

MARLYN HANTEN

Never one to be satisfied with following the leader on or off the track, Marlyn Hanten was known as a true individual on the local racing scene. Hanten answered to no one in his racing organization as he was owner, car builder, engine builder and driver throughout his successful racing career which saw him accumulate numerous feature wins in the three-state area. His cars were known for their appearance and handling, a tribute to his many skills. One of those cars became one of the more well-remembered machines to ever compete at Huset's. In the late 1960s, when all cars in the modified class carried bodies of pre-war coupes or sedans, Hanten chose to mount a '66 Ford Mustang body atop his car's frame. The car caused a stir among officials, competitors and fans. While it didn't make his car any faster, it was Hanten doing what he enjoyed - being different. A racing accident in that car at Interlakes Speedway (now Lake County Speedway) in Madison, South Dakota in 1969 nearly cost Hanten his life. He suffered a broken neck and nearly drowned after his car flipped off the backstretch and landed upside-down in the nearby slough. But after seven weeks in the hospital and nearly a year off of work, Hanten returned to racing, and winning, again. Marlyn, who was also on the Huset's board of directors for 20 years, saw his 28-year career as a driver end in 1978 due to health reasons. He returned to racing with his son, Duane, as driver from 1980-1985. The pair also competed with a sprint car in the 1994-95 seasons.