

EXCLUSIVE! DAN CYR SELLS FOUR SHOWS, INCLUDING GNRS!

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## New Owners For 4 Classic Shows

Dan Cyr Enterprises Sells Grand National Roadster Show, Sacramento Autorama, Portland Rod & Custom Show and Seattle Roadster Show

**F**our of the nation's top indoor rod and custom shows, including the legendary Grand National Roadster Show and Sacramento Autorama, will have new owners next year.

In an exclusive interview with *DRIVE!*, Dan Cyr confirmed that he sold the Sacramento Autorama and Grand National Roadster Show to John Buck, while Jason Wilson—who had been Cyr's operations director for the past year—acquired the Portland Rod & Custom Show and Seattle Roadster Show. The sale of the four shows is effective at the end of the 2005 show season. Sale terms were not disclosed.

"I want to retire," Cyr said as his reason for selling the four shows that he's produced since 2000. "After eighteen years [of producing rod and custom shows], my wife Charlene said, 'I don't want to work all winter every year,' and I said, 'You know, our friends have homes in sunny places, they hang out and do what they want to do, and that sounds like a deal for me.'"

Cyr had worked with both Buck and Wilson before. Buck is the Pomona Fairplex marketing manager, and Wilson worked for Buck before joining Dan Cyr Enterprises last year.

Wilson and Buck were both instrumental in the move of the Grand National Roadster Show from its longtime Northern California home. "I wanted Jason to go after events that were automobile-related, because of our track, because of the NHRA races we have here, and because of our tie-in with the NHRA Motorsports Museum, the history of Pomona and racing, and because of the cars," Buck told *DRIVE!* in another exclusive interview. "We have our big History Cruise at the Museum on the first Wednesday of each month. There's a good synergy with SO-CAL Speed Shop and everything



(left) John Buck, the new owner of the Grand National Roadster Show and Sacramento Autorama, was instrumental in the GNRS's move to Pomona.

(below) Seen here with previous Portland Rod & Custom Show and Seattle Roadster Show owners Dan and Charlene Cyr (at right), Jason Wilson—seen here with his wife, Nicole—doesn't plan on any major changes to the two shows.



Courtesy John Buck

Courtesy Jason Wilson

else around town, and I wanted Jason to look at some of the big [indoor] shows, which we hadn't had here in a long time. Wilson first called the Detroit Autorama's producers, and they laughed at him, and said, 'Detroit is Detroit, and we're not moving,' says Buck. The next call, to Cyr, proved fruitful. 'Unbeknownst to me, when he was having the show in San Mateo, he was having a rough time. (49ers and Raiders playoff games on Grand National Roadster Show weekend hurt the gate at San Mateo-Ed.) Jason picked up the phone at the right time to call Dan, and convinced him to come down here and look at the Fairplex as a new show site. We rolled out the red carpet for him, and said, 'We understand the Grand National Roadster Show is a Northern California tradition. We'd like you to see what we can do for you—take a chance on us and we'll take one on you.' Jason made such a good impression with Dan, and being Jason's boss I helped him out on that relationship, and Dan moved the show to Pomona."

That relationship led to Wilson's taking the operations manager job with Dan Cyr Enterprises—and, eventually, the sale of the shows to Buck and Wilson. "Dan took Jason under his wing, and said, 'Come up here, learn the ropes of the business, and I'll sell you the two [Northwest] shows. I have a buyer who's interested in buying the California shows, and all will be well,'" Buck says. "In the middle of December, I got a call from Jason, and he said, 'We're booking shows—it looks like it's going to be the best year ever. By the way, the guys that were going to put together a bid for the California shows, their bid fell through.' We started talking numbers, and I [eventually] called Dan, and he said, 'I want to retire, but I want to keep these four shows together.'"

As far as changes for upcoming shows, Wilson says he doesn't see any on the horizon for his Northwest events. "Dan and Charlene Cyr did such a great job of building these, and my wife and I want to honor the traditions they started. The shows themselves will stay very similar to how they're run now, at the same venues they are now." Wilson adds that he'll meet with people throughout the year to get newly-built (or not-seen-in-the-Northwest-before) cars for his shows. Meanwhile, Buck doesn't see many changes to the Sacramento Autorama or Grand National Roadster Show, except for moving the Sacramento show away from Super Bowl Weekend. "In talking with Baggy [Autorama founder Harold Bagdasarian] and John Barris, the traditional date had always been the first weekend in February," Buck says. "We're praying now that it'll be the second weekend in February, and that it won't mess up the rotation with Jason's shows. If we can get something that'll work for us, the guys who travel with us to Portland won't have to store their trailers and rigs between shows."

Dates for the Grand National Roadster Show, Sacramento Autorama, Portland Rod & Custom Show and Seattle Roadster Show for next year had not been finalized at press time. Stay tuned to *DRIVE!* for 2006 show dates, plus pre- and post-show coverage. **L**



Photo by Scott Ross