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You can ask, but NASCAR is NOT telling

Rumors fly, but those picking Hall of Fame location saying little

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Speculation swirls. Tension builds. The NASCAR Hall of Fame is going ... somewhere.

A week of hearsay and conjecture ended where it began, as NASCAR's president denied (again) that the race is over. Theories circling through the racing world are certainly entertaining -- but untrue, said Mike Helton.

"Our toughest decision is going to be who to tell no," he told the Observer on Friday.

The rumors started Wednesday, when NASCAR head honcho Brian France visited Atlanta's flashy new aquarium. France is used to big crowds, and the foot traffic impressed him.

But he also praised Charlotte, which has wrapped its \$137.5 million plan in civic hoopla and public money. Did France signal that Charlotte is the leader?

Then Georgia legislators talked about upping their bid, according to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. A sign, perhaps, that Atlanta is the one?

Meanwhile, the Daytona Beach crowd was feeling France-fried, according to the Orlando Sentinel. They got no mention in the CEO's aquarium chat. And the announcement won't happen before the Feb. 19 Daytona 500, the city's moment in the spotlight. Is Daytona out?

The leaders of Charlotte's bid follow all the plot twists and say nothing about them. Their mantra: "Call Kerry Tharp."

We did. Here's the company line from NASCAR's spokesman: "The process simply isn't over yet. We have taken care to try to do the right thing and we're just not ready to make a decision."

So we wait. Until March. At least.