



## Tim Richmond: The Fast Life and Remarkable Times of NASCAR's Top Gun

*David Poole*

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Tim Richmond was, fellow NASCAR driver Kyle Petty said, "a stranger in time." In one regard, the flashy, flamboyant driver from Ashland, Ohio, was years ahead of the trends in a sport that would soon enjoy explosive growth in popularity. Women who were NASCAR fans loved him—and so did their husbands and boyfriends. Richmond believed he could use his stardom in racing as a springboard to a second career as an actor, and he had the Hollywood good looks to make that a realistic dream. At the same time, Richmond was also a throwback. He pushed his race cars hard, too hard at times, driving every lap like he was hauling moonshine through the mountains of the Carolinas with a revenuer on his rear bumper. Those who saw him drive still compare him to veterans like Curtis Turner and Joe Weatherly, who ran as hard off the track as they did off of it. In the early 1980s, however, Richmond stood out. He was not from the South; he had not grown up slinging a stock car through the dirt on red-clay ovals. He had, in fact, never raced at all until he was twenty-one. And just ten years later, after making a splash in the Indianapolis 500 as a rookie, he was emerging as one of the brightest stars and greatest talents in NASCAR's Winston Cup Series.

Richmond's star was bright, but its light went out too soon. As he neared stock car racing's zenith, Richmond's life took a tragic turn. A man who thrived on the affection he felt from those who enjoyed watching him compete spent his final months almost completely shut off from that world. *Tim Richmond: The Fast Life and Remarkable Times of NASCAR's Top Gun* tells the memorable story of a born racer and how he raced headlong through life with the throttle wide open and his wheels burning rubber at almost every turn.



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