

Dear racing community,

If I had to pick one word that comes to mind when I think of something I'd like to see more of in our sport, that word would be respect. Respect from everyone in our sport, towards everyone in our sport. As someone who's raced asphalt and dirt, stock cars and sprint cars, I can honestly say both are extremely difficult and deserve respect in their own way. It's a lot harder than the drivers make it look. With that being said, respect the drivers. Racing a racecar is something that can never be fully understood unless you've done it yourself. Drivers risk their lives to do what they do, and the professionals of any kind of motorsport are extremely talented. While you don't have to be a fan of everyone, at least respect what they're doing.

Respect the financial aspects of the sport. Respect the racers who work 40+ hours a week at their job to pay for their racing on the weekend. Respect the drivers who bang down doors all week to get sponsorship to race. Respect the drivers who have trained so hard and showed their talent that they earned a seat on a team. Respect the drivers who've had members of their family work from the ground up to become financially successful at some point in their lineage to provide for future generations of their family to be able to race.

Respect the fans who spend hundreds of dollars of their hard earned money every weekend to purchase tickets, merchandise, concession food, and more. Respect the fans who travel long distances and spend money on gas and hotels to catch a race. Respect the fans who wait hours just to get an autograph or meet their favorite driver. Respect the fans that attend fundraisers and charity events to help fund drivers, tracks, and charities. Fans are the heart and soul of our sport.

Respect the track workers who come early and leave late, many of which are volunteer, to sell tickets/programs/merchandise, work the concessions, provide security for attendees, clean up trash in the stands, film/photograph/announce, the list goes on (and on and on). Without them, the show wouldn't be possible. Respect the track prep crews that work the track during the week, during the races, and during the off season, in all types of weather conditions. Respect the track officials/flagmen that stand dangerously close to borderline out of control racecars and get dirt, parts, and who knows what thrown at them. They never seem to make everyone happy and get frequently cussed out, all to provide order and safety to a race. Respect the track management that work hard to keep prices down yet keep the doors open. Respect the promoters that work hard to bring in sponsorships of all kinds to grow the sport, pay the drivers, and fund the track operations.

Yes our sport has its weaknesses. Yes people make mistakes - people lie, people cheat, people disagree, people take advantage. However, our sport is ours, and we're lucky to be a part of it. Everyone has a role, and you can waste your time complaining, or you can spend your time helping to lift it up and improve it. Support our sport, love our sport, respect our sport.

If all else fails...there's always golf...