**Definition:** NASCAR from *Dictionary of Sports and Games Terminology*

(auto racing) a form of stock car racing in specially modified cars [acronym of National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing]

Summary Article: NASCAR

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing), organization that sanctions American stock-car races, est. 1948. It held its first race in Daytona Beach, Fla., in 1948 and began its first and most important series of races (known as the Grand National Division from 1950, the Winston Cup Series from 1971, and the Nextel Cup Series from 2005, and the Sprint Cup Series since 2008) in Charlotte, N.C., in 1949. Other major NASCAR events include the Nationwide and Camping World Truck series. Stock cars are standard production passenger vehicles modified in various ways to be faster—they often exceed 200 mph/320 kph—and more powerful than regulation assembly-line automobiles. Typical modifications include larger engines and specialized suspensions, chassis, brakes, and safety equipment. Today NASCAR sanctions more than 1,500 races throughout the country and several in Canada and Mexico. The majority are concentrated in the SE United States and held on paved oval tracks, and the most important are sponsored by major corporations. The largest and most prestigious NASCAR race is the Daytona 500, a 500-mi/805-km Florida race that was first held in 1959 and 20 years later was the first to be nationally televised; it now attracts more than 200,000 fans and is widely covered by the media. As stock-car racing evolved to become one of the nation's most popular spectator sports, a number of drivers emerged as NASCAR heroes, among them Richard Petty, Cale Yarborough, Bobby Allison, Bill Elliott, Darrell Waltrip, and Dale Earnhardt.

See Golenbock, P., American Zoom (1993) and The Last Lap (2001);
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Hagstrom, R. G. Jr. The NASCAR Way (2001);
Menzer, J., The Wildest Ride (2001);
G. Fielden; P. Golenbock, The NASCAR Encyclopedia (2003);
MacGregor, J., Sunday Money (2005);
Thompson, N., Driving with the Devil (2007);
Pierce, D. S., NASCAR (2010).

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