

A Barre, Vermont native, Phil Scott was a young spectator at Barre's "Nation's Site of Excitement" and worked on Robbie Crouch's racing efforts, but he does not list stock cars as his first racing experience. His introduction to motorized competition came instead aboard a snowmobile.

"My first snowmobile race was in 1977 at Devil's Bowl Speedway," Phil says. "I think I wrecked. The wrecks became part of the game and you protected yourself the best you could, but they were inevitable. I remember racing at the fairgrounds in Skowhegan, Maine and we had a huge wreck. I almost went right over the Funhouse. They carted me off to the local hospital and gave me an x-ray and determined that nothing was broken, so me and one of my crewmembers decided we could get back to the track to see if we could get into another race (the wreck happened in an early qualifier). The problem was we rode in the ambulance and we had to hitchhike back. There we were, with me with helmet in hand and my leathers on. A guy picked us up in a pickup and proceeded to tell us that he had been at the track earlier and there was a big wreck. He thought the guy might have been killed. Of course he was talking about me! We got back in time to qualify the second sled in a last chance race."

There was success but also more injuries and the eventual realization that speedsters with four wheels were a lot safer than those without. "I learned a lot from snowmobile racing, and did my share of wrecking in that regard as well." Scott comments, "but towards the end, I was racing in the Formula-One division against racers like Jacques Villeneuve. "There are many car racers that raced snowmobiles during the off-season. I think Ted Christopher did, Tim Bender, The Abolds from New York; there were a lot of good competitors, but I found myself traveling from Manitoba to Minnesota to Illinois to Ontario to Quebec, and I got cold. I decided I wanted to return to stock car racing, which was really my first love, but I couldn't afford it in '77. I did miss some parts of snowmobile racing like the speed of racing on half-mile ice tracks, going over 100 miles per hour, on a sled that weighed four or five hundred pounds, but I didn't miss getting hurt and the cold."

"I was a bit of a late bloomer driving stock cars, beginning when I was 32 years old " Scott says." In the early years we tried racing Pro Stocks. My brother Kevin and I borrowed a car two or three

times to try it out. That was a different experience. In '91 or '92, my first race in a Pro Stock was in an ACT Pro Stock in the then New England 300 at Airborne. I remember spinning coming out of turn two, trying to get out of the way of Junior Hanley, who was about to lap me. All the big guns were there, the Dragons, Dion, Robbie Crouch, MacDonald, etc. But we still managed, through attrition, to finish 13th. It was a great experience."

Phil eventually found himself back at Thunder Road in a late model. "I started in late models," Phil says, "but the late models of yesterday started out as a version of today's Tiger cars, so when I began in the early 90s it was in what are really the Tigers of today. When Kevin and I decided to take the plunge into cars, we thought that with my experience racing sleds at those speeds, and the background I had working on cars (Crouch, Kourafus) we might be a force to be reckoned with, but we reckoned wrong. It was much tougher in the early years. But our will to succeed outmatched my inexperience. It was much more difficult to drive the cars than I had imagined."

In the years since, Phil has ended the season three times as "King of the Road." This along with more than two dozen Thunder Road and ACT feature wins to date, an average finish of eighth in over 200 starts, two wins at Thunder Road's Milk Bowl, a 100-lapper at Canaan, the Fall Foliage 200, The Merchants Bank 150, The Memorial Day Classic and The Spring Green, as well as 100 lap race wins at both Airborne and White Mountain. Oh, and the trifecta of winning the ACT, Airborne and Thunder Road titles all in the same year (2001).

But for those who are not aware of his accomplishments off the racetrack, Philip B. Scott (he prefers "Phil," of course) has served as a Vermont state senator since 2000, in that time also serving on the Natural Resources, Transportation, and Institutions senatorial committees. He currently serves as Chair of the Institutions Committee and as Vice Chair of the Transportation Committee.

In his business life, Phil is a co-owner of Dubois Construction. He has been very active in the Associated General Contractors for a number of years, serving as president in 1997 and 1998, is a member of the Corporate Board at the Northfield Savings Bank (one of his racing sponsors)

and has also been a partner in owning restaurants and nightclubs.

What does Phil Scott think of his own accomplishments? His answers are more humble than you would think for someone who has done so much in his racing, civic and business lives. "On the track, I think the records and the wins speak for themselves. I think what's important is that when the day is over you can look yourself in the mirror and say that you've done the best you could, and at the same time realize it's just a sport. It's not life and death. Off the track, I'm proud of my family. I'm very proud of my daughters Rachael and Erica and my wife Angie. Getting my pilot's license was a big deal to me. I'm proud of my business history, taking on challenges and learning a lot about life and business through success and failure. As with racing, I've made a lot of mistakes, but I've learned from my mistakes in order to be successful. When I look back at becoming a co-owner of a multi-million dollar construction company, with no money in my pocket at 27 years old, I don't know if I would have done that now. But at the time, it seemed like an easy decision to make. A lot of people put their faith in me to do the right thing. But again, a business is somewhat like racing in that you assemble a team and it's really the team that decides your fate. Surround yourself with good people and you will be successful. But you can do that in anything, whether it's racing, family, business, or life in general."

"Winning a seat in the Senate with practically no public-service background, that probably means more to me now than when I first started " Scott says. "The fact that these people, your constituents, have put their faith in you, to make decisions for them, to try and do the right thing, that's a huge compliment but also a very heavy burden. To be one of only two Republican Chairs in the Vermont Senate (the Democrats are in the majority and determine the committee assignments) they have come to trust me and know that I put politics aside and do what's right and honorable."

And what has Phil Scott not accomplished yet? His answer is both philosophical and practical. "Life is a journey. You don't know what's going to be around the corner. I think I take advantage of situations as they present themselves to me. But sometimes you have to make decisions quickly, and then you stick by them. I still believe things can be done today without

written contracts, with just a handshake and, more times than not, it works out for the best and I can sleep at night. So I guess the short answer is, I don't have any burning quests. I don't have a list of things I need to do. If life ended for me tomorrow I would be satisfied with what I had done."