**Pat Austin Bio**

Pat Austin’s dad, the late Walt Austin, was a successful drag racer, so Pat came into this world under a strong influence to become involved in the sport. In 1971 at the age of 7, he and his brother Mike, age 8, were in the garage helping Walt wash parts and prepare his twin engine gas dragster for the next weekend. That year, Pat made his first photo appearance in the winner’s circle when the family won the NHRA FallNationals AA/Gas Dragster class.

In 1980, at the ripe old age of 16, Pat built and drove his first race car, a 1955 Chevy with a modified 350 Chevy for power. While he was satisfied with the car’s overall performance, it wasn’t quick and fast enough for him so in 1982 he installed the engine out of the ’55 into a rear engine econorail dragster and promptly won the first two races he entered.

While happy with the econorail’s performance, Pat was ready to move up to another class, so he sold it and began working with Walt who was racing a AA/Alcohol Funny car. By this time Pat had graduated from high school and was working for his dad, who owned an automotive service company, learning how to operate a business and learning more about being a successful racer. He was also itching to drive his dad’s Funny Car and, since Walt had purchased a second funny that was in pieces, he told Pat he could drive it if he put it back together. It only took Pat four days to have it ready to run and two weeks later Pat was licensed in the “spare” AA/Alcohol Funny car. This was the beginning of team Walt Austin Racing (WAR) and the start of a new drag racing legacy.

WAR posted its first NHRA AA/Alcohol Funny Car class event win at the 1986 Baton Rouge, LA Cajun Nationals, followed by a win at the NHRA Springnationals in Houston, TX, and the beginning of a career total of 75 NHRA National events. The following year WAR became a member of the six-car, six-class Castrol GTX Superteam of, Gary Ormsby, John Force, Larry Morgan, Bill Barney, Pat Austin, and David Nickens and won its first of four NHRA World Championships.

In 1991, WAR purchased Gary Ormsby’s AA/Fuel Dragster and Pat took over the driving chores in it. The team’s first win in this class came at the NHRA Nationals in Topeka, KS where he won both AA/Fuel dragster and AA/Alcohol Funny Car classes. Pat went on to post a total of five NHRA AA/Fuel Dragster class wins to join his 75 AA/Alcohol Funny Car class wins. Of all of these wins, Pat cherished his NHRA AA/Alcohol Allstar wins in 1987, 1988 and 1989 most because they were always on Father’s Day, and he could present the trophy to Walt to celebrate it.

Pat was also inducted into the Car Craft Magazine All Star Team for an unprecedented five consecutive years, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990 and 1991.

Walt and Pat Austin, along with Connie and Scott Kalitta, are the only two fathers and sons to be inducted into the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame.