

Stewart Receives 2013 NMPA Myers Brothers Award

Dale Earnhardt Jr. Named Most Popular Driver For 11th Consecutive Season



**TONY WAS HONORED FOR TAKING
NASCAR BACK TO IT'S ROOTS**

NASCAR Sprint Cup Series™ driver Tony Stewart's reaction to being named recipient of the 2013 NMPA Myers Brothers Award was emotional and heartfelt.

"This is crazy," said the three-time NASCAR Sprint Cup champion. "What an honor. It's very humbling."

Stewart was honored by the National Motor Sports Press Association (NMPA) during Thursday's annual NASCAR NMPA Myers Brothers Awards Luncheon at Wynn Las Vegas for a variety of reasons – as a fierce competitor, championship team owner and race track promoter.

"But he's also helped others on many occasions; quietly and without recognition," said NMPA President Kenny Bruce. "The stories of our winner's

big heart have gotten around; much to his dismay, I'm sure. Trust me, they're endless."

Bruce's introductory remarks were echoed by master of ceremonies and FOX Sports broadcaster Mike Joy. "What he does for the sport makes him one of a kind."

The NMPA Myers Brothers Award is presented in the names of pioneer NASCAR competitors Billy and Bobby Myers. Past recipients are a virtual who's-who of the industry – drivers, owners, track operators, sponsors and members of the media – and include nearly every current member of the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

Stewart was cited for a longtime body of work – and specifically for his role in taking NASCAR back to its roots. He and his staff at Eldora Speedway in Rossburg, Ohio, produced the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series "Mudsummer Classic," the sanctioning body's first national points competition on a dirt surface in more than four decades.

"I'd always joked around that having a dirt race on the schedule would be really great," Stewart said.

Stewart, however, prefers to credit others – specifically NASCAR Senior Vice President of Racing Operations Steve O'Donnell and Eldora Speedway manager Roger Slack – for the ultimate success of the "Mudsummer Classic."

Stewart's 2013 season was cut short by a broken leg suffered in a sprint car accident in early August. He crossed the stage on Thursday without the aid of crutches to accept his award and should be ready to battle for his

fourth NASCAR Sprint Cup title when the 2014 season opens with February's Daytona 500.

"It was hard sitting on the sidelines watching," he said addressing his 13 fellow drivers who competed in the Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup™. "It's given me a different perspective."

Dale Earnhardt Jr. was named the NMPA NASCAR Most Popular Driver in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series for a record, 11th consecutive season. He matched Bill Elliott's mark a year ago although the 1988 NASCAR Sprint Cup champion continues to hold the overall record of 16.

Earnhardt said many things motivate a driver to compete at a high level.

"None impacts us more than the fans," he said. "This year we feel like we were giving them a lot to cheer for on the race track and paying them back for all the years they've voted for us to win this award."

In the end, more than one million



**DALE JR IS A FAN FAVORITE FOR
THE 11TH YEAR IN A ROW**

votes were tallied for 39 eligible drivers with Earnhardt collecting in excess of 700,000.

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