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national sprint car hall of fame



Photo by: Paul Arch

by James McMahan

Johnny Gibson

Intrigued by what he saw that night at Lernerville, Johnny followed the tour to Williams Grove and then Lincoln Speedway. After seeing Sprint Cars race in Central PA, and feeling the excitement as the Outlaws took on the Posse, he was completely hooked and never looked back.

In 1993, Johnny's long-time friend Kevin Eckert introduced him to Bill Woodside who was a writer for Wayne Kindness' Sprint Car publication and also selling programs at the track for the Outlaws. In 1994, Johnny began helping Woodside sell programs, walking through the stands selling them to the fans, while Bill worked the table out front on the midway.

After a couple of years traversing the country with the tour, sleeping on futons, and calling the road his home, Johnny was approached by Bobby Gerould at Kings Speedway in Hanford, California. It was 1996, and Bobby asked him to join him in the booth for an interview, which also resulted in Johnny calling his first ever heat race.

Standing in the booth that night was World of Outlaws Series Director Carlton Reimers. Carlton was so impressed that he went to Ted Johnson that night and told him, "I think we have a solution to our announcer problem." The rest is history.

In 1997, Johnny Gibson became the Voice of the Outlaws. As of 2022, he has worked at 2,153 consecutive Outlaw races. When it comes to the World of Outlaws, every great race, fantastic finish, and memorable moment that has occurred on the track in those 25 years has been brought to life for fans in the stands and at home by the voice of Johnny Gibson.

Prior to joining the Outlaws on the road, Johnny was focused on a career as a professional musician. As the drummer in a rock band, Johnny loved being on stage. As a man who has never been shy and can speak to a crowd as comfortably as one might talk to their family, he was already perfect for the role. However, the fact that he is an educated and die-hard fan is what has really set him apart in the world of announcers.

It's difficult to package up what Johnny Gibson means to Sprint Car Racing. When drivers are inducted into a Hall of Fame, it is their stats sheet full of wins and championships that we talk about. For owners, crew chiefs, engine builders, and promoters it is the innovation and growth that we talk about.

Some of the greatest moments in Sprint Car racing over the past two decades — many of them memorialized in the Sprint Car Hall of Fame itself — have been called by Johnny Gibson. For millions of Sprint Car fans, it was Johnny Gibson's voice that had them on their feet for the last laps of races they will never forget.

When Fox Sports partnered with the World of Outlaws during the pandemic lockdown in 2020 to broadcast a virtual event with iRacing, Johnny was brought on with Jeff Gordon, Clint, Bowyer, and Mike Joy to call the race. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that even a virtual World of Outlaws race wouldn't be an Outlaws' race without the voice of Johnny Gibson.

For Johnny, an already humble man through and through, being inducted into the Hall of Fame is something he never dreamed of. "I'm absolutely honored, of course, but at the same time, it all seems so surreal. I'm still trying to figure out how a lucky race fan with no broadcasting aspirations gets to this point. I cannot emphasize enough how fortunate I am. I'm a race fan who gets to see the greatest sprint car drivers in the world night after night and I get to talk about it."

