

Oh! where does faithful Gelert roam,
The flow'r of all his race?
So true, so brave; a lamb at home,
A lion in the chase!

(From *Beth-Gelert* by William Robert Spencer)

THE LAW of the pack rules in the competitive jungle of NASCAR. The old kings, the elder lions of major league stock car racing, Joe Weatherly and Fireball Roberts, Billy Wade and Jimmy Pardue, died in battle. Junior Johnson has retired from action among the teeth and claws, and Ned Jarrett says he, too, will leave the jungle to the young lions.

Who are the young lions? They're the ones who take lesser cars and, with only sheer desire, gnaw away at the current leaders. There are five who many consider most outstanding.

Jim Hylton, 30, is a native of Norfolk, Va., and resident of Inman, S.C. He was a mechanic for Rex White, Ned Jarrett and Dick Hutcherson for five years before he moved into a driver's seat this season. He failed to win a race in his first 28 starts, but drove so consistently, with 11 finishes in the top five and 20 finishes in the top ten, that he has run a strong second in individual point standings and is a shoo-in for "rookie of the year."

Bobby Allison, 28, is a former Miami, Fla., resident, who now lives in Hueytown, Ala. He was a three-time NASCAR Modified champion, moved up with the big boys this year, went East in July to clip off his first Grand National wins, in 100-milers at Oxford, Me., and Islip, N.Y., finished in the top five eight times in his first 22 starts and is solidly entrenched in the top 10 of the driver rankings.

Sam McQuagg, 29, makes his home in Columbia, Ga. Last season he finished in the top 10 five times in 15 starts to win "rookie of the year" laurels and hit the headlines this season with his spectacular triumph in one of the eight annual super-speedway events, the Firecracker 400 at Daytona. The former Sportsman whiz had five finishes in the top 10 in his first 11 starts of 1966, picking his spots, and was one of seven drivers to surpass \$20,000 in earnings as the campaign turned into the homestretch.

Cale Yarborough, formerly of Timmonsville, S.C., now of Charlotte, N.C., at 27 is the youngest of the five young lions. Cale started racing at 15 and entered his first Grand National

race at 17. However, he became a top Sportsman driver before moving up among the GN stalwarts with a win and 21 top 10 finishes last year. He has been sidelined much of this season by the idling of Ford. He tried the Indianapolis 500 and has been trying 500 cars in other USAC events while waiting to rejoin the Southern circuit.

Dick Hutcherson, 34, a yankee from Keokuk, Ia., has settled among the rebels in Camden, S.C. He is the eldest of the young lions. Sidelined most of the current season by Ford's withdrawal, Hutcherson has established himself by finishing second to Ned Jarrett in the NASCAR driving championship standings last season. Dick won nine races, finished in the top five 32 times and 37 times in the top 10. He led the drivers in points much of the campaign and was overhauled by Jarrett only in the stretch.

These five men have much in common in addition to youth, some accomplishment and considerable promise. All are hard drivers, who prefer to run in front if possible. Most have experienced difficulties in getting the sort of equipment that guarantees them a shot



Young Lions of NASCAR

The Up-and-Coming Chargers Of the Super Speedways

BY BILL LIBBY

at victory. All desire that victory.

The withdrawal from racing of Chrysler last year and Ford this year removed the reigning champions Richard Petty and Jarrett to the sidelines and inactivated the great Freddie Lorenzen. When in action, these three are the best, but the young lions are beginning to nip at their flanks.

While veteran David Pearson roars toward this season's Grand National title, one of the young lions, Jim Hylton, is the charger in closest pursuit of him. Veterans in their late 30s and 40s, such as Darel Dieringer, Mar-

vin Panch, Curtis Turner, Buck Baker, Jim Paschal, Tiny Lund, G.C. Spencer, J.T. Putney and Elmo Langley pose strong threats to win any race they enter. Invaders from USAC such as A. J. Foyt, Jim Hurtubise and Paul Goldsmith are top contenders in any event they drive. But the young lions in their late 20s and early 30s are stealing the show.

Almost as far back as he can remember, Hylton wanted to be a race driver. "I've had the bug ever since I was a kid on my dad's farm. I used to sit in the seat of a 12-mph tractor and

Young Lions

play that I was tearing around a track with my foot on the floorboard," he recalls. "I won a lot of races in my imagination."

Hylton won a considerable number of races in his own Sportsman car, which he raced as a weekend hobby for a few years prior to 1960. He then started as a mechanic full time with Rex White, with whom he stayed until 1963 when Chevrolet left racing. Hylton then moved over to Ned Jarrett's crew and remained with Ned until May 1965, when Jim moved to the Dick Hutcherson crew. This year Jim located himself in the cockpit.

"I would have made the switch before, only I didn't have any decent equipment," Hylton says. "There's not much use racing unless you have. It's tough enough getting along with a competitive car, the opposition being what it is."

A 1965 DODGE driven last year for Cotton Owens by Dave Pearson was purchased by Bud Hartje of Tampa, Fla., and turned over to Hylton. Hartje is chief mechanic on the car, assisted by Dale Rocket and Hylton, a crack chassis man.

Additionally, Cotton Owens and Pearson have volunteered help strictly in the name of friendship. "I have top mechanics and I don't want to sell them short," Hylton says, "but it is Cotton Owens who has kept us in racing. Without his kind help, I doubt if we'd still be running. He has done more for me than a man has to."

The Hartje-Hylton garage in Inman, S.C., is only 12 miles from the Owens garage.

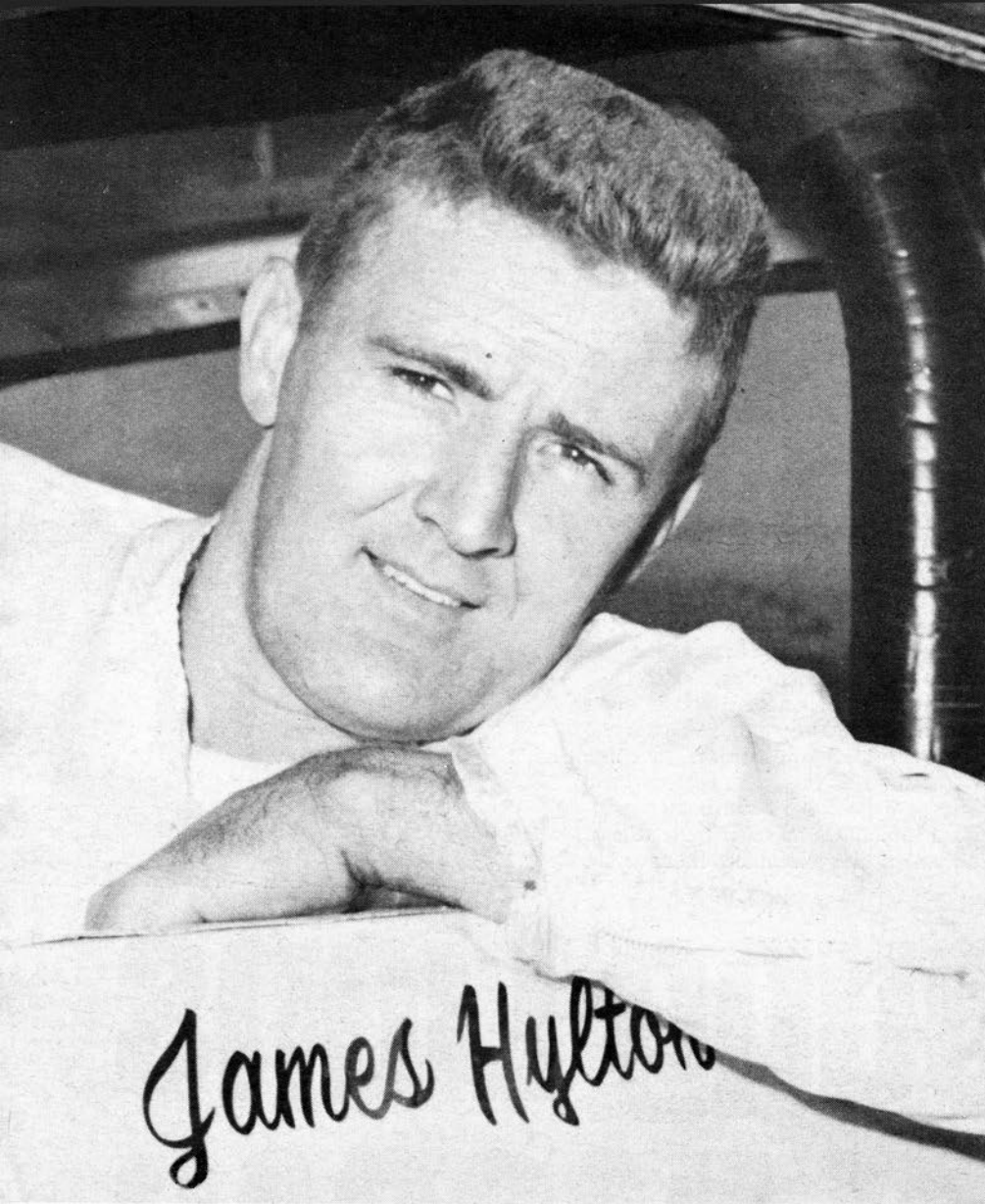
"Owens has made his big garage available to me," Hylton says. "He has supplied me with parts that I couldn't have gotten anywhere else. He even has David Pearson test our car, when we have it all set up, to see what he thinks and to make suggestions for improvement."

"None of us can thank Cotton enough. And, mind you, he has no reason to be so nice. I hardly knew him when I started driving. He's just that kind of man."

At Daytona two hours before the start of the July Fourth 400, a cracked transmission was discovered in Hylton's car. Mechanics from other crews joined Hylton's men in installing a new one in time to race.

Hylton repays such generosity as NASCAR rivals show him.

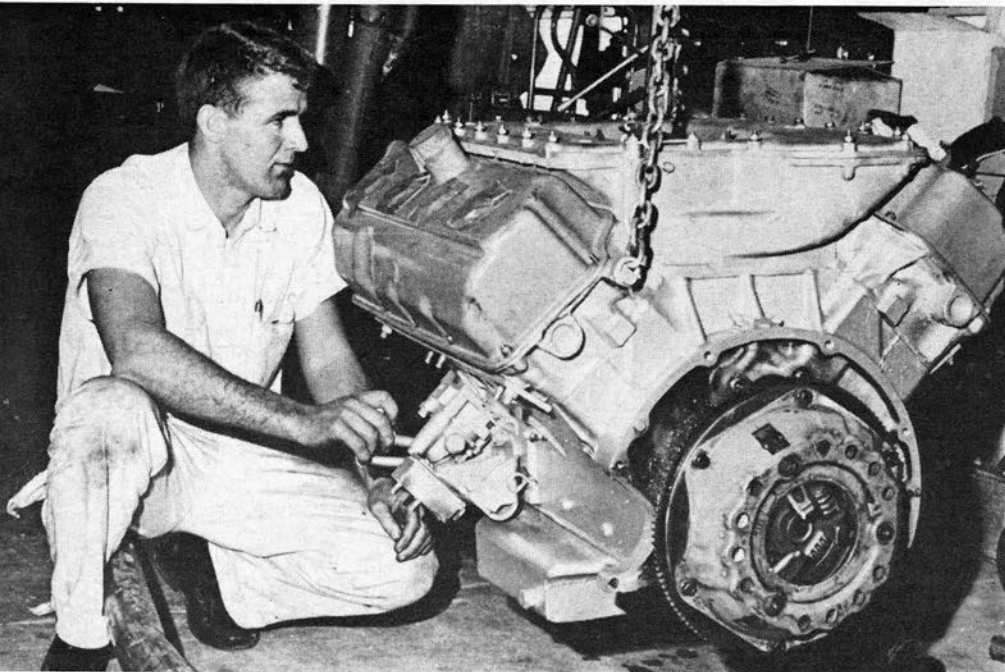
At Islip, in July, Hylton spent several of 48 hours as one of the ring-leaders of a group of drivers and mechanics who helped Bobby Allison



James Hylton

JIM HYLTON was a mechanic for Rex White, Ned Jarrett and Dick Hutcherson before he moved into the driver's seat at the start of the 1966 season.

TURNING WRENCHES for top drivers taught Hylton some things he now uses to advantage, but he still believes the mechanic has the tougher job.



and his crew repair severe damage the Allison car suffered in a midweek crash at Fonda. Then in the race, a 300-lap duel over a tiny 1/5-mile asphalt oval, Hylton led until he ran out of fuel with nine laps to go and, ironically, Allison sped by to win.

Hylton finished second at Islip, one of the four second-place finishes in short races on short tracks he recorded in the first half of this year. His best finishes in the long races on the long tracks were fourths in the World 600 at Charlotte in May and the Dixie 400 at Atlanta in August. He has driven steadily and has improved steadily throughout the season.

The move from the engine compartment to the driver's seat was a shocking one. "To put it bluntly, it was scary," Hylton says. "I'd always wanted to drive and I've driven before, but never in the sort of cars and competition we have in the Grand National and at the sort of speeds you have to go.

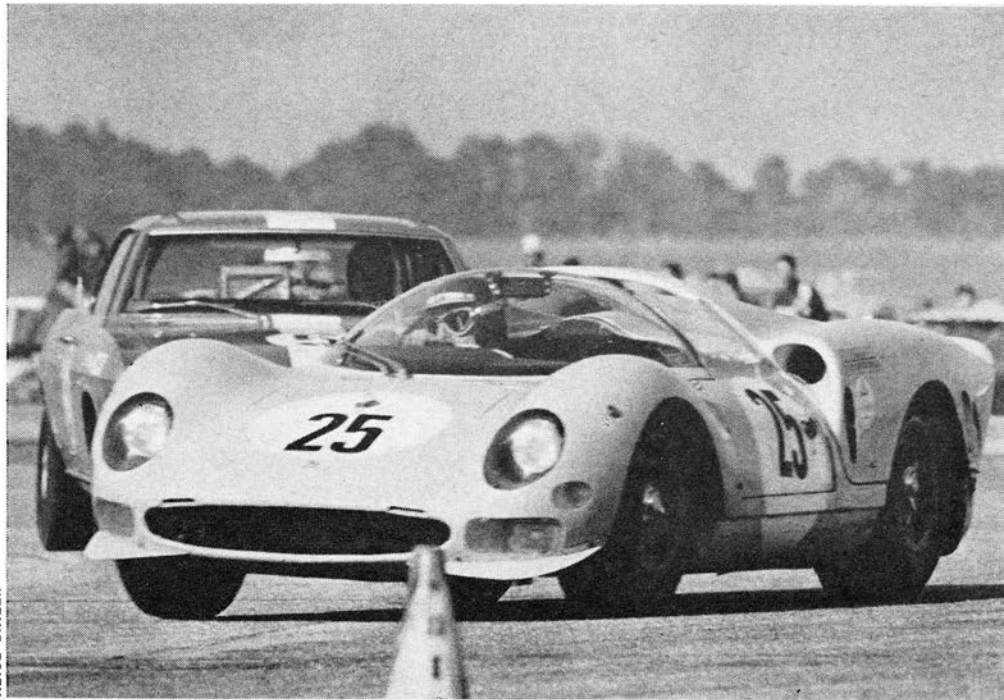
"I'd turned wrenches for good drivers and I figured I knew what to expect, but knowing and doing are two different things. I guess 70, 80 mph was the fastest I'd driven or raced until this season and now I've driven as fast as 174, drafting at Daytona that was. If you think that isn't moving, you're wrong."

With White, Jarrett and Hutcherson, Hylton was a mechanic for three drivers who finished first three times and second three times in NASCAR driver standings. Hylton says he has learned a great deal from each of them, although he denies patterning himself after any one of the three.

"Every driver has his own style, his own way of handling a car and running a race," Hylton says. "If I have copied anyone, I guess it is Rex White. He always was my idol and if I could develop into as good a driver as he was, then I'm sure I'd be satisfied. But then Jarrett was good in his own way, too. And if I can be as good as Hutch or Davy Pearson, I won't mind that either.

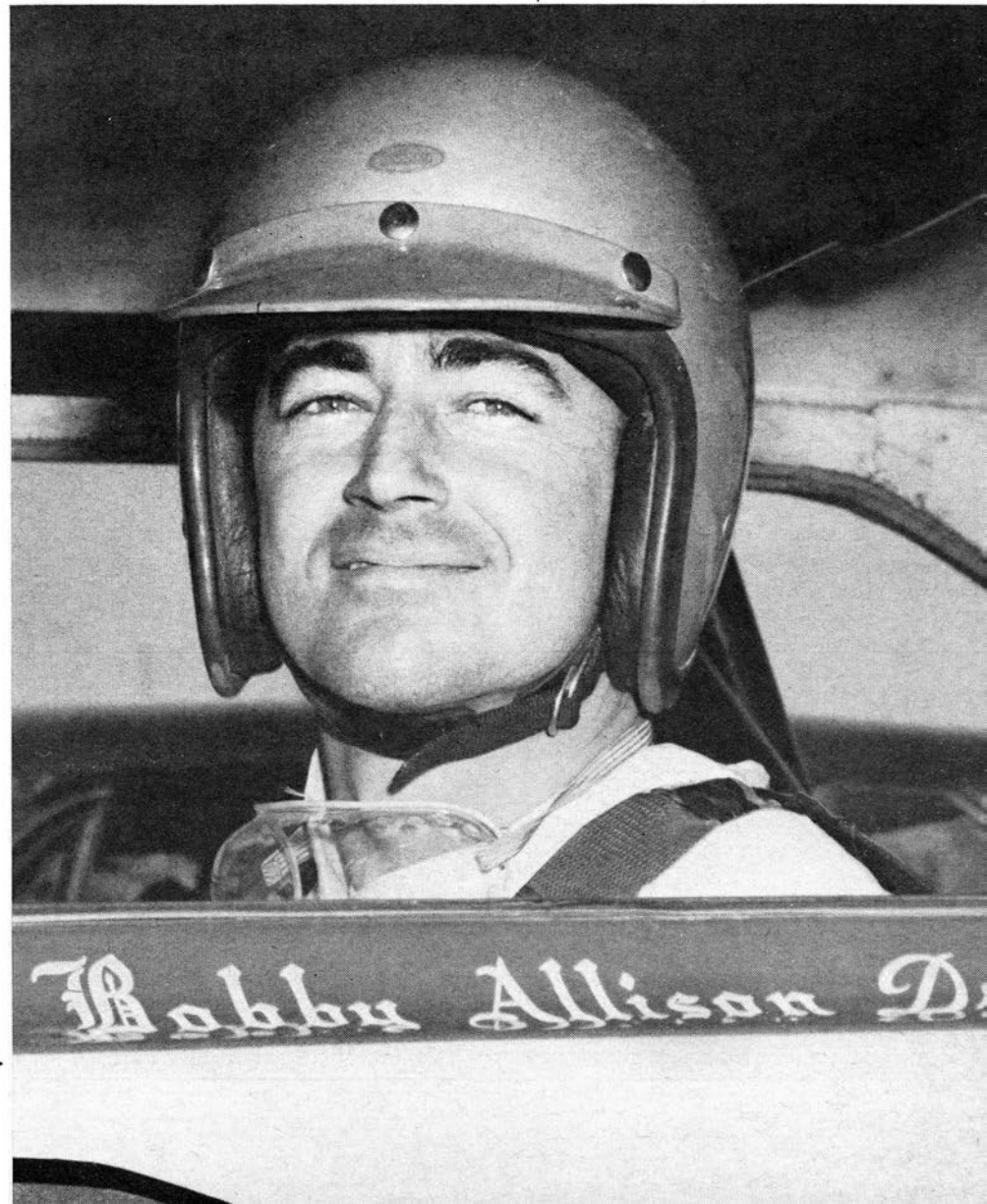
"I have a lot to learn about racing. Every race makes that quite clear to me. Take the 500 at Daytona. I was halfway through the race before I was driving the track the way it should be driven. Know how I learned? By watching the top drivers, particularly Petty and Goldsmith, who were out there in front and easy to watch. I watched how they took the turns and how they handled their cars in traffic and by the time 250 miles was gone I was catching on."

HYLTON HAS AS much respect for mechanics as he has for race drivers. "When I was a mechanic, the drivers had to trust me. Now that I'm a driver, ▶



THE DAYTONA Continental 24-hour race provided road circuit experience for Bobby Allison, in the Corvair Corsa behind the P-2 Ferrari.

BEFORE JOINING the Grand National circuit, Allison won seven track crowns, two divisional titles and two national championships in modified stockers.



Young Lions

I have to trust my mechanics. All mechanics realize the driver has put his life in their hands. The good ones—and they're all good in the big leagues—are darn good and darn careful. I have had nothing fall off my cars this year. I have broken down, but not with anything that could be blamed on mechanics."

Hylton thinks most mechanics put in more hours and work harder than drivers, especially the star drivers. A young independent such as he, especially one who is a mechanic, tends to put in considerable time and effort on the cars.

He has run into some special physical strain as a driver, however. "My neck bothers me a lot," he admits. "A helmet is heavy and centrifugal force pulling in the turns makes a man's neck sore and tired."

SURPRISINGLY, HE thinks he was in more danger as a mechanic than as a driver. "I've been lucky so far and I realize driving is a dangerous bit, but I feel a lot safer strapped in a padded car with a helmet and a fire suit on and a lot of metal around me than I used to feel working in the pits.

"When you're in the pits you're concentrating on your car in for a pit stop and you're not even looking for the cars that are whizzing into the pits around you at 100 mph or more. I've come close to being hit lots of times and probably a lot of other times I'm not even aware of. The record books don't show it, but I'll bet a lot more guys have been killed or hurt working in the pits than driving."

Bobby Allison's worst accident to date came in a pit stop when his car exploded into fire, burning him and four others, one severely. Bobby suffered second and third degree burns, but this didn't scare him off.

Also, in the Fonda accident, he slid into a chain reaction pileup and got rammed from behind, but was able to walk away from it.

"It's a dangerous business, no question of it," Bobby admits. "Sometimes I think of it, but usually I shrug it off. Frankly, I think of it most when I'm racing poorly and staying in a race anyway. When I'm running with no chance to do well, then I get a little apprehensive. But, usually, I don't worry about risk."

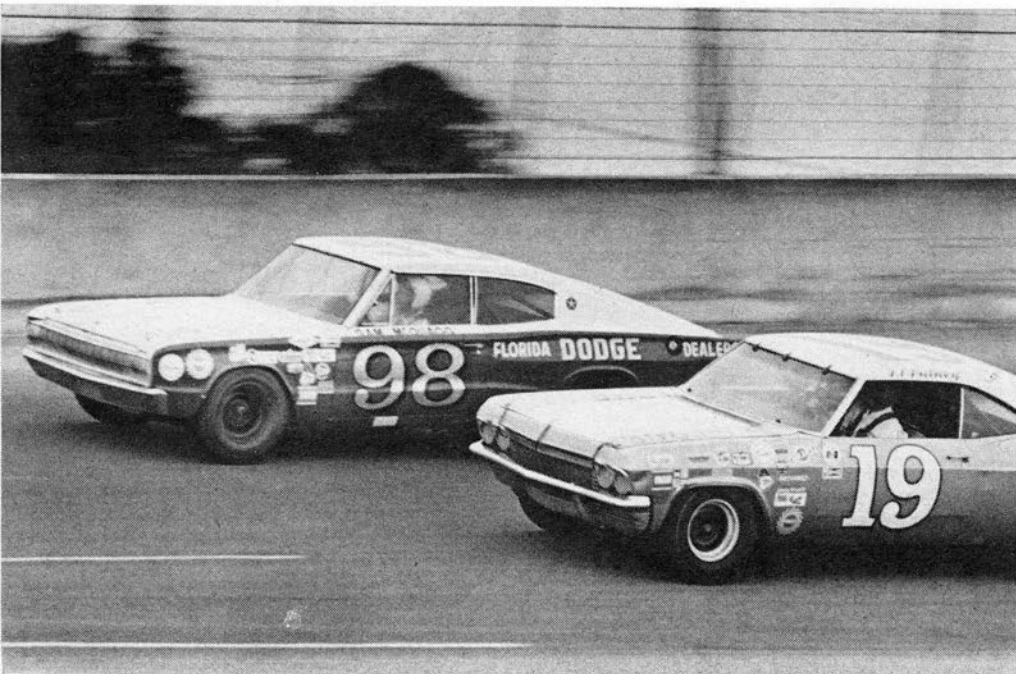
Bobby, a high school basketball and football star in Miami, started racing in 1955 in a jalopy event. Driving modified stockers in 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965, he won seven track championships, two NASCAR divisional crowns and two national titles. Driving his own modifieds, he won 18 races in 82 starts



DAYTONA INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

SAM MCQUAGG, rookie of the year in 1965, this season has scored wins in the Daytona Firecracker 400 and the Charlotte, N.C., Dixie 400.

ON THE outside, Sam McQuagg, in a Dodge Charger, passes J. T. Putney's Chevelle during the running of the 1966 Daytona 500.



ALICE BIXLER

in 1964 and 14 races in 66 starts in 1965 when he won the big titles.

HIS FIRST CRACK at the Grand National circuit came in the 1961 Daytona 500, in which he finished 31st. In the 1965 Daytona 500, he was running at the finish and placed 11th. He wound up with three top 10 finishes. This season, he got rolling with a third in the Rockingham, N.C., 500-lapper and followed up with a number of good finishes until he broke into the winner's ranks at Oxford, Me., then followed up with another win at Islip.

At Oxford, Allison led the qualifiers at 65.68 mph and put his 1966 Chevrolet Chevelle on the pole, then led to the wire in 1 hr., 45 min., averaging 56.72 mph in the 300-lap, 100-mile event. Not only was it Allison's first GN triumph, but it was the first for a Chevy since December 1963. A few days later, on Thursday night at Fonda, Allison, and four other cars were involved in a messy wreck. Working around the clock, with considerable help to mend the car, Allison bounced back on Saturday night to win a 60-miler at Islip, averaging 47.28 mph.

ALLISON, WHO AIMS for a future in automotive development and research, started the season driving a Ford for Mrs. Betty Lilly, but had bad luck with the car. In mid-season he built his own Chevelle. The car had a 327-cu. in. engine that is only three-fourths the size of the opposition engines, and Allison's success with his little whiz-banger was most remarkable.

"We bought a Chevelle out of a junkyard for \$300 and rebuilt it in my backyard. Franklin Engineering Company of Florida helped me," Allison says. "In all, we had about \$5500 invested in the car when we took it racing. Since then there have been other expenses. Banging it up at Fonda didn't help. I haven't had a whole lot of luck on the super-speedways yet, but it's pretty tough to compete on the big tracks with small equipment."

A mechanic, as is Jim Hylton, Allison himself does a great deal of work on his own cars.

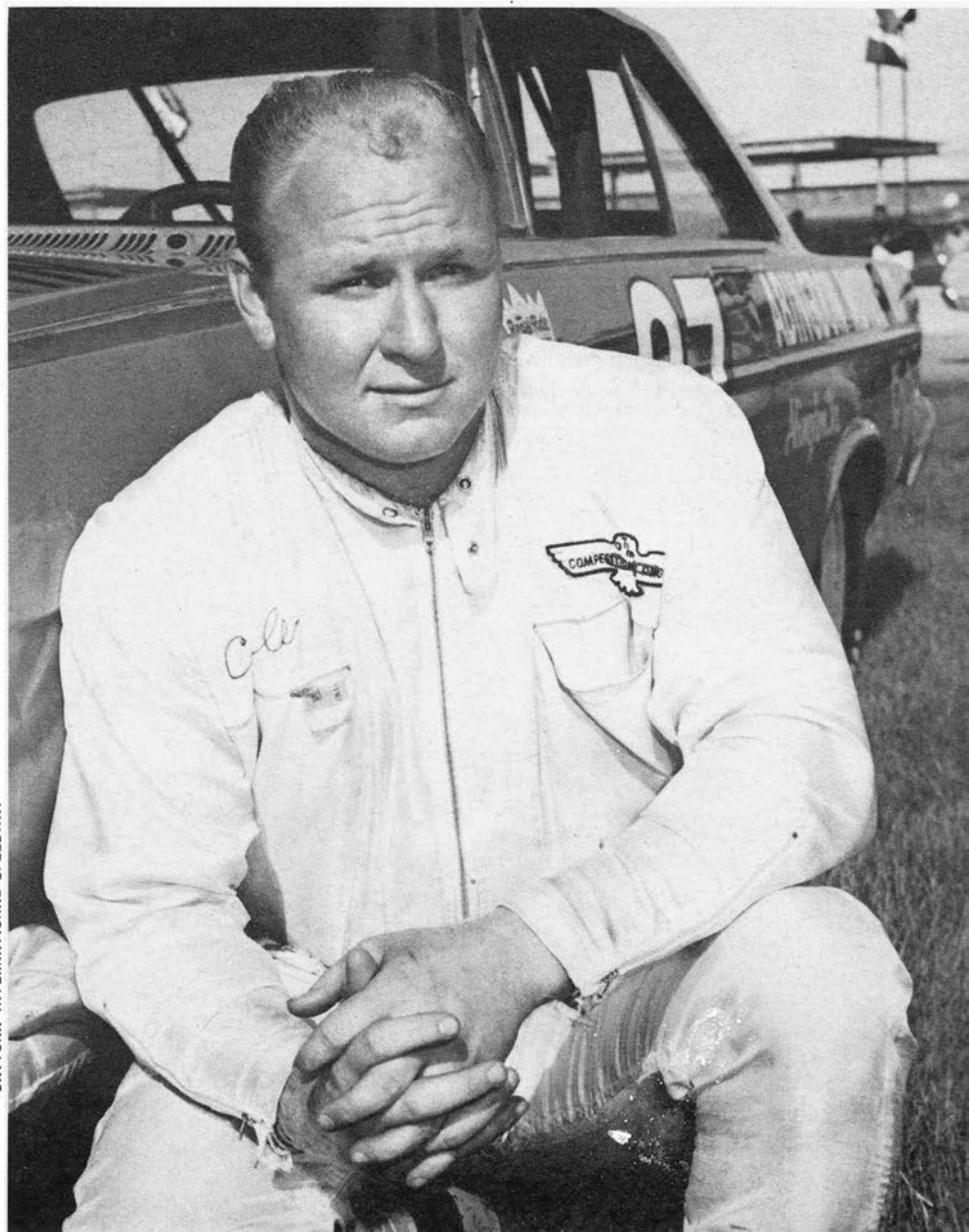
Hylton, Allison and McQuagg are the only independents among the five young lions. All three have had some misgivings. "Four years in a row I made \$20,000 or more in the modified circuit," Allison points out. "Two years I had heavy expenses and showed little profit, two years I had light expenses and made good profit. In the first half of this year in Grand National racing, I earned a little more than \$15,000, but my expenses were heavy.

"It's pretty tough running as an independent. You blow a couple of engines, you're out of business. You total your car, you're out of business. You



CALE YARBOROUGH takes the inside route to pass Curtis Turner in the 1966 Daytona 500. Though three times the leader, Yarborough finished second.

WHEN FORD withdrew from NASCAR competition, Yarborough headed for the Indianapolis 500—where he became involved in the first-lap smashup.



Young Lions

don't have the money or the connections to get all of the good parts. You're bucking long odds. I've thought about going back to the modified circuit, but I'll stick to the Grand National, I think, because once you reach the big leagues you don't want to drop back and because the potential for the big money is here. If I'm lucky, I can make a buck running on my own, and then maybe I'll get an offer of a good factory ride I'd want to take."

Hylton quit a \$14,000-a-year job with Holman and Moody's Ford operation as Hutcherson's mechanic to go out on his own. "It was a tough chance to take. That fourteen grand is a nice, steady income for a family man. But I can make a lot more if I cut it as a Grand National driver. So far this year, I've made about eighteen grand."

Sam McQuagg is a 5-ft., 9-in., 160-lb. former football halfback at Baker High School in Columbus, Ga. He was a spectacular Sportsman driver, who once won 35 races and placed second in 37 starts in one tremendous, consistent streak.

He made his first Grand National start in 1962 and his second in 1964, but did not enter the major league circuit full-time until last year when he was named the "rookie of the year," more for promise than accomplishment. This year, bang—the Firecracker 400 at Daytona, then a fine third in the Dixie 400 at Charlotte.

Last year he drove a 1965 Ford owned by Mrs. Lilly, a long-time racing enthusiast. This year, he moved into a 1966 Dodge owned and maintained by the brilliant Ray Nichels. Like Allison and Hylton, McQuagg is a crack mechanic who has often turned the wrenches on his own cars and pitches in to help his present crew set up his car. "Even if you do not do most of your own mechanical work, it really helps to understand the mechanical end of things. I can communicate with my mechanics. There is nothing more important. When you are comfortable in a car and confident you can concentrate on driving."

McQuagg, who won \$13,600 for his triumph in Florida, had passed the \$20,000 mark in earnings by August, but was still pessimistic about chances of an independent succeeding in the big time. "It can be done, but not by many. I think you have to be awfully lucky," McQuagg admits. "It's been hard for us at times. Guys like us just can't afford the good equipment or pushing the equipment or gambling with it the way factory men can. Factory men can run hard and blow engines and just keep pulling new en-



DICK HUTCHERSON was a Ford team driver until the pullout. Teamed with Ron Bucknum at Le Mans this year, he helped place a Ford Mk. II in third.

BUDDY BAKER, Buck's son, in the center car, is a natural competitor who might have made the lion list if he'd driven in 1966 as he did in 1965.



gines off a truck. They wreck a car, they unwrap a new one."

TWO YEARS AGO, the drawling young Georgian entered his first race at Daytona International Speedway, glamor track of the NASCAR circuit. This was the Firecracker 400 on the Fourth of July, 1964. McQuagg started far back in 30th position, drove steadily, but unspectacularly, and finished 12th. While the crowd swirled around A. J. Foyt in victory lane, McQuagg climbed wearily out of his car and walked away quietly, unnoticed.

Two years later, this year, another Firecracker 400, another Fourth of July in sunny Florida, and the short, chubby McQuagg drove a powerful, shiny red, white and gold 1966 Dodge Charger steadily and spectacularly, blistering the 2.5 miles of high-banked asphalt at better than 153 mph, starting fourth and finishing first.

McQuagg is a smiling, round-faced young man just catching on to the tricks of the auto-racing trade. In scoring a stunning upset in the Daytona holiday event, McQuagg led seven different times in a frenzied duel with more accomplished veterans and was in front the last 75 miles of the 2-hr. and 31-min. grind.

Lee Roy Yarbrough, another fine young driver, led part of the way. Curtis Turner, a hard-bitten old-timer, led some of the race. Young veteran Paschal led some of the race. Tough A. J. Foyt, the greatest of the USAC drivers, and battle-scarred, skilled USAC veteran Jim Hurtubise led some of the way. But at the finish, the cheers of 40,000 fans and a \$15,500 first-place purse belonged to an upstart named Sam McQuagg.

Most of the drivers agree that the Grand National circuit should become either all factory or all independent. "Personally, I think it should become all factory," McQuagg says. "If we can get all the factories in it, there would be good rides for 25 guys and competition for first from 25 guys, and the independents would have a real goal, shooting to make enough of an impression to become one of those 25 guys.

"If it's not all factory, maybe it should be all independent so it's fairer. But I think if the factories went out, it would take the competition out of it. You can't run a real competitive race without competitive equipment, and if everyone was independent, a few guys with dough would dominate the circuit and you'd have three or four guys competing for first instead of 20 or 25."

Ford's defection early this year knocked factory drivers Cale Yarborough and Dick Hutcherson out of the Grand National. William Caleb

Yarborough is a stockily-powerful 5-ft., 7-in., 215-lb. all-around athlete. He was an all-state fullback at Timmons-ville High School in South Carolina and later a semi-pro gridder for the Sumter Generals. He is a pilot and a skydiver; he has been a logger; he was born on a tobacco farm and hopes to die on one; but he never has wanted anything more than to be a race driver.

Cale caught the bug when he entered a soap-box derby at age 10. His dad took him to his first big-time race, at Darlington. Yarborough recalls "I sat there all day with my fingers latched on to the wire. I thought race drivers were the greatest people in the world." At 15, he made his professional driving debut. At 17, he returned to Darlington and entered his first Grand National race. That was in 1957.

CALE BECAME A consistent winner in Sportsman racing in the late 1950s. When Herman (The Turtle) Beam quit driving in mid-1963, he offered Cale his 1963 Ford as a Grand National ride. Cale probably drives too hard. He destroys equipment. He drove Beam right out of race car sponsorship. Without a ride in 1964, Cale quit driving and returned to semi-pro football. Offered a ride with Holman and Moody, Cale quit the gridiron and returned to the track.

Trying to drive more conservatively, he didn't do well and was dropped at season's end. Cale asked John Holman for another chance, moved his family to Charlotte, took a job in the Holman and Moody plant and waited.

In mid-season he was offered a 1964 car set up by Kenny Myler and was back in business. He crashed it forthwith. When Bobby quit his Banjo Matthews-prepared car, Cale hopped into it.

Cale proved his quality in the first and possibly largest of the NASCAR classics when he thrice led the Daytona 500 in January before settling for second in his 1966 Ford behind the vastly more powerful '66 Plymouth driven by the great Richard Petty. Richard averaged a scorching 170 mph to win the brutal classic, but Yarborough knocked the eyes out of many of the 90,000 fans with his performance, earning \$8300, less than half Petty's purse.

Cale was second to Paul Goldsmith in the Rockingham, N.C., 500. When Ford withdrew, Cale headed for Indianapolis, was given a ride in Oregonian Rolla Vollsted's rear-engined, Ford-powered Jim Robbins Special. Yarborough qualified the car for the 500 at 159.7 mph. He then was promptly knocked out in that spectacular first-lap accident. "I drove right into it. I couldn't get out of the way, but I got out of it all right. I was lucky," Cale says.

HE RETURNED TO the Indianapolis Speedway to try a 150-mile event, but crashed in practice. Unlike many NASCAR stars, he is hooked. He enjoys and is unafraid of open cockpit racing. "I've got to get the monkey off my back. I love it and would like to work in as many races as I can between Grand National races, even when I'm back on the Grand National

LEE ROY YARBROUGH (12) is a spectacular performer who could well be included among NASCAR's young lions. He hasn't been consistent, however.



ALICE BIXLER

Young Lions

circuit," he states. "One thing is for sure, I'll be back at Indianapolis next year."

Meanwhile, he is running a drag car and driving an occasional Sportsman race. "I'm just waiting, hoping Ford gets back in the Grand National. If Ford doesn't, I'll be back in it next season somehow. It's my first love. It's pretty tough to be out of it right now, just when I was beginning to do something. Fortunately, Ford has been good to us. I'm not making as much money as I might have if I'd been driving and lucky enough to be doing well."

HIS FORD teammate Dick Hutcherson also took advantage of the interruption in his Grand National activities to try another circuit. The Iowan teamed with Californian Ron Bucknum in the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the French sports car endurance classic in June. He did remarkably well for a novice in this sort of thing, finishing third behind the winning Bruce McLaren-Chris Amon duo and the runner-up pair, the late Ken Miles and Dennis Hulme, as Ford Mark IIs swept the first three places.

"It was a great thrill," he says. "You just don't realize how long 24 hours is until you drive this sort of thing. We switched every two or three hours, but you can't sleep, you just lie on a cot and try to rest, and you're all worked up. Driving at night wasn't bad, except for the rain. You're sleepy and it gets slippery. When Ford slowed us down late to save our cars, it got monotonous and a little dangerous. But I'd love to go back."

Otherwise, Dick has been driving some tire tests and driving some Sportsman races, doing well enough so he figures he'll make about two-thirds the money he might have made had he run in Grand National events.

In running second to Ned Jarrett in the driving race last season, the 6-ft., 1-in., 195-lb. former Midwest and IMCA stock car champion won nine races, was in the top five 32 times and the top ten 37 times in 52 starts and earned \$49,420, which makes him easily the most affluent of the five young lions. The one-time Air Force radar mechanic has found a new home in Camden, S. C. "The Southern people treat me just great," he adds.

Dick's greatest success has come in the short races on the short tracks. He did not win a race longer than 100 miles last year, but he was a strong contender in many super-speedway events and gave Freddie Lorenzen a hectic hustle before being nosed out

and settling for second place in the National 400 at Charlotte last October. Earlier he ran a strong third in the World 600 at Charlotte and had fourth place finishes in the Atlanta 500 and Darlington 300.

Dick is the only one of the five young lions who would like to pick his spots *à la* Lorenzen, running only the big races each year. "It really runs you ragged, going once or twice every week. You don't have time to set up your car right and you start to press and get kind of nervous."

Cale Yarborough says, "I like to stay at it. I love driving." Jim Hylton says, "It keeps you in shape running in 'em all." Bobby Allison says, "If I can keep my equipment in good shape, I like to keep runnin'." Sam McQuagg says, "I'd kind of like to get to the place where I could pick my spots, but right now I like to run as much as I can because I need the experience. I learn something from every track and every race I run."

McQuagg prefers asphalt tracks to running on dirt. "You can make your car work better and run harder on dirt," he says. Hylton adds, "I've had some good success on dirt, but it's too hard on equipment and costs more to run and the bigger money is on the paved tracks, which the super-speedways are." Allison, too, leans to paved tracks. "To me asphalt is easier," he explains, "but then I'm not experienced on dirt and I'm not as sure of what the car is going to do—when the tires are going to bite in a slide, for example."

HUTCHERSON AND Yarborough both prefer dirt. "I was brought up on dirt at the small tracks around Iowa," Dick says. Thus, it is understandable that Dick's greatest success has come in 100-mile events on short dirt tracks. Yarborough feels similarly. "I was born and raised on dirt, so I prefer it," he says. "But the big races and the big money are on the paved tracks, so I'm getting adjusted to it quick."

All five are married family men. Allison and Hutcherson are the champion fathers each with three offspring. Allison and his wife, Judy, have Davey, 5; Bonnie, 4; and Cliff, 2. Hutcherson and his wife, Bette, have a son, Ricky, 1, and Dick also has two daughters by a previous marriage. McQuagg and his wife, Joy, have two boys, David, 8, and Mark, 6. Hylton and his wife, Evelyn, have a 9-year-old son, James Jr. Yarborough and his wife, Bette Jo, have a daughter, Julie Ann, 3.

So far, all five young lions have escaped serious injury, though all have had narrow escapes. For example, Yarborough experienced an even closer call at Darlington than he

had at Indianapolis. In the South Carolina hair-raiser he hooked up with McQuagg, went over Sam's car, vaulted 40 ft. over a guard rail, disappeared down the embankment, but landed upright and unhurt. "The ol' buggy moved every which way," he grins, "but I came out of it all right, so it doesn't bother me none."

Hylton, who thinks being a mechanic is even more dangerous than being a driver, says wives must accept the dangers faced by their husbands. Most of the men were racing drivers before they were married, though Hylton was not. "She's a racing wife," he shrugs. "She understands. I'm happier than I ever was before and that's enough for her."

The list of five is open to debate. Certainly there are other young lions with impressive credentials who deserve to be included among the new elite, possibly more than those who are included. Bobby Johns of Miami is only 32, for example, but has been a threat in NASCAR events since 1950, when he won the super-speedway Atlanta 500, and placed third in the final driver standings.

At 27, Lee Roy Yarborough of Jacksonville, Fla., is a sometimes spectacular performer who set a world record for speed on a closed track when he roared around Daytona's 2.5 miles of high banks at 181.8 mph in a test run.

Bob Derrington of Houston, Tex., is 35, but just arriving. He recorded 19 top ten finishes and placed sixth in the final drivers standings last season.

Another yankee, Earl Balmer, of Floyds Knob, Ind., is a 27-year-old charger of obvious quality. He was second in the World 600 at Charlotte last season and won a 100 at Daytona this season.

The 1964 NASCAR rookie of the year, 27-year-old Doug Cooper of Gastonia, N.C., is another talented newcomer.

BUDDY BAKER, Buck's son, a 25-year-old giant with natural skill, had 17 top ten finishes during the past season, including a second at the Firecracker 400 at Daytona and placed ninth in the final standings, but was inconsistent this season until he drove to a second in the Dixie 400 at Charlotte.

Highest ranking among the young lions omitted from our first five list is Neil Castles, 31-year-old Charlotte, N.C., charger, who has been a consistent high finisher in NASCAR GN driver standings for three years and was sixth in this year's standings as this was written.

Possibly Castles or Baker or Balmer or one of the others belongs in the top five, but a line had to be drawn somewhere and it was drawn after the names McQuagg, Yarborough, Hutcherson, Allison and Hylton.