

James Buescher competes in 25 races a year as part of the Camping World Truck Series and recently finished third overall for 2011

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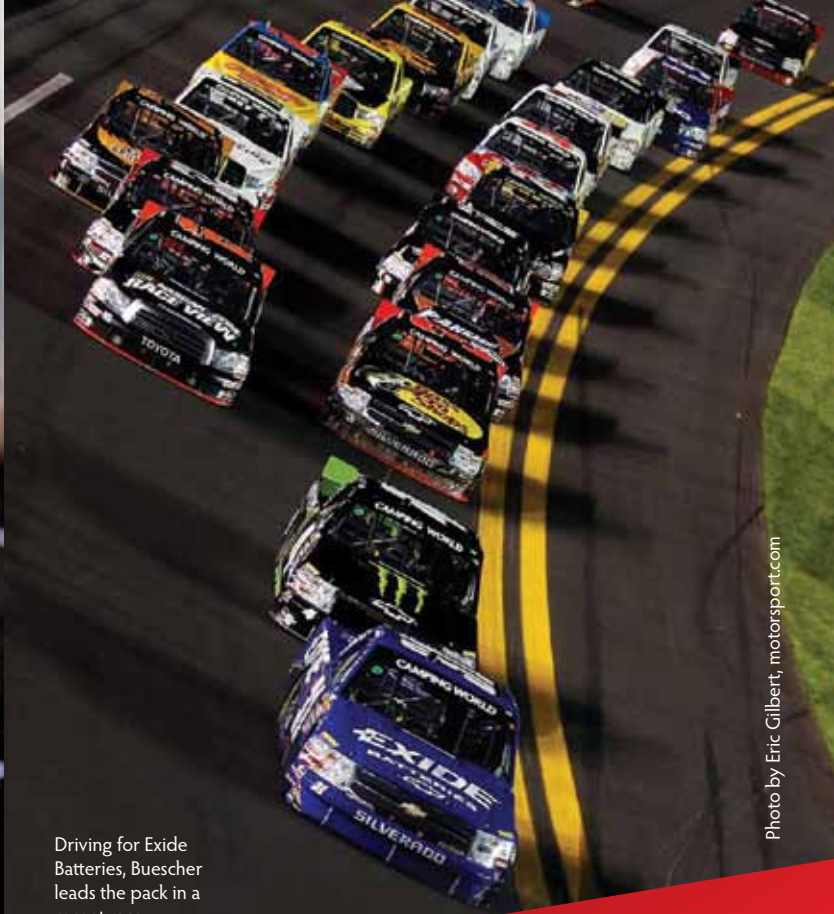
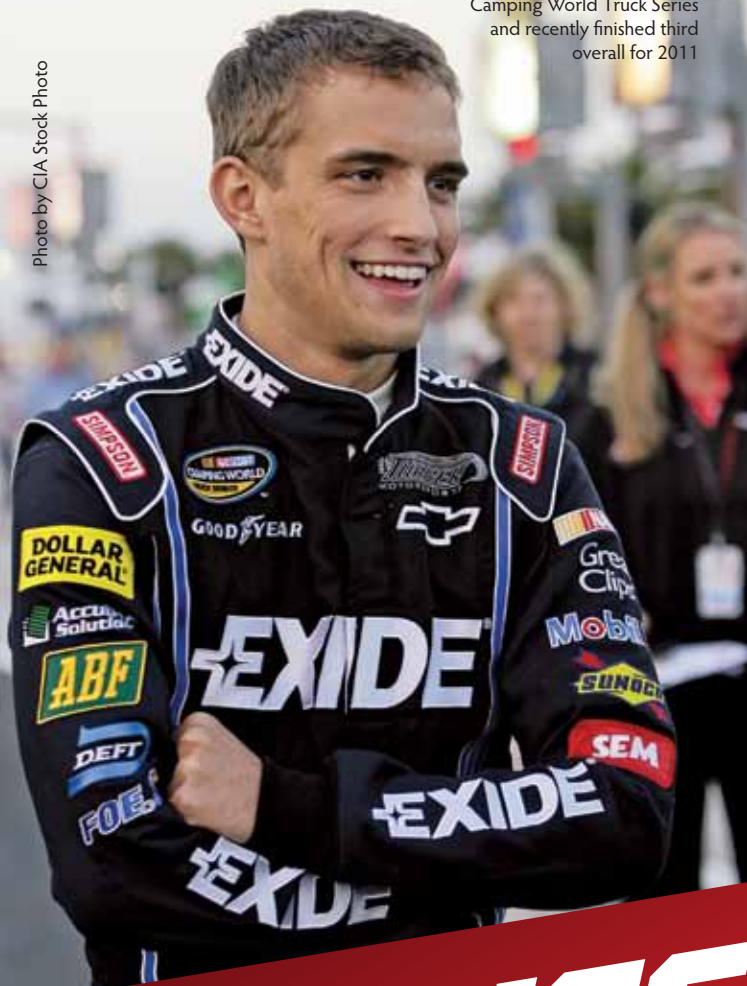


Photo by Eric Gilbert, motorsport.com

Driving for Exide Batteries, Buescher leads the pack in a recent race

LIFE IN THE

Katy race car driver James Buescher speeds toward NASCAR success

Whether he is racing a Bandolero at Texas Motor Speedway or tearing up the NASCAR track at 200 miles per hour, Katy resident James Buescher has a competitor's passion for racing. Buescher, 21, has been racing in the Camping World Truck Series since 2008 and has also dabbled in the Nationwide Series. "I've always been competitive in everything I did," he shares. Growing up, he would watch NASCAR competitions on the weekends and he started going to driving school when he was only 11. "I really liked doing it, and my dad got me a race car for my 12th birthday," he says. "A lot has happened since then."

The Beginning of the Race

Born in Florida, but raised in Texas, Buescher started racing smaller cars called Bandoleros when he was 12 years old.

He won his first championship at 14, competing in the Bandolero Young Gun Series at Texas Motor Speedway. "I raced motocross when I was a lot younger," he shares, adding, "It was something I enjoyed."

Unlike most of his racing peers, Buescher did not come from a family legacy of racing. In 2006, he had a chance meeting with Steve Turner of Turner Motorsports. Shortly thereafter, Buescher began racing for Turner. "When I was 15, I was at a race and racing the car that my dad owned," recalls Buescher. "I had a breakdown at the end of practice. I went and asked him if I could borrow his second car for the second race, so that I could [compete]. I won the race, so a couple of months later I started driving for him full-time at a higher level."

The chance meeting with Turner prompted a move to Sheridan, where Turner Motorsports' race shop is located.

Photo by CIA Stock Photo

Buescher and his fiancée Kris Turner share a love of racing and enjoy life in Katy

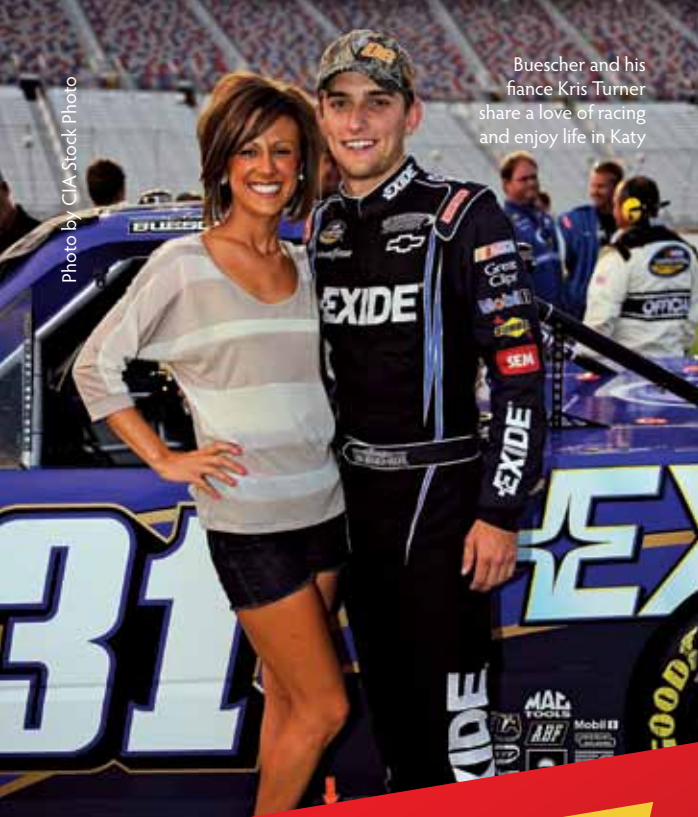


Photo by CIA Stock Photo

Buescher compares the Camping World Truck Series to college football and one day hopes to compete in the Sprint Cup level of racing

FAST LANE

Written by Shetye Cypher

While there, Buescher also met his fiancée Kris Turner, who is Steve Turner's daughter. "I actually used to race against her; it's how I met her," shares Buescher. "She doesn't race anymore, but she likes to travel with me and she understands racing."

Life on the Go

Now, as part of the Camping World Truck Series, Buescher competes from mid-February through mid-November in a total of 25 races. The series champion is named based on the number of points accrued throughout all of the races, with each place finish worth a point. In off months, Buescher continues practicing to improve his skill. "I compare the Camping World Truck Series level to college football," he says. "The difference is that drivers from the highest level - Sprint Cup - can compete in our level and they do. The goal is to get to the Sprint Cup level."

Life as a race car driver requires much travel, and Buescher says he is gone every week starting from around Valentine's Day with the first race in Daytona through Thanksgiving. "I'll have 30 to 35 weekends that I'll be gone," he says. "I normally travel on my off weekends, too, to vacation." He says while he sometimes gets stressed out, he never really

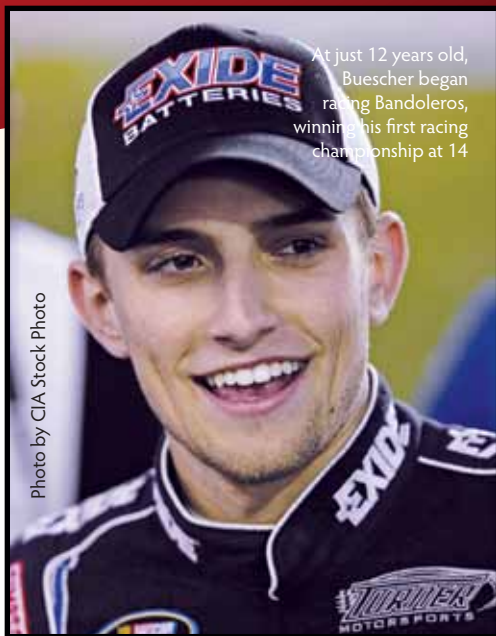


Photo by CIA Stock Photo

At just 12 years old, Buescher began racing Bandoleros, winning his first racing championship at 14

gets nervous racing. For him, it's just another day at the office. Always on the go, a typical day for Buescher involves many activities ranging from media opportunities and meeting with sponsors, who are a big part of his career, to practicing, going over race rules, and driver meetings.

"Exide Batteries is one of my big sponsors and they have a factory in Bristol, TN," says Buescher. "I went and toured the factory, signed autographs, and saw what they did. Their headquarters is in Atlanta, and we went out there, too. We spend a lot of time with our sponsors."

At Home in Katy

Buescher feels blessed that his fiancé Kris shares his love of the sport. She will graduate in December with a Bachelor of Business Administration in marketing from the University of Houston. The two will marry in Costa Rica in January. Upon returning to Katy, she plans to work for Buescher's racing team in marketing.

She is one of the major reasons Buescher chose to move to Katy. "Kris goes to U of H, and Katy is sort of halfway between school and her parents' house, which is a lot of why we ended up here," says Buescher. "We are also a couple doors down from her sister. I like that I can drive five minutes one way and be in the city and [drive] five minutes the other way and be in the country. It's crazy how fast [Katy is] growing." Along with his home in Katy, he also keeps an apartment in North Carolina, since so much of his work and training is done there.

Staying Positive and Giving Back

Like all things competitive, racing brings challenges, along with moments of success. Buescher has faced his own challenges along the way, including a race early in the 2011 series. "I missed the second race of the year in Phoenix, because I didn't qualify," he says. "I felt like I'd killed the season. I felt like I got kicked in the gut. You have a whole team and sponsors behind you, and you're not even in the race. You just have to go home. It's heartbreaking, but you bounce back the next week. It's a new day. Never give up - I

got zero points at that race, but now I'm three points out of the lead. I've even led the points a little bit."

Every Wednesday, Buescher is on NASCAR Sirius XM radio at 3:30 p.m. He also spends time with his charity, Spacecoast Center for Mothers with Children, a group in Florida that teaches homeless mothers life skills so they can turn their lives around. Additionally, he likes to spend his free time playing golf, hunting, and fishing.

"My ultimate goal is to make it to the Sprint Cup level and hopefully win some championships," he shares. "You get one chance, and [if] you fail one time, it's very rare you will get to go again. I'm in no hurry to get to the cup series - if it takes two or three years, it's fine. I'm looking at the long term. If you are successful, you can stay there 20 to 25 years."

He adds, "I always tell young kids, 'Whatever you want to do, always follow your dreams.' People may be against you and tell you that you can't do it, but if you work hard at it, you can beat the odds. I'm not the typical race car driver [and] I don't have the family background of racing, but I've been able to do it anyway." Catch up with Buescher online at jamesbuescher.com. **KM**

SHETYE CYPHER is a freelance writer who has enjoyed living in Katy with her family intermittently since 1976. She is also the journalism teacher and publications advisor at Mayde Creek High School.

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