



Georgia Racing Hall of Fame
415 Hwy 53 East
Dawsonville, Georgia 30534

2010 Georgia Racing Hall of Fame Class Chosen

For immediate release-

Dawsonville, Ga. – The votes have been cast, and the five inductees to become members of the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame for 2010 have been chosen.

The 2010 inductees are Ted Edwards of Atlanta, Ernie Elliott of Dawsonville, Jack Etheridge of Atlanta, Laverne Kendrick of Tifton and Jerry Wimbish of Atlanta.

The 2010 induction ceremony will be held at the Dawsonville City Municipal Complex, which houses the Hall of Fame, on Friday, October 22 at 6 p.m.

A limited number of seats are available for the banquet. Reservations are required to attend. For more information on purchasing a ticket or on the banquet, call Dawsonville City Hall at (706) 265-3256, or go online to www.georgiaracinghof.com.

The following is biographical information on the 2010 inductees for the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame. Feel free to use any of this information in your stories. For more information, or for photo requests, email Brandon Reed at raceinfo@gmail.com.

Ted Edwards was born in Portland, Maine on April 10, 1907. Edwards fell in love with motorcycles early on, and picked up his first win on a two-wheeled racer on September 2, 1929 for trick riding.

After winning several titles up north, Edwards migrated to Atlanta in 1940. He would win two more titles that year, along with being named the American Motorcycle Associations most popular rider award in the U.S. and Canada. He also started his first Daytona 200 on the famed beach and road course at Daytona Beach in 1940.

Edwards continued racing after the war, and also tried his hand at promoting. Edwards became a race promoter at the famed Lakewood Speedway, which included the only dead heat finish in AMA motorcycle history between Bobby Hill and Billy Huber. Edwards himself placed third in that event. He would also promote several stock car events at Lakewood, which included Hall of Famers Gober Sosebee, Red Byron, Ed Samples and Bob Flock, to name a few.

Edwards was one of the promoters at Lakewood in 1954 when the track hosted the first organized drag races held in the state. That led him to open the first permanent drag strip in Georgia, the Skyway Airport Dragway in Fairburn. That dragway also played host to what is believed to be one of the first stock car road race events, which was held in 1956. The event was won by fellow Hall of Fame member Wilbur Rakestraw.

Edwards also was the proprietor of a successful Indian Motorcycle dealership in Atlanta from 1940 until 1950, when the Indian parent company closed shop. The spot where his shop was is the current Varsity Drive Inn parking lot.

Edwards continued to ride motorcycles until the age of 77. He passed away in 1987 at the age of 80.

Fittingly, Edwards was unanimously voted into the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame on June 13 - the same as the number 13 that he always raced motorcycles under.

-Dawsonville, Georgia's Ernie Elliott is one of the most revered and respected engine builders in racing history. Elliott's engines powered his brother Bill to dominating success on the super speedways of NASCAR beginning in the mid 1980s. As an engine builder, Elliott has won 40 races, recorded 148 top five finishes, 291 top 10s, 51 poles and one championship. His engines have also recorded two Nationwide series wins, two Camping World Truck series wins, and 40 ARCA/ReMax series wins. Elliott was named Engine Builder of the year in 1985, and Engine Builder of the Decade for the 1980s.

Elliott continues a very successful engine building business today in his hometown of Dawsonville.

-Jack Etheridge was born in Atlanta, Georgia on April 24, 1912. He began racing early on, running open wheel "big cars" in the early 1930s. He raced a Crager at Lakewood Speedway in Atlanta, then later drove a Miller, which was a forerunner to the famed Offenhausers, finishing third in open wheel "big car" standings three years in a row. He switched to stock cars in 1938, finishing second in his first stock car start to the legendary Lloyd Seay at Lakewood. Etheridge would go on to race across the nation, setting a world record mark at the famed Langhorne Speedway in a stock car, as well as setting marks at Daytona Beach. Etheridge won more races in 1946 than any other driver. Among his wins that year were events at Lakewood, at Chattanooga, Tennessee and at Augusta, Georgia.

Etheridge passed away on August 9, 2000 at the age of 88.

-Laverne Kendrick, of Tifton, Georgia, was born on Sept. 16, 1927. Although times were hard due to the loss of his father at the age of 2, Kendrick would go on to become a fine business man. One of the more known businesses Kendrick owned was the Kendrick Recreation Center, known around the area for its great food.

In 1953, Kendrick teamed with local farmer and car owner Jim York, who had lost his racing sponsorship. By the next year, Kendrick owned the entire team, and would go on to be a very successful race car owner for the next three decades. Kendrick's cars would race all over Georgia, Florida, Alabama and the Carolinas, including races on Daytona Beach. Among the drivers that would pilot Kendrick's famed number 90 were NASCAR racers Bobby Allison, Tiny Lund, Sam McQuagg and Morgan Shepherd, along with Georgia Racing Hall of Fame members Eddie MacDonald and Aubrey Holley. In all, Kendrick's cars recorded 900 wins, along with the 1963 NASCAR Georgia Sportsman Championship. Kendrick passed away on March 21, 1999 at the age of 71.

-Jerry Wimbish was born on June 16, 1925 in Atlanta, Georgia. He grew up loving cars and things that went fast, a passion that would serve him well when he enlisted in the Army Air Corps at the age of 17 to become a pilot during World War II. However, after finding there was an overage of pilots, Wimbish would serve as a bombardier, flying 27 successful missions over Germany. After the war, Wimbish found himself again lured by speed, and ended up behind the wheel of a race car. He and friend Gober Sosebee, himself a 2002 inductee into the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame, teamed up to become a very successful racing duo from just after the war until 1952. Both Wimbish and Sosebee were well known for their on-track antics. Wimbish would often tell the story of an incident at the famed Lakewood Fairgrounds in Atlanta that sent his racer into the lake in the center of the track. Early on, Wimbish competed in both midget cars and stock cars, recording victories at Lakewood, the famed Peach Bowl in Atlanta, as well as at several tracks in Alabama, Florida, Tennessee and North Carolina. In 1950, he recorded 16 top 10 finishes at the Peach Bowl. He won the Alabama State Championship event at the Iron Bowl in Birmingham, Alabama.

After leaving racing, Wimbish would continue to work around racing, serving in the role of race official, flagman, technical inspector and event as an announcer well into the 1980s. During the 90's, Wimbish became very involved with the early organizing efforts for the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame. He passed away on June 23, 1998.

About the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame - *The Georgia Racing Hall of Fame (GRHOF) inducted its first class in 2002. The museum, recognized by the state legislature as the official home of the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame, recognizes prominent members of Georgia's racing heritage. The Hall of Fame also plays host to other events saluting the state's racing history, including the annual Lakewood Speedway reunion. The Hall of Fame and Museum are housed in the Dawsonville City Municipal Complex just outside of downtown Dawsonville, Georgia on Hwy. 53. The museum is open Monday – Friday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and Sunday 12 a.m. - 4 p.m. Holiday and Summer hours vary. Guests can visit the museum for free — there is no charge for admission. We run on donations. For more information, call (678)283-6100 or go online to www.georgiaracinghof.com.*