



The Great American Gamble: How the 1979 Daytona 500 Gave Birth to a NASCAR Nation

Joe Menzer

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One of NASCAR's greatest stories is brought to life in this meticulous, highly entertaining replay of the day that changed everything for the sport.

—Lars Anderson, *Sports Illustrated*

""Joe Menzer has done an excellent job in telling the story of one of NASCAR's most important races, a tale that includes the vibrant stories of the cast of characters who participated.""

—Mike Hembree, NASCAR Scene

""A magnificent book, one that should be in the library of every diehard race fan.""

—Jerry Bonkowski, National NASCAR columnist, Yahoo! Sports and on-air personality, Sirius NASCAR Radio

It could so easily have been a disaster . . .

Everyone knew it, from CBS executives and owners of local CBS affiliates to NASCAR founder Big Bill French to driver and NASCAR booster Darrell Waltrip. If anything went wrong with the first-ever live, start-to-finish broadcast of America's premier stock car race, a lot of people were going to lose a lot of money. It would also be the last-ever live broadcast of a NASCAR event. *The Great American Gamble* tells the gripping tale of the event that instead made NASCAR the multibillion dollar powerhouse it is today: the 1979 Daytona 500.

Based on new interviews with all the major drivers in the race and others involved, including Richard Petty, crew chief Dale Inman and Kyle Petty, Bobby Allison and Donnie Allison, Cale Yarborough, Benny Parsons, Junior Johnson, Buddy Baker, Darrell Waltrip, A. J. Foyt, Ned Jarrett, Humpy Wheeler, Ken Squier, Richard Childress, Jim Hunter, David Pearson, Doug Rice, Ricky Rudd, Geoffrey Bodine, Sterling Marlin, Marvin Panch, Leonard Wood, Eddie Wood, Larry McClure, and Michael Waltrip, this is the ultimate, high-octane account of the most important race in NASCAR history.

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