



**OBERLIN MINI-TRUCK RACER DALTON DOLAN,** 16, is in his rookie season. He hopes to eventually make a living as a professional race car driver. — Herald staff photo by Jim Merriott

## Young driver looks at professional status

By **JIM MERRIOTT**  
*jimmeriott@nwkans.com*  
 Oberlin's Dalton Dolan wants to become a professional race car driver and mechanic.

Right now he's a 16-year-old rookie, who's working toward his goal by competing on dirt tracks throughout the tri-state region.

Dolan started driving on the dirt track in the mini-truck series when he was 15. Next year he will enter Decatur Community High School.

"At an early age, my father (Tom) took me to the Oberlin Speedway," said Dolan. "It is something that I enjoy."

"I started riding dirt bikes around 8 years old and just moved up."

Dolan is the first member in his family to test the racing waters.

"I get a big kick out of watching racing movies like 'The Dukes of Hazzard,' and the movie 'A Need

for Speed,'" he said.

Dolan's mini-truck, a 1982 Ford ranger 2.3 liter is named "3D," and painted black for intimidation purposes.

"I got the idea of 3D because my favorite number is 3 and my last name starts with D," he explained.

It isn't all fun and speed, however.

On Friday, leading in the "A" feature at the McCook Speedway, Dolan was clipped coming out of the first turn, flipping over six feet in the air and rolling twice before a crash landing that damaged the rear axle of his racer.

He was knocked unconscious and suffered a concussion and an injured wrist.

Thanks to the mechanical help of IMCA national modified champion David Murray, however, Dolan was able to race on Saturday after an all-day mechanical repair session.

"I owe Mr. Murray a lot," he said. "He looked over my truck and told me that he would help me repair it for the upcoming race. He also gave me the confidence to pick myself up by the bootstraps and race again. He is a good man."

Dolan lives with his grandmother, Bonnie Dolan.

His father, a Decatur Community

High graduate, is an oil drilling roughneck foreman for ARCO/VECO Oil Co. in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska.

He said he enjoys turkey hunting and has hunted since he was 8.

He also plays football, wrestles, and tosses the discus and shot during track season, and collects knives for a hobby.

## Atwood plans July 4 race

The 27th annual Lake Atwood County Challenge will start at 7:30 a.m. next Wednesday.

The men's race will be 8 kilometers (5 miles) and the women's will be 4 kilometers (2.5 miles).

Finishers will score points for their county in each age division and those teams with the most participants have best chance of winning

the competition for their county.

There is no entry fee or awards. Runners do not have to be a resident of the county they represent.

The County Challenge race is the first event of the annual Atwood Day celebration sponsored by the Atwood Rotary Club. For more information call Charles A. Peckham at (785) 626-3295.



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