

Lou Caposey - # 3

2007 VROA Champion

I was born in 1949 in Chicago, Illinois. I have one older brother, Phil and a younger sister, Cheryl. Phil started going to the races in 1949 when my dad started racing. I on the other hand didn't get to go until the summer of 1950. My father raced at Raceway Park, Soldier's Field and I believe at Half Day Speedway too.

Raceway Park was where he spent most of his racing career. He only drove a handful of times – he always had someone else drive his cars. My dad's talent was in engine building. I was just a boy, but it's amazing how clear those nights at the racetrack are to me. Someday I knew I would be driving for my Dad. He quit racing in 1956 when my sister was born. I had to get my fix by working at home to get an allowance on Friday, so that I could run across the bean field to the local go cart track.

When I was 12, I learned how to drive my dad's 1953 Studebaker pick up truck. It was a 6 cylinder with a 3-speed on the column. I learned how to drive that in the driveway of our new house. When I was 14, he bought a used Ford pick-up. It was also a 6 cylinder 3-speed. I graduated to driving the truck in the alley. At 15, I got my driver's permit. Back then you had to have an 18-year old licensed driver with you. A couple of my friends were already 18, so I was golden. That was the year that I participated in my first drag race. I raced at 1959 Chevy 6 cylinder with a 3 speed. By the time I turned 16, I blew up my first engine drag racing. I drag raced the next few years or so, and by the age of 17 I was drag racing my first high performance 6 cylinder for a guy about 2 year older than me.

In 1970 I got married to my first wife and I was lucky enough to be asked to drive a 1967 GTO with a LS6 454 Chevy, rated 450-460 horsepower from the factory. It had a Holley 750 double pumper, a Borg Warner super T10 close ratio 4 speed and a 4:33 rear end. We raced this car for 1 year and never lost a race. We raced anything that was driven on the street. Back then you could give a cop \$50.00 and he would block the street for you. Up until this point, I would make a casual visit to Raceway Park. I still loved it.

My buddy Vince, who owned the GTO and also introduced me to Mexican food about 4 years prior, sold the goat and my need to race turned to stock cars. In 1971, with the help of my first sponsor, my uncle John – my cousin Larry and I bought a 1962 Chevy 4 door, 6-stick, and turned it into a Golden Knights car. That was the 6 cylinder class at Raceway Park. We were a back-of-the-pack car, but one Saturday night, my father and some guys that worked with him came to watch. That night I won my first heat race. It was a miracle, and that's when I really got hooked.

In 1972 my wife and I had our son Chris. Every year for the next 5 years, I got a better car, but never won a feature. The highest I ever finished was 6th. In 1975 we had another addition to our family. We had my daughter Robyn. In 1976, my sixth year of racing, I was asked to drive

a late model part time. My friend Stanley's brother-in-law Eddy owned the car and Stan was the other driver. He was better than I was, but I still had fun. 1976 was the last year I raced until I met Dale. I got divorced from my first wife in 1985 and married my wife Ellen in 1986. In 1988 on our 2-year anniversary, Ellen and I had my second daughter, Abbey. In 1993 we had our second child and my fourth. It was a baby girl that we named Kelsey. I'm thankful and blessed that all of my children love each other and my ex-wife and my wife are loved by all. My ex-wife is a great friend and is a loved part of our family.

I had moved from the south side of Chicago to Michigan in 1993. I was a manager for a trade show company, but in 1995 they closed down. I then found a job at Kool Chevy in Sturgis. Dale's brother won the lotto in Wisconsin that year and told Dale to take his dad out and buy him a new car. Well Dale came to Kool Chevy and came to me. When he mentioned that he had a race car – trying to sell him a car took the back seat. I told him that I drove before, and he asked me if I would be interested in driving a second car that he was thinking of building. I jumped at the chance to drive again. He took my number and said he would call. The summer passed and I didn't get a call, so I assumed it wasn't going to happen.

Then the great surprise happened when Dale called me and said that his brother had lost my number and had just found it. He didn't build another car, but asked if I wanted to drive every other race night. This was a dream come true.

The 1996 season came around tooooooo slow, but the first night out I think we got fast time and won the feature. Dale never drove his car in a race again. The first season, we ran 27 races (heats and features) and won 22 of them. Our first year together, we won the championship. The second year was almost as successful as far as victories and won that championship also.

Dale always gave me a car that was capable of winning any race we were in. We had the track record at 4 tracks until Mike Becker broke the record at South Bend Speedway. One year we didn't join the club, but they said we could race with them and we won the points race but because we weren't members the championship went to the 2nd place car. In 2004 we won the championship again, leading in points from the first race night and never giving it up for that season. In 2006, Dale had medical issues and I took a ride in an Outlaw Late Model. It was a year of affirmation. We raced at M40 and it was a good night if we passed someone. Vince and Laurie Ray owned the car. None of us had any idea how to make this car go around the track, and it showed. One night when the VROA were racing at M40, Rob Parker called me and asked if I would like to drive his car, because he couldn't make it. OF COURSE, I said yes. I was doing double duty that night, and that was when I knew that my home was in a vintage car. I found myself smiling as I was racing Rob's car. I let the Ray's know that I wanted to go back to Vintage and called Dale to let him know.

That brings us to this year – 2007. We have never raced against a tougher or faster group than this year. By only 2 points, we beat out a champion in my eyes – Bobby Martin, for the championship. I also got back in the late model and raced it at Plymouth Speedway, where we lead the B feature for 20 laps, ran second for 11 more and with 4 laps to go, the motor let go. I have committed to drive the late model for the 2008 season. The late model schedule will work around my work schedule and the VROA schedule. If there were ever a good time to retire, it would be now. I don't see another championship coming our way in the near future. Some of these cars are flying. Time will tell where I end up. I plan to enjoy what we've accomplished in 2007 and make the call for 2008 in 2008.