



*Iconic car returns to site of Earnhardt's last victory to commemorate racing icon's enduring legacy*



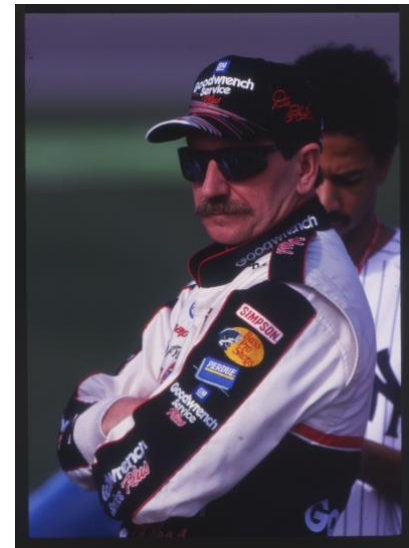
*Three friends united by their special bond forged through the sport of racing and their shared love of the great outdoors: Richard Childress, Johnny Morris and Dale Earnhardt*

**TALLADEGA, Ala.** – Racing fans around the world will pay tribute to the memory and legacy of Dale Earnhardt Sr. this weekend, with Bass Pro Shops founder and noted conservationist Johnny Morris set to ride alongside racing legend Richard Childress driving the last racecar Dale Earnhardt Sr. piloted to victory. The No. 3 returns to that same track – Talladega Superspeedway – where Childress and Morris will drive the ceremonial pace car for the NASCAR Cup Series Talladega 500 playoff race on Sunday, October 13.

Sunday's race marks the first time the iconic black and red No. 3 car will be taken out of the Richard Childress Racing (RCR) Museum in Welcome, North Carolina, still equipped with the

same engine Earnhardt used to secure his final victory in 2000 before his tragic passing in 2001.

“Dale Earnhardt was a true champion, not only in racing but also in life. As a fan and later as a close friend, I came to deeply respect Dale’s passion and enduring spirit, which will undoubtedly be with us this Sunday,” said Morris, an avid racing fan. “I’m deeply humbled and darn excited to be joining my good friend and conservation partner Richard Childress at such a legendary place inside The Intimidator’s No. 3. This will be a moment I cherish for the rest of my life. I am truly grateful to my friend Richard for this special opportunity, and congratulate him and his wife Judy on their milestone 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of RCR.”



*The Intimidator*

### **A friendship rooted in a shared love of the outdoors**

The connection between Morris, Childress and Earnhardt dates back more than 20 years and is rooted in a shared love for racing and the outdoors. Morris and Bass Pro Shops got their start with NASCAR in 1998 by sponsoring Earnhardt’s No. 3 with RCR for the All-Star Race. The trio quickly bonded over their passion for hunting and fishing, which inspired an idea to help advance conservation. Capitalizing on the popularity of Bass Pro Shops and one of NASCAR’s most revered drivers, the group released a collection of co-branded merchandise benefitting conservation. The collection of t-shirts, die cast cars, mugs, lures and knives amazed NASCAR officials when it raised more than \$10 million in just 30 days, with 100 percent of profits donated to conservation initiatives.

In the years that followed, the friends would enjoy time together on numerous hunting and fishing trips which served as a temporary respite from the high-stakes game of racing. A noted conservationist, Morris continues to connect his dual passions of racing and the outdoors together. In 22 seasons as a NASCAR sponsor, Morris and Bass Pro Shops have donated space on its racecars each year to promote leading conservation organizations including Ducks Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation and the Quality Deer Management Association, showcasing the not-for-profit groups to tens of millions of fans.

Morris and Childress continue to partner together on critical conservation projects today. The two are both active with the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation and the Boone and Crockett Club. Childress was also an honored guest at the grand opening of Johnny Morris’ Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri, which included more than four hundred of the nation’s leading conservationists.



*Dale Earnhardt presents Megan Morris, daughter of Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris, with his 1999 championship trophy, now on display at the company’s motorsports museum in Springfield, Mo.*

### **Full-circle at Talladega**

Richard Childress’ own racing career began at Talladega in 1969 when he competed in the inaugural NASCAR Grand National race. The next day, following a boycott by dozens of Cup Series drivers including Richard Petty over safety concerns due to high speeds from the track’s extreme design, Childress was asked



Richard Childress with his original No. 3 race car in 1980.



John Paul Morris, Dale Earnhardt and Johnny Morris celebrating in Victory Lane at Talladega.

by Talladega Superspeedway founder and former NASCAR president Bill France to race in the first Talladega 500. The fearless Childress took the money he earned from that memorable race to purchase a piece of land and open a garage, which ultimately became RCR, one of the most prominent teams in all of professional racing. The opportunity to honor Dale and his Talladega victory is part of RCR's 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Earnhardt, affectionately known as The Intimidator, won his last career race at Talladega in 2000, edging out Kenny Wallace by 0.119 second. 10 of Earnhardt's 76 career wins came at Talladega Superspeedway. As a team owner, Childress has won 12 races at Talladega, nine of which came with Earnhardt Sr. behind the wheel.

Following Earnhardt's victory at Talladega in October 1999, Childress awarded the team's championship trophy to Morris, which is now on display inside the Bass Pro Shops Motorsports Museum at the company's National Headquarters in Springfield, Missouri. The free gallery also features the No. 3 Chevy Earnhardt piloted to his first and only checkered flag at The Great American Race – the Daytona 500. Childress and Earnhardt are also featured in the *Racing for Conservation* exhibit inside the Motorsports Museum.

**Fans can watch Morris and Childress salute their friend and racing legend Dale Earnhardt by tuning in this Sunday, October 13 at 1 p.m. CST on NBC.**



## **About Bass Pro Shops**

Bass Pro Shops is North America's premier outdoor and conservation company. Founded in 1972 when avid young angler Johnny Morris began selling tackle out of his father's liquor store in Springfield, Missouri, today the company provides customers with unmatched offerings spanning premier destination retail, outdoor equipment manufacturing, world-class resort destinations and more. In 2017 Bass Pro Shops acquired Cabela's to create a "best-of-the-best" experience with superior products, dynamic locations and outstanding customer service. Bass Pro Shops also operates White River Marine Group, offering an unsurpassed collection of industry-leading boat brands, and Big Cedar Lodge, America's Premier Wilderness Resort. Under the visionary conservation leadership of Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops is a national leader in protecting habitat and introducing families to the outdoors and has been named by Forbes as "one of America's Best Employers."