

# RACING

## STOCK CAR RACING

# Divas

### Stock Car Racing salutes the women of racing

By Meghan Frazier • Photo Editor Sandy Arneson



BRIAN GOMSAK PHOTOS

Louise Smith was no ordinary woman. In 1949, just one year after NASCAR was founded, Smith started taking the family sedan and racing it on weekends—without her husband's knowledge. Her run as a race car driver lasted 10 years and brought 38 victories.

Then there's Janet Guthrie, whose racing career started in 1963 only after she had earned her pilot's license, graduated from college and qualified for NASA's astronaut program. In 1977 Guthrie became the first woman to compete in the Indianapolis 500, and she competed in NASCAR for the first time that same year.

These are the stories Shawna Robinson, Tina Gordon, Sunny Hobbs, Molly Morter, Kelly Sutton and Angie Wilson grew up hearing. The obstacles of being a woman in a male-dominated sport will no doubt always be there, but these women have overcome them just as others will in the future.

Angie Wilson grew up knowing what it was like racing and being the only girl in a group of boys. Tina Gordon just "stumbled onto racing" in her late 20s and is progressing quickly on her learning curve.

Shawna Robinson started out racing semi-trucks, and is trying to get her foot in the Winston Cup door, having run one Cup race last season. Sunny Hobbs, in an attempt to better understand race cars, helped build one from the ground up. Molly Morter enjoys the bumps and grinds of off-road racing. Kelly Sutton is too tough to let a medical condition keep her down.

These ladies see themselves simply as race car drivers. There is no separation between genders once the green flag waves; these ladies are out there to win.

So read about what makes our racing divas tick. And if you're a woman who races, we'd love to hear your story. Just write to us at: *Stock Car Racing*, 5555 Concord Parkway South, Suite 330, Concord, NC 28027.