

Georgia Racing Hall of Fame
415 Highway 53 East
Dawsonville, GA 30534

For immediate release-

2009 Georgia Racing Hall of Fame Inductees Announced

Dawsonville, Ga. - The votes are in, and the "Elite Eight" inductees for 2009 into the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame have been chosen.

The 2009 inductees will be Bob Burcham of Rossville, Luther Carter of Acworth, Tommie Irvin of Baldwin, Ronnie Sanders of Fayetteville, Leon Sells of Villa Rica, Buck Simmons of Baldwin, Herb "Tootle" Estes of Knoxville, Tn. and Katron Sosebee of Lilburn.

The induction ceremony will be held on October 23, at 6 p.m. at the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame at the Dawsonville Municipal Complex in Dawsonville, Ga. Reservations are required to attend the induction ceremony. For more information, call Dawsonville City Hall at (706) 265-3256, or go online to www.georgiaracinghof.com.

For more information on the Hall of Fame and it's past inductees, go to www.georgiaracinghof.com.

The following is biographical information on the 2009 inductees for the Hall. Feel free to use any of this information in your stories. For more information, email Brandon Reed at raceinfo@gmail.com.

·Bob Burcham of Rossville, Ga., who won events throughout the southeast, winning many times on the NASCAR Sportsman circuit, as well as making several starts on what is now the NASCAR Sprint Cup tour. His best finish in that division was a fourth at Nashville in 1974. Burcham passed away on April 10 of this year.

·Luther Carter of Acworth started his career at Sutallie Speedway in 1969, and would record wins at that track, as well as the old Canton International Speedway, Dixie Speedway and Rome Speedway. Over the next few years, Carter would record wins at Macon, Jefco, Pensacola, Fl., Montgomery, Al. and Opp, Al. Carter won the Coca Cola 200 at Dixie in 1985, and won several asphalt events at Senoia, Georgia International Speedway and Lanier National. Carter retired in 1999.

·Herb "Tootle" Estes was born and raised around Knoxville, TN, but is best known for his racing exploits out of the Athens, Ga., area. Estes was a force to be reckoned with throughout the state, especially after teaming with car owner James "Jabo" Bradberry of Athens. Together, they would race throughout the North Georgia/East Tennessee circuit at places like Boyd's Speedway, Cleveland, Toccoa, Banks County and Anderson. More often than not, Tootle

would come away with the win against legendary racers such as Bud Lundsford, Charlie Mincey, T.C. Hunt and Harold Fryar.

Estes died of a heart attack in 1982, just moments after picking up a feature win.

·Tommie Irvin of Baldwin, Ga., is a true pioneer of the sport. Irvin raced locally in the late 40s and early 50s, and was one of the first drivers, along with his friend Swayne Pritchett, to obtain a license from NASCAR shortly after the sanctioning body formed in 1948. Irvin raced all over, including at the famed Daytona Beach road course, where he once ended up running out into the ocean. Irvin was the Southern Racing Enterprises Association champion in 1954, but says his biggest win came at Atlanta's famed Lakewood Speedway in 1955. In that same year, Irvin opened Banks County Speedway near Baldwin, a track that would remain in operation until the early 70s. Irvin also raced at Soldiers Field in Chicago, Il., for legendary car owner Andy Granatelli. Irvin continues to live in Banks County today, operating his store just outside of Baldwin.

·Ronnie Sanders of Fayetteville, began his racing career in 1967 and since then has raced all over the nation. Sanders has won over 500 races and nine championships. His wins include Middle Georgia Raceway in Byron, Montgomery International Speedway and Baton Rouge Speedway in Louisiana. He won the prestigious Snowball Derby in 1977, won the Rattler at Opp, Al. three times, won the World Classic at Birmingham in 1999 and in 2005 won the World Crown 300 at Peach State Speedway.

Sanders has raced cars prepared by Georgia Racing Hall of Fame mechanic Harvey Jones. Sanders has competed in three Daytona 500s, racing in 1981, 1987 and 1989. He has also competed in Nationwide, Winston Racing Series, ARCA, All Pro and All American Challenge events, among several others. Sanders was the NASCAR Southeast Regional Champion in 1982, and finished second in the national championship that same year.

Sanders retired from driving at the end of 2008. In 2009, Senoia driver Bubba Pollard has piloted Sanders' car to several short track wins in Georgia and Alabama.

·Lawrenceville native Leon Sells began his stock car racing career around 1953 at the old Canton Speedway at Hickory Flat, filling in for Curley Allison, who had failed to show up for the race. That's where the racing bug bit Sells, and it never let go. Sells raced and won at Lakewood Speedway, the Peach Bowl, West Atlanta, Senoia, Dixie Speedway, Rome Speedway, Toccoa, Jefco and Middle Georgia, among others. Sells hung up his helmet in 1988 at Dixie Speedway.

·Buck Simmons of Baldwin is nothing less than a Georgia legend. Simmons has over 1000 dirt track wins, and is a member of the National Dirt Hall of Fame.

Simmons learned to win early on, taking the win in his third career start at Westminster, S.C. En route to his next 999 victories, Simmons beat some of the best stock car drivers

on dirt or on asphalt. He beat out Bobby Allison and Cale Yarborough in an asphalt late model event at Baton Rouge, La. He defeated the legendary Dale Earnhardt on a dirt track at Hartsville-Darlington, S.C. Simmons also competed on the Sprint Cup circuit, racing in several superspeedway events in 1979 and 1980.

Simmons won on dirt and asphalt tracks all across the southeast, and was the 1981 National Dirt Racing Association champ. He also took wins in events for the United Dirt Track Racing Association and the Southern All-Stars.

When Simmons climbed out of his legendary number 41 for the last time in 2003, he had amassed 1012 victories.

Simmons still lives and works in Habersham County, Georgia.

·Katron Sosebee of Lilburn was born in Habersham County, Georgia, and would be a force to be reckoned with on dirt tracks throughout the state. From the early 50s to the 70s, Sosebee went toe-to-toe with the likes of Leon Sells, Bud Lundsford, Jabez Jones, T.C. Hunt, Bruce Brantley and Harold Fryar, just to name a few. Sosebee was a frequent winner in the Super Modified ranks at the famed Peach Bowl in Atlanta, where he was the champion in 1963. He also recorded wins at Boyds Speedway, Cleveland and Montgomery, Al.

Sosebee made it all the way to Daytona in the early 70s, but his bid to run in the Daytona 500 was thwarted by an accident in the pits that totaled his car.

After retiring from racing, Sosebee went on to build and maintain cars for his son Bo, and his nephew Michael, racing mostly at Lanier National Speedway.