



Dr. Lori Hageman: Race Car Driver

There are two main types of car races: time trials and wheel to wheel races. In time trials, the actual competition is done with only two or three cars spaced out on the track; drivers only worry about their own driving – how their car is handling the turns. Wheel-to-wheel is full speed with lots of other cars on the track at the same time. Dr. Hageman has run wheel-to-wheel and the practice sessions are all at speed with other cars, so she still gets a chance to worry about the other guy's driving!

Racing is VERY tiring, says Dr. Hageman. "I sleep very well on race nights. At high speeds all turns cause G-forces to try and move your body in ways that are no longer conducive to driving! The body is constantly fighting to maintain proper positioning, which uses muscles and is tiring."

Dr. Hageman prefers to drive older race cars, which she also knows how to repair. She races mostly older Porsches, which are truly race cars that are modified for the road. "My favorite was my 1986 944 that I purchased for \$3,000," she says. "I stiffened the suspension myself and put on race tires and I turned in record times for that car (in

the stock configuration) at Laguna Seca. I am most proud of that part of my racing."

Racing can be expensive and dangerous, Dr. Hageman admits. It can run \$500 a set for tires and a set may last only one or two events. "Now that I have a family and young children it isn't just time that limits my racing," she says.

As for the dangers, "I have run off course many times and spun many times. I have wrecked parts of my car but never totaled it. I recommend that anyone who owns a sports car take a course where you are allowed to put your car on a skid plate, just to learn where your individual car loses its ability to stay on the road. Once you find it, you'll NEVER hit it."

So how does race car driving compare to veterinary medicine? "It's much more fun, and easier to take risks."

When she's not at her solo practice, the Ark Pet Hospital in Antioch, Dr. Lori Hageman can be found at the race track. She's been driving cars on the big tracks for 15 years and has raced at Infineon, Laguna Seca, Sebring and other nationally-recognized tracks.

Dr. Hageman graduated from the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine in 1993. She went with a friend in 1996 to his car club's time trial and became addicted. Plus, "I got tired of speeding tickets!" she says. She raced regularly until 2006, but has cut back a bit now that she and her husband John have children.

"When I first started I wanted to really pursue the SCCA (Sports Car Club of America) championship series; unfortunately I didn't have the time," says Dr. Hageman. "I needed to race EVERY weekend and back then I was working weekends. Now I pursue mostly time trials – competing with my time against other driver's times." Dr. Hageman has won many of those time trials.

