

# Derby Dreams delves into Soap Box lives

**Documentary to be broadcast at 8 p.m. ET Saturday on SPEED**

Press Release  
October 20, 2005  
03:01 PM EDT (19:01 GMT)

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. -- The late entertainer Johnny Carson participated in it. So did three-time NASCAR champion Cale Yarborough and current NASCAR President Mike Helton. Heisman Trophy winners Paul Hornung and Pete Dawkins and actor Frankie Muniz were also among the hundreds of thousands who have experienced the thrill of the "Greatest Amateur Racing Event in the World" -- Soap Box Derby.

A fixture on *Wide World of Sports* in the 1970s, the All-American Soap Box Derby (AASBD) returns to television courtesy of the SPEED Channel documentary *Derby Dreams: Stories from the 68th All-American Soap Box Derby* (8 p.m. ET Saturday). The documentary showcases the next generation of young racers and provides a glimpse into potential future NASCAR stars.

Produced by NASCAR Images and narrated by Nextel Cup Series driver Jimmie Johnson, *Derby Dreams* is a one-hour special which provides viewers with behind-the-scenes drama of five competitors and their families as they experience the highs and lows of derby competition at the 68th AASBD World Championship presented by Levi Strauss Signature, which took place July 30 at Derby Downs in Akron, Ohio.

"We couldn't be more excited about the premiere of *Derby Dreams*," said Jim Huntsman, President of the Board of Trustees, All-American Soap Box Derby. "NASCAR Images and SPEED have really captured the spirit and emotion of this unique family activity. Finally, viewers from all over the U.S. will get a true sense for why Soap Box Derby is a true piece of Americana."

The AASBD, an official youth initiative of NASCAR, is the premier youth and family oriented racing program involving boys and girls ages 8-17 from across the United States and several foreign countries. This year, 502 local champions representing 43 states and four foreign countries (Japan, Germany, New Zealand and Canada) qualified for the gravity-powered world championship and competed in three divisions -- stock, super stock and masters -- for trophies and college scholarship money.

"We are proud to have the All-American Soap Box Derby as a youth initiative of NASCAR," said Roger VanDerSnick, Vice President of Marketing, NASCAR. "Each weekend, race fans have the chance to follow their favorite NASCAR drivers and personalities, and now through *Derby Dreams*, fans will have the opportunity to experience this wonderful youth and family racing activity and maybe find a future NASCAR star."

Johnson, who is currently seeking his first championship in the Chase for the Nextel Cup, is the national spokesperson for the AASBD and narrates the documentary, helping viewers experience the emotion, excitement and drama of this American youth sports tradition that dates back to the 1930s.

SPEED followed four derby families in their hometowns during spring 2005 as they prepared to make the journey to the 2005 AASBD World Championship, with filming taking place in and around Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Francisco/Oakland and Lansing, Mich. Highlights include: intimate profiles of each of the five competitors and their families, opening ceremonies in Akron, competitors making last-minute preparations before making their qualifying heats, championship races and the awards ceremony.

"With the evolution from a fairly straightforward racing highlights format to one focusing on the experiences of a select group of participants and their families, *Derby Dreams* delivers a much richer and more satisfying portrait of this uniquely American event," said Robert Ecker, SPEED Channel VP of Programming. "This year's program promises to build upon that foundation with an equally remarkable selection of young competitors representative of the scope and scale of the Derby."

## About the families/competitors profiled:

- Wolfie Ruddell is a 10-year-old boy from Los Angeles, who isn't your average kid. From his unrivaled name to his unique red mohawk, Wolfie is one-of-a-kind.
- Stephanie Jay is a 15-year-old girl from Vallejo, Calif., who experiences adversity in Akron, Ohio, as she competes for the title.

•Karla and Krista Osborne are 14-year -old identical twin sisters from Gilbert, Ariz., who share the same interests, yet race in separate divisions.

•Andrew Feldpausch is a 13-year-old boy from St. Johns, Mich., who is one of 11 brothers and sisters and comes from a long line of derby racers.

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