



# national sprint car hall of fame

KNOXVILLE, IOWA



## dr. pat Sullivan

PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN MAHONEY

by Dave Argabright

**G**regarious and outgoing, Pat Sullivan, was born May 19, 1955, has enjoyed the friendship and respect of racing people from coast-to-coast in his travels as one of the most successful PA announcers of modern times.

Pat first took the microphone in 1990 as PA announcer at I-44 Speedway and Bolivar Speedway USA, both located in Missouri. That fateful step began a career in motorsports media that has now spanned more than 25 years.

A native of Kansas City, Kansas, Pat managed to parallel his passion for auto racing with his primary career as an educator and writer in the field of mental health, earning his Ph.D. from the University of Kansas.

In the early 1990s, Pat took a teaching position with Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), and his motorsports career blossomed. After relocating to central Indiana, Pat found himself amid the well-known hotbed of open wheel racing. He was soon lead announcer with the UMRA TQ-Midget series (thanks to a reference from his friend Tony Stewart) from 1993 and 1994, and in 1993 began his ongoing tenure on the microphone at Indiana's Bloomington Speedway. His inaugural season paired him with Cary Pittman, and the following year he began a long and distinguished association with longtime colleague Brad Dickson.

From that point on, it seemed that Pat's distinctive voice was a constant presence at prominent open wheel races. He is one of the most prolific announcers in USAC history, with an estimated 400 USAC feature races conducted while he was on the microphone.

He has held announcing roles at a great number of tracks, including Kokomo Speedway, the Terre Haute Action Track, Salem Speedway, 16th Street Speedway, and Lucas

Oil Raceway in Indianapolis (formerly known as Indianapolis Raceway Park).

In addition to his significant work in Sprint Car and Midget racing, Pat has extensive experience at tracks such as Kentucky Speedway, Sonoma, and Chicagoland. From 1997 to 2005 Pat was on the microphone at over 100 Indy Racing League events. He has also served with the News Bureau at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for 23 years, moderating countless interviews and press conferences.

Pat's writing career is also extensive and spans nearly two decades. Beginning with Open Wheel Magazine in 1999, Pat is currently a columnist and feature writer with Sprint Car & Midget Magazine. He has covered in detailed fashion racing in earlier eras as well as contemporary activity, penning a significant volume of highly-regarded stories and articles.

Teaming with John Mahoney and Bob Gates, in 1998 Pat authored "Dirt Road to a Silver Crown," an extensive history of the USAC Silver Crown series. He was also a major contributor to "USAC - 50 Years of Speed and Glory," the definitive history of the noted series. Pat was also a major contributor to the exhaustive Midget History volume assembled by Ed Watson. Pat also wrote "Brick by Brick - The Story of Joie Ray" in 2008. As of this writing, Pat is heavily involved in a book project that will provide an updated history of USAC Sprint Car racing.

Pat's contribution to Sprint Car racing over the past 20 years has been notable. He served on the Board of Directors of the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame, and has long served on the selection committee for the Hall of Fame. He has been a constant presence as co-emcee of the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony for nearly 20 years.

A key element of Pat's contribution to the sport lies in his genuine passion for short track racing. As he takes the microphone at NASCAR or IndyCar events, one can immediately hear mentions and tidbits that tie the listener to something related to Sprint Car or Midget racing. Personalities, historic references, interesting anecdotes, all help

raise the awareness and recognition of the sport to a wider audience.

Pat's many awards and honors include the Tony Hulman Award from the National Assoc. of Auto Racing Fan Clubs (2000), the USAC Special Recognition Award (2003), the Hoosier Auto Racing Fans Media Award (1998), Gene Powlen Fan Appreciation Award (1998), and PA Announcer of the Year Award (2007).

Pat has also received the Media Member of the Year award from the National Sprint Car Poll in 2002, 2005, and 2006.

While his accomplishments are notable, Pat has never lost sight of his roots. He continues to work the microphone at Bloomington Speedway, where he is truly in his element. His voice is as much a staple of the beautiful Friday night setting as the pristine hills and red clay of Monroe County.

His professional work in the field of education is also notable, and Pat is highly respected for his work as a professor at IUPUI. He continues to balance the demands of his teaching position while also pursuing his passion for Sprint Car racing. His professional awards include the Sagamore of the Wabash, the highest civilian honor in Indiana. He has also received the Distinguished Hoosier Award and Outstanding Alumnus award for the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare. He has received 12 awards for teaching, and he continues to enjoy respected friendships with current and former students.

An avid fitness advocate, Pat looks back at a lifetime of running and playing hockey, which he continues to enjoy. Other interests include reading, music, sports, and history. Pat is a high-energy man who seems to function best in a stressful environment with limited rest. His wide range of interests continues to surprise and delight his closest friends.

Pat is the proud father of two adult children, Nikki and Reid. He and wife Cheryl live in Carmel, Indiana.

His voice has become a staple of auto racing, and for nearly three decades Pat Sullivan has been front-and-center at many of the sport's most memorable moments.