

## Profile: Don Tomberlin

Don "Duck" Tomberlin out of Rhine, Georgia, has been involved in racing, either as a driver or car owner, for 45 of his 64 years. But before we got into the nitty-gritty of Don "Duck", where did the "Duck" moniker come from? When Don's grand-daddy first picked him up, he said, "Well, if it isn't my little Donald Duck." You need to understand that Don comes from a large family where everybody has a nick-name. Besides "Duck",

there's "Sport", "Rocky", "Ma-teen", "Daddy-Pa", and Mama "Creasey" who, at 84, lives in Macon. Don has two sons, three married step-sons, 10 step grandchildren and two great-grandsons. (We don't have their nick-names.)

Duck grew up learning to drive in fields and on old country dirt roads when he was no more than 8 or 9 yrs. When his family moved to Macon, he met Mr. V.D. Morelock around 1959-60. Duck was a teenager, and loved to hang around Morelock's shop sweeping floors and helping anyway he would let him. This is where he learned about racing. After about 3 years, Mr. Morelock put him in a car they had built, and Duck was in his first race. After that he drove for Mr. Morelock until his death about 3 years later.



**Duck voted Most Popular driver at Middle GA**

In 1969, Don won the track championship at Middle Georgia Raceway in a '64 blue and white, battle-scarred Chevelle. The day before the race that brought Duck the championship, the Houston Home Journal story began this way: "A little old lady strolled past the Middle Georgia Raceway Booster Club's booth at the Georgia State Fair....'My goodness,' she said, 'look at that beat up old car.'

"Little did she know that that 'beat-up old car' was

to be the champion of the Late Model division of NASCAR at Middle Georgia Raceway."

Driving a racecar on Georgia's dirt tracks is hazardous duty, but Don's flirtations with the grim reaper came on a public roadway and in the garage. In '74, Don was cruising (at what speed we're not certain) down Highway 96 when he was involved in an accident that flipped his Volkswagen on it's roof resulting in a broken neck. His second brush with death came as Don was working under a racecar when the jack stand collapsed crushing his chest. Tough dude for a guy called "Duck".

Don's last win driving a race car was in 2003 driving the S&M #4 Falcon. This was his first time in a racecar in 30 years.

Don's is best know these days as a racecar builder...make that a winning racecar builder. This season, Don is campaigning a car fondly known as the "Grey Ghost" because the first season it was on the NVRA circuit, it was grey primer. So far this year, the "Grey Ghost" has won the first two races of the season in the Modified Open division with driver Woody Calaway.



**Don "Duck" Tomberlin and his '55 in 1967**



**Duck's last win May 2003**



**Duck with the "Grey Ghost" '36 Ford**

Don is known for his very dry sense of humor. He may not smile much but he does bring many a smile to those around him. The following is a quote in a story about Don, during his driving days, in The Houston Home Journal; "I told them not to tell the PA announcer to announce a driver change. I told him, 'My wife's in those stands, if she hears it's me in that car, I'll have to outrun that Lincoln (the family car) too,'"

Don's wife Angela is the NVRA Secretary/Treasurer.

Don's 2006 season success came with a 1966 Nova that won the Late Model Modified Championship with Woody at the wheel. It was obvious to all who saw that car run that Don's ability to set-up a racecar and Woody's ability to drive a racecar made for a great team.

One thing that's unusual on both Don's cars is the number...or more correctly... are the numbers. The number 85 is on one side and 22 on the other... numbers Don campaigned successfully in his driving days.



**Woody Callaway in the Winners Circle in 2006**

**The '36 Ford Modified Open  
As you can see, Don likes the color "lite yellor".**

