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Delivering Top Speed through Service

How this dragster got to the finish line faster with Hartwig & Okuma

It seems like most people in metalworking are into some type of motor sport – the two just seem to go together. You can draw a lot of parallels between motor sports and metalworking shops. No place can you see that more evident than in drag racing. Derek Korn did a great job of pointing out these parallels in his March 2007 editorial in Modern Machine Shop (<http://www.mmsonline.com/columns/the-race-shop.aspx>). It's a short read and gets right to the point, but the CliffsNotes version reads something like this - teamwork, workplace organization, flexibility under pressure, consistency, and getting one chance to do it right are qualities that you see both at the drag strip and at the shop. As the Vice President of MetalQuest and a drag racer, Scott Volk sees this first hand day in and day out.

Scott was a drag racer long before he had any idea what he would be doing to pay for his "habit." Volk says, "It actually started out the day I was born, as my mother went into labor with me while watching my uncle race at the very drag strip that I race at today. Needless to say, I was born into it. Growing up, my brother and I worked on my uncle's farm and weld shop during the day, and drag car in the evenings. On my 23rd birthday, I got the opportunity to buy my uncle's car, and got my childhood wish of being the owner/builder/tuner/crew chief/driver of a drag car."

Scott's childhood fascination with all things mechanical led him to pursue a career in metalworking straight out of high school. A few years later, it led him to his current job at MetalQuest. MetalQuest has given Scott and his colleagues

the opportunity to come up with some real out-of-the-box approaches to operating a modern metalworking company – not just in cutting chips, but in the way the machines and the shop-wide enterprise intercommunicates to allow them to achieve higher efficiencies and ongoing improvements. "The centerpiece of our system is our Okuma machine tools, and in particular, our THINC controls. We at MetalQuest feel that Okuma and the THINC control play a key role in the current and future success of our company. However, great machines are nothing without great support behind them, which is why we are happy to have Hartwig, Inc. as our partner in manufacturing. We value our close relationships with Hartwig's staff and engineers, and without their support, it would be very difficult for us to do what we do, day in and day out," says Volk.

Okuma is the primary sponsor of the Okuma/BME Top Fuel dragster, which is a great way to highlight the capabilities of their machine tools – accuracy, reliability, speed, and precision. Okuma also sponsors Volk's dragster. Scott says, "I think Okuma's sponsorship of my dragster is just another way to show that people who appreciate the qualities of an Okuma machine tool also appreciate a sport where teams compete for 10ths and 100ths of seconds. The appreciation of Okuma machine tools drives our relationship with Okuma and Hartwig, which provides us with a solid foundation for continued success at MetalQuest. The appreciation of high pressure, high speed drag racing will hopefully drive me to bigger and better (and faster!) things and continued success as a drag racer. See you at the strip!"

