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national sprint car hall of fame



Photo by: Paul Arch

Tony Stewart

by Doug Kennedy

It could be argued that no individual has made a greater impact on the sport of sprint car racing, on and off the track, in the last quarter century than Tony Stewart. He was one of the all-time greatest on the track in any form of short track open wheel car and once he went to the next level of Indy Car and NASCAR, he used his celebrity and wealth to further bring short track racing into the consciousness of big-time racing through his participation and car ownership more than any racer before him. In addition to this, he purchased Eldora Speedway to build on to the Baltes' legacy and rescued the All Star Circuit of Champions with his ownership.

As a driver, Tony Stewart was the first to win the USAC Triple Crown in one season (1995) and was also the 1997 IndyCar champion. He has wins with the World of Outlaws and the All-Stars as well as numerous other series. As an owner, entering 2022, he has better than 300 wins with the World of Outlaws, nine WoO titles with Donny

Schatz and Danny Lasoski, 11 Knoxville Nationals wins with Schatz and Lasoski and five King's Royal wins as an owner. He also has 37 wins as an owner with the All-Stars and 71 more with the USAC National Sprint Car Series. He won Silver Crown titles in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2010, and 2011. He has seven championships in USAC's National Sprint Car Series (2003, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2011 with drivers J.J. Yeley, Jay Drake, Josh Wise, and Levi Jones).

Throughout his USAC driving career, he has won titles in IndyCar, Midgets, Sprints, and USAC Silver Crown cars. Overall, he has 27 USAC National Midget wins, 10 USAC Sprint car wins, and three Silver Crown Series wins.

In 2001, he was elected to the National Midget Auto Racing Hall of Fame. Stewart is one of the most versatile drivers ever. "I'm proud of that, it's something in my career that I never set out to be, but I'm very proud that I was able to make myself known for that trait," said Stewart. "Every opportunity I got to drive, I didn't care what it was, I just took it and tried to be good at it. Getting into different types of cars and going fast-that's something I'm very, very proud of."

As for his favorite type of race car that he drives, Stewart said, "Winged sprint cars are my favorite type of racecar to drive. It's because of how challenging they are to drive. To be really, really good in a winged sprint car is a talent. You can count on two hands the guys that are head and shoulders above the rest of the world. Sprint car racing has always been the one thing that I've always thought was the holy grail."

Stewart currently owns the famed Eldora

Speedway and is credited with saving the All-Star Circuit of Champions in 2015 when he merged the Renegade Sprint Series with the All-Star circuit. He is also the co-owner of Paducah International Raceway in Kentucky and the co-owner of Macon Speedway in Macon, Illinois along with Kenny Schrader, Kenny Wallace and Bob Sargent.

Since 2008, he has been the co-owner of Stewart-Haas Racing of NASCAR fame and 14 of his career 48 wins have come with Stewart-Haas. Stewart won the NASCAR Cup Series title three times (2002, 2005, and 2011). As an owner he won in 2011 as his own driver and in 2014 with Kevin Harvick as his driver. Known forever as "Smoke," Tony Stewart is the not only driver in history to win a championship in both IndyCar and NASCAR but one of the finest to ever wheel a sprint car.

Since 2021, he and former crew chief, Ray Evernham have partnered up with the Superstar Racing Experience.

And now Tony Stewart enters yet another hall of fame, the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame. "There's probably a lot of people that are going to be upset in Charlotte and Daytona Beach, but of all the Hall of Fames I've been inducted into this is the one that I've probably wanted to be inducted into the most, just because of my passion for Sprint Car racing and dirt car racing," said Stewart. "Being inducted into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame means the world to me."