

Bubba Pollard Wins at Berlin Raceway - Beats Kyle Busch

Story/Photos: Phillip Prichard, MSA

With \$20,000 on the line, Senoia's Bubba Pollard gambled in a late race strategy that earned him the checkered flag in the Money in the Bank 150 at the Berlin Raceway (Michigan). It is a win that Pollard seemed very proud of as it not only came against a tough field of stars and cars, but also on a track he considers one of the toughest in the land.

Bubba Pollard of Georgia, took a chance and won big, capturing the Super Late Model special in the 30-car field that included NASCAR Monster Energy Cup 2015 champion Kyle Busch and Cup rookie Erik Jones of Byron.

Leader Kyle Busch, along with the rest of the top four in Joe Bush, Brian Campbell and Chris Koslek all gambled with 18 laps to go when they darted into the pits under caution for fresh right-side



tires. Meanwhile, Carson Hocevar, a 14-year old from Portage, rolled the dice and stayed out, even though he hadn't pitted all race.

And then there was Pollard, who pitted about halfway through the race and was sitting third on the restart. Pollard gambled with a three-wide move moments after the race went green, diving inside Hocevar and Kyle Jones coming into turn four. Pollard made contact with Hocevar, who spun and collected a number of cars, including Busch and Koslek. Busch continued and finished seventh, Koslek fourth and Bush sixth. Hocevar's race was over.

Pollard eventually pulled away from a pair of second generation drivers in Steven Wallace and Harrison Burton, the sons of NASCAR's Rusty Wallace and Jeff Burton, to earn his share of the \$100,000 purse.

"When they came off the corner, it was 18 to go," Pollard said. "You have (Busch and Campbell), who have fast race cars on fresh tires coming. It's \$20,000-to-win, you have to go. (Hocevar and Kyle Jones) come off the corner side-by-side, and we went into the corner three-wide. I lifted, checked up, hit the brakes. I knew they were coming down, and I did all I could to stay off of them."

"I definitely learned a lot tonight, especially when it comes to saving tires. I also learned never to quit. The motor shut off 10 laps into it for some unknown reason. It fired back up and was able to work our way to the front and got to the lead. We



never held our heads down even when we restarted last. The guys at KBR Development kept me cool in the car."

While Pollard might have entered the race under the radar, he has proven in the past that he can find his way around Berlin. He won Pro JEGS All-Star race at Berlin last year and in 2015, too.

Pollard said, "It's good for us, we're a small low-budget team that just loves to race." We do it as a family, it's hard work. I can't thank my sponsors enough, everybody on the side of this race car is a big part of it, can't do it without their help."

Busch and Jones headed to Berlin after competing in Cup race at Michigan International Speedway. Mechanical failure

sent Jones to the pits on lap 48 after his car started smoking, and he did not return.

MONEY IN THE BANK 150 RESULTS - 1. Bubba Pollard, 2. Steven Wallace, 3. Harrison Burton, 4. Chris Koslek, 5. Dalton Armstrong, 6. Joe Bush, 7. Kyle Busch, 8. Terry VanHaitsma, 9. Mason Keller, 10. Ross Meeuwssen, 11. Brian Campbell, 12. Jon Reynolds Jr., 13. Thomas Hufferd, 14. Tate Fogleman, 15. Carson Hocevar, 16. Kyle Jones, 17. Chad Finley, 18. Chris Anthony, 19. Boris Jurkovic, 20. Nate Walton, 21. Johnny VanDoorn, 22. Wes Griffith, 23. Joey Pole, 24. Erik Jones, 25. Aaron Hulings, 26. Tyler Dippel, 27. Kyle Crump, 28. Kyle Herp, 29. Steve Drorer, 30. Michael Bilderback

Richard Petty turning 80 but still 'The King' in so many ways

by Kenny Bruce, NASCAR.com

July 2, 2017 - It's been 25 years since the King of stock car racing climbed out of his race car for the last time and Richard Petty turned 80 years old the coming weekend.

Sunday to be exact.

"It doesn't really seem that long," Petty told NASCAR.com recently during an interview and tour of the Petty Museum and compound. "What makes it ... that I know it's been a long time is when I look at the cars today and see that kind of cars we drove. You see the safety features that we didn't have or how the cars were built.

"It's a new era, a completely different race car. Still got a number on it, still got Goodyear tires on it or whatever, but the cars are so much different."

His driving career began in 1958, shortly after his 21st birthday. It ended 35 years later, in 1992.

In between all those years were wins and records and wins and plaques and wins and proclamations and injuries and still more wins.. Two hundred wins in all, a record likely never to be matched. Only two other drivers have equaled his seven championships - Dale Earnhardt and Jimmie Johnson.

But Richard Petty is more than records, wins and championships and consecutive starts and career starts and just about any other record you can find in the record book.

Richard Petty is a living, breathing, walking, talking piece of Americana. He is stock car racing history in the flesh.

He is at the race track nearly every single weekend. If the No. 43 is competing, the King is likely somewhere nearby. Perched atop the hauler. Headed to a sponsor appearance. Waving at the Goodyear tire busters and nodding to the workers by the Sunoco gas pumps.

His continued at-track involvement dulled any desire to return to competition long ago.

"Drivin' the race car was my hobby," Petty said. "I worked on the car, did promotions, hauled the cars to the track in a truck. You did what everybody else was doing at that time.

"The big thing was every Sunday or Saturday night I could get in that race car and I could be Richard Petty. Any other time I was just with the crowd but (in the car) you're an individual, doing your own thing; you try to run fast but if you don't then you try to do the best you can.

"But you're in that car and you just became a part of the car. The hobby deal was that it got me away from the telephone, all the bills I need to be paying, whatever it was. I can completely concentrate on nothing except what I want to do. That was the good part."

It was a family affair from the very beginning, with father Lee competing in the very first NASCAR-sanctioned "Strickly Stock" event in Charlotte, NC in 1949. Strickly Stock was the forerunner to what's known today as the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series. And a Petty has been involved every year since.



1967-PETTY ARCHIVE PHOTO

Lee Petty went on to become NASCAR's first three-time champion. When he was injured in a crash at Daytona in 1961, an incident that eventually led to his retirement from driving, Richard was already beginning to carve out his own racing career.