

## **BILL LEESCH**

Bill Leesch's 40 years of involvement in auto racing began in 1958 when his coworker at Terrace Park Dairy, and Huset's Hall of Famer Earl Thomas, talked him into building a race car. Once the car was ready, the pair took it to Huset's, which was the first time Leesch ever saw a race. Thomas and Leesch took turns driving the car for several years before Leesch decided that Thomas was the better driver and let him take over the driving duties full-time. Eventually, Leesch joined Huset's Hall of Famer Fred Buckmiller, and the two owned the red No. 5 with Thomas as the driver. Leesch continued as a car owner through 1975, with Thomas, Kenny Thompson and Terry Turbak doing the bulk of the driving chores in his familiar No. 1. Other drivers that drove for Leesch included Joe Volsch, Lowell Behrens, Marlo Jones, Duane Lund and Marlow Egge, among others. Leesch was a member of the track's board of directors and as the secretary/treasurer, vicepresident and eventual president of the Sioux Falls Stock Car Association. He was the track manager at Huset's from 1984-1987, the last year the Association owned the track before selling it to Clarence Rubin. In 1984, Leesch and his wife Patty purchased Hartford Speedway in Hartford, South Dakota - renamed it Red Devil Speedway - and owned and managed it until 1997.