

PHOTO CREDIT: MAX DOLDER

dale Blaney

by Doug Kennedy & Tom Schmeh

Dale Blaney was born on January 30, 1964, the youngest son of Lewis G. "Lou" and Kate Keir Blaney. He had one brother, Dave, and they lived in Hartford, Ohio, next to Blaney Lumber Company and just two miles from the historic Sharon Speedway.

Dale, who stands 6'4" tall and weighs 185 pounds, was a two-time first-team All-State selection at the Class 'A' (Rev. Joseph) Badger High School in Kinsman, Ohio. The shooting guard was recruited by assistant coach Gary McPherson and played with distinction at West Virginia University, 1983-86, while he was earning his Bachelor's degree to allow him to teach Physical Education.

At coach W. Gale Catlett's WVU in Morgantown, he was a four-year starter for Mountaineer teams that went to the NCAA tournament three times and the NIT tourney once. He averaged 14 points per game during his four years, and 17 points per game as a senior.

Twice during Blaney's career, West Virginia won the Atlantic-10 tournament. As a senior, he was named to the Atlantic-10's First-Team and he also received recognition as an honorable mention All-American.

Dale was drafted in the fourth round by the Los Angeles Lakers of the National Basketball Association (NBA) in 1986. The Lakers were then overseen by general manager Jerry West, himself a former Mountaineer. On the final day of training camp in Palm Springs, California, Blaney approached the coaching staff with what head coach Pat Riley termed a 'revelation.' Dale wanted to go back home and become a race car driver, following in the footsteps of his father Lou, the 1966 Williams Grove National Open winner, and his brother Dave.

Assistant coach Bill Bertka called it an NBA first. "In all my years in basketball, I've heard every possible reason for giving up. But I

never heard of anyone quitting to race stock cars."

Well, actually, Dale Blaney 'gave up' because it had 'stopped being fun,' in favor of eventually driving sprint cars.

But before Dale got in a sprint car, he did play one season for the championship-winning Tampa Bay-turned-Rapid City Thrillers of the Continental Basketball Association (CBA). The following year, he played some exhibition games for the NBA's Washington Bullets. But, while playing for West Virginia's Charleston Gunners of the CBA, he blew out his right knee. One year of rehabilitation later, he blew out his left knee while playing for the Youngstown Pride of the World Basketball League (WBL).

In the spring of 1990, at age 26, Dale Blaney landed a sprint car ride with Denny Stockdale, winning two features at Sharon Speedway and being named the National Sprint Car Poll's Rookie of the Year. The kid that went right from driving go-karts for fun to racing sprint cars for money won six more features in 1991 and Don Martin's Lernerville Speedway track championship.

According to Dale, "You can teach somebody to be a good basketball player, but you can't teach him to be a great player. You can teach somebody to be a good race car driver, but you can't teach him to be like Steve Kinser or Sammy Swindell. Everybody in the NBA is a great player. They were born to be there, just like Steve and Sammy were born to be what they are. Maybe I was born to be both."

Dale continued to race locally in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania in 1992, at tracks like Sharon, Mercer and Lernerville. He did win the 1992 Knoxville Nationals Rookie of the Year honors, though. Afterwards, he drove for World of Outlaws (WoO) car owner Tom Wimmer through the Manzanita Winter Series in Phoenix, Arizona. In '93, he was without a full-time sprint car ride, but he did drive his father Lou's modified stock car just to stay sharp.

In 1994, Dale Blaney joined Dean and D.J. Lindsey's number 2d team. With the Lindsey brothers, Dale won five times with Bert Emick's

All Star Circuit of Champions (ASCoC). He shared the ASCoC Rookie of the Year title with Tim Shaffer in '94 after finishing fourth in points behind champion Frankie Kerr, runner-up Kevin "Pup" Huntley and Joey Saldana, respectively.

After that season, Dale joined car owner Tim Hughes and his Hughes Wheel & Axle number 94 team. It was with this team that Dale won 29 All Star wins (12, 17) and back-to-back ASCoC point championships in 1995 and '96, winning both titles over Frankie Kerr. 1995 was also the year that brother Dave Blaney won Ted Johnson's WoO point championship.

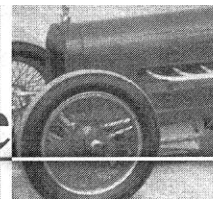
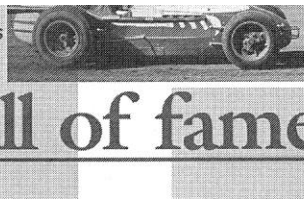
In 1997, Dale finished fifth in ASCoC points after winning just three more ASCoC races. It was the year that Hughes Motorsports' crew chief Davey Brown, Jr., lost his life. According to Dale, "He was as good a mechanic as I'm ever gonna be around."

After winning the 1997 Knoxville Nationals, Dave Blaney left his own (Keith) Hylton-(Dave) Blaney Motorsports Vivarin-sponsored number 10 sprint car ride for NASCAR stock cars. It seemed only right that brother Dale Blaney would take the seat of that Kenny Woodruff-wrenched ride in '98, only it would be painted as the Amoco number 93.

The highlight of the '98 season was parking the Amoco number 93 in victory lane at the \$100,000-to-win Historical Big One at Earl Baltes' Eldora Speedway that August. He was also the '98 WoO Rookie of the Year and finished tenth in points.

In April of 1999, Dale left his brother's team. He raced for Tim Hughes and "Junior" Holbrook, until Kevin Gobrecht was tragically killed in his brother's car. At that time, Dale got back in it with friend D.J. Lindsey as his mechanic, along with help from Gene Jenkins. Dale finished fourteenth in WoO points.

In year 2000, Dale Blaney won the seventeenth annual WoO-sanctioned Kings Royal championship at the Eldora Speedway in the Amoco number 93 machine. He was seventh in WoO points, with two A-main wins, behind champion Steve Kinser, runner-up Sammy Swindell, Mark Kinser, Danny Lasoski, Stevie Smith and Joey Saldana, respectively.



national sprint car hall of fame

DALE BLANEY

continued from page 6.

One year later, Amoco was gone, as was Jenkins. He finished fifteenth in WoO points with one WoO win to his credit. He also had won All Star win. By year end of 2001, NASCAR driver Dave Blaney sold his sprint car team and purchased the Sharon Speedway in Hartford, Ohio, with his dad Lou, Bill and Ron Kirila, and Jim Weller.

In 2002, Dale Blaney was working at his family's dirt track, doing everything from promoting races to driving the water truck. He also raced locally with car owner "Fritz" Andrews and mechanic George Fisher aboard the red car number 72. He had two All Star wins in 2002, four in '03, and a series-leading seven wins in '04 (but only fourteenth in points).

It wasn't until 2005 that Dale Blaney placed in the top ten of the ASCoC standings, this time in third place behind champion Chad Kemenah and runner-up Danny Smith. He drove for both Jack Elden and George Fisher, and had help from Tom and "Fritz" Andrews. He earned one ASCoC win.

In 2006 and '07, Dale Blaney did not race regularly with the All Stars, but he did win the most ASCoC races those two years combined (two and five, respectively). He placed eighth in the 2006 points and retired from his promotional work at Sharon Speedway at the end of the season.

But, in '08, he won his third ASCoC point championship in the George Fisher-owned, Charlie Fisher-powered, unsponsored red number 2 sprint car with nine wins. It should be noted that Sarah Fisher's father, Dave, is the third Fisher brother.

Ti22 Performance, with its GF-1 chassis, has long sponsored and supported 'the Low Rider' Dale Blaney. In 2009 and '10, he had four All Star wins each season. On July 14, 2010, Dale won the WoO-sanctioned Brad Doty Classic at Limaland Motorsports Park in Lima, Ohio. He had won it previously (1996) when it was an All Star-sanctioned race at Attica, Ohio.

In 2011, Dale scored eight All Star victories. In '12, Tim Shaffer edged nine-time race winner Dale Blaney for the ASCoC point championship.

Dale Blaney went into 2013 with 93 career All Star wins and was looking to over-take fellow Ohioan Kenny Jacobs, who had recorded 98 series wins in his career. Blaney and long-time crew chief George

Fisher would garner six All Star wins, including one at Attica on the same night as brother Dave won at Port Royal, Pennsylvania. Blaney would also record his fourth career All Star championship (and the All Star Circuit's Ohio Region title).

The 2014 season would be Blaney's best in terms of total wins. Dale would record 16 career All Star wins to run his career total to an outstanding 115. Blaney would also become the first five-time All Star champion in the series long and storied history (and win the sanction's Ohio Region title).

At the beginning of 2015, Dale Blaney and crew chief George Fisher teamed up with Tod Quiring's Mainstream Holdings (Big Game Treestands, Muddy) and CH Motorsports (Aaron Call, Janet Holbrook). In July of 2015, Dale Blaney won the WoO-sanctioned Don Martin Memorial Silver Cup at Lernerville Speedway aboard the Muddy-sponsored number 1B machine. He also won twelve ASCoC features in '15 en route to his sixth overall title in the All Star Circuit of Champions, now owned by Tony Stewart.

As of today (June 4, 2016, at 12 Noon), Arctic Cat ASCoC point leader Dale Blaney in his Muddy number 1 machine has already won thrice this season and has recorded an incredible 130 career ASCoC feature wins. He is trailed by Kenny Jacobs (98), Joey Saldana (71), Jack Hewitt (56), Tim Shaffer (56), Frankie Kerr (53) and Dave Blaney (47), respectively.

He also has eleven WoO main event wins to his credit. Dale has won the ASCoC Ohio Sprint Speedweek title in 1995, 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2014.

In January of 2016, Dale Blaney won in the open-competition Winter Heat Sprint Car Showdown at the Cocopah Speedway near Yuma, Arizona, marking the 27th consecutive year that he has at least one sprint car feature victory to his credit.

Dale Blaney, the two-time WVU basketball captain who was inducted into the West Virginia University Sports Hall of Fame in 2013, lives in Fowler, Ohio, and has two daughters, Leah (studying at WVU) and Ashley. He also enjoys following the career of his brother Dave's son, Ryan, in NASCAR stock car racing.

The three basketball-playing Blaney's from Hartford, Ohio, have now all been inducted into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame: father Lou (2013), oldest son Dave (2014) and youngest son Dale (2016).

**Congratulations
To All Inductees!**



MACHINE AND TOOL
www.EnglerMachine.com

**CONGRATULATIONS
GUS LINDER ON YOUR
INDUCTION TO THE
SPRINT CAR HALL
OF FAME!**

Ed Lynch Jr. & Ed Lynch Sr.