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Q&As: CAPTAIN KIRK p.24
AND NO. 48 p.30

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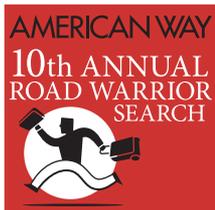
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TWICE MONTHLY





Taking the Q&A on the Road



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by Aug. 31, 2011 at 11:59 p.m. CDT.

WHEN IT COMES TO JOURNALISTIC FUNDAMENTALS, one of the first lessons they teach you in college remains one of the hardest disciplines to master: the interview. No matter how many you do during your career, you always feel like you could have done a better job. Or you wish you had asked another question. Maybe you kick yourself for a poorly told joke in your preamble to the Q&A session. Or maybe, just maybe, you were so intimidated by your subject that you tripped on your words and sounded like a buffoon.

I've done all of these maybes. And regardless of how long I've been — or will be — in journalism, I'll inevitably do some of them again. Of course, practice makes perfect, but as Bishop Joseph Hall pointed out at the turn of the 16th century, perfection is the child of time.

One interview that I'm particularly proud of was a brief Q&A with the Miami Heat's star guard, Dwyane Wade. It was conducted the day after the Heat won the NBA Finals in 2006 — their first championship in franchise history — just as the twin titles of World Champion and NBA Finals MVP sank in for Wade. I learned a lot about the man and the athlete in our conversation, everything from his pregame rituals (he listens to the same Eminem song that he listened to in his Marquette University days) to his favorite reading materials (basketball history books and articles about him); his feelings toward then-teammate Shaquille O'Neal ("he's like a father, like a brother to me off the court") to his eating habits ("I'm a Quarter Pounder, Double Cheeseburger, Chicken Nuggets guy"). More important, *you* learned more about the man and the athlete from the interview. The objectives of a journalist are to entertain, to educate and to inform.

As evidence of our commitment to these tenets — and as a nod to our respect for the traditional Q&A — *American Way* introduced a new section called "Brief: Q&A" in our Jan. 1, 2011, issue. In a short time, we've already had sit-downs with some of the most influential and entertaining people in their respective fields, everyone from former Olympic skier (and the person on the Utah license plate) Heidi Voelker (in our March 15 issue) to culinary wizard Marcus Samuelsson (June 1) to the folks with accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (Feb. 15), who are tasked with guarding the envelopes on Oscar night.

In this issue, we have three entertaining, educational and informative interviews, conducted by three expert interviewers. For our "Brief" section, Jordan Rane sat down with Captain Kirk himself, 80-year-old William Shatner (page 24). He's still got that great stuff. Writer Michael Ventre caught up — or tried to keep up — with

No. 48, NASCAR superstar Jimmie Johnson (page 30), who has five consecutive Sprint Cup championships. And although the story itself isn't in traditional Q&A format, former *Time* correspondent Jeffrey Ressler traveled to Middle-earth and conducted a tremendous interview with Elijah Wood (page 34).

Back in Miami, Dwyane Wade is looking to avenge a heartbreaking loss to the Dallas Mavericks in the 2011 Finals (once the NBA, mired in a work stoppage as we went to press, starts playing again, that is). I didn't have a chance to interview him this time around, but I know what question I'd ask him:

Q: Since your rookie year in 2003, when the Heat drafted you in the first round, your entire career has been as a professional basketball player in Miami. What would you say if I told you that *American Way* magazine is going to celebrate its 10th Annual Road Warrior contest in your adopted hometown?

Maybe I'll get a chance to ask him that question in person after all. We'll be taking our talent (read: winners) to South Beach, and maybe, just maybe, we'll all catch D-Wade, LeBron, Bosh and company playing for a title at the American Airlines Arena. Maybe this 10th Road Warrior competition will be the best one yet. So here's my question for you:

Q: Want to go to Miami?


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