

# GOLDEN WHEELS

FRATERNITY  
*Auto Racing Pathfinders*



Issue #1 – 2011

*Welcome to the 2011 Season, .....* and a belated start to the newsletter. I'll mark that up to being frozen part time, a tad of lazy part time, waiting for info part time and a tad bit of lazy. That's my story (excuse) and I'm sticking to it.

With what looks to be a good 2011, let's start it like we quit 2010, with our esteemed.....

**President's Column:** Well folks it's February, and as I write this, there is fresh snow on the ground, and not much going on in the racin' business except Nascar. And with the recently concluded season opener at Daytona, all I'll say about that was it certainly was interesting racing. But there will be a season. When the thaw finally comes, we will start our season off with the annual Sandblasters car inspections, static show, and hot rod show. This extravaganza, hosted by Warren Kindle of Sandblasters Inc. just gets better every year. A great excuse to polish up the old race car or cars, and spend a day telling lies, er stories to your fellow racers, some of whom you haven't seen since last fall.

Remember that if you plan to participate in on track activities with your car this year, it must go through a rigorous inspection, where we usually find out why you went so fast last year. And then we fix it! So mark your calendar for Saturday, April 23rd., and join us at The Plant Farm in Arlington, WA. The show runs from 10am to 3pm. And plan to buy a hot dog and some chips while there. The proceeds go to the "Gail Jubie Memorial Fund", a charity that your club strongly supports.

While we're on the subject of the upcoming racing season, some of you know, but most do not, that the West Coast Vintage Racers club trailer was stolen a while back. Reading the recent WCVR newsletter, they mention that their treasury was in pretty good shape for the coming season. Then this! Lost was the trailer, 20x30 tent, fifty chairs, three BBQs, two propane tanks, three folding tables, five coolers, two McClure carts, sixteen orange traffic cones, two sledge hammers, chafing dish and other utensils, 5000w generator, ramp etc. The estimated total loss is \$10,000.

For Golden Wheels members that attend our on-track sessions, you know just how much that trailer and it's contents contribute to what we do. In fact, I would not be overstating that we have come to depend on it. In his message, Marv Price, president of WCVR suggests that renewing members consider adding a little extra to their renewal to help with the loss. It has long been my position that Golden Wheels members that participate in our on track events, should consider a dual membership in WCVR, as they are even more that our full time partners. Aside from providing the items mentioned above, they are very involved in negotiating the great schedule we all enjoy. I am a dual member

and I will be helping them out when I renew. If you are interested in joining WCVR and helping out, you can contact me and I will see that you get an application form.

I was prepared to get off my soap box after the above, but then I read a little further in the WCVR newsletter. They have negotiated with a large motorsports firm to buy a major brand of racing tires at special pricing for Golden Wheels and WCVR members. Marv gives examples of sets of four sprint dirt and asphalt tires, as well as the same for midgets. From experience, I know these are smoking deals. If interested, please contact me and I will pass on the information.

The 2011 season brings new rules to both Golden Wheels and WCVR. They are virtually the same except for 1 very minor difference. If you plan to run with us this year, you need a set. Contact me, and I'll see that you get one.

Lastly, membership renewal started off gang busters this year, but has slowed significantly. If you haven't renewed yet, there is another form in this newsletter. It's getting late to get our roster together for this year, so we need to hear from you. I'm a really nice guy, but George Hespe might threaten to cut off your newsletters. You don't want to make George mad!

Looking forward to all the new cars, and new members we've received lately, and the best on track season ever. Hope to see you all there. Since I started this column some time ago, some very bad news has come my way via NWRacechat. It seems that the owner of the Port Angeles track is currently tearing out the stands, buildings and track. Although we have had difficulty with the surface there, P.A. is a track with vast history, and was geographically close for many of us. It is with much sadness that I pass along this information. *Hal*

As Hal mentioned in his message, we have had a very nice jump in **NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS**. A nice list for this issue starting with former members Fred Gibson of Bothell, WA and Jack Bumgarner of Marysville, WA. Fred's a former midget racer and Jack was his crew member. How far back were they members? Fred is #246 and Jack was #12 to join Golden Wheels. Welcome back Gentlemen.

Our New Member list includes; Angie Kindle, wife of Warren Kindle, Marty and Joann Munce of Tacoma, WA, Robert A Keslin of Gilbert, AZ, Kenneth V Wood of Everett, WA (Kenny is a son of John and Sue Wood), Clyde Sullivan of Portland, OR, John Beilke, and his mother Margaret, of Puyallup, WA, Clyde Sullivan of Portland, OR, John and Kris Kaylor of Seattle, WA and Mike Long of Salem, OR.

It is great to have you all on board. Welcome to Golden Wheels!! "We Hope You Enjoy The Ride".

Hal also mention the significant slowing in renewals for 2011. For those of you that have Have Not Renewed, be it from the "Did I or didn't I do that" syndrome that many of us suffer from, the lack of a reminder, or any other reason, your Mailing Label will have your Membership Number Hi-Lited in PINK. Please use the 2011 Dues form on the Business Advertisement page.

Thanks, hope to hear from all of you soon so we can get started on the 2011 Roster.

**BIRTHDAYS!!** Members that celebrated a January Birthday were; Gary Berg (the very first, on the 1<sup>st</sup> I believe), Paula Ashworth, Ruby Shervey, Warren Kindle, Allen Follett, Don 'Pete' Samuelson, Bill Blackwell, Howard E. Welch, Dave Craver, Fred Honeycutt, Harold Braff, Rayford Hiatt and Hal Schlegel.

February saw Nancy Dennison, Delores Randall, Gerry McLees, James Read, Wesley 'Butch' Duren, Dan Robinson, Richard Norton and Sam Rodriguez celebrating a birthday along with those Valentine goodies.

In March we have Marileen Moser, Ronald 'Bud' Melby, Don Kane, Ed Williams, Dick Nelson, Ralph Hunt and Don Menard doing the Cake & Candles as the celebrate another year. And no, I won't make any remarks about March winds to the cake & candle part of the day. Best Wishes to All ! May you have many more!

Speaking of Birthdays, we have a lot of blank spots in our list. If you never filled out a membership form, added your spouse without a date or any reason you aren't on the list, feel free to use the enclosed dues sheet to do so. Just write the Birthday on it with the date.

Also, a reminder to our Merchants that support Golden Wheels with an ad to please remit the \$25 annual fee when it is due (it's birthday?). We appreciate your support and urge all of our members to support these businesses in return. Thank you.

The latest word on the **Golden Wheels Web Site** is progress is going well with a panel of experts editing information and photos along with other checks and fixes. I know that Mel Anthony, Art Weller, Jim Edwards, John Wood, Jim Read, and probably more, are providing web master John Kaylor with this great history of Northwest Racing that we can share with others through the internet. A reminder again of the site address change that has been made. It is now - **[www.goldenwheels.org](http://www.goldenwheels.org)** - and the old [www.goldenwheelsfraternity.com](http://www.goldenwheelsfraternity.com) address is gone and won't even get you back to the pits for help.

At our February Breakfast treasurer Gary Berg informed attendees that in 2010 Golden Wheels had made donations in excess of \$1000. This money comes from bond interest. Our general treasury balance at that time was \$6304.49.

**Reminders**..... Another gentle nudge for those still in arrears on their 2011 Dues as this will be the last news letter if we don't hear from you.

Remember our Breakfast Sunday March 15<sup>th</sup> (if this is back from the printer in time) and the next will be on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Always the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. Always at Shay's. Dinner at Shay's on tap every Tuesday around 5:00 PM.

Be sure to make the Annual Inspection / Car Show at The Plant Farm on April 23<sup>th</sup>. Exit west off I-5 at exit 206.

On April 17<sup>th</sup> the Port Gardner Vintage Auto Club will be having their annual "Show N Shine" at Jennings' s Park, 6915 Armar Road, Marysville, WA 98270 from 11am-4pm. Always a nice little gathering of cars and folks and you may just see a Golden Wheels car or two there also. Drop by as several of their members support the Inspection/Car Show.

A slow, slow time for info so will fill out the rest with some walks down 'Memory Lane' from the Pike Green Collection. Enjoy!! ..... And be sure to

.....*Keep Your Wheels Down!!!*



The improved version, driven by Vern Bruce and owned by Bruce Passmore.

Seattle, Wash. . . Ever hear of the Humming Kibosh? Believe it or not, that was actually the name of a race car, the first effort in a long line of cars built by Jack Smith. He constructed the Kibosh at his home in Calgary Alberta, when Ray Haroun was making history at Indianapolis in 1911. The Hummer was powered by a motoreycle engine and rode on four sturdy bicycle Wheels. Sad to say that it never caught on or set the racing world afire as Jack had expected. Nevertheless, it proved to Jack that he could build a car that actually ran, and build he did for the next forty years.

Jack is one of the rare breed of far-sighted car builders who consistently manage to stay a few years ahead of the competition. Before lightweight materials became readily available, Jack covered the exterior of one of his creations with leather. Not such a shabby idea, in view of the fact that all airplanes of the era were skinned with fabric. He also became a driver of championship calibre, which will be covered in a later issue.

However, the last two cars he produced, are in my opinion, the most noteworthy here. More than a decade before Jack Brabham brought a rear engine car to Indianapolis and started a revolution in oval track car design in this country, Jack Smith designed and put two of them together in Victoria B.C. The first was built in 1947, followed by an improved model two years later. The 200 cu. in. four banger engines were installed midship and cross mounted in the chassis. Both cars sported four wheel independent suspension and were chain driven. The early model had one chain connecting the engine to a jackshaft, which in turn drove two more chains, one to each rear wheel. The tube frames doubled as water lines between the engines and front mounted radiators. Even more incredible, the old master builder used cylinder heads of his own patented design and ground his own camshafts, using a homemade jig and an ordinary bench grinder. The heads were of the "F" type (intake valves in head, exhaust in block), and differed in one respect. The early model had a standard four intake and four exhaust valves, the second car had an improved head containing eight in-take valves. Four Stromberg carburetors were mounted whereby each of the eight intakes was fed by one throat. The car weighed in at an amazing 990 lb., wet.

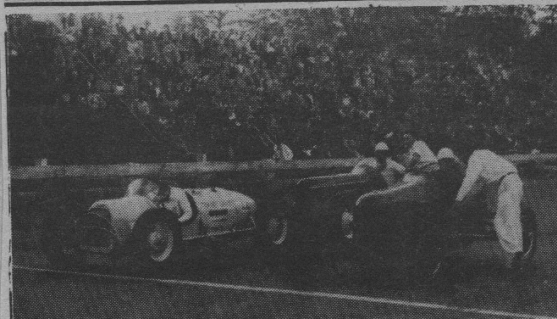
Treated as a curiosity not to be taken seriously when they first appeared, the local racing community soon learned to have a healthy respect for the two odd looking machines when it became apparent that one or the other was usually present in the trophy dash lineup. They scored their share of the main event victories as well, and were seldom very far back in the field.

As with the rear engines we now have, their true

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## Yesterday's Wheels

by  
Pike Green



The early model rear-engine car, owned and driven by Howard Stanley, is on the outside front row in a trophy dash lineup. The driver on the pole wishes his name withheld, and the late Ken McMurray completes the 3-car field. (Chuck Hobson Photo)

*PAUL BOOMER*

### Yesterday's Wheels

Continued from page 9

forte was in handling, being far superior to any of the conventional cars in that department. Had these two funny looking little cars been able to completely dominate the local racing scene, perhaps the clock of history would have been turned ahead by quite a few years. But tradition dies hard, and a few of the big bore and Offy-powered machines were able to hold the line against the threat posed by two little home made 200 cubic inch jiggle heads.

I spoke with Jack several days ago, and learned that some of today's car owners and builders are still seeking his advice. Quite a tribute to the genius of one of auto racing's Grand Old Men.

Just a hint to the Modified Boys. Keep a wary eye on the 1300 lb., rear engine, chain driven 302 being readied for this season by Mike Hitchcos and his sons, Clifford and Alan.

## Yesterday's Wheels

by  
Pike Green



Sprint racing safety has improved considerably since this pre-war photo was taken at the old Oakland mile dirt track.

Seattle, Wash. . . Contrary to the expert opinions of many who report the news in this nation, Indianapolis 1973 will definitely not be judged the most infamous race in history. Reporters claiming to be "friendly" to auto racing, have often overlooked any benefits derived from racing in favor of the bizarre. Five lives were claimed at the speedway in 1909, while another single fatality was recorded in 1910.

Newsmen of the day were using the same trite superlatives, designed to create an aura of insanity surrounding auto racers, which they attempt to pass off as being original today. Partly as a safety precaution, the track's dirt surface was paved with bricks for the first 500-mile event in 1911. The death toll continued to mount at one each year in 1911 and 1912, where the winning speed of 78.72 mph was considered "too fast" by the knowledgeable gentlemen of the press. Engine size was then reduced from 600 c.i. displacement to a more conservative 450 c.i., yet the average speed climbed to 82.47 by the conclusion of the 1914 500. Always concerned with safety, the racing community trimmed the starting field from 40 cars, in 10 rows of four, to the 33 starters in rows of three as we know it today. Maximum engine limits of 300 c.i. displacement, were imposed in the years 1915 through 1919, which only produced two 500 milers since the 1916 event was scheduled at 300 miles and racing was suspended in 1917-18.

Despite the fact the engines were now limited to half their original size, the pace had quickened to 88.05 in 1919, and no less than three were killed. Amidst the familiar cries of "too fast," engine displacement was then dropped to 183 c.i. for the next three years, while speeds continued to inch upward, reaching 94.48 in 1922. Curiously, these three years of racing at record speeds were "safe" years. Another cut in cubic inches, to 122, was effective in slowing the pace to 90.95 in 1923, but the reduction in speed went unnoticed by the press when an accident claimed another life. Peter DePaolo completed the trip in his 121.780 c.i. Deussenberg at 101.13 in 1925, which naturally suggested another slash in horsepower, this time to 91½ c.i. (Smaller than today's midget engines). Although these engines were the smallest in The Speedway's history, and in spite of the resulting lowered speeds, 2 more lives were lost, 1 in 1926, and another in 1929.

Another point of interest during the small engine era is that auto manufacturers of the time were closely tuned to the happenings at Indianapolis, for it was then that small bore passenger cars were mass produced for the first time in this country. These engines proved to be less than adequate in the eyes of the public though, so the emphasis went back to increased engine size at Indy. From 1930 through 1937, engines of 366 cubic inches were the order of the day. Upon completion of the 1937 classic, the average winning speed had increased to 113.380, which was only 12 mph faster than the winning time in 1925.

However, in the 8-year period, 1930 through 1937, Indy was the scene of the worst carnage ever. The cost was 18 lives, five of which were lost in 1933 alone. In a frantic effort to reduce the human toll, new restrictions appeared regularly. Fuel was limited to 45 gallons in 1934, reduced to 42½ gallons in 1935, then to 35½ gallons in 1936. Commercial grade gasoline was imposed in 1937, and from '34 through '37, oil was restricted to 6½ gallons. Two-man cars have never been outlawed to this day, yet they were also dropped voluntarily. With the adoption of 274.59 c.i. limits in 1938, speeds were still on the upswing, but the death rate was somewhat slackened. Engines in this category saw service until 1957, with Billy "The Mad Russian" Vukovich posting their best mark of 130.480 in 1954.

History seems to tell us that whatever precautions may be taken, from limiting engine sizes to restricting fuel, the speeds will eventually increase and fatalities will occur. Nothing short of starting single file and running the full distance under a yellow flag would have altered these facts in the past. History also records tremendous contributions toward the safety, economy and comfort of our modern day automobile, listing anything from a simple safety nut to lifetime tires. Were it not for the men of Indianapolis, past and present, who chose a way of life where they occasionally venture into the unknown, I'm afraid that we all would be driving automobiles with the power and safety features of a 1924 Essex.

This is what Indianapolis is all about. From lessons learned at the Speedway, auto racing in general is also a great deal safer now than at any other time in our history. Nonetheless, the hard, cold fact is that auto racing is still a dangerous sport. If, as indicated by their writing, some reporters actually envision the day of absolute safety on any speedway, I'd like to buy a pack of whatever it is they're smoking. Controversy now rages again at Indy over the same issue that has plagued the speedway periodically for 64 years. Always, there have been divided opinions among those most directly concerned, with valid arguments presented by both sides, and always there have been reporters eager to present only their own biased judgment.

Certainly, the opinions expressed by Gordon Johncock, Andy Granatelli and others of their stature in today's racing world cannot be ignored. But to accuse the Unser brothers of entering into some sinister plot hatched by Parnelli Jones simply because they voiced a differing opinion, is sheer hysteria. Perhaps the friendly reporters have forgotten that the Unser family, too, was touched by tragedy at Indianapolis when older brother Jerry was killed there in 1959. Another unnamed "famous driver"

has been branded as a potential killer because of alleged petulance while in his race car. Since when has anyone at trackside been gifted with a power of perception great enough to know what enters a driver's mind in the opening moments of a race, or to foresee the circumstances surrounding any driver at a time when a number of split second decisions must be made?

Jerry Grant is quoted as saying that the 64-year-old Speedway is unsafe. Beyond any doubt he has earned the right to say so, but I have seen no mention of others who regard the speedway as no more dangerous than the world's narrow, twisting road courses where cars capable of 200-plus compete on a regular basis. True, the present situation at the 500 warrants renewed scrutiny, but no problem has ever been resolved in a satisfactory manner without the airing of both sides to the conflict. Let's leave the rule making to those persons best suited to handle matters involving the governing of their own sport, the participants, where history indicates that any restrictions imposed are transient at the outset.

◆◆◆◆◆ == BUY=SELL=FIND=TRADE == ◆◆◆◆◆

**For Sale:** Rail Frame Midget. Early 97c.i. Offy #213. Franklin Steering, Hilborn Injection, Halibrand rear end, 12" Halibrand Wheels. 25K **Brian McMurtry** 425 350-0999

**For Sale:** Midget offset Bennett quick change housing w / side plate & rear covers. 4.44 to 1 Ford ring & pinion. Used Franklin 10 spline gear sets #7-8-9-23 special-35-41. **Also:** Midget Race Car - 1930's vintage. Looks like a Solar. Lots of LA Calif. history. No Engine or gear box. Contact: **Jack Corley** 360 NE 20<sup>th</sup> Dr., Gresham, OR 97030 Phone: 503-667-1725

**For Sale:** 1971 Bob Trostle midget. Very rare as only three (3) were built. Has new Chevy II engine, new tail & nose and chrome plating. Torsion rear, leaf spring front suspension. Car was in process of restoration. Death in family forces sale. \$11,000. Contact: **Sam** at 480-830-8883.

**For Sale:** '74 Edmunds-Kane Midget. 6 sets gears, 12 wheels, Chevy II, Halibrand & spare parts. \$16,000 w / open trailer or \$20,000 w / 2008 14' enclosed trailer. Call: 360-387-4696

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