

NASCAR: Hamlin Surges To Victory At Martinsville

MARTINSVILLE, Va. (AP) — Denny Hamlin and crew chief Mike Ford were in a tough spot, leading a race with a dominant car and eight laps to go when a caution forced a decision.

If they headed for pit road, the cars right behind them would stay on the track, gambling they could win a short sprint to the finish on old tires. And if they stayed on the track, the rest would pit, get fresh tires and surely run them down.

They picked pit road, and Hamlin made it work in a remarkable finish at Martinsville Speedway, rallying from ninth place by almost recklessly bull-rushing

his way through the field during a pair of two-lap sprints on the shortest, oldest track in NASCAR.

Hamlin passed Ryan Newman, Matt Kenseth and leader Jeff Gordon following the final restart to earn his third career victory here.

"That's hard to do. I had to bully my way through there towards the end, but everybody was just running into everyone," Hamlin said of his surge from the outside of the second row. "I flattened my tire with Kenseth going down the backstretch and just somehow made it work."

First, he hugged the inside into the first turn, forcing three-wide

racing that almost never leads to good things, especially on a narrow 0.526-mile oval. He plowed his way into fourth before teammate Kyle Busch spun out, bringing out a very timely caution.

Ahead of him, Gordon was poised to cross the start-finish line and take the white flag, which almost certainly would have allowed him to win the race with the lead Hamlin handed him. But when the yellow flew before Gordon got to the line, a two-lap sprint was required.

"We had the thing wrapped up," Gordon said. "And then he didn't, and Hamlin

had one more power move to make. He pushed Newman out of the way on the restart, then watched as Kenseth and Gordon duelled. Both eventually slid up the track on older tires, allowing Hamlin to dart underneath for the victory.

"What can you do? When you're the leader, it's bad in a lot of different ways on a short track because you're at the mercy of the guy behind you," Hamlin said.

The race originally was scheduled for Sunday, but was postponed by rain. The finish delighted about 30,000 fans who came out to watch on a work day.



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Mount Marty second baseman Katrina Romero throws on to first after forcing out Dakota State runner (No. 10) during the first game of Monday's doubleheader at Riverside Park.

TRACK

From Page 9

Bucks included Rachel Weinandt (fourth, 400-meter dash), Mariah Hofer and Jenna Grossenburg finished third and fourth in the 1600-meter run, fourth in the 1600-meter relay and medley relay, Emily Anderson and Kelsey Fitzgerald finishing third and fourth in the high jump, Rachel Johnson (second, long jump) and Kayla Salonen (second, shot put).

For the Bucks, Tyler Sternhagen finished fourth in the 400-meter dash, Mitch Yaggie (fourth, 3200-meter run), Perry Schafer (fifth, pole vault) and the sprint medley team finished third.

Even though Vermillion didn't have any runners finish in the top five, Billberg said this meet was used to see where the team is at.

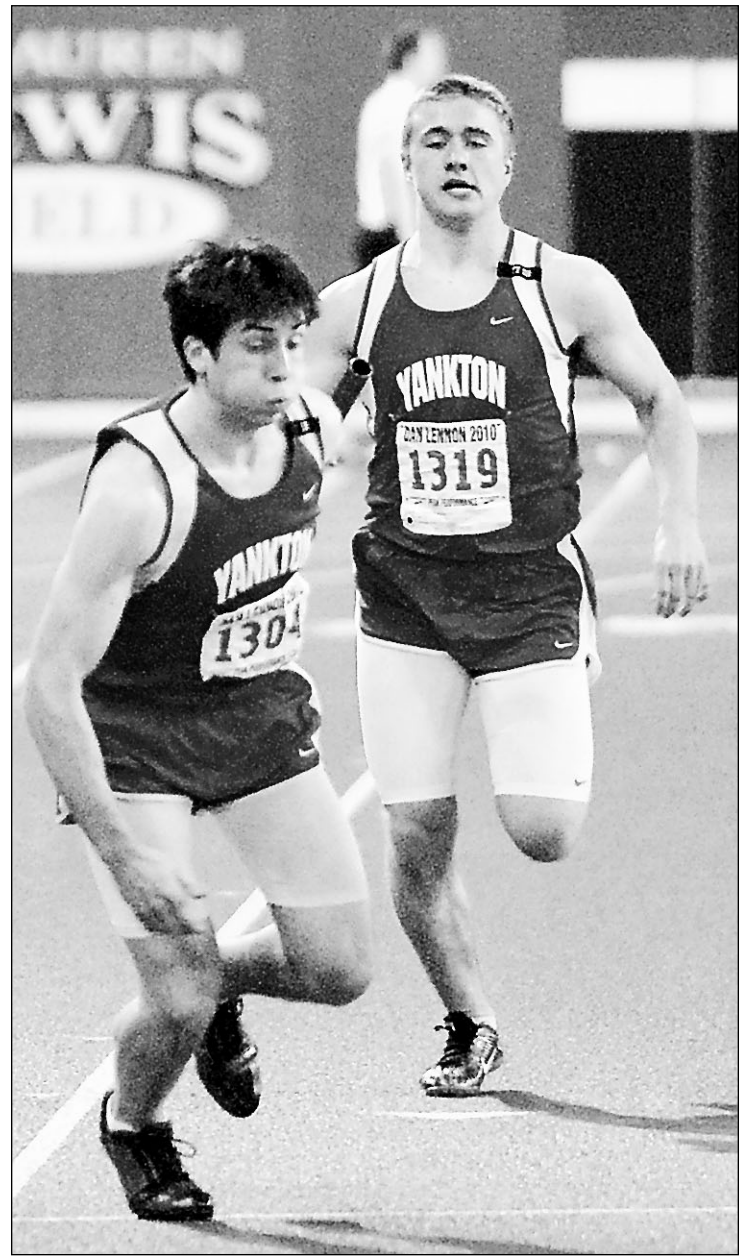
"We got to run with the big dogs and our kids competed as best as they could," she said. "The freshmen showed us something, and that some of them could be at this level."

The Tanagers have a busy week planned for next week, with meets scheduled for Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Of course, those meets will all depend on the weather.

"Usually they are built in for snow, and we also like to start the kids off slow. We have never run the Saturday meet because it's always been cancelled because of the weather," Billberg said. "Thursday we will go all out since that is a home meet."

The Class B portion of the Dan Lennon Meet will take place today (Tuesday) with the first events starting at noon.



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Yankton's Connor Fitzsimmons reaches back to take the baton from teammate Evan Schroeder during their heat of the medley relay at the Dan Lennon Invitational Monday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

NCAA

From Page 9

their cheerleaders and pumped them in the air, All-America center Jayne Appel dancing a jig with a net around her neck.

These Musketeers hung with Stanford for all 40 minutes — and the Cardinal needed every bit of grit they had to move on for at least one more.

Nnemkadi Ogwumike had 16 points and 14 rebounds and Pedersen added 18 points and 10 boards for the Cardinal (35-1), who survived an intense defensive matchup from the physical Musketeers to win their 26th straight game in a foul-filled affair at Arco Arena. They will next play in the national semifinals Sunday in San Antonio against the winner of Tuesday's matchup between Kentucky and Oklahoma.

BAYLOR 51, DUKE 48. MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Baylor's youth nearly cost the Lady Bears a trip to Final Four, and ended up saving the day.

Celebrated freshman Brittney Griner caught a pass, spun around and hit a short jumper with 45 seconds left to propel fourth-seeded Baylor to a 51-48 win over No. 2 seed Duke on Monday night for its second trip ever to the Final Four.

Duke led the entire second half and held a 46-38 advantage with 4:59 left before a pair of free throws by Kismetria Hayden launched a 13-2 run for the Lady Bears (27-9).

Hayden, also a freshman, stole an inbound pass by Joy Cheek and dished it to Melissa Jones for a layup with 2:10 left that pulled the Lady Bears within one. Jones, who finished with 10 points, also hit a pair of free throws with 26 seconds left, forcing Duke (30-6) to scramble.

Two 3-point attempts by Cheek in the last 17 seconds bounced off the rim as the Blue Devils' shot at their first Final Four since 2006 slipped away.

Griner just missed her third triple-double of the season, finishing with 15 points, 11 rebounds and nine blocks.

STATE

From Page 9

very good shooter from anywhere on the court."

Winne and Hart didn't get to close their careers at the state tournament, but both players certainly had notable careers and solid senior seasons.

Winne, a three-year starter and three-year all-conference selection in both the Little Missouri Valley and Southeast South Dakota conference, compiled career totals of 1,405 points, 398 rebounds, 412 assists and 208 steals on Scotland teams that went a combined 48-18.

The 5-7 guard, who has signed to play at Mount Marty College in Yankton, averaged 18.6 points and 5.7 rebounds per game this season.

"April has been a great floor

leader for us," said Scotland head coach Kevin Janish. "She has the complete game. She has great shooting range, but can take you to the basket with her first step and finish strong. She also has great floor vision and the knack of always finding the open girl."

Hart scored 16.3 points per game this season for Hanson. The three-time All-Cornbelt Conference selection finished her career with 1,137 points, 286 assists and 225 3-pointers.

The 5-8 guard, who led Hanson teams to a combined 80-16 record during her career, is headed to Dakota Wesleyan University to continue her basketball career.

"Amanda has a nice touch from the outside and wasn't afraid to take shots at crunch time. She has great course sense and handled the ball well," said Hanson head coach Jim Bridge. "She did a very good job of getting the ball to her teammates

and contributed well on both ends of the floor."

All-State second team honorees includes White River's Caitlin Whiting, who scored 24 points per game and state-tourney participants — Jessie Lee of Viborg, Megan Mutchler of Newell and Bailey Kusser of Highmore-Harold — as well as Haley Luond of Ipswich, whose team's unbeaten season ended on a late 3-pointer by Kneeland in the Region 1B championship.

Allison DeKam of state champion Castlewood heads the third team along with Allison Boeck of Arlington, Kelsey Walloch of Menno, Marissa Mann of Philip and Katrina Kjerstad of Wall. Kjerstad also played in the state tourney.

2009-10 CLASS B ALL-STATE GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

First Team
Alex Kneeland, Summit, 5-9 junior (26.3 ppg, 5.2 rpg)
Hilary Paulson, Freeman, 6-0 senior (24.3 ppg, 10.6 rpg)
Samantha Kleinsasser, James Valley Christian, 6-0 senior (25.4 ppg, 12.8 rpg)
April Winne, Scotland, 5-7 senior (18.6 ppg, 5.7 rpg)
Amanda Hart, Hanson, 5-8 senior (16.3 ppg, 2.3 rpg)

Second Team
Caitlin Whiting, White River, 5-8 senior (24 ppg, 8 rpg)
Jessie Lee, Viborg, 6-0 senior (17.2 ppg, 9 rpg)
Megan Mutchler, Newell, 6-1 junior (14.8 ppg, 6.9 rpg)
Bailey Kusser, Highmore-Harold, 5-9 junior (15.6 ppg, 5.8 rpg)
Haley Luond, Ipswich, 6-0 senior (15.4 ppg, 10 rpg)

Third Team
Allison Boeck, Arlington, 5-6 senior (18.1 ppg, 4.1 rpg)
Kelsey Walloch, Menno, 6-2 senior (14.6 ppg, 14.6 rpg)
Marissa Mann, Philip, 5-10 senior (18.2 ppg, 8 rpg)
Allison DeKam, Castlewood, 6-1 senior (15.6 ppg, 7.1 rpg)
Katrina Kjerstad, Wall, 6-0 senior (12.6 ppg, 9.3 rpg)

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