

Lonnie Roberts saw his first stock car race at age 10 at the old North Valdosta Speedway, Valdosta, Ga. as his father, L D Roberts took him to the races every Saturday night.



His love for racing almost ended on July 17, 1971 at the Thunderbowl Speedway, Valdosta, Ga. when Glenn Doberley crashed his car through the fence and landed on Lonnie, knocking him unconscious and breaking his left leg. Bobby Dumas, who was to become his close friend several years later, and others helped lift the car off Lonnie and he was taken to the hospital. He was laid up in the hospital, traction and a wheel chair for a nine week span. Lonnie had declared he was finished with going to stock car races. Anyway, he got out of the hospital on a Friday, and on Saturday he was back at the races. That evening, his favorite driver, Aubrey Holley found out he was at the track and autographed a photo for him, their friendship remained until Aubrey's death in 2006.

Lonnie and his father continued to go to the races every week until his dad passed away when Lonnie was only 14 years old. At that time, his dad's friends took him to the races every Saturday night. When he was 17, he met Sherry, was 15, and she was to become his wife three years later, they dated going to the races, and during the off season they would go to movies or bowl.



Lonnie began his racing career in 1980 when Charles Paige of Moultrie, Ga. offered Lonnie a car to race in the last event of the year at Thunderbowl Speedway in a Late Model Sportsman # 72. Lonnie was working that morning on his job, and fell off a scaffold, breaking his right wrist and splitting his forehead open requiring 10 stitches. He was rushed to the hospital, but later checked himself out to go race. He did start the event, but pulled in as he felt too bad to compete in the event. He continued to race for Mr. Paige 7 1/2 years. He started his own race team in 1989, and it was # 81, his old high school football number, plus he started racing in 1981. His first time out in 1990 he flipped the car at the Thunderbowl Speedway, before even getting to race it. He continued to race the car through 1997.

Lonnie's biggest win was a National Late Model Series race on November 28, 2004 when he won \$12,000 for winning the Thanksgiving weekend event.

He was the Super Late Model track champion at the Thunderbowl Speedway, Valdosta, Ga. in 1993, the Super Late Model track champion at Cordele Speedway, Cordele, Ga. in 1995, and the Sportsman champion there in 1997. He was also the Sportsman champion at Lake City Speedway, Lake City, Florida in 1999 & 2001, and the Sportsman champion at North Florida Motor Speedway, Wewahitchka, Florida in 2003. Lonnie was the Modified Sportsman champion in the National Vintage Racing Association for 2006.



Lonnie purchased his 1931 Chevrolet sedan on November 19, 2005 from Harold Roach of Lavonia, Ga. Mac Simpson and his crew from Barney, Ga. prepared the car for racing making it # 81 , while Rance Phillips installed an engine in the car, a NLMS legal 358 cubic inch engine. His pit crew consists of his wife Sherry, Houston Joiner, Kayla Wall and T J Roberts. He is sponsored by Roberts Construction Company and Sherry's Rental Properties, both of Sparks, Ga. He won several races enroute to his NVRA championship in 2006.



He and Sherry have two children, Lonnie Dee, age 26 and Lancia Kristen age 19.

Lonnie's goal is to win every race he enters, but he believes in racing clean. He hopes to win more championships. His advise to young drivers "Have patience, you can't win the race on the first lap." It took Lonnie seven years to win his first event, and he has had a successful

racing career spanning over 25 years.

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