

Gale Pifer

Gale Pifer grew up in a racing family. His father raced modified stock cars in the 1950s, and Gale was there from the start. When Huset's raced for the first time on May 23, 1954, Gale was in attendance.

But Gale's biggest contribution to racing was his camera and pen. Before auto racing became a regular staple on television, Gale ordered racing films to air on KSOO Television in Sioux Falls where he worked. His motorsports contributions at KSOO included interviews with local drivers like Huset's Hall of Famers Harold Petree (Class of 1999) and Marlyn Hanten (2006).

Gale was also a regular contributor to Chris Economaki's *National Speed Sport News*, as well as Iowa-based *Hawkeye Racing News*, where Gale once featured Huset's Speedway exclusively. He later formed a partnership with Huset's promoter and Hall-of-Famer Fred Buckmiller (1998). The partnership resulted in the promotion of both Huset's on Sunday nights, and the race track in Madison, which raced on Saturday.

For 20 years, Gale wrote a weekly racing column for the *Madison Daily Leader*. He also had racing articles published in the

Sioux Falls Argus Leader, Stock Car Racing Magazine, and many other national publications. He authored a book on the history of Lake County Speedway titled *"Thunder Over the Plains."*

He also was president of Interlakes Racing Association for many years and promoted and managed races at Interlakes Speedway south of Madison. During his tenure as president of the Interlakes Racing Association, he staged "Race Days" in Madison that included a parade of race cars led by the Madison High School Marching Band, go-kart racing on the streets of Madison and the selection of a Miss Lake County Speedway at the races that night.

He also established sponsorship-of-the-night at the races for Dakota State College and was the first to stage the 'Passing Pastor' race in which Madison church pastors competed against each other in stock cars. Church goers were surprised when many of the sermons included challenges to other pastors, including comments such as: "We Lutherans can whip the Baptists and Catholics any time." Churches also sold tickets to the races, retaining half of the sales money and purse money from the race itself.

Gale was always a staunch supporter of auto racing.