnson

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NASCAR will not penalize Martin Truex Jr. or Jimmie Johnson for failing inspection after the opening race of the playoffs.

Truex won Sunday's race at Chicagoland Speedway and Johnson finished 12th. Both cars failed the laser inspection with infractions that should have drawn 10-point penalties.

Although the infractions were similar, NASCAR executive vice president Steve O'Donnell said the penalties would not have been equal. Truex advanced into the second round of the playoffs with his victory, but Johnson's chances of advancing would have been hampered by the loss of 10 points.

O'Donnell said not penalizing either driver was the fair decision.

"If we applied those penalties, the post-race penalty really would not treat each competitor fairly," O'Donnell said. "We also saw this as a potential situation that we could see repeating itself for the next nine races of the Chase going forward. So we made the decision coming out of Chicago not to penalize (Truex) or (Johnson) for the post-race infractions we saw in Chicago, which the industry would agree were minor in nature."

NASCAR didn't budge, though, on the penalties for missing lug nuts. The crew chiefs for Arie Almirola and Greg Biffle were each penalized \$10,000 for not having properly installed lug nuts at Chicago. Drew Bickensderfer (Almirola) and Brian Pattie (Biffle) were both hit with \$3 penalties on NASCAR's scale.

Also, all 16 teams in the Chase will go through the laser inspection after this Sunday's race at New Hampshire. Only nine were inspected at Chicagoland.

"When we talked to the drivers and the teams shouldn't all 16 (Chase) go through there and that's a very fair point as well," O'Donnell said. "Going forward that will be part of our post-race inspection as well. If we have a field of 16, all cars will go through post-race LIS and go down to 12, eight and four."

NASCAR is trying to set defined guidelines for penalties to avoid teams manipulating the system to their advantage.

"We don't want to be talking about post-race penalties," O'Donnell said. "Our goal is to never have to penalize anybody and we want to just talk about the action on the track. We felt like that this is hopefully enough of a deterrent not to have teams go there and also to be very up front as to what the consequence would be."



Joe Avento/Johnson City Press

Austin Gatewood and ETSU's defense allowed 2.9 yards a carry against Kennesaw State.

No option

Bucs hoping to slow Terriers' attack

By Joe Avento
Press Staff Writer
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ETSU at Wofford

Saturday, 1:30 p.m.

They've already shut down one option team, now the Bucs of East Tennessee State University hope to replicate that effort.

ETSU travels to Wofford College on Saturday for a Southern Conference football game, and the Terriers will challenge the Bucs with their vaunted triple-option, an offense they have been running for 29 seasons under Mike Ayers.

"They're very disciplined," ETSU linebacker Austin Gatewood said. "Coach Torbush compared them to the military academies."

Wofford is usually among the national leaders in rushing offense. This year is no different as the Terriers are third among FCS teams at 303 yards per game.

It's the kind of matchup that usually gives defensive coaches headaches, but the Bucs at least have some experience stopping the option. They opened the season against Kennesaw State, another option team.

They rushed for more than 400 yards against ETSU. This time around, they got only 166 and the Bucs limited the Owls to 2.9 yards per carry in a 20-17 double-overtime win.

"It gives you confidence," Gatewood said. "You think if you play your assignments like you need to, you have a better chance of being successful."

Assuming the Bucs didn't forget everything they learned in the week leading up to the Kennesaw State game, that experience should help this week.

"Just to see that look Week One, I think it's really going to be beneficial to our team," linebacker Trey Quillin said. "Every team is different. They do a little bit of gun option stuff, but I think we'll absolutely be prepared for whatever they have. We're just going to play our game, that's all we can do."

Gatewood, who is fourth in

the team with 10 tackles through two games, agreed.

"It helps a lot," he said. "It's really good that we got some experience. I was talking to (fellow linebacker) Dylan Weigel earlier and about how good it was that we played Kennesaw right off the jump. All preseason camp we worked against the spread and then we got Kennesaw. Now we know more about that option. It's good that we got to see it."

One way to keep the rushing yards down for Wofford is for the Bucs to keep the ball, and that's something they've done surprisingly well so far this season. ETSU ranks fourth nationally in third-down conversions with a 55.9-percent success rate.

"We have to just go out there and execute the play that coach calls and do our best and everything will take care of itself," ETSU quarterback Austin Herink said. "We just have to play our game and do what we've been doing in practice all week."

The Bucs come into the game undefeated after two games. They're coming off their first

See **OPTION**, Page 5B

Florida at Tennessee
Saturday, 3:30 p.m. (CBS)

Vols ignore puzzling prediction

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KNOXVILLE — Florida cornerback Quincy Wilson's unusual reference to predict the Gators will beat Tennessee for a 12th straight time hasn't riled up the Vols.

"Have you ever seen a duck pull a truck?" Wilson said while referring to Florida's winning streak over Tennessee. "Ducks don't pull trucks. Nobody has ever seen a duck pull a truck. Florida Gators are going to win, simple as that."

Gators coach Jim McElwain said Wednesday he'd only heard "bits and pieces" of Wilson's comment. The 191th-ranked Gators (3-0, 1-0 SEC) are 6½-point underdogs in Saturday's game at No. 14 Tennessee (3-0, 0-0).

"Hey, look, these guys are who they are," McElwain said during the Southeastern Conference coaches' teleconference. "I'm not into, you know, censorship. And you know, he better go back to it. I guess, whatever he said."

McElwain was asked if he'd ever seen a duck pull a truck.

"That's a classic right there," McElwain said of Wilson's comment. "I've got to find out what the heck that means. But I guess I have watched an Altec commercial, but I've never seen that duck do it, so I don't know."

See **PREDICTION**, Page 5B

Hall's return gives O-line shot in arm

By RHANNON FORKEY
Knoxville News Sentinel

Tennessee's heavily scrutinized offensive line is getting some additional manpower.

Sophomore Chance Hall will make his season debut when No. 12 Tennessee (No. 14 Associated Press) opens SEC play against No. 16 Florida (No. 19 AP) on Saturday (TV: CBS, 3:30 p.m.) at Neyland Stadium.

"Chance Hall is good to go. We are excited about that," Tennessee coach Butch Jones said on Wednesday during a news conference at the Ray & Lucy Hand Digital Studio.

Hall had arthroscopic knee surgery in mid-August, and returned to practice for the first time this week.

The 6-foot-4, 315-pound Hall played in 10 games last season, making seven starts and earning All-SEC freshman team honors.

See **HALL**, Page 5B

Got it covered

Stephens journeys into Milligan record book

By Dave O'neil
Press Staff Writer
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When Charlotte Stephens signed up for a goalkeeper's camp as a high school player back home in England, she had no idea a college soccer career was even a possibility.

But her performance over the course of that camp set in motion a journey to Milligan College, a place Stephens had never heard of. Now Milligan women's soccer coach Lisa Buckley can't imagine the program without Stephens guarding the woodwork for the resurgent Buffs.

"She had a great year for us last year, and I wondered if she could top that," Buckley said. "The way

Charlotte is playing right now is the best I've ever seen her play."

Indeed, Stephens is closing in on the school record for saves in a career. The senior made three show-stopping saves in the early stages of a recent Appalachian Athletic Conference win over Columbia to help get the Buffs off to a 1-0 start in league play.

It is a remarkable story, especially when you consider all the pieces that had to be in place in order for Stephens to end up at Milligan in the first place. The remarkable chain of events started when Buckley reached out to an international recruiting service based in Scotland in search of a new goalkeeper.

The service Buckley used had served Milligan well in the past,

connecting the school with standout players Daniel Ball and Lewis Grant. It just so happened that the service Buckley was relying upon to find a goalkeeper was the same one Stephens had contracted with to get her recruiting profile out to coaches in the U.S.

As Stephens contemplated a college career across the Atlantic Ocean, she said the support of her family was key in helping her embark on such a bold journey. "It was a big step," Stephens said. "My parents were so good in supporting me. They said it would be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. When you have the support from home, it really helps."



Milligan College

See **STEPHENS**, Page 4B

Charlotte Stephens is closing in on Milligan's saves record.

SPORTS

MLB

Indians knock Royals from AL Central race

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
CLEVELAND — Corey Kluber allowed two runs and struck out nine in 5 1/3 innings and the Cleveland Indians defeated the Kansas City Royals 4-3 on Wednesday night, eliminating the reigning World Series champions from the AL Central race.

but recorded his 28th save in 31 opportunities. Catcher Roberto Perez threw out pinch-runner Terrance Gore trying to steal second for the first out and Allen retired the final two batters. Ian Kennedy (11-10) allowed three runs in 5 2/3 innings and lost for the first time since July 25.

Scherzer (18-7) allowed three runs and struck out eight to push his major league-leading total to 267. He's tied for with Chicago's Jon Lester for the most wins in the NL.

NEW YORK — Center fielder Yancie robbed Yomiis Cespedes of a game-winning homer for the final out, and New York were handed another costly defeat by last-place Atlanta when the Braves rallied.

NEW YORK remained tied with St. Louis in the NL wild-card race, a half-game behind the Giants pending San Francisco's late game at Dodger Stadium. The teams began the day in a three-way tie for the league's final two playoff spots.

THIS WEEK

SPRINT CUP

Bad Boy Off Road 300

Site: Loudon, New Hampshire
Schedule: Friday, practice (11:30 p.m., NBCSN), qualifying (4:45 p.m., NBCSN), Saturday, practice (9 a.m., CNBC), practice (11:30 a.m., CNBC), Sunday, race, 2 p.m., NBCSN.

Trucks: New Hampshire Motor Speedway (oval, 1.06 miles).
Distance: 317.4 miles, 300 laps.

Last year: Matt Kenseth, who started 13th, best teammate Denny Hamlin and a hard-charging Joey Logano.

Last week: Martin Truex Jr. jumped ahead on a late restart and held on to win the Chase opener at Chicagoland.

Fast facts: Truex clinched a berth in the round of 12 by winning last week. Truex finished fourth last season. Kenseth has won three times in New Hampshire, including twice in a row. He's currently seventh in the Chase standings.

Next race: Citizen Soldier 400, Oct. 2, Dover International Speedway, Dover, Delaware.

XFINITY SERIES

Valley Forge 300

Site: Sparta, Kentucky
Schedule: Friday, practice (5:30 p.m., NBCSN), practice (6 p.m., NBCSN), Saturday, qualifying (4:45 a.m., NBCSN), race, 8 p.m., NBCSN.

Trucks: Kentucky Speedway (oval, 1.5 miles).
Distance: 300 miles, 200 laps.

Last year: Ryan Blaney won his first race of 2015, one that saw five drivers tied at least 13 laps.

Last week: Erik Jones picked up his fourth win of the season at Chicagoland Speedway.

Fast facts: The first round of the series playoffs will begin in Kentucky. The opening round of 12 will also feature events in Dover and Charlotte. ... Jones is the favorite heading into the Chase after winning four races in 2016 so far. Jones is the first rookie with four victories since Carl Edwards in 2006. ... Richard Childress Racing has three drivers in the playoffs, the most of any team.

Next race: Drive Saver 200, Oct. 1, Dover International Speedway, Dover, Delaware.

TRUCK SERIES

UNOH 175

Site: Loudon, New Hampshire
Schedule: Friday, practice (1:30 p.m., FS1), practice (3:30 p.m., FS1), Saturday, qualifying (10:10 a.m., FS1), race, 1 p.m., FS1.

Trucks: New Hampshire Motor Speedway (oval, 1.06 miles).
Distance: 185.15 miles, 175 laps.

Last year: Austin Dillon won his only series race of the season at Loudon.

Last week: Kyle Busch led 95 of 151 laps for his first series win since April.

Fast facts: The trucks will kick off their inaugural eight-driver playoff this weekend. After three Chase races, the two non-winning drivers with the least points will be eliminated. ... Four drivers in the current Chase field finished second through sixth last year in New Hampshire, led by runner-up Matt Crafton.

Next race: DC Solar 350, Oct. 1, Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Las Vegas.

FORMULA ONE

Last week: Nico Rosberg won in Singapore, his third victory in a row. Rosberg is now up to 8 points on Lewis Hamilton.

Next race: Malaysia Grand Prix, Oct. 2, Kuala Lumpur.

NHRA

Midwest Nationals

Site: Madison, Illinois
Schedule: Friday, qualifying (4:30 p.m.), qualifying (7 p.m.); Saturday, qualifying (3:30 p.m.), qualifying (6 p.m.); Sunday, finals, 4:30 p.m., FS1.

Trucks: Gateway Motorsports Park.
Last year: Arton Brown won at Gateway for the fourth time in his career.

Last race: Brown beat Doug Kaetta in the final of the opening Countdown to the Championship event.

Fast facts: Brown, the defending world champion, has a 42-point lead on Kaetta in Top Fuel. Brown could easily build on that edge this weekend outside of St. Louis considering his dominance at Gateway. ... Kaetta is seeking his first world championship.

Next race: Dodge Nationals, Sept. 29-Oct. 2, Maple Grove Raceway, Reading, Pennsylvania.

Kahne's next 2 years are locked in at Hendrick

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Hendrick Motorsports has locked down the driver and sponsor of its No. 5 car with an extension of Great Clips for driver Kasey Kahne.

STEPHENS
Continued from Page 1B
Stephens had been to the States before on vacations, but those jaunts had been to popular tourist hotspots like Orlando and Washington D.C. For Stephens and her family, the most interesting was a great unknown when Buckley finally reached out with a scholarship offer.

Fortunately for all involved, Buckley had taken a similar path from the United Kingdom to Milligan. Having played at the school before eventually becoming Milligan's coach, Buckley was able to go a long way in easing the minds of Stephens and her parents.

"She knew a lot about what I'd experienced because she'd been in my shoes," Stephens said. "She was able to answer a lot of questions because she's been a student here once and a soccer player."

AUTO RACING
"and we feel like members of their team, too," said Terri Miller, senior vice president of marketing and communications for Great Clips.

STEPHENS
Stephens admitted that it was hard to keep herself motivated last season, let alone keep everyone else on the team moving forward. But she believes the tough lessons learned last year have helped fuel the Buffs during their 4-2 start to the new season.

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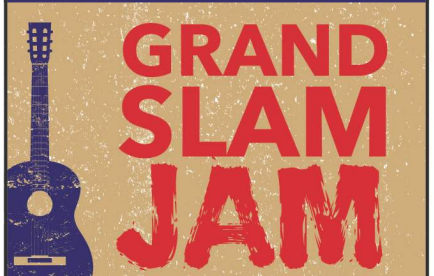
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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH



Radio advertisement for 97.7 FM and 1590 AM, featuring 'Inside Topper Football' and 'Join Stacy Carter and his assistant coaches, live at Mobile Smoke RESTAURANT'.

Advertisement for a meet & greet with Josh Thompson, including 'WIN TICKETS WITH JOSH THOMPSON' and 'FOR MORE INFO & TO ENTER, VISIT WWW.THENET360.COM/MEET-JOSH'.