

# Nicholas Patrick ‘Nicky’ Hayden

## (30 July 1981 – 22 May 2017)

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Saturday, 25 May 2017, p2B:



Nicholas "Nicky" Hayden passed away Monday, May 22, 2017, at the age of 35, following a May 17 bicycle accident in Italy.

Born into a large extended Catholic family in Owensboro, Nicky was the middle child of Earl and Rose Hayden, with two brothers and two sisters. The entire family loved motorcycles, and shortly after he could walk, Nicky declared that his dream was to be a world champion. Although life on a farm meant that animals -- horses, pot-belly pigs, even llamas -- were a part of every day, for Nicky they were just novelties, and while he was a natural athlete, childhood sports leagues were little more than a lark. Racing -- for the whole family, but especially for Nicky -- was everything. Apart from an annual spring-break jaunt to Panama City, Florida, family trips were to racetracks, first around the Midwest, then the eastern U.S. and eventually the entire country.

That said, there was never any doubt about where home was. Even after he began traveling the globe to race in exotic locales, Nicky would always return to his beloved "OWB." He received his education through local Catholic schools -- Precious Blood Elementary School, Owensboro Catholic Middle School and Owensboro Catholic High School -- and his first jobs comprised helping out at his uncles' nearby farms, where he began developing the tenacious work ethic for which he would be known throughout his racing career. He remained close with his core group of childhood friends throughout his life, and he helped many young local racers to pursue their own dreams.

For Nicky, a distinguished amateur dirt track and road racing career transitioned into a successful stint in the AMA Grand National Championship and AMA Superbike series, in which

he earned the 1999 AMA Supersport and 2002 AMA Superbike crowns with American Honda. He was promoted to the FIM MotoGP series with Repsol Honda, for whom he achieved his dream of earning the World Championship in 2006. Nicky also rode for Ducati and Aspar Racing in MotoGP, and last year he transitioned to the FIM Superbike World Championship with the Ten Kate squad. Along the way, his charisma earned him legions of fans the world over, while his dedication and professionalism earned the respect and admiration of his teams, teammates and competitors.

Among those who knew him best, Nicky was cherished for his generosity, kindness and mischievous sense of humor. His famous grin was never far from his lips, and he invariably had time to engage with others, even strangers. The life of any party, Nicky loved to dance, wear funny costumes and pull pranks, often with a microphone in hand.

Throughout it all, family was Nicky's anchor. Many Americans who race internationally opt to relocate overseas, but Nicky always preferred to return home between events. Well into his professional career, he resided in an apartment above his parents' garage, and even after purchasing his own home nearby, he religiously showed up for his mother's 6 o'clock dinners when he wasn't traveling. Several years ago, he purchased and refurbished an old building on an Owensboro lake, and what he dubbed Victory Lane Lodge became the family's preferred location for functions of all types, from Sunday get-togethers to weddings. He loved children and was a model uncle, and friends and family say he was never happier than after meeting girlfriend Jackie, with whom he became engaged last year.

Nicky is survived by his parents, Earl and Rose; his siblings, Tommy, Jennifer, Roger and Kathleen; his fiancée, Jacqueline Marin; nieces Olivia, Klaudia, Vera, Kyla Jo and Kate; nephew Colt; and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Services are noon Monday at St. Stephen Cathedral. Visitation is from 2 to 8 p.m. Sunday at Haley-McGinnis Funeral Home in Owensboro.

Donations may be made to the Nicky Hayden Memorial Fund, <https://cflfund.net/netcommunity/hayden> which helps local children in the community Nicky loved so much.

Share your messages of condolence to the family of Nicholas Patrick Hayden at [www.haleymcginnis.com](http://www.haleymcginnis.com).

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The following articles about Nicky Hayden appeared in the newspaper, Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer (listing by Jerry Long):

- 1988: 10/18 p.4B (“Haydens win in Texas races”)
- 1989: 7/11 p.2B (“Haydens place in motorcycle contest”)
- 1990: 8/21 p.3B (“Haydens sweep cycle titles”)
- 1996: 9/26 p.1B (“End of an era for track”)
- 1997: 8/21 p.5B (“Cycle racer follows in brother's footsteps”)
- 1997: 12/25 p.1B (“Nicky Hayden joins Suzuki factory team”)
- 1998: 4/21 p.1B (“Nicky Hayden gets initial win as pro in Monterey”)
- 1999: 3/4 p.4B (“Racing Haydens kick off '99 season”)

- 1999: 6/3 p.1 (“Racing Haydens now a pro trio”)
- 1999: 6/3 p.4 (“Haydens fighting for top of standings Nicky holds slim lead over Tommy in cycle division”)
- 1999: 9/23 p.1 (“Life in the fast lane Nicky Hayden wins national title as brothers balance motorcycle racing, work at Catholic”)
- 1999: 12/14 p.1 (“Hayden honored”)
- 2000: 6/15 p.9 (“Owensboro racing into limelight with the Hayden family”)
- 2001: 6/27 p.1 (“Revved Up Motorcycle enthusiasts turn out big for Haydens”)
- 2001: 9/9 p.1 (“Deliverance After rocky start, Nicky Hayden fulfills expectations”)
- 2002: 2/16 p.5 (“Hayden brothers gear up for '02”)
- 2002: 6/27 p.4 (“Haydens' success reaches others”)
- 2002: 7/11 p.6 (“Nicky Hayden on pace for historic title”)
- 2002: 8/11 p.1 (“Nicky Hayden wins national crown”)
- 2002: 8/14 p.7 (“Nicky Hayden is a source of local pride”)
- 2002: 9/14 p.3 (“Nicky Hayden joins world title circuit”)
- 2003: 1/29 p.1 (“Nicky Hayden takes career to next level Owensboro racer honored with Mayor's Award for Excellence”)
- 2003: 2/8 p.6 (“Nicky Hayden set to take world stage”)
- 2003: 7/28 p.4 (“Nicky Hayden records best MotoGP showing”)
- 2003: 11/3 p.4C (“Hayden ices award; Rossi leaving”, named Rookie of the Year)
- 2004: 4/8 p.4D (“Motorcyclist Nicky Hayden house hunting in Europe”)
- 2004: 7/5 p.4D (“Hayden equals his career-best MotoGP finish”)
- 2004: 9/21 p.19S (“Hayden brothers put area on motorcycle racing map”)
- 2005: 2/12 p.5S (“Hayden brothers build on last year”)
- 2005: 6/22 p.1B (listed one of the 50 "hottest bachelors" by People magazine)
- 2005: 7/11 p.1C (“Hayden gets 1st MotoGP win Local rider leads wire-to-wire at Monterey, Calif”)
- 2005: 7/26 p.1D (“Haydens to appear on Leno”)
- 2005: 9/29 p.1B (“Nicky Hayden geared for career-best points finish”)
- 2005: 12/5 p.1C (“Rising star Hayden made late run to finish 3rd in MotoGP standings”)
- 2006: 6/25 p.1B (“Series leader Nicky Hayden gets first win of season”)
- 2006: 7/21 p.1D (“The Kentucky kid Nicky Hayden returns to U.S. with MotoCP lead”)
- 2006: 7/24 p.1C (“Hayden pads points lead with victory Pedrosa up to second in standings after Rossi suffers blown engine”)
- 2006: 8/3 p.6B (“Will Nicky Hayden be our best-ever racer?”)
- 2006: 9/24 p.3B (“Nicky Hayden re-signs with Repsol Honda's MotoGP team”)
- 2006: 10/30 p.1A (“Hayden takes world title Owensboro native capitalizes on defending MotoGP champ's fall”)
- 2007: 1/1 p.1A (“Top 10 stories of 2006”)

- 2007: “2/10 p.1S (“World champion Owensboro's Nicky Hayden adjusting to life of MotoGP”)
- 2007: 7/29 p.1C (“MTV films life of MotoGP star Owensboro's Nicky Hayden celebrates 26th birthday with friends, TV cameras”)
- 2007: 11/14 p.6B (“Nicky Hayden to appear on MTV's `TRL' this afternoon”)
- 2007: 12/8 p.1C (“`Kentucky Kid' gets encore showing Documentary follows Owensboro's Nicky Hayden race MotoGP”)
- 2008: 6/2 p.1C (“Full Throttle Owensboro native Nicky Hayden hopes his Honda team's struggles are about over”)
- 2008: 8/27 p.2B (“Nicky Hayden featured in Men's Vogue”)
- 2008: 9/12 p.3D (“Nicky Hayden leaving Repsol Honda 2006 MotoGP world champion reportedly will sign deal with Marlboro Ducati”)
- 2008: 9/15 p.1C (“Hayden second at Indy Owensboro native has best finish this season”)
- 2008: 9/16 p.1C (“It's official: Hayden heads for Ducati Owensboro rider wants to finish strong for current team”)
- 2009: 2/7 p.4S (“Hayden brothers enter season of change”), 8/31 p.1B (“Hayden third at Indy”)
- 2010: 1/27 p.1C (“Nicky Hayden eyes better season Owensboro racer finished strong in first season as MotoGP rider for Ducati”)
- 2010: 2/6 p.6S (“Haydens prepare for another season”)
- 2010: 6/7 p.3C (“Nicky Hayden OK following crash”)
- 2010: 8/29 p.3C (“Nicky Hayden: Indy race `special' Owensboro racer looking for first top-three finish of season”)
- 2010: 8/30 p.1C (“Ducati shows confidence in `Kentucky Kid' with new 2-year deal”)
- 2010: 11/25 p.2B (“Nicky Hayden undergoes surgery on right wrist”)
- 2011: 1/24 p.1C (“Hayden looking for progress out of Ducati testing Owensboro rider finished seventh in championship standings last season”)
- 2011: 2/12 p.5S (“Hayden healthy, ready to get under way”)
- 2011: 5/16 p.6C (“Tommy Hayden claims sixth career SuperBike win”)
- 2011: 8/29 p.1C (“New Ducati model provides hope for 2012”, 12/30 p.3C (“Hayden injured in training accident”)
- 2012: 7/31 p.1C (“Local Sports”)
- 2013: 2/11 p.1B (“Hayden geared for big year”)
- 2013: 5/24 p.1A (“City's Walk of Fame will add”)
- 2013: 7/26 p.1C (“Inductees have pride in hometown”)
- 2013: 10/18 p.4C (“Hayden signs with new team”)
- 2014: 6/6 p.2B (“Former world champ Hayden has wrist surgery”)
- 2014: 6/16 p.1A (“Walk of Fame plaques near appear”)
- 2014: 6/25 p.1B (“Walk of Fame plaques to be unveiled Thursday”)

- 2014: 7/4 p.1B (“Local star Hayden gives back”)
- 2014: 7/26 p.1D (“Hayden recovering from second wrist surgery”)
- 2015: 11/5 (“Hayden reached pinnacle, but never forgot his roots”)
- 2016: 5/16 (“Hayden notches victory in Malaysia”)
- 2017: 5/18 (“Hayden has major surgery after bicycle crash in Italy”)
- 2017: 5/19 p.1C (“Hayden's condition 'extremely critical'”)
- 2017: 5/24 p.1B (“Hayden tribute set for Friday After 5”)
- 2017: 5/27 p.1A (“Hayden fondly remembered at tribute", public visitation will take place at Haley-McGinnis Funeral Home on Sunday and funeral services will be at St. Stephen Cathedral on Monday)
- 2017: 5/27 p.2B (obituary)

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## From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Nicholas Patrick Hayden (July 30, 1981 – May 22, 2017), nicknamed "The Kentucky Kid", was an American professional motorcycle racer who won the MotoGP World Championship in 2006. Hayden began racing motorcycles at a young age. He began his road racing career in the CMRA before progressing to the AMA Supersport Championship and then to the AMA Superbike Championship. He won the AMA title in 2002 and was approached by the Repsol Honda team to race for them in MotoGP.

In his first season he performed well, finishing fifth in the championship and winning the Rookie-of-the-year award. However, this was followed by a difficult second season in which he managed eighth overall. Hayden then rallied in the 2005 season by scoring his first Grand Prix win at Laguna Seca, and finishing third in the standings at the end of the season. The next year, 2006, would be Hayden's greatest in motorcycle racing as he won the 2006 MotoGP world title, breaking Valentino Rossi's five-year consecutive streak. He remained with Honda for two more seasons without a world title, before moving to Ducati for 2009. Hayden had five largely unsuccessful seasons at Ducati, with his highest finishing championship position a seventh place in 2010. He subsequently moved to the Honda Aspar team in 2014 where he raced for two seasons before making a move to the Superbike World Championship with the Ten Kate Racing Honda team.

Hayden finished fifth in his first season in the World Superbike Championship with the highlight of his season being a win in Malaysia. For 2017 Hayden continued with the Red Bull Honda team (formerly Ten Kate Racing team).

On May 17, 2017, Hayden was hit by a driver while riding his bicycle in Italy. He suffered a traumatic brain injury and died five days later in a local hospital. Hayden was posthumously inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame in 2018.