



A Family Affair

Roseville, CA - (May 25, 2010) - Chris and Denise Lambert met at All American Speedway in 2000 when they were both rookies driving in the Bomber division. Chris had never led a race before and he was on his way to win his first race. Denise was trying to get out of his way when their cars got together and they both crashed. That could have ended the story right there, but it didn't.

Chris gave Denise his phone number and volunteered to help her fix her car. They became friends. Later on they they became more than friends, and in 2006 they got married. Their wedding reception was in a hall at the fairgrounds. Denise said she did that because it was on a Saturday night and everyone at the wedding would know how to get to the reception.

Chris pitted for his dad and co-driver Mark Sharp for two years before he started racing in 2000. He said the first time he drove his dad's car in practice was when he said he got hooked on driving. "I started looking for a car right then and there."

Denise grew up with racing because her brother Rusty Berkfield raced Bombers for years at All American Speedway. She mentioned to her mom after one of Berkfield's wins that it sure looked like a lot of fun to race.

Berkfield did really well and eventually built a Street Stock to drive, and in 2000, he presented Denise with his Bomber car for her 32nd birthday.

Denise is mom to a daughter and two sons. They were her first priority, but when Rusty gave her his car and a fire suit, she decided to go for it, and her kids supported her wholeheartedly. "I'd never been in a race car until my first race," she said. "I was scared to death. My brothers just put me in the car and sent me out on the track." After Denise drove onto the track, her brother Dan asked her brother Rusty, "Did you tell her what to expect?" Rusty replied, "No, I thought you did!"

Needless to say, Denise had a difficult time her first time out. "I spun about six times in an eight lap heat race," she said. Denise's mother was always her biggest cheerleader. She went to every race Denise raced in and sat in the same place every week in a green shirt.

Chris said his first time out was scary too, but after that first race, the nerves went away. In 2007, he moved to the Street Stock division, won rookie-of-the-year and won two races. He said he liked the Street Stock division because the cars are like old school racecars and they are faster than a Bomber.

Last year Chris won the Street Stock championship. "It was amazing," Chris said. "Mickey (Owens) is a very tough competitor." Owens was leading in points going into the last race, but his engine blew up after four laps and his exit off the track solidified Chris spot as the champion.

"There is a lot of heartbreak and a lot of triumph in racing," Chris said. "I'm glad to still be racing. It has been a roller-coaster ride. You start at the bottom as a freshman and then get to be top dog, but then you go to a new division and you are a freshman again."

In 2006, Denise had her best year ever. She won eight heat races, five trophy dashes, and two main events, and her mom was there to watch it all. In July 2007, Denise's mom passed away. It was a very emotional time for her and she decided to pretty much quit racing for a while. She raced a few races each year and her daughter and her friends came out and they all wore green shirts and sat where her mother used to sit.

Denise loves being a homemaker, and when her grandson Owen was born two years ago she stopped working outside of her home and now spends her time taking care of Owen, who is Chris's biggest fan.

Denise said she and Chris are completely different racers. She said she is much more relaxed about racing and just likes to have fun, whereas Chris is completely serious about his racing. Neither is very good at watching the other race because it is too stressful. Denise said it's the first time she has been able stand out in something and that makes her feel good.

Both plan to continue racing in to the future. Chris said he is thankful to his wife and family for being so supportive of his racing and gives big thanks to his crew who he said are phenomenal.

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Contact Jeannie Broussal at 530.613.4445, racegirl@colfaxnet.com or Karen Spencer at 916.663.3723, kspencer@ncbb.net