

Jerry Richert, Jr.

Jerry Richert, Jr., grew up in a racing family as his father, Jerry, began racing sprint cars nationally on the USAC and IMCA circuits. He began racing IMCA sprint cars in 1958 and was crowned national champion in 1964-65-66 and 68. In 1965, Richert started the season on the USAC tour but switched back to the IMCA midway through the summer, and still claimed the national championship.

Growing up in Forest Lake, Minn., Richert Jr., said he remembers spending time in the race shop where his father raced for Frank Wagner.

But Richert Jr's., first foray into a sprint car came by chance. At 17 years of age, he was warming up his father's famous orange No. 62 at the Sioux Empire Fairgrounds. In what was thought to be just slow laps around the half-mile to warm up the engine, the green flag surprisingly dropped and the teenager got his first taste of a high-powered sprint car.

He began officially racing in 1981 in the George Dabruzzi purple No. 22 in Centuria, Wisc., where he won a feature event on his third night out. He later raced at I90 Speedway in Hartford that same year.

Ironically, his father drove the same car to a feature win in 1978 at North Star Speedway in the Twin Cities.

Richert, Jr., made his Huset's debut in 1983 when he drove the Bill Hansen No. 63 for two years before joining Loren Woodke (Huset's Hall of Fame Class of 2010) in the familiar black and yellow No. 1W.

In 1986, Richert, Jr., joined the Taggart-Johnson racing team owned by Terry Taggart (Class of 2003) and Marty Johnson in the iconic light blue No. 81, which is where Richert, Jr., made his biggest mark at Huset's. He won the 410 sprint car title in 1987, winning two features that year with multiple runner-up finishes. In 1988, he didn't win the title but claimed three feature wins. In all, Richert, Jr., registered seven feature wins at Huset's, and one more at the Sioux Empire Fairgrounds.

Other car owners he raced for at Huset's include Phil Durst, Cahill Brothers (Kenny and Larry) Racing, Guy Forbrook (Class of 2018), Glen and Rich Stewart, Dirk VanHeeder, and Pat Donnahue. In 1988, Richert, Jr., raced for Ron Kohls with Forbrook as the crew chief where the team won three features at Huset's.

Richert, Jr., continued to race into the 2016 season. His final race at Huset's - known that season as Badlands Motor Speedway - was May 29 of that year in a 360 sprint car where he won his heat race but didn't finish the feature. His last race ever was in Cedar Lake, Wisc., later that season.

His commitment to Huset's was a big one for several years. After racing on Sunday nights, Richert Jr., returned to his job in St. Paul every Monday morning, sometimes not returning home until 5 a.m.

He becomes just the sixth person to be inducted into the Huset's Hall of Fame, Jackson Motorplex Hall of Fame, and Knoxville Raceway Hall of Fame. The others include Darryl Dawley (Huset's 2009), Guy Forbrook (2018), Roger Larson (2002), Tom Savage (2008), and Doug Wolfgang (2008).