

Hunter Stewart Crowned Summer Shootout Champion

Never Giving up Pays Off for Rookie Driver

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Concord, NC –

As America's most prestigious grassroots Legend Car and Bandolero racing series came to a close, seven first-time division champions entered the history books with the conclusion of the 18th annual Summer Shootout Series at Charlotte Motor Speedway. Piloting the #16 Ruston Racing Development owned Racing 2 Cure sponsored car, 11-year-old, Hunter Stewart, of Mooresville (NC), made up for a rough night of racing in the Round Nine race by leading every lap of the Bandolero Beginner Bandits main event en route to his third season victory and his first division title, all as a rookie.



Hunter Stewart Hoisting the Championship Trophy

Stewart entered the final race five-points behind leader Austin Powell after giving up a 21-point lead the previous night from an incident that left Stewart's car heavily damaged. Under immense pressure Stewart's never give up attitude got the job done. He set the fast qualifying time of the night, won the heat race and led every lap of the main event finale. Powell was able to work his way up to the sixth position, but that was not enough to hold his pre-event point lead. After battling closely all season with Powell the night belonged to Stewart as he took the checkered flag and sealed the Championship.



As a Rookie, Stewart visited Victory Lane 3 Times in the 10 Race Series

For Stewart winning races and a championship is a dream come true. But just being able to race is something that a few months ago he thought wasn't possible. Stewart drives for Racing 2 Cure, a 501(c)3 Non-Profit organization inspired by him and legally started by his parents. Racing 2 Cure began when Hunter was racing off-road trucks back in Southern California. His Mom (Alycia) was diagnosed with Cancer during that time. Hunter began raising money through his racing, which eventually inspired his parents to formalize the effort into Racing 2 Cure (R2C). After a move from California to North Carolina and a second bout with Cancer for Stewart's mom, racing was placed on hold, so the family could focus on getting Mom well and focus all their time and resources into Racing 2 Cure.

Hunter accepted that he would have to step away from racing for a while and maybe forever. He progressed with other sports such as football and baseball. Just as racing was seemingly going to be something of the past another family stepped in and put Stewart back on track. After meeting female race car driver Kenzie Ruston and her father Darren Ruston they decided that Stewart had both the talent and determination and offered him a ride in a Bandolero with their team Ruston Racing Development. Hunter now refers to his team owner as "Uncle Darren" and for many reasons bringing a championship to both his race team and his family has significant on and off track meaning.

Post race quotes:

"When we started racing these cars a few months ago I had never been on pavement before and I was pretty nervous that first race," said Stewart. "I've had to learn quickly and it hasn't been easy. There are a lot of great drivers

in my class. It is really hard to win and a lot of things can go wrong. Like last night we got into a crash and we worked really hard to get the car fixed for the final race. But as my dad says you can just never give up no matter what and now tonight we won the race and won the championship. We never gave up and now we are the champions.”

“I would like to thank "Uncle Darren" for letting me drive his car, Kenzie [Ruston], John [Bowen] and all of the RRD team,” said Stewart in his post race interview. “I especially want to thank Kevin [Caldwell] for helping us build and fix our car and always giving us help this year. He is not here for us but for his daughter Ashley [Caldwell], but he always helps us out when we ask.”

“I didn’t even have a good race suit when we started and we couldn’t afford a new one, but Don [Stodola] helped us with all this G-Force safety gear,” added Stewart. “So many people helped me out and most of all I want to thank my mom and dad and my sister Brooke for coming to every race and helping so much.”

When asked what he will do with the Championship trophy? “That is for my Mom.”

For more on Hunter Stewart or Racing 2 Cure visit: www.Racing2Cure.org



Hunter Stewart with runner up Austin Powell. Both battled all year and were true sportsman on and off the track.