

Ron Thomas Racing History

Ron Thomas has been a racecar driver since 1997, but he was involved in racing long before that. Ever since he was very young, Ron had passion for racing. Growing up in Speedwell, VA, Ron would often attend the Saturday night races at Wythe Raceway, a local dirt track. Though he started out as simply an avid fan, it wasn't long before he had left the stands for the pits.

Ron was soon working as a crewmember for a friend who drove a car in the Late Model class at Wythe Raceway. Although this was much closer to racing than sitting in the stands, it still wasn't quite where Ron wanted to be: the driver's seat. Ron's dream wasn't just to help with a racecar; he wanted to drive one.

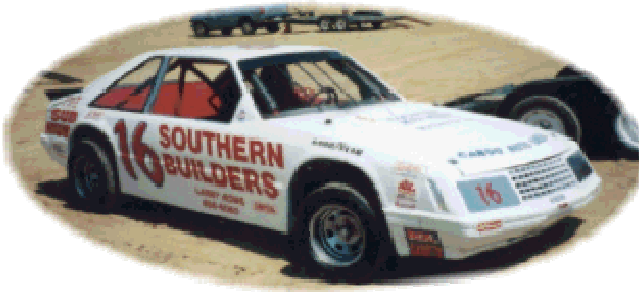
So, in 1997, Ron built his first racecar with the help of his family and friends. It was a Ford Mustang Mini-Stock car, painted white and bearing a dark blue number 16. Finally, after years of dreaming, Ron would drive a racecar.



Although Ron was still learning, he did quite well for his first season at Wythe Raceway. He earned the award for 'Rookie of the Year' and also finished fourth in the points.

Bolstered by the success of his first year, Ron immediately set to work on a better car for the next race season at Wythe Raceway. This car was also a white Mustang Mini-Stocker, but this time with a red number 16. The first race of the year was proof enough for everyone that the rookie season was over and Ron was serious

about racing. As the season closed, Ron received awards for the 'Best Appearing Car,' 'Most Wins,' and also finished third in the overall points.



Once more, the beginning of winter found Ron hard at work on another new Mini-Stock car. The car was the, now traditional, white Mustang with a silver, holographic number 16, but no longer the hatchback of the two years before. This car was one more step closer to the racecar of Ron's dreams. Ron had another successful season at Wythe Raceway, earning the 'Best Appearing Car' award again, as well as winning once, finishing in second place an extraordinary 13 times, and finished second in the overall points.



However, the success of his first three years in racing brought a certain restlessness to Ron. It was then that he began looking toward another racetrack, New River Valley Speedway. After only one visit to the NASCAR-sanctioned track, Ron knew that he was ready to trade in dirt for asphalt.

Ron began working to convert his previous year's dirt track car into an asphalt car. The #16 Ford Mustang remained white, this time with a red and black color scheme. Racing at New River Valley Speedway was definitely different from Wythe Raceway, and Ron found himself having to take a little time to 'learn the ropes.' However, even that didn't stop



Ron from having a fun and successful season to start to his racing career at New River Valley Speedway. He finished the year seventh in points, and quickly began working on plans for the next season.

For his second season at New River Valley Speedway, Ron had a Ford Thunderbird Mini-Stock car built with an aftermarket body. The traditional Ron Thomas white, the traditional number 16, and a not so traditional bright green and purple color scheme complemented this car's smooth lines.

Its appearance was impressive, but not nearly as impressive as Ron's performance on the track. This was to be Ron's most successful season yet. It was obvious to all that he had made the right decision when he came



to New River Valley Speedway. He worked his way to the front in his races on a regular basis, finishing the season with wins in 9 of the 16 races, which earned him an award for 'Most Wins.' In addition to that, he also accomplished 6 heat race wins, 4 qualifying poles, second place in the points, and set a new track qualifying record for an 18.83 second lap. After his nearly phenomenal success, Ron was once again restless and began his search for a new challenge.

A challenge was definitely what he found. The 2002 season at New River Valley Speedway found Ron the proud owner of a Late Model Truck.



While the truck was painted the traditional white, that was all that remained unchanged. The truck was a Chevrolet Silverado and sported a red and blue color scheme. Due to the fact that Ron's usual number was already

taken in that class, the truck bore the number 6 rather than 16. Ron performed well during the 2002 season, but he once again faced the difficulties of a 'learning' year.

The 2003 season brought a number of changes to the Thomas racing team. Ron and I married, moved to South Carolina, found new jobs and purchased our first home. Unfortunately, this left very little time for racing and even less time to find sponsors in our new location. Ron worked on getting the truck ready for the next season whenever he had a chance, and we both looked forward to getting back to the track as soon as possible.

During the 2004 racing season, Ron raced a limited schedule at Hickory Motor Speedway in Hickory, NC and also spent a little time at the Motor Mile Speedway in Radford, VA, as well. The truck had a brand new paint scheme and was the #8. The truck was white with a black stripe around the bottom, black v-shape on the hood, black roof, and black bedcover. Each black stripe was bordered by a thinner stripe of electric green. The number 8 was done in the same neon green with two outlines, one in metallic silver diamond-plate and the other in black. The 2004 racing season proved to be a chance to get back into the swing of things, get used to racing at a brand new track, and work out the kinks from everything that had to be changed on the truck to meet a new set of rules.



While racing in the late model truck division had been a nice change of pace, for the 2005 racing season Ron was ready to get back to something a little more familiar. He decided to go back to New River Valley Speedway, now renamed Motor Mile Speedway, to race as the #16 in the Limited Sportsman division. The car once again had a white background, but a brand new color scheme for everything else. The numbers were purple with a thin yellow middle outline and a thicker red third outline and shadow. While Ron's performances in the first two races showed promise that this season would get him back on track, an unfortunate wreck in the third race ended the season prematurely.



After a long winter spent making painstaking repairs, Ron began the 2006 season with high hopes. The car looked great with a brand new body and printed graphics by Todd Davis. The white body of the car showed off a red and black color scheme with bright yellow accents. The #6 filled out the sides and sporty double racing stripes ran the length of the car's top. Overall, it was one of the best looking cars that Thomas racing had ever brought to the track. After finishing 10th and 5th in the first two races, Ron was excited about the remainder of what was so far a successful season. However, the third time proved not to be the charm, when in the third race Ron was taken out by an early wreck. Unfortunately, damage from the wreck was financially-severe enough to again end the season far too early for the Thomas racing team.



The lack of a large crew, a lack of non-personal financial support, and time constraints all served to raise some questions at the end of a second disappointing season. After carefully considering his options, Ron decided it was time to return to his roots: dirt racing. He placed his now-repaired limited car for sale and purchased a dirt late model. As we head into the winter months, Ron is excited about this new challenge and ready to get back on the track in 2007.