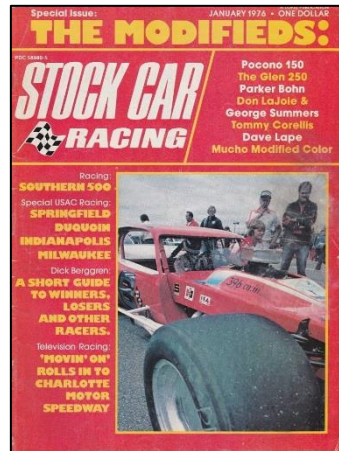


PHOTO TRIVIA

from the Spring, 2019 issue



This may not be much of a challenge for some, but here goes: this periodical was a much-valued part of our sport until its demise. What was the name of it? Who was honored with having their car in the cover photo of this issue?

Many folks will recognize the iconic #6 of Maynard Troyer – legendary racer and prolific car builder of the Northeast – on the cover of *Stock Car Racing* magazine.

Stock Car Racing was launched in May 1966. At the time, Jim Davis was publishing a drag racing magazine called *Super Stock*, so with the existing production staff, the printer, and the distribution network already in place, Jim Davis was planning to add a second magazine to his business.

It was Dick Williford who suggested that Davis start a magazine on stock car racing because no other magazine had devoted full coverage to stock cars. While covering drag racing with *Super Stock*, Jim Davis had become acquainted with Williford from seeing him at various drag racing events over the years. Williford was employed as a PR rep for Chrysler and had turned to drag racing when Chrysler pulled out of NASCAR in 1965. Jim Davis recalled, "Speed Sport News was about it...some of the general automotive magazines like Motor Trend would have occasional articles about stock car racing..." However, there was no magazine at the time devoted exclusively to stock car racing.

So Jim Davis and business associate John "Monk" Reynolds, following the suggestion from Dick Williford, began *Stock Car Racing* in May, 1966. The first issue's cover showed a picture with defending NASCAR champion Ned Jarrett and another cover photo of racer Curtis Turner.

The magazine had limited success in the first years. Jim Davis noted, "It was extremely difficult because NASCAR didn't want anything to do with us. They didn't like the idea of outsiders coming in and, in their opinion, making a profit off of their shows." Jim Davis met with NASCAR officials to arrange an agreement; he noted, "Monk and I called NASCAR and asked for a meeting so we could explain to them what we were going to do. They eventually had Monk and me down there [to Daytona], essentially to have a meeting about what we were doing." Regardless, NASCAR was still not very receptive to the idea of a publication covering the sport, and Davis said that the press credentials were sometimes difficult to obtain because of that mindset.

The magazine persevered, however, by the tactics of staffing the big NASCAR races with an on-site photographer and publishing the related stories as written by local newspaper writers.

Davis and Reynolds began publishing the magazine in Alexandria, Virginia. They eventually implored Dick Williford to come and help to keep the magazine in publication. Williford was vital in getting the early issues of *Stock Car Racing* to press. He did much of the writing and legwork necessary to publish the magazine. "There is no way the magazine would have gotten off the ground without him," Jim Davis recalled. "He [Williford] set up all the contacts with the stringers we used at all the major NASCAR superspeedways. Monk and I didn't know any of those people and knew almost nothing about NASCAR racing."

Three years later, in 1969, Jim Davis sold his interest in both magazines, *Stock Car Racing* and *Super Sport*, to John Reynolds. John Reynolds eventually sold both magazines to Lopez Publications. Since then, several other companies have owned *Stock Car Racing*.

Stock Car Racing magazine eventually gained a loyal following of readers worldwide. The magazine not only provided photos and articles for the racing enthusiast, it also provided articles for the racers themselves. Many issues contained tech articles that explained the physics and mechanics of race cars and how to work with them. Not only were national NASCAR events covered, grassroots racing articles appeared frequently, along with special interest articles and interviews, and television broadcast listings. Although dirt racing was not represented as often as asphalt, it was by no means ignored.

Although *Stock Car Racing* included many talented writers and staff members, much of its success must be attributed to Dr. Dick Berggren. Early on, Dr. Berggren worked for *Stock Car Racing* magazine while he taught at Emmanuel College and raced on the weekends. He later became the magazine's editor. After 22 years with the magazine, he left in 1999 to start *Speedway Illustrated* in partnership with the owners of *Down East, The Magazine of Maine*.

Sadly, a combination of factors brought *Stock Car Racing* magazine to a close. The last issue of this auto racing icon was published in November of 2008.

Credit: Wikipedia.com

