

Walter "Bud" Moore Passes Away: NASCAR Hall of Famer, World War II Hero Was 92

Walter "Bud" Moore Jr., a decorated member of America's "Greatest Generation" who went on to win NASCAR championships as car owner and crew chief, has died at the age of 92.

Moore, a Spartanburg, S.C., native who won the NASCAR premier series title in 1957 as crew chief for Buck Baker and car owner titles in 1962-63 with Joe Weatherly, had been the oldest living member of the NASCAR Hall of Fame. He was inducted in 2011.

After graduating from high school, Moore joined the military in 1943 at the age of 18 as a machine gunner, assigned to the 90th Infantry Division which landed on Utah Beach in France on D-Day, June 6, 1944. His unit was attached to General George W. Patton's "Third Army," which pushed to liberate Europe. In recognition of his heroism, Moore was decorated with five Purple Hearts and two Bronze Stars (the second with clusters).

Auto racing was a destination for many returning veterans. NASCAR was born in 1948 and Moore, as a South Carolinian who enjoyed fixing cars, would make the organization his life's work. Referring to himself as "a country mechanic who loved to make 'em run fast," Moore stood more than six feet tall and couldn't be missed in the garage – or in Victory Lane where his cars won during parts of four decades beginning in 1961. In all, Moore won 63 times as an owner.

Moore and Weatherly proved to be a virtually unstoppable combination. The duo won eight times in 1961 and 12 times during their back-to-back championship seasons. Weatherly died in early 1964 during a race at the old Riverside (Calif.) International Raceway, ending what could have been a dynasty rivaling that of Petty Enterprises and other top teams of the era.

Moore's team would not win another title but came close with such top drivers as NASCAR Hall of Famers Dale Earnhardt and Bobby Allison, and NASCAR Hall of Fame nominees Buddy Baker and Ricky Rudd. Each



Bud Moore (right) with Dale Earnhardt (Getty Images)

managed to finish among the top 10 in the championship standings at least once, with Allison the runner-up in 1978.

Allison won the 1978 Daytona 500, a feat not previously accomplished by Moore or Allison.

Moore's final NASCAR premier series victory came in May 1993 at Sonoma Raceway.

Moore is survived by sons Daryl (wife Carol), Brent (wife Nancy) and Greg (fiancé Roberta), grandchildren: Melissa Moore Padgett (Tommy), Candace Moore

Glover (Tommy), Benjamin Moore (Kristen), Thomas Moore, and Brittany Moore, along with seven great-grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren.

He is also survived by brothers, Ralph, William, and Richard Moore and sister, Ann Moore Elder. He was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Betty Clark Moore, and his brothers, Charles, Cecil and Donald Moore and sisters, Edith Moore Gregory and Helen Moore McKinney.

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