

Class for the ages set for Hall induction

■ 4 who left indelible mark to be inducted

By John Kekis
Associated Press

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — Three dominated on the mound, the other excelled at three positions up the middle. Together, pitchers Randy Johnson, Pedro Martinez, John Smoltz and multitalented Craig Biggio left a remarkable imprint on baseball.

Playing through an era tainted by steroids and dominated by offense — compliments of bulked-up sluggers, a smaller strike zone

and smaller ballparks — the trio of pitchers combined for 735 wins, 11,113 strikeouts and nine Cy Young Awards. And the indefatigable Biggio became the only player in major league history with at least 3,000 hits, 600 doubles, 400 stolen bases and 250 home runs while being asked to play four positions in his 20-year career.

All four, elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in January, will be inducted Sunday in Cooperstown.

“How did I feel pitching in the juice era? I wouldn’t want it any other way,” said Martinez, who joins former Giants right-hander Juan Marichal (1983) as the only natives of the Dominican Republic elected to the Hall. “For me, there’s no crying. I mean, as far as the way I did compete, I know I did it right. I did it the right way.”

Johnson, Martinez and Smoltz were elected by big margins



The versatile Craig Biggio was a standout at second base and catcher for the Astros, making the National League All-Star team at both positions. Biggio finished his stellar 20-year career with 3,060 hits and 414 stolen bases.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

See **HALL OF FAME, 6C**

A FADING FIELD

■ Shortage of high school officials hits South Texas

By Mark Travis
Special to the Caller-Times

An important part of the high school football ecosystem may soon be going on the endangered species list.

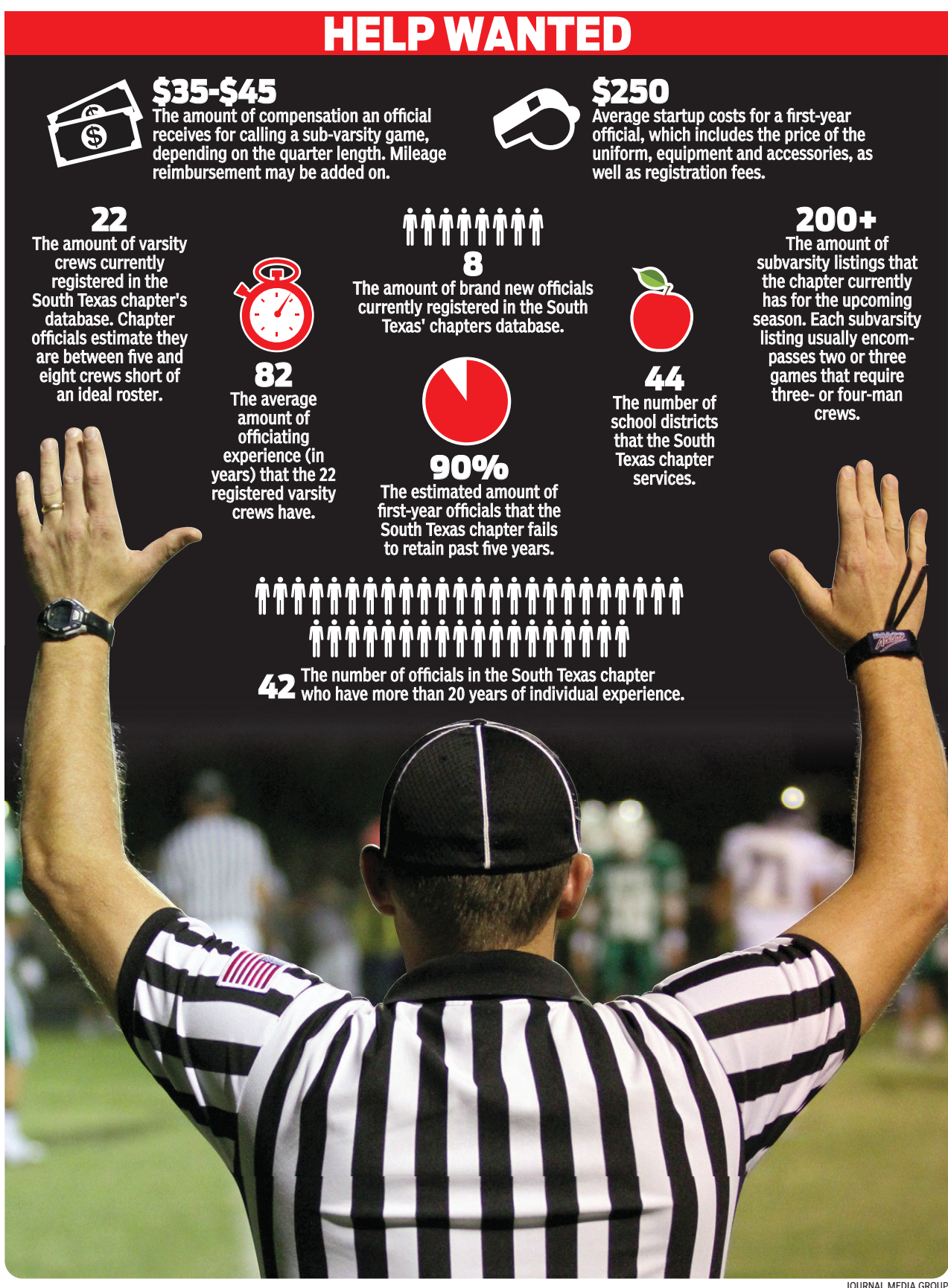
The South Texas chapter of the Texas Association of Sports Officials (TASO) is struggling to meet increasing demands for its referees, and the chapter is anxiously seeking a new wave of young officials.

“We need more people to get involved, more people that are willing to learn and that can give us a younger presence throughout the chapter,” South Texas chapter president Rudy Duarte said. “Having to stretch our guys thin like we are really creates a strain on us.”

The South Texas chapter services 44 school districts in Corpus Christi and the surrounding areas, covering everything from a seventh-grade scrimmage at Kaffie Middle School on a Tuesday afternoon to a varsity game in Freer on Friday night. But the chapter’s enrollment has been steadily declining in recent years, and now there are real concerns about its ability to service a full season’s schedule even as soon as next year.

“This is a continuing issue that’s gotten worse,” chapter treasurer Joel Hilliard said. “Some schools and districts have started to move subvarsity games to different days to help spread things out and lighten the load on our guys. We’re going to have to keep working with coaches to see what works best for the schools

See **REFS, 3C**



HOOKS **7** ROUGHRIDERS **6**
TEXAS LEAGUE

Hooks garner win in Frisco

■ Team tallies double digits in hits again

Staff reports

FRISCO — The Hooks finished with a double-digit hits total for the second night in a row, pumping out 11 in a 7-6 defeat of the RoughRiders on Saturday at Dr Pepper Ballpark.

Corpus Christi’s season-best streak of eight games with a home run was snapped, and only two of its hits went for extra bases with Colin Moran’s triple to lead the 10th inning coming last.

Alfredo Gonzalez drove Moran in with a sacrifice fly to center field for the game-winning run.

The Hooks (15-14 second half, 63-36 overall), put up a five-spot in the top of the sixth inning to erase a four-run deficit but surrendered two runs in the bottom half of the inning. However, they scored a run in the ninth to force extra innings, and another in the 10th inning to win the game.

Brett Phillips led the ninth inning with a single to right field, which was followed by a single up the middle from Teoscar Hernandez, allowing the speedy Phillips to navigate to third base.

Jack Mayfield then grounded into a double play, but Phillips crossed home plate to make it a 6-6 game.

Hernandez went 2 for 4, extending his team-best hit streak to nine games. Moran’s hit streak reached eight games with that 10th-inning triple.



Moran

KEY INNING

Aside from the obvious — read: the ninth and

See **NASCAR, 3C**

See **HOOKS, 6C**

NASCAR Edwards captures Brickyard 400 pole

■ Stewart fails to pass him in second round

By Jenna Fryer
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Carl Edwards will be on the pole

for the Brickyard 400, where passing could be at a premium Sunday at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Edwards turned a lap at 183.484 mph Saturday to move to the top starting spot. But he then had to



Edwards

see if two-time race winner and Indiana native Tony Stewart would bump him from the pole.

Stewart was fastest in the first round of qualifying and drew a rousing ovation from the hometown crowd. He

INSIDE

Kyle Busch earns second Indy win in three years. **3C**

Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton clinched pole position on Saturday for the Hungarian Grand Prix. **3C**

was the last driver on the track in the second round

of qualifying, and Edwards watched from pit road as Stewart circled the track. The three-time NASCAR champion had to get off the gas in the final turn and wound up fourth.

“Tony had me nervous,” said Edwards, who put

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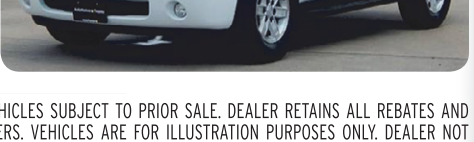
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SPORTS

XFINITY SERIES

Busch notches 2nd Indy win in 3 years

By Michael Marot
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS— Kyle Busch spent the last 10 laps desperately chasing Ryan Blaney.

When the old pro finally caught up, the 21-year-old youngster flinched.

As Blaney attempted to pass a slower car in the back straightaway Saturday on the final laps, Blaney’s car wiggled, Busch ducked inside, raced past and held on to win the Xfinity Series race at Indianapolis for the second time in three years.

The 0.421-second victory margin was the closest of the four races held on Indianapolis’ historic 2.5-mile-oval. Rookie Daniel Suarez, of Mexico, finished third.

“It’s cool, and it’s great and all, and made for an exciting last lap,” Busch said. “We just never should



Kyle Busch does a burnout on the front straight after winning the Xfinity Series race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Saturday for the second straight year.

have been in that position to begin with. If it wasn’t for a mistake by the car in front of us, we would have

lost today.”

Instead, it was yet another stunning chapter in Busch’s remarkable

comeback.

Since missing the first three months of the season after breaking his

right leg and left foot in the Xfinity opener at Daytona, the 30-year-old Cup regular has reached victory lane five times — twice on the Xfinity circuit and three in the Sprint Cup Series. He also won the pole Saturday, his third straight at Indy, and has won two of NASCAR’s last three undercard races here.

But Busch had to sweat this one out.

“I’m still kind of warm. I’m not even cool in here yet and I’m soaking wet,” he said after extending his career wins record to 72. “I just have to get dry and get some fluids in me tonight, take it easy and get ready for tomorrow.”

Blaney, meanwhile, was distraught.

After Busch took the outside line on the final restart of the race, Blaney outraced Busch into the first turn, took the lead on

Lap 76 and held it — until he encountered the slower car of Derrick Cope.

Blaney moved toward the wall with Busch near his tail end. That forced Blaney’s car to bobble and gave Busch the chance to slip inside.

“Not many can say they had a chance to win at the Brickyard and gave it away,” Blaney said. “But I did just that, so I think I’m the only one in that category. So I’m leading that category. That’s definitely going to sting for a long time.”

How bad was it? After the race, Blaney referred to himself as a “bad driver” and said the mistake would go down as a “laughingstock” for a long time.

Neither Blaney nor Busch can allow Saturday’s results to linger.

Both are scheduled to start Sunday’s Brickyard 400.

FORMULA ONE

Lewis Hamilton takes pole for Hungarian Grand Prix

Driver starts at front for 9th time in 10 races

By Jerome Pugmire
Associated Press

BUDAPEST,Hungary— Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton clinched pole position Saturday for the Hungarian Grand Prix, where he will start at the front for the ninth time in 10 races this season and 47th overall in his career.

Hamilton, starting from pole for the fifth time here, looks well set to clinch his fifth career victory at the Hungaroring on Sunday.

The British driver topped all three practice sessions and all three sections of qualifying to clock a best time of 1 minute, 22.020 seconds, putting him .575 ahead of Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg and .719 clear of Ferrari’s Sebastian Vettel.

“It’s been a good weekend so far. I love the track; it feels like an old go-kart circuit we used to race on years ago,”

Hamilton said. “It’s been one of the best weekends I’ve had. Can’t remember having a better weekend so far than this.”

In an encouraging performance for Red Bull, Australian driver Daniel Ricciardo, the winner here last year, sneaked into fourth place ahead of Ferrari’s Kimi Raikkonen.

It was disappointing for Williams, with Valtteri Bottas sixth behind Finnish countryman Raikkonen and Felipe Massa eighth behind Red Bull’s Daniil Kvyat.

Drivers wore tributes on their helmets and cars to Jules Bianchi, the French driver who died last week at age 25 from injuries sustained in a head-on crash at the Japanese Grand Prix last October.

A group of fans at the Hungaroring held up a banner in honor of Bianchi with “Tous Avec Jules” (All with Jules) written.

Rosberg was first out on track in qualifying, followed by Hamilton, who was nearly one second faster than Rosberg on their first laps.

Rosberg had complained about his car’s balance during Friday’s second practice, and the problem with understeering resurfaced in Q1.

“Just didn’t find the pace, it’s been a bit up and down all weekend for some unexplained reasons,” Rosberg said. “Going to have a look at it tonight, definitely not happy with what happened today.”

Chasing down Hamilton’s leading time in Q3, Rosberg was fastest at the first time split and then drifted back.

As if underline his superiority, Hamilton then went out on one final lap and went even quicker to extend his leading margin.

In the final practice, Hamilton was .098 seconds ahead of Rosberg and .889 clear of Vettel, the only other driver apart from Hamilton and Rosberg to win this season.

“Third is the maximum we could do today, so we’re very, very happy,” Vettel said. “It was a great recovery from yesterday when we had problems with the car.”

NASCAR from IC

his Toyota on the pole for the second consecutive week. The Joe Gibbs Racing driver also won the pole last weekend at New Hampshire, where teammate Kyle Busch won for the third time in four races.

JGR last week had three drivers in the top seven, and had four of the top five at Kentucky two weeks ago.

Stewart is having the worst season of his career, and returned to his favorite racetrack with just one top-10 finish all season. He admitted last month that his confidence is shattered, but he said finding speed Saturday gave him a boost.

“That’s exactly what I needed,” he said. “I’m excited about being in the top two rows right now. I’m definitely happier about that than being mid-pack right now.”

But he cautioned it might not translate into a strong run Sunday.

“I could go and be a natural disaster tomorrow, so it could all be for nothing,” Stewart said. “But it’s the way you want to start the weekend, for sure, is to have two good runs in qualifying and have a decent starting spot. That’s definitely what we were looking for.”

REFS from IC

and for us.”

Subvarsity games have become the most difficult matchups for the local chapter to service because those are the games typically called by new officials, which the chapter is severely lacking. Without any new referees to take on the responsibility, some of those assignments are now going to veteran officials who already have an important place on a varsity crew, which only compounds the problem.

“It adds wear on the body for officials that are already on varsity crews,” said Billy Gaines Jr., who has more than 25 years of officiating experience in the South Texas chapter. “And as we get older, our bodies don’t recover, so it’s a lot tougher to go out and call games two or three times during the week and then be fresh for Friday night.”

Some school districts have taken it upon themselves to alter their subvarsity schedules to better accommodate the officials.

“One thing we do is we combine all of our subvarsity games at one location,” said Andres Martinez, Odem’s head football coach and athletic director. “We do that to help the officials and their crews. But we could use a lot more of officials. It would make everyone’s job a lot easier.”

The chapter’s dwindling enlistment doesn’t just affect subvarsity games; currently there are 22 active



An official signals a touchdown as Alice running back Juan Gonzalez scores during a game in 2012 at Buc Stadium. The local football officiating chapter is trying to close the gap on a shortage of new officials.

varsity crews, which chapter officers believe is more than five crews short of an ideal roster.

“There were two Fridays on the schedule for this upcoming season that had more games than we had crews available,” Hilliard said. “We worked with the schools to move the games to Thursday or Saturday, but that makes it harder on the schools. Thursday

games disrupt school for the following day, and Saturday games give the kids less recovery time for the next week. It really puts all of us in a bind.”

Rescheduling varsity games, having skeleton crews called into action on short notice and the expedited promotion of junior officials who wouldn’t normally be ready for a spot on a varsity crew all

are examples how close the shortage is ballooning into a real problem not only for TASO, but for various school districts across South Texas.

“The UIL spoke about the shortage of officials at a recent coaching clinic,” said Brenda Marshall, CCISD’s athletic director. “They mentioned that they are looking at increasing their pay scale as a way to entice newer officials. In the future, we may have to start playing fewer (varsity) games on Friday nights to get on the same page with the officials.”

“We’re overloaded with games,” said Dotson Lewis, a varsity crew chief who is entering his 70th year as an official this season. “I expect that soon it will reach the point where the coaches have to start officiating seventh and eighth grade games because we won’t have enough officials to service a full schedule. It’s starting to reach that point.”

The chapter is doing everything it can to attract a younger crowd, but it also recognizes the roadblocks that are preventing it from expanding its roster with fresh faces. Whether it’s the wear of the job versus the relatively minor compensation or the fact that people in their 20s and 30s are often trying to begin a family or get started on their professional career, it’s tough for TASO to get a grip on the younger generation.

“Over the years, you could see this coming,” said Tom Allen, Sinton ISD’s athletic director and head football coach. “Back

when I was in school, it was hard to earn a spot on the field as an official. Now less young people are getting involved, and the pool is shrinking. It really affects (coaches) a lot.”

That said, there is one particular demographic the chapter is trying to tap into that may prove to be fertile: College students. The chapter has been in touch with the kinesiology departments at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M-Kingsville and Del Mar College, and it hopes to have booths set up during registration at those schools to help spread awareness about the open positions within the chapter. Additionally, the University Interscholastic League (UIL), which governs all athletic competitions for public schools in the state, has set up a statewide program that encourages high school coaches to find one graduating senior from their football team interested in officiating and to steer them toward their local chapter.

“Officiating is an ideal job for a college student,” said John Patino, the South Texas chapter’s secretary. “It fits their schedule since most of our games are in the evening, it puts some money in their pockets, it familiarizes them with the community. And when they graduate, they have a skill that they can put on their résumé, and if they want to continue officiating, they can go out and help another city.”

Unfortunately, getting new members into the chapter won’t totally fix the problem, at least

not right away. As big of a challenge as generating interest in officiating is, retaining new officials may be an even tougher task for TASO.

“We lose probably 90 percent of our first-year officials,” Hilliard said. “If we hold onto a new official for two years, then we say we have an official for life. But in order for us to make some progress, we need to find a way to have more guys stick around.”

Lewis, who also acts as the master trainer for the chapter, thinks that the state of officiating, in terms of participation, is at a critical point.

“We are at the most critical point since I started officiating back in 1946,” Lewis said. “We had no training back then, but now we have extensive training and the ability to help turn dedicated people into very good officials. The tough part is finding those dedicated people that will help breathe some life into the chapter.”

While most referees prefer to go unnoticed when they are on the field, this is a time when the officials hope their black and white stripes stand out. TASO is in desperate need of reinforcements.

“You can’t make a living doing this,” Hilliard said. “It’s a hobby for us. We do it for the love of it. We feel that the football field is an extension of the classroom. We work hand in hand with the coaches, and we love working with the kids. But right now we are hurting. So hopefully there are others out there that share the same passion.”