

Galaxie Takes Ned Jarrett To Ford's First NASCAR Sprint Cup Championship 50 Years Ago

This season marks the 50th anniversary of Ford's first NASCAR Sprint Cup Series championship, which was won by Ned Jarrett in 1965. Galaxie dominated the 1965 season with Jarrett posting a first, second or third-place finish in 36 of the 54 races in which he competed.

Ned Jarrett made a living out of being first and that's still the case today even though it's been almost five decades since he climbed inside a stock car.

He ranks first on the all-time Ford NASCAR Sprint Cup Series win list with 43 and made history by becoming the first champion in company history when he won the 1965 championship driving for owner Bondy Long.

To commemorate the 50-year anniversary of that accomplishment, Ford Performance has produced a three-part video series which highlights that season. This first installment looks at the car that took Jarrett to 13 wins and nine poles in 1965 – the Ford Galaxie.

"It really doesn't seem like 50 years ago. It's hard to believe that much time has gone by," said Jarrett, who won 50 career races in what was then known as



NASCAR's Grand National Division. "So much has happened in the sport and so much has happened in the automotive industry since then, but that 1965 Ford was a very special one. It dominated the sport that year and we were able to pull off the championship. It was a very, very special car.

"I think the balance on the car was one thing that helped make it a good race car and of course it was the first year Ford put coil springs on the rear," continued Jarrett. "Up until then we had been using leaf springs because that's what was on the cars when they came from the factory, and the rules in those days was that you had to run whatever came with the car from the factory."

The 1965 season saw Jarrett compete in 54 races and the blue No. 11 was a familiar sight at the front of the field as evidenced by it finishing first, second or third in 36 of those events.

"The number 11, I sort of inherited it, so I just kept the number on it," recalled Jarrett, who retired from driving after the 1966 season. "It was very easy for me, at least from a cost standpoint, because we didn't have a lot of money back in those days and we tried to cut costs every way you possibly could. It was easy just to make two marks on there and you had an 11 as opposed to having to design some number, so we kept it and it became something very special to us."

- Dan Zacharias / Ford Performance



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