

NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVORS DAY

CELEBRATING CANCER SURVIVOR AND SODA RACER, MILAN MAZANEC

OVERCOMING THE ODDS

From cancer to World Championships, Milan Mazanec has conquered them both. Milan is currently the driver of the black #1469 Class 14 truck in the SODA Series and originally got his start over 49 years ago racing motocross and road bikes. Shortly after he sustained an injury, he decided it was time to put a cage around him. From there, Milan built his first 1972 Bronco... and the rest is history.

No stranger to racing, Milan has competed in multiple series including: SCORE Canada, SCORE International, HDRA, the original SODA, CORRA, CORR, and many series throughout the Midwest and most of the East Coast. Milan has also had the opportunity to work with Stock car teams, REMAX Series and Nascar Bush Series. Racing has taken him throughout North America - from Florida to Connecticut to Canada - and everywhere in between.

In 2019, about one week before the Crandon 50th Anniversary, Milan found out he was sick. However, not wanting to miss the monumental weekend, he attended the Labor Day weekend races and returned to the doctor that following Wednesday. Within two days, he was diagnosed with throat cancer and was immediately referred to a specialist the following morning for a biopsy.

From there, Milan underwent 33 intense radiation treatments and surgery to remove infected lymph nodes. During this time, he lost over 100 pounds in 2 months and the diagnosis impacted not only his physical health, but his mental health as well.



SUNDAY, JUNE 5TH 2022



THE JOURNEY

Milan shares, "During my treatment, I was in a bad place mentally. I had many supporters including the Bennett Family who took me to a race at Slinger. This was the first race I attended since my diagnosis and it made a HUGE improvement. I'd also like to thank Kevin Hanegraaf. He took me to a race in Lena where everyone was extremely supportive and went out of their way to help me. Last year I also had the opportunity to be his Crew Chief. Dan and Nancy Vanden Heuvel also made a big difference and I'm grateful for their support."

"About two years before I was diagnosed, I sold my truck. However, after I recovered, I wanted to get back into racing, but could not afford it due to medical bills. Thankfully, Jay Schaefer was kind enough to gift it back to me for my birthday - FOR FREE! From there, I was able to put it back together and compete in the Re-born SODA Series!"

Milan is now CANCER FREE and has a new outlook on life. He continues to have bloodwork done every 6 months to ensure it's caught and treated in time if it is to return.

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Q & A WITH MILAN MAZANEC

DO YOU LOOK AT LIFE DIFFERENTLY AFTER YOUR CANCER DIAGNOSIS?

Yes, I get up early and I'm happy it's another day to enjoy life. I frequently talk with John Holtz about it. It changes your mind about everything. It's hard to put into words.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR ANYONE WHO MAY HAVE BEEN RECENTLY DIAGNOSED WITH. CANCER?

You have to think positive and be a fighter. Never give up. Being positive about beating the b*tch is half the battle. If you give up, your body will go down.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST RACE EVER?

Winning World Championships ring , many stadium races at Toronto CNE and SKYDOME, 4th place at Crandon in Red Bull Pro-4 Cup race

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR OTHER INTERESTS OR HOBBIES?

Helping people is my biggest passion. I want to help them become better racers. I welcome any questions people may have. I also enjoy building RC Cars.

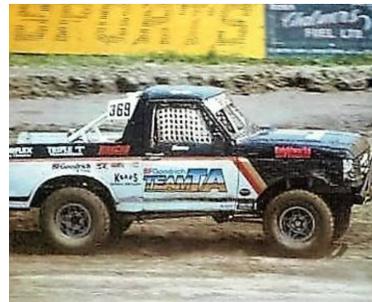
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR RACING STYLE?

Poor , LOL

Milan Mazanec holding a 1st place 4x4 trophy from the Ontario Off-road Association while standing in front of a wall filled with racing trophies of various kinds.



M.M. MOTORSPORTS



WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TYPE OF TRACK?

I enjoy a technical track and most that I raced on - the old Mint 400 1989 Desert track comes to mind.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER TRACKS ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

I'd like to go out to Montana and run a long endurance course on a track out there.

WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO THANK ?

I'd like to thank my fiancé, Karla Finnelly for all her support. I'd also like to thank Alex for all his help! I'd also like to thank everyone for their support during my cancer diagnosis.

DO YOU HAVE ANY SPONSORS YOU'D LIKE TO RECOGNIZE?

Any sponsors you'd like to recognize?
BF Good Rich , Raceline Oil Pumps, Baumgart Tire and Wheel, Mountain Machine from Michigan, and the Allies of Autism - team who has helped me out a lot.