



Michael "Mike" Daly Sr.

January 15, 1941 - June 19, 2025

Michael Daly Sr. — known as Duke, Big Mike, Senior, Daly, or simply The Boss — crossed the finish line peacefully on June 19, 2025, at 84 years old. He's now reunited with his beloved wife of 53 years, Micki, no doubt smiling quietly as she takes charge once again.

Born and raised in Omaha, Mike lived a life fueled by horsepower, heart, and humor. His racing story started in the mid-1960s behind the wheel at the drag strip, where he'd drive anything with a motor — from a '55 Chevy to a custom-built Opel GT. He found his groove helping others win just as much as driving himself. In 1974, he bought the machine shop at Raceland Speed Shop, which immediately became Daly's Machine. From that point on, his engines powered racers to championships, track records, and plenty of bragging rights — though Mike himself wasn't much for bragging. In fact, he'd rather tune an engine than talk about his 2013 induction into the Nebraska Auto Racing Hall of Fame. As he always told his son: "It's not about the money; it's about putting smiles on people's faces."

After his drag racing career, Mike found a deep love for motocross, and once he started racing MX himself, it quickly became one of his favorite outlets. He shared a racing career with his sons for many years, which kept the family close and at the track most weekends. He was known for pulling hole shots and, just as reliably, giving them up with a spectacular crash somewhere mid-

moto — usually the result of his wide-open-throttle approach to life on two wheels.

Mike had a unique talent for turning everyday moments into legendary tales. He could clean a table of leftovers like it was a competitive sport — happily finishing your plate, your neighbor's plate, and, if you weren't careful, a stranger's Applebee's birthday cake (true story). Every road trip included at least one "where the hell did Mike go?" moment — getting lost was part of the fun, and finding him was part of the adventure. On the ski slopes, he was a master at demonstrating what a "yard sale" looked like — gloves, poles, and dignity scattering down the mountain.

He didn't say much, but when he did, you listened — not just because he chose his words carefully, but because somehow the timing, tone, and delivery were always spot-on. Mike anchored every family gathering, football sideline, and pit stop in life. For 15 years straight, he never missed a single football game or go-kart race his grandsons competed in — rain or shine, win or lose.

Mike loved Nebraska football, cold beer — especially Hamm's over the last decade — and the peace that came from planting trees. He planted over a thousand across his Elkhorn property. Each one stood tall and steady, just like him — weathering storms and quietly making the world a better place.

He leaves behind two sons, Mike Daly Jr. and David Frakes; four grandsons who adored him: Brandon, Andrew, Nathan, and Derek; and a wide circle of friends, racers, and neighbors who are better for having known him. Mike didn't just leave behind stories; he left behind lessons in humility, generosity, and finding joy in life's simple adventures.

A private celebration of his life was held at The Post in Ralston.

Tribute Wall

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“ *Mike and I went to high school together for a couple of years great memories. Met again when I was transferred to Offitt. Spent many Saturdays together at horse races. Lots of fun and good times.*
Dick Molden

richard molden - September 18, 2025 at 06:09 PM

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