

# SPORTS

Friday, January 11, 2008

## new baseball coach for Chargers

Former Charger assistant coach Brian Perleberg is the new head coach for the Brandon-Evansville baseball team, taking over for Tom Otte who will become the new principal at Ashby High School.

Card boys' hockey team falls

B2



ECHO PRESS **B1**

## SPORTS SCOOP

### Gymnastics correction

The Cardinal gymnastics team's home meet against New London Spicer and Bemidji is on Friday, January 11, at 6 p.m., instead of January 10, which was incorrectly stated on some calendars.

### Grandma's Marathon registration

Registration for the 2008 Grandma's Marathon on June 19 will now be available online.

Those interested will be able to sign up by visiting [www.GrandmasMarathon.com](http://www.GrandmasMarathon.com) for registration, which opens Thursday, January 17.

The registration is open to the first 9,500 entrants.

Those interested in competing in the lottery registration for the Garry Bjorklund Half Marathon will be open from February 20 through March 2 and will select 4,500 entrants via a lottery.

Registration for the William A. Irvin 5K, limited to the first 1,200 entrants, opens Wednesday, March 19.

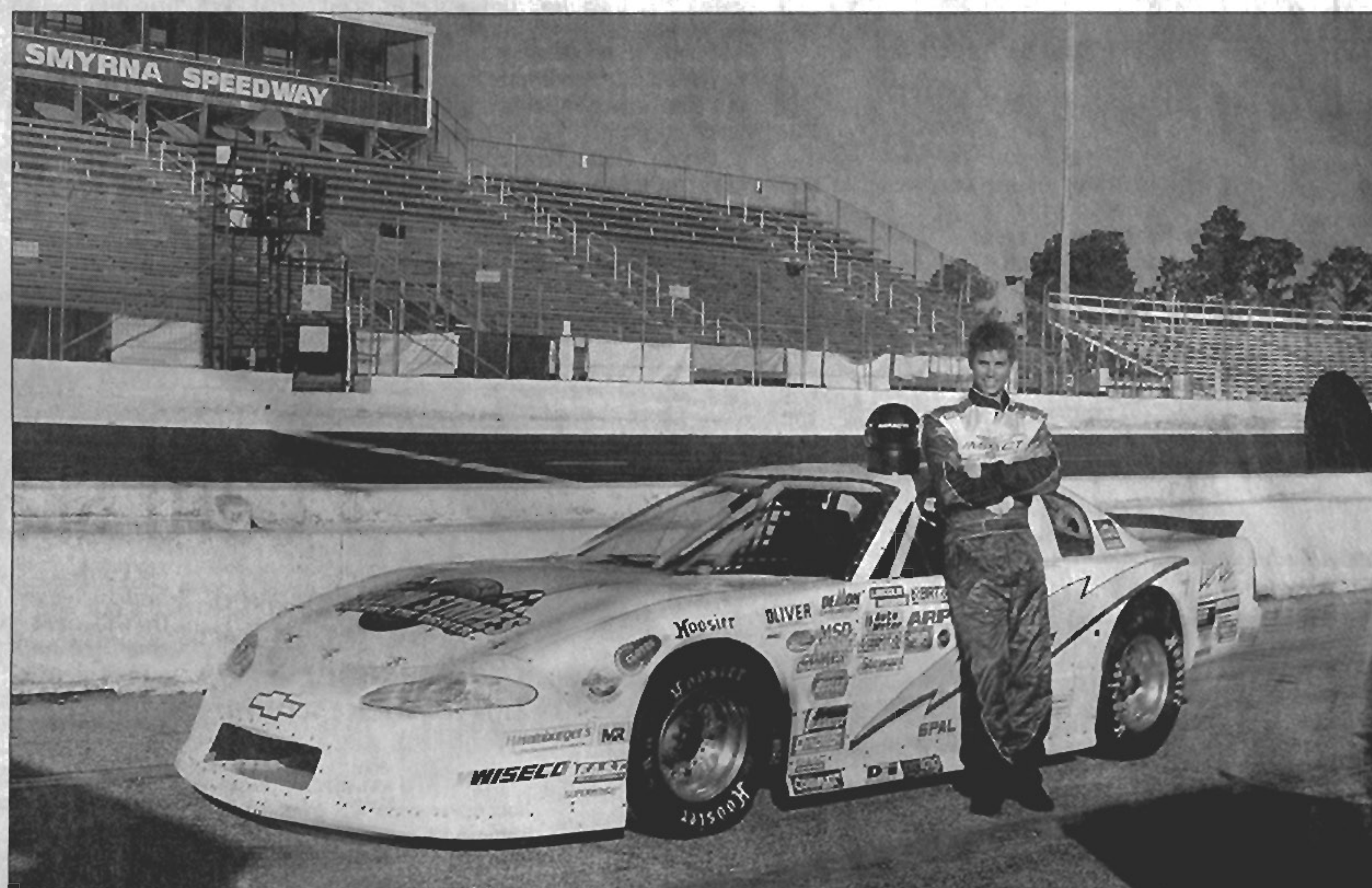
### FCA broomball

The Middle School Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), grades 7-9, will meet Sunday, January 13 at Discovery Middle School for broomball.

There is no cost for the event.

Anyone interested should meet in front of DMS at 3:30 p.m. for a bus ride to Joe and Cindy Giroux's for broomball from 4-6 p.m., followed by pizza.

The bus will return to



Contributed photo

Scott Stenzel, a 1999 graduate of Jefferson High School in Alexandria, recently co-created Yellow Stripes Making the Driver, a race car driver development program. He recently went

through the program himself, and is only a sponsor away from running the ARCA season kick-off race in Daytona, Florida in February.

# Heading down the fast track

Alexandria graduate Scott Stenzel is close to making a childhood dream reality

By Tara Bltzan  
Life Editor

What was once a childhood dream is close to becoming a reality for 27-year-old Scott Stenzel.

Like many young boys, he loved

dirt bikes, four wheelers, go-karts...anything built for speed. He also dreamed of someday being a big-time racecar driver.

Scott, the son of Mike and Sue Stenzel, lived his first eight years in Mankato. He was introduced to racing in his neighbor's back yard, which contained a small dirt track oval. He visited often just to be close to the racing action.

He moved with his family to Alexandria in 1988 when his dad, a

postal worker, was transferred. Ironically, his new friend and neighbor, Josh Fischer, had a small dirt track oval built in his back yard.

Josh often let Scott drive his four-wheelers, go-karts, dirt bikes, and even some cars they found in the junkyard.

His dad helped him build a go-kart. Since there was no budget for racing in the Stenzel family, the only place to race was on the Fis-

chers' back yard track.

Scott spent countless hours there making laps, and then more time on a tractor grading out the grooves he wore into the track.

"I remember when I was about 14 years old and my dad told me to watch this Jeff Gordon guy," Stenzel recalled. "I knew then that I wanted to be that person. I wanted

STENZEL B7

Racer obtains ARCA license



## Alex native obtains ARCA license, searches for sponsor to run series this season

to do what Jeff Gordon had done."

At age 16, he entered the FASCAR racing league. He worked as a part-time shelf stocker at a grocery store, a part-time laborer for his father's marine removal and installation service, and worked night shifts at a food and dairy plant, saving up enough money to get his foot in the door in the racing world.

During his high school years, he assembled three racecars, one for dirt and two for pavement. He did it with his own money, donated parts, the help of friends and family, and various sponsors.

His first official sponsor was a Web site design company that paid for his entire third season of Enduro racing at the I-94 Raceway in Sauk Centre and the Fergus Falls Raceway.

During the winter months, Scott got his adrenaline rush through snowboarding, tying for second in the 1998 Division Championships. He went on to compete in the USA Snowboard Association (USASA) national competition, receiving a 37th place national ranking despite a sprained ankle.

In 1999, he decided it was time to give it all up and focus on his future. He sold his racecars and gear as well as his snowboarding equipment and gear.

He graduated from Jefferson High School in Alexandria in 1999 with honors and a 3.97 grade point average, and set his sights on college.

He attended school at North Dakota State University in Fargo, Valencia Community College in Orlando, Florida, and Full Sail Real World Education in Orlando, Florida.

During that time, he continued to get his racing fix by participating in simulated on-line racing leagues.

In 2003, Scott started his own advertising and marketing company, Digi Craft, which he continues to own and operate today. The company specializes in print, Web and video multimedia services and serves such clients as Universal Orlando Resort, Disney Adventures Magazine, National

Retail Federation and for such prestigious race events as the Daytona 500 and Indianapolis 500. The business has allowed Scott to travel around the world.

While that has kept him extremely busy, his passion for racing has never subsided.

He purchased a drag racing car that he completely restored and raced at various Florida tracks. He also attended some racing schools to keep his skills sharp, hoping someday a door would open, allowing him to enter the world of big-time auto racing.

A chance meeting with Charlie Patterson, a retired builder of NASCAR driveshafts and owner of Nex-Gen Motorsports, brought him much closer to that dream.

Together, the two started creating the "Yellow Stripes: Making the Driver"

driver development program with the goal of guiding up-and-coming drivers. The nationwide program would offer first class training with top notch instructors, teaching attendees not only about racing, but also about becoming a good spokesperson, networking, making a good impression, etc.

Before long, Stenzel himself was one of the drivers being "developed."

"Charlie's always told me, 'You'd be a great driver. You've got some talent.' So I decided why not put myself through the same exact program to prove that it works."

Stenzel attended Finish Line Racing School December 11-12, and a few days later tested at the Daytona International Speedway in a Chevy Monte Carlo owned by Bob Schacht of Bob Schacht Motorsports.

After his second test run, he posted the 13th fastest time of the day, running at just over 178

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**Scott Stenzel**  
DRIVER

**"My goal is to sign a 10-race deal, and race all of the televised ARCA events this season."**



Contributed photo  
Scott Stenzel spent his childhood racing four-wheelers, go-karts and dirt bikes at his neighbor's back yard practice track. After stints racing Enduro cars, dragsters and a successful snowboarding career, he's set his sights on a future in big-league auto racing.

miles per hour. He had the fastest time of Schacht's four drivers, was the fourth fastest Chevrolet time, and the fastest rookie at the speedway that day.

Stenzel returned to the track the next day and ran enough laps to obtain his ARCA license, which would allow him to run in the series this coming season, which kicks off in February.

"This was one of the most exciting weeks of my life," Stenzel said.

He's got the license, he's got the Bob Schacht Motorsports car, now all he needs is a sponsor.

"I'd need about \$100,000 to run the February race in Daytona," he said of the season kickoff. "My goal is to sign a 10-race deal, and race all of the televised ARCA

events this season."

"I am really impressed with Scott's abilities - both on and off the race track," noted Schacht. "He is a great listener and has a lot of talent."

"Everybody who's worked with me as a driver has seen the talent," Stenzel said. "There's no issue with that. I've just got to keep at it and be determined. I've financed myself to this point, but can't do it any more."

Stenzel's goals don't end with finding a sponsor and racing a 10-race ARCA season. He noted that Schacht also has a Busch series car waiting for a driver, and after that, on to the big time - the Nextel Cup.

For now, he just wants to win

### CHECK IT OUT

For more information on Scott Stenzel, his business or the Yellow Stripes: Making the Driver program, visit the following Web sites:

[www.digicraftproductions.com](http://www.digicraftproductions.com)  
[www.scottstenzel.com](http://www.scottstenzel.com)  
[www.makingthedriver.com](http://www.makingthedriver.com)

races, build up his name and become recognized as an appreciated member of the racing associations that he joins.

Once he's accomplished that, he'll set his sights on a Daytona 500 win.