

NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL of FAME & MUSEUM

DUANE "PAPPY" CARTER (SR.)

Duane Claude Carter was born on May 5, 1913 in Fresno (Calif.). He began his race car driving career in 1932 while a student at Fresno State College. Duane was a top midget driver before debuting in the 1948 Indianapolis 500. His best finish at Indianapolis was fourth in 1952, although he drove in relief for Sam Hanks (3rd) in 1953 and Troy Ruttman (4th) in 1954.



Duane Carter, Miracle Power Special #7 at Illiana Speedway, Schererville, Indiana - A.A.A. Sprints (Armin Krueger, Photographer)

During the early 1950s, Duane Carter and Ruttman enjoyed a friendly rivalry over the unofficial title of "King of the High Banks" at tracks like Dayton in Ohio and Salem, Ft. Wayne and Winchester in Indiana. In fact, Carter won the 1950 American Automobile Association (AAA) Midwest sprint car title with Ruttman third, while Ruttman won it in 1951 with "Pappy" Carter second.

Although the AAA Contest Board, racing's major sanctioning body since 1902, had never officially included participants in its decision making, that policy was to be changed for 1956. A slot for "driver representative" was announced and it was Carter who was selected. In the meantime, AAA decided to pull out of racing completely and, with the subsequent formation of the United States Auto Club (USAC), he accepted the newly-created full-

time position entitled Director of Competition.

Although his tenure at USAC was brief, he left in early 1959, his impact was significant as he was responsible for a strengthened relationship between USAC and the international motorsports community and the advent of professional sports car racing in this country. He also instituted a career in 1959, competing in a total of eleven Indianapolis 500 races before retiring in 1965.

After hanging up the gloves, Carter continued as one of auto racing's true 'ambassadors' with his involvement in such worthwhile programs

as the Champion Spark Plug Highway Safety Program and the Championship Drivers Association (CDA) "show car" program. These programs gave "Pappy" much self-satisfaction, although not nearly the amount that he received from watching his family excel in the sport he loved so dearly. In 1974, Duane watched as his son Duane "Pancho" Carter (Jr.) qualified for his first 500 and went on to win the "Rookie of the Year" award at the Speedway. Son Dana, also a midget and sprint car front-runner, died in 1982 of heart failure, never having qualified at the Speedway. Stepson Johnny Parsons (Jr.), whose mother Arza married Carter in 1949, is a veteran of nine Indy 500s.

In January of this year, "Pappy" received news that he was to join 1991 inductee "Pancho" as the first father-son duo to be elected into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame. Duane Carter (Sr.) passed away on March 7, 1993. He is survived by sons Duane (Jr.) and Tony, stepdaughter Joan Voyles and stepson Johnny Parsons (Jr.).