

Tribal members chase speed itself

Blanchard, Shandy hooked on racing

By Ron Karten

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For Tribal member Darryl Blanchard, 49, racing quenches his thirst for speed.

"I can go as fast as I want and I ain't going to get a ticket," he says the day before his recent race at Willamette Speedway in Lebanon.

For Tribal member Todd Shandy, 45, who has been racing "on and off for 20 years," it's the mechanic end of things that draws him to the sport, but it's the racing that keeps him coming back.

"I like to build things," Shandy says. "Making the bodies is pretty cool. And when that thing runs, when you're out there, you don't think about anything else. You don't hear anything else. And you're just going as fast as you can."

Races are held on Saturdays, April through September, with time trials at 2:30 p.m. and races starting at 6 p.m.

Blanchard's been at it for six years now.

"I came over and watched (Tribal member) Todd (Shandy) and a couple of my other friends over there racing, so I thought, 'I'll join them,'" Blanchard says.

Five classes of cars compete: Outlaw, Super Sport, Sportsman, Classic and Modified. Shandy races Outlaw; Blanchard, Super Sport. Before the full-sized cars, Blanchard used to race one-eighth scale remote-controlled cars.

"They ran on alcohol and nitro," he says, "and were very, very fast."

The day of the races starts early in the morning, says Tammy Shandy, Todd's wife, with final maintenance work on the car before heading off to the track. The cars are unloaded, the track gets watered and then come time trials and races.

Cars, costing more than \$30,000 a pop at the Outlaw level, are daunting obstacles for almost any racer.

Even in the Super Sport class, Blanchard says, "What we got in our whole car is what some of these



Contributed photos

Tribal member Darryl Blanchard races Super Sport cars at Willamette Speedway in Lebanon. His mother, Tribal Elder Donna Casey, uses his car number 75X as her license plate number.



Tribal member Darryl Blanchard

guys have in their motor. But it ain't all about power. It's a lot to do with driving and setting the car for traction."

"You want to stay up on the technology," Shandy says, "because it changes quite a bit."

Shandy has been investigating a new chassis for his car. "You're looking at about \$24,000, and that's just a rolling chassis without a motor or transmission. We rebuilt the motor on ours last year. It was

\$2,400. If you change the valves and springs, you're looking at \$4,000-5,000."

"You've got to work your butt off on the car, just to keep in contention," Blanchard says.

Blanchard totaled his car earlier this summer. The crash knocked him out and his doctor ordered three weeks off from racing.

It didn't keep him far off, however. "We just put a new body on it, yesterday," he says. He didn't consider the job finished, however, until the Spirit Mountain Casino logos were added.

He adds, though, that the car's upkeep is continual. "It costs you paint to pass," he says. "If you go

by, they're going to rub their tires on you, every time.

"Racing. I'm telling you. I love it. I don't know why. I just love it."

With a fourth-place finish a few weekends ago, Shandy posted his best finish yet as an Outlaw driver.

"I led for 35 of 40 laps," he says.

Tammy is quick to add, however, "When he used to race in the Super Sport division in previous years it was a common occurrence

that he was in the trophy dash with many first-place finishes in the Super Sport A Main Events."

And besides any of that, Shandy says, "It's kind of a family thing. My mom (Tribal Elder Louise Coulson) goes. My sister (Mardie Williams) goes."

His nephew races and his daughter, Tribal member Shiloh Shandy, 20, races.

"She has a car in it, too," Shandy says. "She has a jalopy, classic, old Firebird, something easy for her to get in and drive."

"What do I think of the racing?" says Tribal Elder and Blanchard's mom Donna Casey. "Just look at my license plate: 75X MOM."

75X is the number on her son's car.

"People tell me they sponsor my car because they gamble at the casino," Shandy says. "I had this older lady tell me, 'I was trying to sponsor you, but I won at the casino today.'" ■

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~ Tribal member Darryl Blanchard



Contributed photo

Tribal member Todd Shandy races Outlaw cars at Willamette Speedway in Lebanon. His car is decorated with Spirit Mountain Casino logos.