



by Tim Kennedy &
Newton "Buzz" Rose

Colby Scroggin

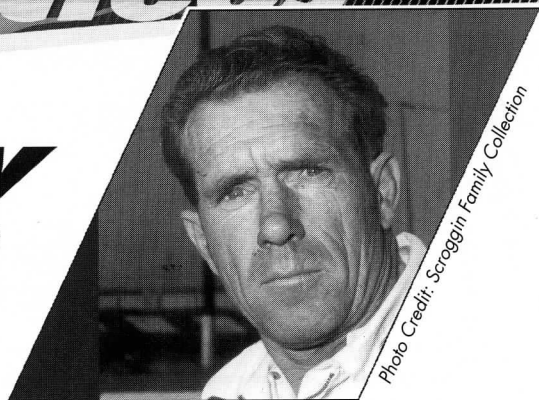


Photo Credit: Scroggin Family Collection

Colby Dean Scroggin was born on February 17, 1925, in Mount Pulaski, Illinois, to parents Oscar Newton and Minnie Ellen Tribbett Scroggin. At an early age, Colby's family, including Oscar's brothers and fellow milk salesmen Vernal and John, moved to Glendale, California. In 1928 Colby and his sister Wanda Lea were joined by another sister, Anona Jane. By 1935 City of Industry was their home.

Colby began his driving career in 1946 racing jalopies, and he advanced through the California Roadster Association (CRA) hot rods to the renamed (in 1955) California Racing Association (CRA) sprint cars. The roaring roadsters were gaining popularity post-war in southern and central California at tracks like Huntington Beach, Bonelli Stadium in Saugus, Bakersfield Speed Bowl, Balboa Stadium in San Diego, Carrell Speedway in Gardena, Culver City Speedway, Fresno Airport Speedway, Rocky Hill Speedway in Porterville, and the Orange Show Stadium in San Bernardino.

In late 1947 Colby broke into victory lane with roadster wins at Orange Show, Huntington Beach (thrice), and Bonelli. All of his wins came aboard the Vince Duarte Ford-powered hot rod.

In May of 1949 Colby even raced with the St. Louis Hot Rod Association in Chicago, Illinois, against such drivers as fellow southern California racers Stan Kross and Dick Rathmann, "Junior" Hower of Kansas City, Dorsey Schroeder of St. Louis, and others. He finished nineteenth in CRA points in '49 aboard the Green Brothers hot rod.

In 1951 Colby added three more roadster wins at San Diego, Orange Show and Culver City. These wins occurred in the Bruce Robinson Mercury, the Vince Duarte Ford, and the Sunset Auto Mercury, respectively. He finished third in the '51 CRA point standings in the Bill Phegley machine behind champion Bob Denny and runner-up Bob Chaplin.

The next season Scroggin claimed three more wins at Carrell and Culver City (twice). His 1952 wins came aboard the Menveg Daigh Ardun-Mercury, the Bob McCloud Ardun-Mercury, and the Lester Robinson Mercury, respectively. He finished fourth in the '52 CRA point standings in the Bob West machine behind Harry Stockman, Nick Valenta, and Bob Chaplin, respectively. Chuck Hulse and Walt James finished fifth and sixth in points that year, respectively.

In 1953 he took four more roadster wins at Carrell (twice), Culver City and Porterville. His cars were the Sunset Auto Mercury (thrice) and Bob Moore Mercury (once). He finished fourth in the '53 CRA point standings in the Warren Wickham machine behind Nick Valenta, Bob Chaplin, and Howard Gardner respectively.

1962 was Colby Scroggin's year in CRA competition, though, as he won ten main events and the point championship aboard the Kenny Worth Chevy-powered sprint car.

In 1956 Colby Scroggin finished 22nd in CRA points aboard the Marvin LeBlanc roadster. Amongst those in the "top 48" in points were champion Art Bisch, Roger McCluskey (3), Granvel "Hank" Henry (7), Chuck Hulse (15), Jim Hurtubise (23), and Parnelli Jones (48).

Colby was a little bit unusual in that he took time off each CRA sprint car season in order to compete for five to seven weeks on the tough International Motor Contest Association (IMCA) circuit, which consisted primarily of county and state fairgrounds tracks. He did this from 1957 through 1962.

In 1957 he won his first two California Racing Association (CRA) mains, once in the Sunset Auto Supply-sponsored Mercury at El Centro and the other in the Don Blair-owned DeSoto at the Gardena Stadium. One year later he took his third triumph, again at Gardena Stadium in the Blair DeSoto, and he finished ninth in CRA points. He also finished seventh in IMCA points, with 1958 wins at Kansas State Fairgrounds (twice) and Muskogee, Oklahoma. In '59, he went winless and finished twelfth in both CRA and IMCA points, respectively.

1960 saw Colby Scroggin run Kenny Worth's Chevy-powered sprint car primarily and Don Blair's Offy-powered sprinter secondarily. It was in Blair's car, though, that he won a late-season 100-lapper at Ascot Park. He also finished third in CRA points behind champion Don Davis and runner-up Danny "Termite" Jones.

Colby piloted Blair's Offy primarily in 1961, but he also started two mains in Ted Wyrozumski's Chevy-powered sprint car. That season, he won once at El Centro and once at Ascot, both in the Blair machine, and he finished seventh in CRA points. He also won in IMCA competition at Shreveport, Louisiana, and finished thirteenth in their points.

1962 was Colby Scroggin's year in CRA competition, though, as he won ten main events and the point championship aboard the Kenny Worth Chevy-powered sprint car. His wins came at El Centro, Ascot Park (five times), Clovis (thrice) and at Manzanita in Phoenix. All of his wins came aboard the Worth machine, although he started one main in Don Blair's Offy. In IMCA, Colby won three times, twice at Des Moines and once at West Union, Iowa. He finished ninth in IMCA points. Colby also started two United States Auto Club (USAC) main events in '62, and he finished fourth in both shows at Ascot Park. He also ran once with the USAC midget car division that year and twice on the USAC Indy Car Championship Trail. The driver racing out of Eagle Rock finished twelfth and fourteenth, respectively, at Sacramento and Phoenix.

Colby raced all of 1963 with USAC

in the Indy Car Series and finished 27th in final points. He ran in four of twelve races, with his best finish being eighth. He finished 13th in the season opener at Trenton driving the Ward Machine Offy. He had the No. 46 Ebb Rose roadster for his '63 Indianapolis 500 rookie driving test. Mechanical problems during the 135 mph phase of his driver's test prevented him from qualifying. Colby finished eighth in the Milwaukee 100 driving the No. 46 Racing Associates car. He finished 17th in the Indy Fairgrounds Hoosier 100 in the Konstant Hot Offy. He finished 17th in the Phoenix 100 in the Ward Machine Offy. In USAC national sprints, he raced in three of 22 races, finishing 41st in points, with a best finish of seventh. In USAC national midget cars, he ran 15 of 51 races and finished 31st in points, with ten "top ten" finishes to his credit.

In 1964 Colby retired from racing to run a deer-hunting preserve and dude ranch in Ruth, Calif., near Oregon.

In 1968, at age 42, he came out of retirement to make a strong comeback in CRA competition. Colby built fiberglass speedboats near San Gabriel and raced the No. 84 Pratt & Bartley Chevy from El Monte. The car was a 1965 Granvel "Hank" Henry-built chassis. Colby finished 11th in the final 1968 CRA point standings, despite racing in only 23 of the 33 events.

In 1969, he raced out of Sepulveda, Calif., and finished fifth in CRA points. He raced the Don Peabody and Knox & Hill Chevis. In 1970, Colby raced with CRA briefly. He did not race in 1971.

Colby Scroggin returned at the age of 47 in 1972 for his final race. Colby then returned to running his deer-hunting preserve/dude ranch full-time in Ruth. He retained his interest in sprint car racing and, at age 50, was hired by the CRA board to be the CRA official starter in 1975-76; he handled the job well.

Colby Scroggin was married multiple times, to Iris (Cutter-Bird), Joette (King-Robinson), and Kay (Gollighugh-Fikes). He and Iris had one son, Colby Dean Scroggin, Jr., who passed away in 1999.

Colby Dean Scroggin died on December 9, 1992, in San Diego. His record with CRA stood at six Fast Qualifying times, seven Trophy Dash wins, sixteen Main Event victories, and one season point championship (1962). He also had eleven Main Event victories to his credit in IMCA.

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