

■ DRAG RACING: Sport is a family affair with Hyde Racing Team

Racing an adrenalin ride for Hyde siblings

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They live for the rush, the Hyde kids do.
"The anticipation at the line is



crazy," says 16-year-old Sydnie. "It's nerve-wracking. There isn't a feeling like it."

"The butterflies are there just before I make that first pass. I've never gone into an event and not felt them," adds Spencer, 19. "My emotions tend to calm down a bit and it's business as usual after the first run, but definitely not before."

Their mother, Lisa, knew something was up about 18 years ago.

"Spencer was running before he could walk, so I'm not surprised he's so much into racing," she said. "He's always had the need for speed. And now Sydnie ..."

It's all in the family with the Hyde Racing Team. Spencer and Sydnie are the drivers, dad Peter

Sydnie Hyde and her junior dragster.



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— Sydnie Hyde, 16

and his brothers help form the nucleus of the pit crew (Pete's brother, Ron, is crew chief) and Lisa is lovingly referred to as 'The Sandwich Lady'.

"We've got a lot of people that help make our team go," she says.

"They've got their families at the track quite a bit. We've got to keep everyone fed."

Since late 2006, when he made his first start and collected his first victory that same day in junior dragster at Grand Bend Motorplex, Spencer Hyde has been filling a hunger for speed. He competed in the junior division through the end of 2008 and has since moved into the Chevy Cobalt (pictured at right).

"I was hooked after that first day at the Bend," he recalled. "My pals Joey Hishon and Jordan Switzer were into racing and they encouraged me to give it a try. I ended up winning the trophy ... what a way to start."

Soon after, the Hydies bought the junior dragster from Jordan's father, Jack, and the family has been at the track ever since.

"I gained good experience (in junior dragster)," Spencer said. "I learned a lot about the sport, about fundamentals. I worked on the car myself, and with my

dad and my uncles and with Jack.

"There's a steep learning curve in making the jump (to the Cobalt) and we've had a couple of scrapes now and then.

"But I love everything about racing, from driving the cars to working on them to cheering on my sister."

When Sydnie was 11, she saw the passion her brother had for racing; now she's following in his footsteps and winning races. A victory in Top Dragster during Canada Day weekend at Cayuga over renowned Grand Bend champion Jeff Moser ranks up there as a personal thrill, as does her first-round triumph mid-June at the same Toronto Motor-sports Park over Mike 'The Boss' Hinbest, of Orangeville.

"Jeff's a great competitor and a multiple champion and it was a big deal beating him," she said. "Mike is very consistent and difficult to beat and that was another huge win for me. I had a lot of people come up (after the Hinbest race) and congratulate me. I think some of them were as excited as I was."

Big brother is her biggest fan.

"Sydnie drives like a champ," says Spencer, who takes as much pride in helping prepare his sister's car for competition as he does in his own success.

"I'm really proud of her. She's caught on to this a lot faster than I thought she would. And the big thing is, she loves it. It's great to see her enjoying it as much as she does."

Watching her children compete at speeds of 180-200 mph is also thrilling for Lisa Hyde, who has complete confidence in their abilities and their safety.

"Safety is number one," she stresses. "If there's something that isn't right with the car we shut it down. With every sport there is an element of danger. But with the helmets, firesuits and harnesses, and all the safety measures that are addressed at the tracks, I've become more and more comfortable with it."

Sydnie says the feeling of protection her equipment provides allows her to focus on the task at hand.

"Once you're strapped tight into that car, there really isn't much left for you to do except wait for the rush, and try to do

the best you can," she said. "Just enjoy what you're doing because that's all you can control. And when you win, you enjoy it even more."

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Spencer Hyde and his Chevy Cobalt.



■ HYDE RACING



Contributed photo

Team Hyde includes, from left, Spencer, Sydnie, Lisa and Peter Hyde. The Hydies, their crew and their many valued sponsors are gearing up for their next races at Grand Bend Motorplex, the Stratford Spectacular Hot August Nationals, Aug. 5-7.

Next stop: Spectacular

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The Quick 32 season opened for the Hyde Racing Team at Cayuga May 24 weekend and Sydnie turned in a 7.37 at 182 mph (a .025 light) in qualifying, her first full quarter mile pass in top dragster. Spencer turned in a 7.07 at 198 mph in his Cobalt and finished the competition in third place.

In June, Sydnie made it to the semifinals by knocking off both Hinbest and longtime family friend Travis Gueguen, of Shakespeare, who red-lit. Spencer also reached the semis with a pair of wins. Although engine trouble prevented both from making their semifinal runs, the team

took away the positives.

"We had a couple of car issues but that's racing," Lisa says. "All in all it was an excellent racing day."

The Hydies look forward to having another excellent day at the Bend in the Stratford Spectacular Aug. 5-7, the Super Bowl of racing to many local motorsports enthusiasts.

"I'll be testing the Cobalt in about two weeks in preparation for the Stratford Spectacular," Spencer said. "It's an event you can't beat. The whole community comes out and supports each other and we have a blast."

And that's what it's all about.
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