

197 Laps at Charlotte Speedway

Charlotte, North Carolina

150 Miles on 0.75 mile Dirt Track

Fin	St	No	Driver	Sponsor	Make	Laps	Laps Led	Race Pts	Bonus Pts	Pts	Status	Earnings
1	12	34	Jim Roper	Mecklenburg Motors	Lincoln	197	47			0	Running	\$2,000.00
2	5	47	Fonty Flock		Hudson			0			Running	\$1,000.00
3	3	22	Red Byron	Parks Novelty	Oldsmobil			0				\$500.00
4	14	2	Sam Rice	Rice Racing	Oldsmobil			0				\$300.00
5	2	90	Tim Flock		Oldsmobil			0			Running	\$200.00
6			Archie Smith		Ford			0				\$175.00
7		31	Sterling Long	Long Racing	Hudson			0				\$150.00
8			Slick Smith		Oldsmobil			0				\$125.00
9	6	41	Curtis Turner		Buick			0				\$100.00
10		36	Jimmy Thompson		Chrysler			0				\$75.00
11		87	Buck Baker		Kaiser			0				\$50.00
12	8	44	Bill Blair		Lincoln	150	145	0			Overheating	\$50.00
13			Jack Smith		Ford			0			Overheating	\$50.00
14	13	71	Sara Christian *		Ford			0			Overheating	\$50.00
15			John Barker		Kaiser			0				\$50.00
16			Jimmie Lewallen		Ford			0				\$25.00
17	9	38	Lee Petty		Buick	105		0			Crash	\$25.00
18		11	Skimp Hersey		Ford			0				\$25.00
19		25	Bob Smith	Lane's Motor Co.	Oldsmobil			0				\$25.00
20	4	19	Otis Martin		Ford			0			Overheating	\$25.00
21		37	Frank Smith	Smith Racing	Chrysler			0				\$0.00
22		16	Bill Snowden	Snowden Racing	Mercury			0			Overheating	\$0.00
23			Jim Paschal		Ford			0			Overheating	\$0.00
24		1	B.E. Renfro		Hudson			0				\$0.00
25		10	Fred Johnson		Unknown			0				\$0.00
26			George Mantooth		Unknown			0				\$0.00
27		5	Felix Wilkes		Lincoln			0			Overheating	\$0.00
28	10		Pee Wee Martin		Oldsmobil			0				\$0.00
29		93	Herb Thomas	Thomas Racing	Ford			0			Springs	\$0.00
30		4	Frank Mundy		Cadillac			0				\$0.00
31		29	Clarence Benton		Ford			0				\$0.00
32	1	7	Bob Flock		Hudson	38	5	0			Engine	\$0.00
33	7	25	Glenn Dunaway **		Ford	200		0			Disqualified	\$0.00

Race Time:

Average Speed:

Lead Change: 2

Lead Drivers: 3

Cautions:

Caution Laps:

Margin: Race Dete

Qualifying Speed: 67.958

Qualifying Notes

Leaders: Bob Flock 1-5; Bill Blair (6-150); Glen Dunaway (151-200)

NASCAR's First Race Dominated by First Controversial Finish

Qualifying trials were held on Saturday, June 18th. Bob Flock, a man with majestic blue eyes and a volatile temper, posted the quickest lap of 67.958 miles per hour in the Davis Brothers '46 Hudson. Tim Flock, a fidgety, nervous youngster, was second in the Buddy Elliott '49 Oldsmobile; and Red Byron, the original Huckleberry Finn of racing, was third fastest in the Parks Novelty Co. '49 Olds. Otis Martin, a scraggly mountaineer wearing farmer's overalls, qualified fourth in a '48 Ford, and smiling joker Fonty Flock was fifth in a '49 Hudson. The Flock Brothers were doing very well.

Other qualifiers included Curtis Turner, a womanizing lumberjack in a '46 Buick Roadmaster; Hubert Westmoreland, an eccentric moonshiner in a '47 Ford; and Bill Blair, a laid-back greasy little fellow who put a Lincoln through the timing lights.

Lining up twelfth was Jim Roper, who had hauled his Lincoln all the way from Great Bend, Kansas. Roper had become aware of the race from the syndicated "Smilin' Jack" comic strip authored by Zack Mosely, an auto racing fan who often slipped racing news into his art work.

Another notable in the field was Sara Christian, who was regarded as "The Leading Woman Stock Car Driver in



the Country" in early NASCAR press releases.

Christian qualified thirteenth in a '47 Ford, one spot ahead of Sam Rice, a quiet and polite man whose trademark was a full-brimmed hat.

Others in the field included Jim Paschal, tattooed up to his armpits with ships and anchors; Herb Thomas, a skinny tobacco farmer; Jack Smith, a portly Georgia boy with a pure leather neck; and Buck Baker, a big-eared ex-door-to-door milk man. All these would eventually be represented in the National Motorsports Press Association Hall of Fame.

Nine different makes of automobiles would go to the post: Lincoln, Hudson, Ford Olds, Cadillac, Buick, Chrysler, Kaiser and Mercury.

Race day was hot, humid and dusty, but a huge crowd estimated at more than 20,000 turned up. Some 13,000 paid between \$2.50 and \$4 to watch, and the rest were gatecrashers as the state police arrived to control the unruly crowd.

The field of thirty-three cars snarled around the track three times behind the pace car. The crowd, full of anticipation, were on their collective feet for this historic occasion. Seventeen rows were filled by cars with unimaginative color schemes - some not painted at all. Lots of black cars, a couple of red ones, a gray one. And then there was a bright green flag in the hands of Starter Alvin Hawkins.

Into the first turn they sped - the leaders disappearing into clouds of billowing dust which rose well above the undressed wooden fence. Wheel to wheel, hub to hub they came. Fenders popping. Throttles snapping. Spectators cheering.

For five dusty trips around, Bob Flock's bulky Hudson led the way. Then a black Lincoln with five-foot, six-inch Bill Blair peeping over the steering wheel took command, skimming past Flock as they roared down the backstretch.

Greasy little Bill Blair, broad sliding over the bumps and chuck-holes, left his comrades choking on the dust from his whitewall heels.

Bob Flock was one of the first drivers out of the race. His Hudson retired to the pit area and was parked in a pool of oil that had oozed from his motor. He then accepted relief driving chores for Sara Christian, who climbed out of her Ford after thirty or so punishing miles.

Blair continued to tackle the gently banked corners with reckless abandon, passing each and every car with bold, daring thrusts. Meanwhile, as the half-way point rolled around, perhaps a dozen or more cars were motionless in the unmanicured pit area. Drivers, with helmet in hand, studied geysers of steam shooting skyward from tortured, overheated engines.

On Lap 107, Lee Petty, a new face to the racing game, found himself holding on for dear life as his Buick - a vehicle he drove from Level Cross, North Carolina to Charlotte two days earlier - tumbled endlessly through the third turn, coming to rest on all four wheels. Petty unbuckled his seat belt, got out of the car and sat down on the upper crest of the track, staring out over the countryside in a dejected muse. "I was just sitting there thinking about having to go back home and explain to my wife where I'd been with the car," Petty said later. It was the first and to be the only crash of the afternoon, and Petty suffered nothing more serious than a cut on his cheek.

Bill Blair pressed on, lapping the rapidly fading field at least once. His sights were set on the black and which checkered flag and the \$2,000 that went to the driver who got there first.

But the casualty epidemic struck Blair's fleet Lincoln fifty laps from payday. He brought his R.B. McIntosh-owned car down the grassy pit lane, steam whining as it gushed from the radiator, his quest for racing immortality ruined by mechanical problems.

Blair's misfortune allowed Glenn Dunnaway to pick up first place on lap 151. The Gastonia, North Carolina driver arrived trackside Sunday morning without a ride. But Hubert Westmoreland let Dunnaway, the more experienced pedal-pusher, tighten the seat belt at race time.

Funny page reader Jim Roper moved up to second place, but overheating problems forced him to slacken his pace. He finished the race slowly, cruising the inside of the track.

Dunnaway's Ford breezed across the finish line three full laps ahead of Roper's ailing Lincoln. He was congratulated by all. The handful of newspaper writers wrote their stories accordingly.

But as twilight descended on Charlotte, Major Al Crisler, NASCAR's first Technical Inspector was summoned to conduct a teardown of Dunnaway's winning Ford. Some officials had wondered about the apparent stability of the car as it passed through the bumpy turns.

Crisler said the Westmoreland-Dunnaway Ford was equipped with "altered rear springs" and therefore it did not fit the guidelines of the Strictly Stocks. No modifications of any kind were allowed except for a reinforcing steel plate on the right front wheel in the interest of safety to prevent lug nuts from pulling through the rims on conventional wheels.



The '47 Ford was a bootlegger car designed to haul heavy loads of illegal moonshine, and "spreading the springs" was common in vehicles used for that purpose.

Westmoreland howled like a coyote when NASCAR disqualified his car and awarded the \$2,000 first prize to Roper, who had completed 197 of the scheduled 200 laps. Westmoreland was so incensed that he filed a lawsuit for \$10,000 in damages against NASCAR.

But Judge John J. Hayes threw the case out of Greensboro, North Carolina court. NASCAR had prevailed in all aspects of the inaugural Strictly Stock race.

Fonty Flock got credit for finishing second and picked up a check for \$1,000. Had Roper been forced to complete the full 200 laps running at a snail's pace, Flock very well may have won the race. Red Byron wound up third and collected \$500. Sam Rice finished fourth for \$300, and Tim Flock got fifth and \$200.

Rounding out the top ten were Archie Smith in a Ford, Sterling Long in a Hudson, the Olds of Slick Smith, Curtis Turner's Buick, and a Chrysler manned by Jimmy Thompson.

Blair got credit for 12th place, and Bob Flock, in relief of Sara Christian, was 14th.

The Charlotte race was a monumental success, and France organized a slate of seven additional races in 1949. Within eight months the newly named Grand National Division would replace the Modifieds as the premier class of NASCAR.

The principals on that sunny, muggy afternoon in Charlotte were an outlandish cast of characters with a sense for adventure. The meek did not inherit the confines of this small acreage of earth. It was a circus of carefree performers who were neither stylized nor synchronized, but the collection of odd-balls at center stage commenced the theatre of Winston Cup Grand National racing, which opened for a long run.