

Closing the books on 2008

As the Northwest enjoys what seems like three straight weeks of awesome weather (at least as of press time for this issue) it seems a shame that some of this sunshine couldn't have found our region's race tracks or some of those brutal weekends last Spring. Just a thought.

In fact, the last bit of rain I recall was the Friday night squalls that postponed the first night of racing when the World of Outlaws pulled into Skagit Speedway. Fortunately Skagit fans got to see both nights completed (albeit a day later than planned) before the sprint teams rolled south to Grays Harbor Raceway and on to Cottage Grove Speedway. Robert Hunter's photos accompany a four-page recap of the Outlaws' swing through the Northwest, starting on page 8.

Speaking of sprint cars, several of our local racers made the trek to compete at the Knoxville Nationals this August. Look to page 18 for Craig Murphy's analysis of the event and how our teams fared in Iowa.

There's plenty of other great stuff in this issue, including features about drag racers Jayson Seibert (page 6) and Chet Vandewater (page 14), to James Muck (page 12), who jumped from the Bombers to the Super Stocks at Evergreen Speedway this season.

The smell of Nitro was in the air when a gathering of vintage dragsters fired up for a parade pass at Bremerton Raceway (see page 16) and early November will be equally exciting when Buckley Austin's vintage collection stages another Cacklefest in conjunction with the Motorsports 2008 show this November at the Tacoma Dome. Read the details of what's in store for motorsports fans with a preview of the show on page 21.

Between the great stuff on these pages and in the enclosed ITW/weekly issue, there's plenty to catch up on until our 2008 Season Finale rolls off the presses in time for delivery in early December. That special 80th Inside Track issue will debut some new improvements, just one of which will be the merging of our two publications so that all the great stuff for the 75th edition of ITW/weekly will be conveniently contained in the beefier magazine. I will be posting more about this and other changes on our website: www.insidetrackmagazine.com.



In the meantime, keep doing business with the businesses on these pages. Without their support, it would be nearly impossible to bring these publications to thousands of motorsports fans throughout the Northwest. Let them know you appreciate their contributions to this publication.

Now, I'd better get to work on the next issue... I think you all will be impressed with some of the big changes in the works for 2009!

Steve Heeb, Publisher



After watching the Dirt Cup racing at Skagit Speedway, Paul Burdick decided to take up racing. He spent a partial season in the Hornets division before jumping to the 360 Sprints where he has competed for the past three seasons, also assuming car owner duties while friend James Bundy has been fielding Paul's Hornet car at Skagit.

Bundy and Burdick

Kicking up dirt in Skagit's Hornets and Sportsman Sprints

Steve Heeb

James Bundy, a 17-year-old driver out of Lake Stevens, Wash., first took up racing in the 250 Mini Sprints division 10 years ago at Deming Speedway. Northwest race fans may recognize the Bundy name from James' grandfather, Jerry Bundy, a 26-year veteran of the 360 Sprints at Skagit Speedway.

"James' granddad is a legend at the track," says Snohomish driver Paul Burdick.

Paul's history as a race fan at Skagit Speedway stretches back more than 30 years.

"My dad brought me to the track in '76 when the Outlaws were first here," Paul explains.

"Seeing the cars in the corner fascinated me as a kid."

He says his parents never had the money to allow him to race while he was younger.

"When I was 35 I came and watched Dirt Cup and decided I could race a sportsman car,"

Paul says of his transition from spectator to racer three-and-a-half seasons ago.

Before he jumped into the 360 Sprints ranks, he decided to first cut his teeth in a Hornets car. "I bought a Hornet that I ran for about seven races," Paul says. "I flipped it on the first night."

While he was first starting out, Paul says he worried about fire in the cars. Being overly cautious also affected his driving during those early races.

"I had no racing experience so I was on and off the throttle," Paul confesses. "It was impossible to drive in the corners."

As Paul made the switch from Hornets to the 360 Sprints after the 2005 season, he hooked up with James who was making the switch to racing closer to home at Skagit Speedway.

"It was getting too expensive

to race at Deming," James explains. "It was too far to haul. I decided to come play with the Hornets."

His first car was a Ford Mustang powered by a 2.3-liter four-cylinder engine.

"I was worried about it being boring," James says of the jump from mini sprints to a full car. "The Hornets don't look as fast as they really are."

He notes that it was harder to drive the mini sprint and he had to fight in the corners.

"I could race a 17-lap race at Deming and be pouring sweat," he explains. "I could probably go 250 laps in a Hornet before I get tired."

Paul has a different take on the two types of racing.

"It's weird because almost all the Hornets are front-wheel drive," Paul says comparing the Hornets to the sprint car he fields. "The Hornets are just as much a handful."

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After several seasons in the 250 Mini Sprints ranks at Deming Speedway, James Bundy has moved to the Hornets at Skagit Speedway, the hometown track where his grandfather Jerry Bundy raced 360 Sprints for 26 seasons.

VIPARD



When the elegant lines of classic Packard design get saddled to 500 horses of raw Viper V-10 power

Steve Heeb

When the Goodguys street rod fleet made its way to the Western Washington Fairgrounds in Puyallup, Wash., this summer, many heads were turned by the unique ride of Cheryl Luce.

She and John Potts brought their classy convertible from Battleground, Wash., as they have done for as many shows as possible since purchasing the car less than two years ago.

"We take it to cruise-ins whenever we have the opportunity," Cheryl says of the cream and plum street rod. "I get a kick out of people looking at it."

What really draws attention is the 8.3-liter Dodge Viper V-10 engine snuggled into a well-crafted Packard boat tail convertible.

"When they see the engine, there is a double take and it's like: 'Wow!'" she laughs.

"We like it because it is different," John says. "It's the only one on the planet."

John and Cheryl originally discovered the VIPARD (think Viper + Packard) car at a Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction in Scottsdale, Ariz.

"We saw it and said that's what we have to have," Cheryl recalls of the sleek custom street rod.

The car was purchased by someone else, but Cheryl and John weren't going to let it slip



Cheryl Luce at the wheel of her 1926 VIPARD, the high-horsepower elegant vision of automotive artisan Peter Portugal. The car's Mahogany boat tail and Viper engine draw plenty of attention coming and going.

away so easily.

"We found the guy that bought it and bought it from him," Cheryl explains.

Then they set out to talk to the builder, Peter Portugal.

"He's a real artist," Cheryl says of the veteran car builder. "There is no part of the car that he hasn't thought through. He tuned it for the sound he wanted from the Viper engine."

"That's what catches people's

eye," John agrees. "He wanted to keep the look with the big engine. It's smooth with a lot of power."

Wrapped around the 500-horsepower powerplant from Mopar is the original 1926 Packard cowl.

"It's still titled as a '26 Packard," John says of the end result of Peter's design work. "It's his vision of what Packard should have done in 1926."

"We cut up production sedans and built concept cars that the

Packard company had talked about making but never did," Portugal states in a brochure that shares the history of the car and other Packard projects he was doing with Carl Schneider. "The pile of leftover parts led me to the creation of this 1926 Packard boat tail speedster hot rod. It is a car that captures an important part of automobile history, is at home in an art gallery, and is really fast."

The Viper running gear and

Ford 9-inch rear end do allow for high-performance, but with modern steering and brake equipment that is far safer than what had been included in the 1929-vintage straight-eight-powered one-off roadster constructed by the TRW company that served as an inspiration for Portugal.

The exotic look to the VIPARD is equally paired with quality workmanship.

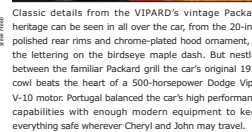
"The neatest thing is the craftsmanship," John says. "Anyone who knows wood work appreciates how it was done."

Since buying their dream VIPARD, John and Cheryl have taken it to the Portland Roadster Show and Blackie Gejeian's invitation-only Fresno Autorama. Before that, the car already had won the Righteous Roadster award at the 2006 Goodguys West Coast Nationals, and received Best of Show nods at two regional shows in Oregon and northern California.

"It's definitely a driver," John says. "The smoothness comes because of the 120-inch wheelbase."

But no car is absolutely perfect. "The bad thing about driving it is that my head sticks up above the windshield and it is really windy," John says with a laugh.

Wind-blown hair certainly is a small price to pay for such high-powered fine art.



Classic details from the VIPARD's vintage Packard heritage can be seen in all over the car, from the 20-inch polished rear rims and chrome-plated hood ornament, to the lettering on the birds-eye maple dash. But nestled between the familiar Packard grill the car's original 1926 cowl beats the heart of a 500-horsepower Dodge Viper V-10 motor. Portugal balanced the car's high performance capabilities with enough modern equipment to keep everything safe wherever Cheryl and John may travel.