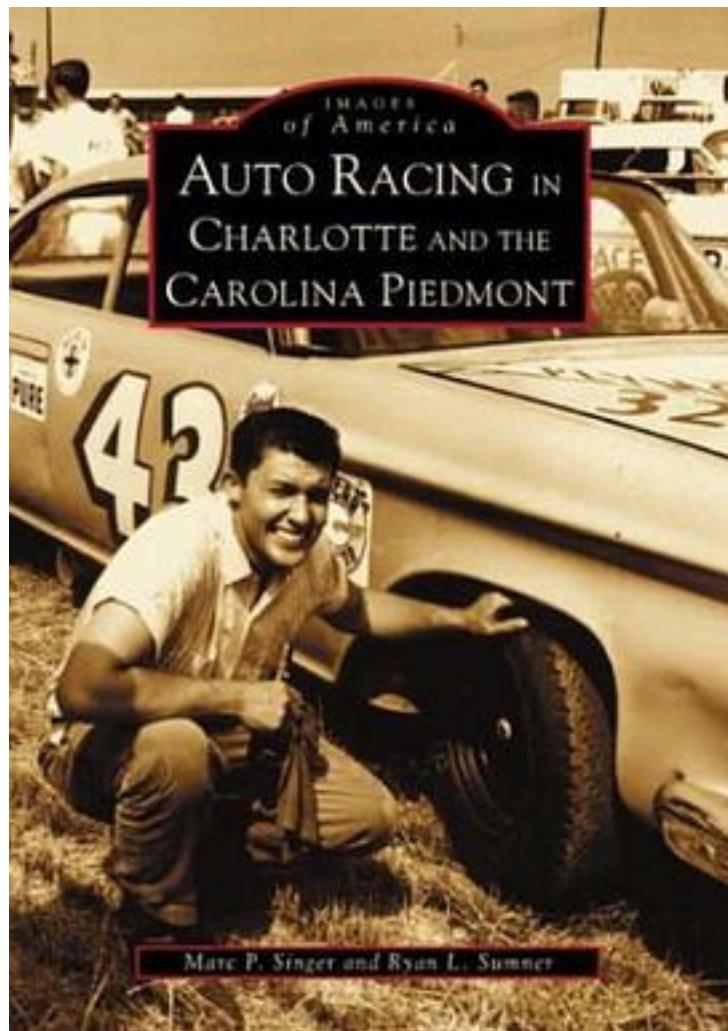


Auto Racing in Charlotte and the Carolina Piedmont



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Charlotte and the Carolina Piedmont has an extensive and legendary tradition of automobile racing. Soon after 1904, when the first car was registered in Charlotte, autos became a part of everyday life. Car racing was just around the bend: an open-road race was run through Charlotte as early as 1908. Many drivers themselves have hailed from the area, and some are said to have received early training by running moonshine and outrunning authorities. Probably the best-known aspect of Carolina racing is the Queen City's involvement since 1949 with NASCAR, which hosts many of its big names and operations. Auto Racing in Charlotte and the Carolina Piedmont explores the story behind the various forms of the sport, the kinds of people who have raced, and the reasons why they have done so. Historic photographs—many never before published—trace the history of NASCAR and look beyond the professional aspect to include the dragracers, wannabees, kids, and just plain amateurs participating in this cultural phenomenon. The story includes the first formal oval track, constructed entirely of wooden planks and opened in 1925. Other famous Charlotte locations, including professional dirt tracks, drag strips, and even a paved track dedicated to Soap Box Derby, are also revisited. Images of fans, mechanics, and hangers-on round out this singular journey of racing in the Carolinas.

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