

## Auto Racing

## Points-leader Truex on track for NASCAR championship

By PETE IACOBELLI  
AP Sports Writer

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Martin Truex Jr. believes being far away from NASCAR's hub has helped him during the most successful stretch of his career, a run he hopes ends with a championship this season.

Truex, the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series points leader, also is tied for the series lead with three victories. Already locked into the playoffs for a third straight season, Truex believes he's better prepared to end the year with NASCAR's trophy.

"It just seems like consistency has gotten better as we go down this road together as a team," Truex said Tuesday. "Last year was a good and this year so far seems even better so hopefully we can continue that upward trend."

A big reason, at least in Truex's mind, is his Furniture Row Racing team's headquarters in Denver, two time zones from the NASCAR center outside of Charlotte, North Carolina. The location gives the team an all-in-the-same-boat feeling that has made them bond

into a winning group.

"I think it's a great team, a great situation," Truex said. "Being in Denver, all by ourselves out there, my crew chiefs, my engineers, we're just like a family and we get better and better as we work together."

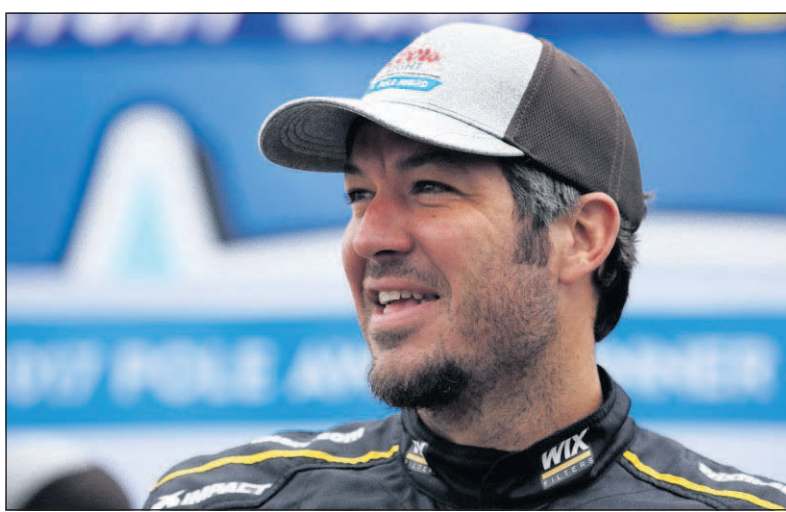
That's certainly apparent this season.

Along with his three victories, Truex has had eight top fives and 14 top 10s in 21 races this season. He's lead the most laps of any driver (1,291) and has been out front in 16 of 21 events so far this year.

"You don't know what tomorrow is going to bring, you don't know what next weekend is going to bring, so we're enjoying while we have success," he said. "We're working hard to stay where we're at."

The next step is running for a title.

Truex made the final four two years ago, yet finished 12th at Homestead to fall to fourth in the points race. In 2016, Truex came in as a playoff powerhouse with crown jewel victories in the Coca Cola 600 in Charlotte and Southern



AP Photo/Charles Krupa, File

**NASCAR series points leader Martin Truex Jr. has been among the most consistent drivers this season. He's hoping that helps his latest bid for a championship as the regular-season winds down.**

500 in Darlington. He then won two of the first three chase races to move out front. But problems in the round of 12 ended Truex's run as he finished 11th overall.

This time around, Truex isn't looking ahead. He thinks a focus on the week-to-week racing will keep himself and his crew sharp so when the playoffs come, they'll be ready.

"The last two years we had some good success in the playoffs and we did that by not changing our strategy," Truex said. "Obviously, we haven't got a championship yet so we've got some work to do on it. But I feel good about this year and we'll see how it ends up."

Truex was outside of the track "Too Tough To Tame," at Ramsey's

Pond to do a little down-time fishing. Truex, sponsored by Bass Pro Shops, sat in a boat alongside Darlington President Kerry Tharp and Bass Fishing Hall of Famer Guy Eaker. He made a few casts in the pond that local lore says led to Darlington's misshapen, egg-like layout because the Ramsey family did not want track creator Harold Brasington to get rid of the pond.

"The word environmentalist wasn't created back then," said Jim Ramsey, whose grandfather was credited with saving the pond. "But I would say he thought about it years ago. He wanted to save that little pond."

Truex fished some with the South Florida High fishing team that has won state and national angling titles on the prep level.

"Wished we could've caught some," Truex joked after coming up empty.

A bigger concern for Truex is staying on track with five races left in the regular season, including the Southern 500 at Darlington on Sept. 3.

"Can't wait for 30-some days to come back here and try again," Truex said.

## Outdoors

## Montana woman swims way to history

Associated Press

KALISPELL, Mont. — A Montana attorney fought through headwinds, high waves and exhaustion to become the first person to swim the length of the West's largest freshwater lake and back, a 56-mile feat that took 40 hours.

Emily von Jentzen, 34, set off at dawn Saturday from Somers on the northern shore of Flathead Lake, a 200-square mile body of water in northwestern Montana.

The attorney from nearby Kalispell was accompanied by a support crew in a boat that gave her food and kept other vessels away, but otherwise didn't assist her.

Strong headwinds began to rise in the middle of the first day, slowing her down and putting her hours behind her schedule. She told the Daily Inter Lake that she cried in frustration, and that her exhaustion led to strange and negative thoughts.

"I am going so slow, and every-

one's going to laugh at me," she said she recalled saying to the support crew at one point.

She made up her mind to at least make it to the halfway point, the town of Polson on the south shore. There, John Cole, a 35-year-old pediatrician, was waiting to swim with her on the return trip.

Cole's positive attitude when she arrived encouraged her to start the long swim back in the dark, she said.

On Sunday, huge swells began to form, battering the swimmers and making the water so choppy that their support crew became sick and had to be replaced.

"To have those big waves when we were both exhausted was really challenging," she said. "I don't think we could have done it without each other."

A crowd of 50 people greeted the two swimmers when they arrived in Somers at 10 p.m. Sunday, about 10 hours behind their projected finish.

Von Jentzen and Cole had trained together for 10 months for the swim. They spent four hours a day in a pool during the cold winter, then donned wetsuits to train in the lake when the weather began to warm.

Von Jentzen was the first woman to swim the length of Flathead Lake in 2010, and the first person to swim the 55-mile Lake Chelan in Washington state in 2011, according to the Flathead Beacon.

In 2013, she swam 30 Montana lakes in 60 days.

The Flathead Lake double-crossing raised money for a 5-year-old boy with a congenital heart defect and a 4-year-old girl with cancer. Von Jentzen has raised about \$50,000 for six different children through charity swims and her nonprofit organization, Enduring Waves.

By accompanying Von Jentzen on the return trip, Cole became the sixth person to swim the length of Flathead Lake.

## OLYMPICS:

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In embracing the 2028 date that is expected to be finalized later this year, city Olympic organizers ceded the 2024 Games to Paris, which both cities had craved.

But Garcetti and other supporters argued that the four-year delay was advantageous, giving the car-choked city more time to build rail lines. Additionally, the delay comes with financial sweeteners that, among other things, will pump millions of dollars into youth sports.

But time rushes on, and major changes are bound to happen.

Los Angeles County is home to 10 million people, and that population could increase by more than 500,000 by 2028, state demographers project. The cutting-edge technology in the new NFL stadium, now scheduled to open in 2020, will probably look like the forgotten Blackberry by 2028.

Many athletes in their prime today will be in the bleachers in a decade. And how can officials accurately estimate ticket prices and the revenue they will generate?

Events that happened 11 years ago can seem part of a faded, distant past. Facebook was a mere two years old. Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was executed. Taylor Swift released her first album, and "Game of Thrones" was years into the future.

Consider the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. The nearly century-old iconic structure — which would be used in an Olympics for a third time after the 1932 and 1984 Games — was constructed long before modern building codes. It was also severely damaged in a 1994 earthquake. The coliseum is currently undergoing an extensive makeover, but experts have warned it could still be vulnerable to shaking.

Estimates vary widely on what the federal government would need to spend on security for the two-week event, by some accounts \$1 billion or more. It's only a guess what the price tag will be in

2028, or the level of threat at that time.

Higher construction costs are likely, too. One example of the work that needs to be done: the Coliseum, a football stadium, would need to be converted into a venue for Olympic track events, then back again.

Over the years Olympics have been notorious for cost overruns, and studies have questioned if host cities benefit economically. Russia has struggled with costs from the 2014 Sochi Olympics, which have been called the most expensive Olympics of all time.

But Andrew Zimbalist, an economist at Smith College in Massachusetts, said LA was better positioned for a longer wait than other recent Olympic cities because its plan calls for no new major construction.

"They will be able to run an operating surplus," he predicted.

In the shorter term, the private committee behind the LA bid must retool its initial 2024 plans for four years in the future, including renegotiating contracts for housing athletes and temporary venues, which were all hooked to 2024.

Another hurdle: With the change in date, LA apparently needs to renegotiate and extend financial guarantees approved by the city and state to cover potential shortfalls connected with the 2024 bid. Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation in September that puts California taxpayers on the hook for up to \$250 million if Los Angeles were awarded the 2024 Games and they ran over budget, and the city has promised the same.

Chicago-based sports-finance consultant Marc Ganis said the overall outcome was favorable for LA, given that Paris was in line for the 2024 Games. Additionally, financial sweeteners will help cover costs over the longer wait time.

Still, facilities age, technology advances and costs rise.

"There is always going to be financial risk," Ganis said, "when you are targeting 11 years into the future."

## CHANCELLOR: Has been starter since 2011

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started, both sides in a great agreement. Bygones be bygones. I'm ready to play football."

Without a new deal, Chancellor could have left Seattle in free agency after this season. Chancellor's first contract extension, signed in 2013, is set to expire after the 2017 season.

"I think it's another illustration of, if you have deep relationships sometimes you don't see things eye-to-eye and sometimes you get going in a different direction and stuff doesn't quite make sense. We got there," coach Pete Carroll said. "But because of the depth of the relationship, because of the commitment to one another to really the individual and to us as well, we worked our way through it and it made sense. He's been better for it. We've been better for it even though it was as really hard thing."

Chancellor has been Seattle's starting strong safety since 2011. He is a two-time second-team All-Pro selection and a four-time Pro Bowler.

Known as one of the biggest hitters in the defensive backfield, Chancellor is also a highly respected voice in Seattle's locker room, even after his holdout two years ago where he missed the first two games of the regular season. Any wounds from that decision were healed when Chancellor was voted a team captain last season.

"He came back like we didn't miss



**In this Oct. 18, 2015 file photo, Carolina tight end Ed Dickson, left, flies toward Seattle strong safety Kam Chancellor (31) after Chancellor intercepted a pass during a game in Seattle.**

AP Photo/Stephen Brashear

a beat. ... He came back like he never left. We accepted that," teammate Earl Thomas said. "He's a leader, we listen to him and he's very valuable to this defense."

The contract extension was also taken as a signal to some of Seattle's other veterans who could be in the same position a year from now. Thomas, for example, has two years remaining on his current contract. The same goes for Richard Sherman.

Seattle also spent four draft picks this past spring on defensive backs.

"I was watching very closely," Thomas said. "You want to see because we're all right around the same age. They're bringing a lot of new guys in. If the writing is on the wall I want to be able to see it because I know I'll be

next."

NOTES: Rookie DL Malik McDowell has arrived in the Seattle area after being involved in a vehicular accident a few weeks ago, Carroll said. Carroll had yet to meet with McDowell as of midday Tuesday but said the process of determining McDowell's status begins now. "We're really anxious to really let everybody see him and take care of him, look after him and find out first hand," Carroll said. "Everything has been through communications with the doctors at the other end, which have been in-depth." ... WR Tyler Lockett is getting closer to coming off the PUP list and could return to practice in the next few days, Carroll said. Lockett broke both bones in his lower right leg late last season.

## MARINERS: Erasmo Ramirez lasts just 3 1/3 innings in 2017 debut with team

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DeShields tried to advance from first on a single by Nomar Mazara, but was beaten by a precise throw from Dyson.

"We can't get thrown out in that situation," Rangers manager Jeff Banister said. "Not with our best hitter coming up."

Nelson Cruz homered and Leonys Martin had two hits and two RBIs for Seattle.

Joey Gallo had two homers and four RBIs, and Rougned Odor also went deep for the Rangers, who lost their fourth straight.

Casey Lawrence (1-3) picked up his first MLB win after after entering the game in the fourth inning. Edwin Diaz earned his 21st save

after working a 1-2-3 ninth.

Nick Martinez (3-4) gave up seven runs and eight hits in 5 1/3 innings. He was recalled from Triple-A to fill the void after Yu Darvish was traded to the Dodgers.

"I kind of lost my timing a little bit," Martinez said. "It would come back and I would lose it again."

Cruz led off the second inning with his 22nd home run to give Seattle an early lead. Martin doubled the lead to 2-0 on an RBI single later in the inning.

Seattle scored three times in the third inning as Cano, Danny Valencia, and Martin all drove in runs to make it 5-0.

Dyson set the stage for Cano's RBI double when he stole his 200th career base.



**Texas' Joey Gallo (13) follows through on a three-homer run swing as Seattle's Mike Zunino, right, watches during the sixth inning of Tuesday's game in Arlington.**

AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez

Dyson now has a successful steal rate of 85.1 percent, second in MLB history behind Carlos Beltran (86.4

percent) for players with a minimum of 225 attempts. "I'm going for 300 now," Dyson said. "It's a good

milestone for me, especially being a backup guy basically my whole career. Getting a chance to play every day is special to me."

Odor and Gallo countered in the bottom of the fourth inning. Odor hit a two-run homer, his seventh in his last nine games, and Gallo hit a solo shot 456 feet over the batter's eye in center field.

That ended the night for Erasmo Ramirez, who made his first start since returning to Seattle in a July 28 trade. He allowed five hits and struck out five in 3 1/3 innings.

Two innings later Gallo hit a three-run homer to trim Seattle's lead to 8-6, responding to an RBI single by Dyson and two-run double by Cano in the top

of the inning. Mike Napoli had an RBI single that pulled the Rangers to 8-7 in the seventh.

## TRAINERS ROOM

Mariners' GM Jerry Dipoto said OF Mitch Haniger could return to the lineup by mid-August. Haniger was hit in the face with a fastball on Sunday against the Mets and is dealing with a mild concussion and a nasal fracture.

## UP NEXT

Mariners: LHP Ariel Miranda (7-5) will make his team-leading 22nd start and has recorded four straight no decisions.

Rangers: RHP Andrew Cashner (6-8) will make his 18th start and has won back-to-back starts for the second time this season.