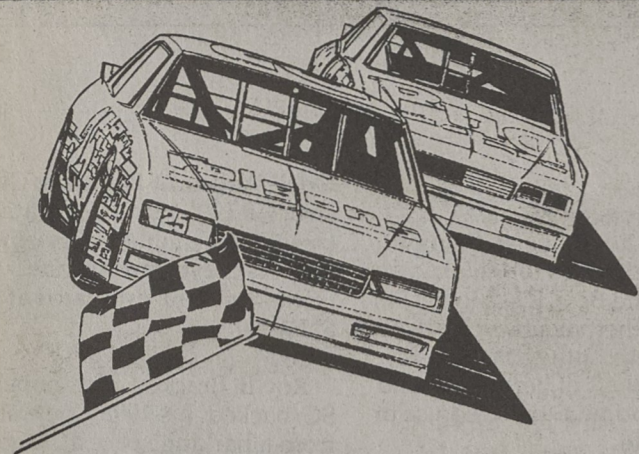


Racing Editor, Mike Cearley  
July 14th & 15th, 1999



# Inside Dirt Track

## Grassy Smith memorial to attract best field in local history

**Mike Cearley**  
Racing Editor



It's only fitting that the biggest dirt track race in local history will be in honor of racing's most influential pioneer.

The late Clarence "Grassy" Smith will be honored Thursday night (July 15) with a memorial race at Thunder Valley Speedway in Lawndale. Grassy Smith passed away last January after a bout with cancer. He was 79.

Track promoter Ernie Elkins is expecting up to 45 of the nation's top super late model drivers for the 60-lap main event. The winner will take home \$5,000.

"This is all in honor of Grassy," Elkins said. "He is one of the pioneers in racing, not just dirt track, but all of racing. The bulk of engine builders in

NASCAR Winston Cup today worked with or for Grassy including Robert Yates, Keith Dorton and Waddell Wilson."

Headlining the field will be Grassy's son Freddy Smith, who is the defending and only five-time world dirt track champion. Freddy's son Jeff Smith is also entered in the field along with Hav-A-Tampa points leader Dale McDowell, Ray Cook, C.S. Fitzgerald, Ronnie Johnson, Randall Chupp, Mike Duvall, Ricky Weeks, Jack Pennington, Ray Tucker, Phil Hall, Petey Ivey, Dennis Franklin, Clint Elkins, Randy Morrison, Dale Lineberger, Doug Sanders, Dan Brewer, Larry Blankenship, Steve Hendren and Wendell Wallace.

The main event will be a Southern All Stars race. Gates open at 4 p.m., with hot laps scheduled for 7:15 and racing at set for 8. All super late models will run time trials to set the running order for heat races.

There will also be racing in five other divisions and a

gigantic fireworks display following the action.

"We're expecting a good crowd," said Elkins. "I would like to see the place fill up. Grassy's family are all from Kings Mountain, and I would like to see all of Cleveland County come out and support one of it's big names."

Although Grassy never drove a race car, he built championship engines for more than 50 years. He was a part of NASCAR's early history as an engine builder for Holman-Moody in Charlotte where he worked on motors for drivers such as Cale Yarborough, David Pearson and Bobby Allison.

When Freddy Smith started racing go-carts in the early 1960s, Grassy left the NASCAR garages behind and started his own business in Kings Mountain, Smith and Sons Automotive.

"There wasn't anything about racing he didn't know," Freddy said. "When I turned 18, he started helping me with

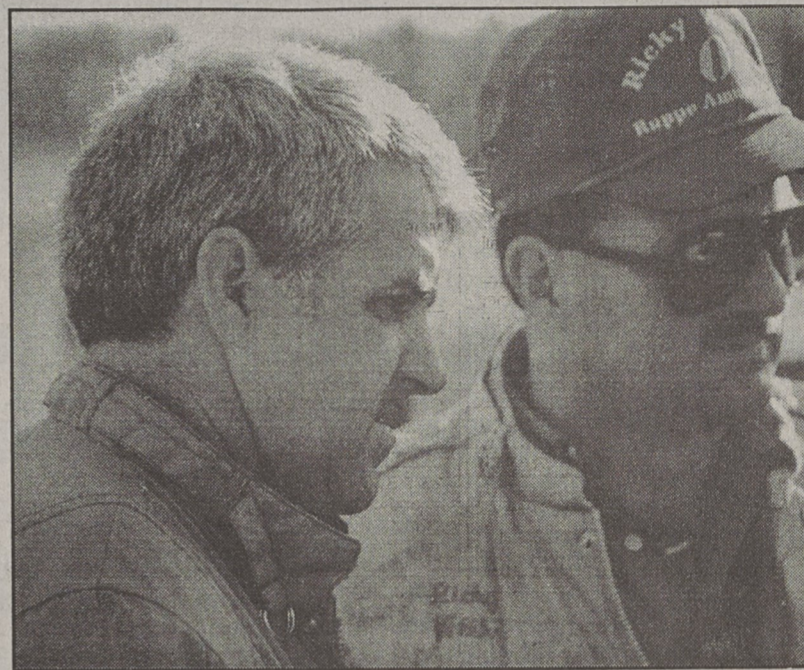
stock cars. It's hard to say how many cars he went on to build. It had to be well into the hundreds.

"I give him all the credit for my success," Freddy said. "I've won 770 races in my career and he was involved in 90 percent of them."

Grassy fielded several champion late model dirt track cars during the 1980s and '90s. He continued to build engines until a few seasons ago.

"The last motor he built was season before last," Freddy Smith said. "We put the motor in a car and sold it to a driver from Georgia named Bruce Taylor. His first time out, he set the fastest qualifying time. And his second race, he won. It tickled Dad to death. I think Taylor went on to win five or six races that season."

Belmont's Doug Sanders was another one of Grassy Smith's success stories. Sanders drove for Grassy in the early 1990s when he won a Shrine 100 at Carolina Speedway.



THE HERALD/FILE PHOTO

Freddy Smith (left) and Ricky Weeks will be among the Super Late Model drivers competing in the Grassy Smith Memorial Race.

"Anything you wanted to know about a racing motor, all you had to do was ask Grassy," Sanders said. "He was one heck of an engine builder. He was

always willing to help any driver that came to him. Anything you needed to know, he would help you and he always told the truth."

## LOCAL TRACK ROUNDUP

### Galloway wins third straight

James Galloway won his third straight late model main event at Carolina Speedway last Friday.

Galloway, who broke a two-month win drought three weeks ago, had plenty of competition from David Lindsay. Lindsay was returning to action after a three-month absence from the local tracks.

Lindsay finished second, while Gene Miles took third.

Andy Thompson won the thunder & lightning main event, while Greg Barker returned to winner's circle for the first time since April in the Mod 4 division.

Billy Greenway picked up his first pure stock 8 win at Carolina, while Marc White won his second straight pure stock 4 race.

### Wilkes wins thriller

Donald Wilkes edged Tim Sigmon to win East Lincoln Speedway's late model main last Saturday.

Dan Yarborough was a close third followed by Gene Miles and Keith Bowman.

Arnold Drye won for the second straight week in the thunder & lightning class. Billy Bishop was the pure stock 8 winner, while David Sigmon took the mod 4 main, and Charlie Lunceford won the pure stock 4 feature.

The sprint winner was Pete Brower.

### Parker returns to Thunder Valley

Ron Parker and Doug Sanders returned to Thunder Valley last Friday and staged one of the best super late model races of the season.

Parker took the win, while Sanders was second followed by Steve Hendren.

Tim Smith won the limited sportsman feature, while Ray Warlick was the stock 8 winner. Scott Tessner won in mod 4 action, Barry Bryant took the stock 4 main, and Rodney Hubbard finished first in the rookie 4 division.

### Rambo wins at Gaffney

Dennis "Rambo" Franklin was the super late model feature winner at Cherokee Speedway in Gaffney last Saturday.

### Area dirt tracks

**Carolina Speedway**, Highway 274 South (Union Rd.), Gastonia 704-869-0313 Promoter: Dewey Stump Racing: Friday nights. Admission: \$10 grandstand, \$15 pits. Divisions: late model, thunder & lightning, limited sportsman, super stock 8, modified 4, pure stock 4.

**Thunder Valley Speedway** 248 Old Statecoach Rd., Lawndale 704-538-9666 Promoter: Ernie Elkins Racing every Friday night. Admission: \$10 Grand Stand; \$16 Pit. Divisions: super late model, late model, thunder & lightning, UMP modified, limited sportsman, mod 4, stock 4, rookie 4.

**East Lincoln Speedway**, 1873 Mariposa Rd., Stanley 704-263-5347 Promoters: Boyd Knight, Richard Meabon Racing every Saturday night. Admission: \$10 grandstand, \$15 pits. Divisions: late model, thunder & lightning, pure stock 8, open mod 4, mod 4, pure stock 4, sprints.

### Results for Racing July 9 & 10

| Carolina Speedway       |                          |  |  |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| Late Model              |                          |  |  |
| 1.....James Galloway    | 3.....Keith Patterson    |  |  |
| 2.....David Lindsay     | 4.....Frank Cooke        |  |  |
| Mod 4                   |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Gene Miles        | 1.....Greg Barker        |  |  |
| 2.....Tim Sigmon        | 2.....Shannon Barnhill   |  |  |
| Thunder & Lightning     |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Andy Thompson     | 3.....Tiger Miller       |  |  |
| 2.....Jim Patterson     | 4.....Doug Freeman       |  |  |
| Pure Stock 4            |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Jason Rice        | 1.....Marc White         |  |  |
| 2.....Jeff Oaks         | 2.....Charlie Lunceford  |  |  |
| Pure Stock 8            |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Billy Greenway    | 3.....Henry Duffield     |  |  |
| 2.....Mark Towell       | 4.....O'Dell Harris      |  |  |
| East Lincoln Speedway   |                          |  |  |
| Late Model              |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Donald Wilkes     | 3.....Wayne Lunceford    |  |  |
| 2.....Tim Sigmon        | 4.....Neal Lunceford     |  |  |
| Mod 4                   |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Dan Yarborough    | 1.....Mike Bills         |  |  |
| 2.....Gene Miles        | 2.....Jerry Oliver       |  |  |
| Thunder & Lightning     |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Arnold Drye       | 3.....Terry Fennell      |  |  |
| 2.....Shawn Martin      | 4.....Darrell McLaughlin |  |  |
| Pure Stock 4            |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Mike Walker       | 1.....Charlie Lunceford  |  |  |
| 2.....Jason Rice        | 2.....Matt Sigmon        |  |  |
| Pure Stock 8            |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Billy Bishop      | 3.....Adam Yarborough    |  |  |
| 2.....Doug Patterson    | 4.....Travis Childers    |  |  |
| Sprints                 |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Tim Walker        | 1.....Pete Brower        |  |  |
| 2.....Jimmy Davis       | 2.....Ben Henson         |  |  |
| Super Mod 4             |                          |  |  |
| 1.....David Sigmon      | 3.....Tim Allen          |  |  |
| 2.....Damon Crump       | 4.....Fred Krimminger    |  |  |
| Thunder Valley Speedway |                          |  |  |
| Super Late Model        |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Ron Parker        | 1.....Scott Tessner      |  |  |
| 2.....Doug Sanders      | 2.....David Roach        |  |  |
| 3.....Steve Hendren     | 3.....Jim Blackburn      |  |  |
| 4.....Lance Laufenger   | 4.....Scott Childress    |  |  |
| Limited Sportsman       |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Tim Smith         | 1.....Barry Bryant       |  |  |
| 2.....Rodney Goins      | 2.....Josh Ledford       |  |  |
| 3.....Bobby Howard      | 3.....Tommy Reeves       |  |  |
| 4.....David Clay        | 4.....William Bivens     |  |  |
| Stock 8                 |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Ray Warlick       | 1.....Rodney Hubbard     |  |  |
| 2.....Cotton Pittman    | 2.....Ricky Fox          |  |  |
| 3.....Jason Green       | 3.....Brandy Champion    |  |  |
| 4.....Kelly Pearson     | 4.....Allen Franklin     |  |  |
| Cherokee Speedway       |                          |  |  |
| Super Late Model        |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Dennis Franklin   | 3.....Jeff Cooke         |  |  |
| 2.....Mike Gault        | 4.....David Ayers        |  |  |
| 3.....Doug Sanders      |                          |  |  |
| 4.....Petey Ivey        |                          |  |  |
| Limited Late Model      |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Roger Hamrick     | 1.....Brian Connard      |  |  |
| 2.....Odie Robertson    | 2.....Jeff Cooke         |  |  |
| 3.....Ken Rominger      | 3.....Jerry Caton        |  |  |
| 4.....Ron Parker        | 4.....Sandy Garland      |  |  |
| Stock 4                 |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Keith Morgan      |                          |  |  |
| 2.....Roger Terry       |                          |  |  |
| 3.....Jeremy Clements   |                          |  |  |
| 4.....Terry McFalls     |                          |  |  |
| Rookie 4                |                          |  |  |
| 1.....Justin Reid       |                          |  |  |
| 2.....Greg Butler       |                          |  |  |
| 3.....Russell Falls     |                          |  |  |
| 4.....Josh Wilkerson    |                          |  |  |

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