

The Illustrious History of NASCAR

The history of NASCAR is one riddled with influential people. More than most professional sports, NASCAR was founded and has been maintained through the work of a few special individuals, none more special than William France, Sr.

The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) was founded by France on February 21st, 1948. France, together with other drivers, designed a points system that would become the foundation of NASCAR racing. As early as 1948, the schedule consisted of 52 modified races that were run on dirt tracks. The first National Championship was won by Red Byron.

The Beginnings

Named its first commissioner, Erwin "Cannonball" Baker had a big impact on the history of NASCAR. An accomplished racer who set dozens of land speed records himself (hence his nickname), Baker allowed almost no changes to the cars that were raced.

Glenn Dunnaway became the first NASCAR driver to be disqualified after it was discovered that he had altered the rear springs in his cars. However, over a 10-15 year period, modifications were allowed for safety and performance periods, until by the mid-1960s almost all stock cars were built solely for the purpose of racing them.

Most NASCAR race tracks were from half a mile to a mile long, and the action in a relatively compact area added to the excitement of the sport. Some of the earlier tracks, such as the Martinsville Speedway and the Darlington Raceway are still in use today. Even the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, which has been in existence since 1909, is still being used. However, the most famous race track of the NEXTEL Cup Series, the Daytona International Speedway was built in 1959, with a length of 2.5 miles.

The Modern Era

In the early 1970s, the history of NASCAR took a dramatic turn. It increased in popularity due in large part to an altered points system as well as new sponsorship including the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

The 1970s also saw the introduction of television into the history of NASCAR. CBS for the first time showed an entire NASCAR race from start to finish with the 1979 Daytona 500. It didn't disappoint. Frontrunners Cale Yarborough and Donnie Allison wrecked in the last lap. They engaged in a fistfight, adding to the drama that has become part of the history of NASCAR.

NASCAR counts today amongst the most popular sports in the USA. It is hugely profitable for the participants as well, with at least million in prize money up for grabs at every race in the NEXTEL Cup Series. The NEXTEL Cup is run over 36 races. The sport is so popular that the successful drivers have millions of devoted fans that watch every single race and spend a lot of money on fan gear every year. In a way, the history of NASCAR is still in the writing.

About the Author

By Brady Goddard. Are you a NASCAR fan? At www.stockcarcrashes.com you can watch [NASCAR wrecks videos](#).

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