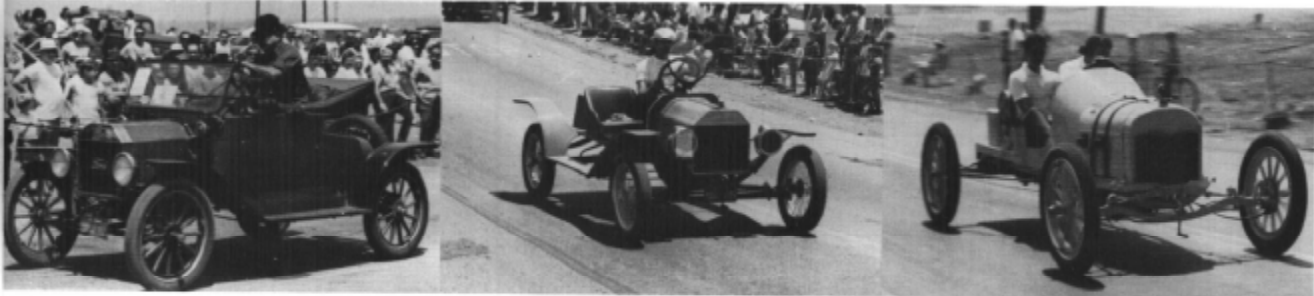


ON THE THIRD SUNDAY IN MAY OF EACH YEAR, THE LONG BEACH MODEL T CLUB HOLDS ITS ANNUAL SHELL HILL CLIMB. HERE IS A PICTORIAL REPORT ON THE FOURTEENTH YEAR OF THIS OUTSTANDING EVENT.





It s an old Southern California custom! At least it has been for the past fourteen years. And each year it gets a little bigger.

The Fourteenth Annual Shell Hill Climb, held on May 17 attracted about eighty participating Model T Fords, in addition to an undisclosed number of additional T s which just came to watch the contest, and who knows how many modern cars. Spectators were like ants - all over the place.

Rules for participation are simple - and there is a class for just about anything that can run. The first requirement is that the car must have a Model T Ford engine block. Having met that simple qualification, you can try your luck. From here, there are classes and sub-classes to cover any form of T-powered vehicle. All entries must be licensed for the street and have certain safety features such as sturdy wheels and effective brakes. This year s event saw cars with the basic requirement, a T block, as the only Model T item on the car, all the way to beautifully restored and authentic show cars.

Shell Hill is a 22% grade located in the oil fields of Signal Hill, near Long Beach, California. The course is one-tenth of a mile long; cars are



timed from a standing start to the top of the Hill. Terminal speed is not important; the time it takes to make the grade is all that counts. The average T will make the run in around twenty-five to thirty seconds. The hottest cars run just under nine seconds. There were a few that could be there yet, still trying just to make it to the top!

As in our coverage of this event last year, (Vol. 4, No. 4) just about anything the mind could imagine and that was powered by a T block entered in the contest. Beginning with Doc Pruden's DOC Fronty (which blew a transmission early in the day) to a number of worm-drive TT trucks; everyone had his champion.

Failures, of both minor and major nature, were common. One car left the line, traveled no more than ten feet and paid off like Las Vegas - parts and oil dropped out like pay dirt. Seems a connecting rod broke and that the end still attached to the crank literally reamed out the side of the engine.

Our San Fernando Valley Chapter champion, Ellis Gray, had his OHC Roadster entered and it ran quite well. Geared too high, it failed to break any records this year, but since this event will be repeated on the third Sunday in May next year (and in the years that follow), he will be back.

In fact, we'll all be back. This is just too good to miss!



*Photos and Text by Bruce McCalley*

## THE HILL CLIMB, MAY 1970

*From the June 1970 issue of THE MAGNETO NEWS, the Long Beach Model T Club's publication.*

Speed, participation and attendance records were broken at the biggest Hill Climb yet! What a day!

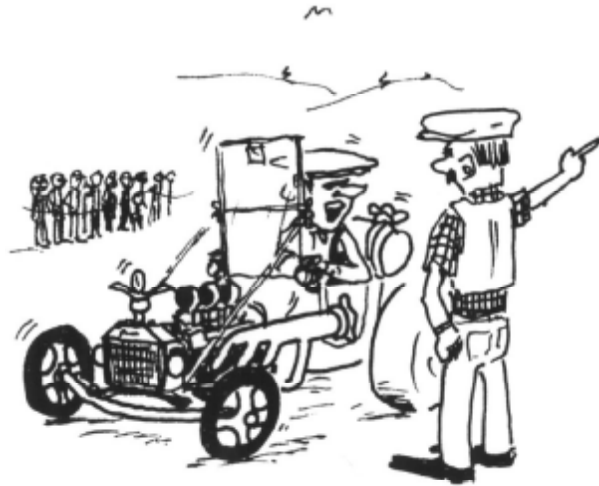
Clem Sala finally beat Doc Pruden by shattering Doc's record with a time of 8.15 seconds! Doc had been the only one to hold the record since 1966 when we started keeping records of the times. His 8.887 that year stood until he broke it himself last year with 8.22. Sala, hot on his tail last year, broke Doc's old record with an 8.50, but not before Pruden's top run. Although the spirit of competition grows every year, we knew last year that Sala "had the taste of blood" and this would be a hot competition year. Doc blew second gear on his first run this time and came out with a "no time." Wait until next year!

The eighty T's registered set a new participation record. Each driver is entitled to three official runs. Some T's had as many as four drivers as the whole family got into the act. It's no wonder it was difficult to get a turn to run.

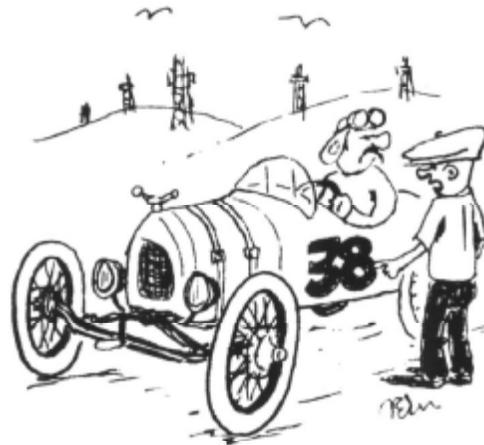
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Would you guys mind if I just started in reverse?



But she's mostly Model T!



Is that your number - or how many seconds it takes you to get up the hill?

Trophies were awarded in thirteen classes. These were for stock cars of various body and weight classes; semi-modified cars (non-stock carburetion, ignition, etc.); modified (overhead valves, etc.); modified with non-Ford crankshafts; and an unlimited class which required only a T block.

Stock class cars generally ran the hill in excess of twenty seconds (best time was Tim Stangland who drove his stock speedster in 17.82) and the average was around twenty-five seconds. The modifieds ran from 8.15 to 20 seconds. Slowest time for the day was 147.02!!!!



R. Hendricks (33.36)



Doug Abernathy (34.01)



L. Baglietto (29.87)

WHERE POSSIBLE, THE OWNER'S NAME AND BEST TIME ARE SHOWN

It would be difficult to imagine a type of Model T which didn't appear on the Hill. Everything from made up bodies, many of which showed sure signs of the loving hands of home, to completely stock, well restored, show cars.

These pictures, as well as those on the first two pages of this article, will certainly illustrate this fact.



G. Seguire (38.85)



Herb Bramley (16.76)



Ellis Gray (9.24)



B. Hand (12.79)



B. Halloway (12.97)



D. Williams (28.72)

S. Alexluder (21.03)



Vic Sala (9.12)





K. Prichard (27.61)



Mark Hanna (23.95)



Clem Sala (8.15)



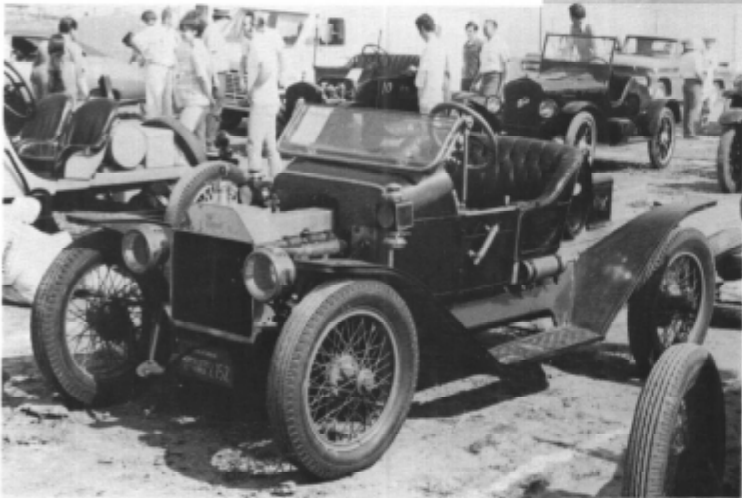
R. Davidson (15.16)





A. Uslanghi (9.24)

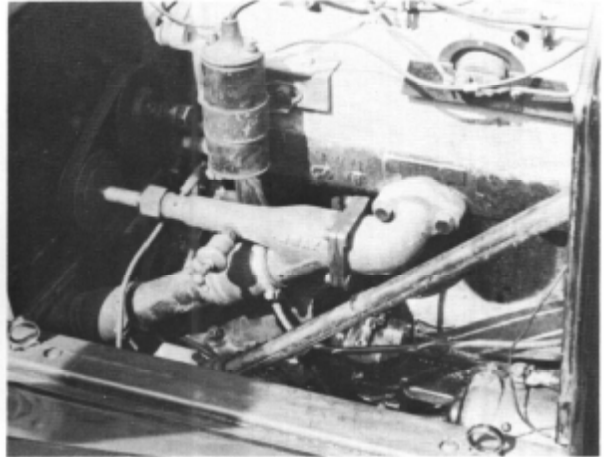
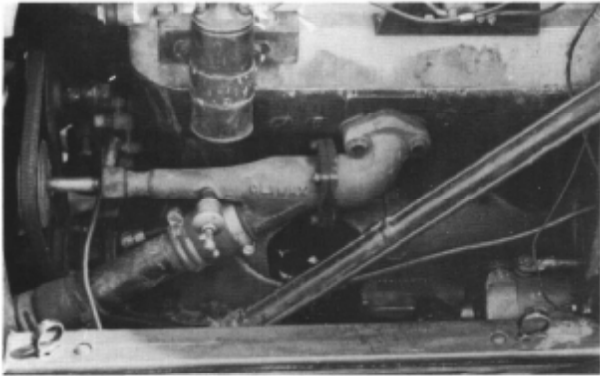
N. Ray (28.08)

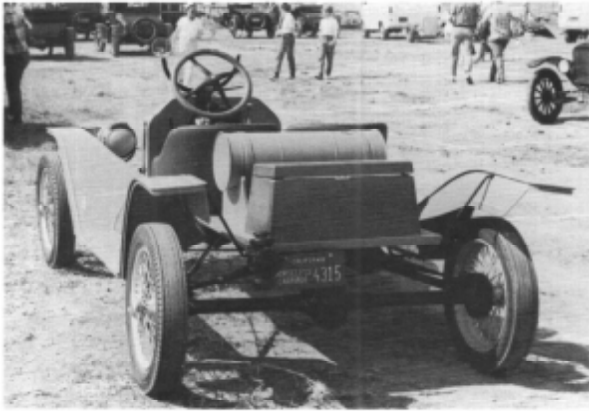




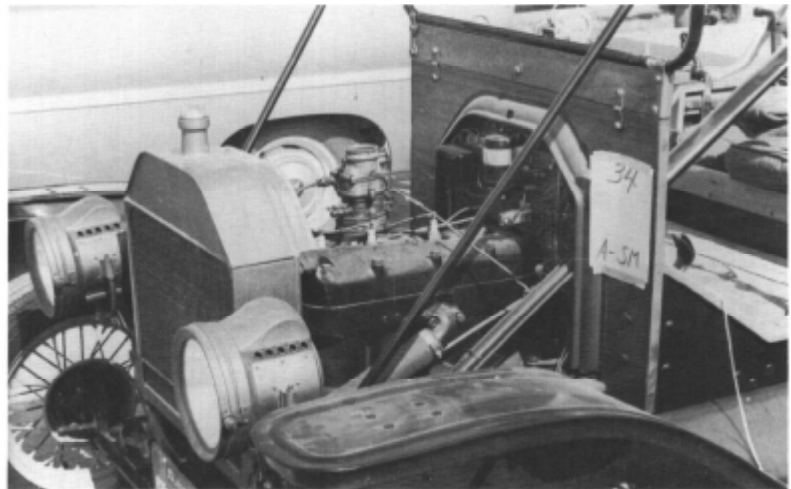


Running like a clock, waiting for the starting flag, this '15 Roadster made about ten feet before a rod let go and punched a hole in the side of the block (below). The car was running a Model A crankshaft and had welded rods to adapt the T style pistons to the A type big ends.





Those interested in building speedsters can get hundreds of new ideas here. Every conceivable type of body style can be seen. Engines run from pure stock to extremely modified. More than a few of the participants build cars for the sole purpose of "making the Hill."





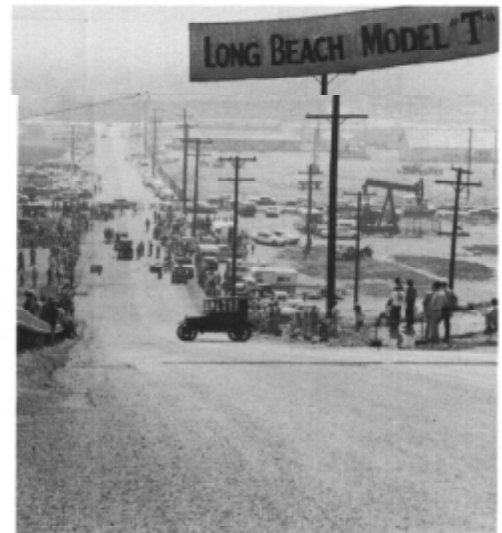
P. Streckewald (18.36)



Ellis Gray's car, which was featured in Vol. 4, No. 4, ran well but not well enough. So, it's back to the drawing board until next year.



The Long Beach Model T Club made every effort to provide for the comfort of participants and spectators. As the day wore on, these "comfort stations" were removed. For some reason, the load seemed heavier.



A few of the entries could not even make the grade. If you couldn't get up going forward, you tried reverse. Failing that, you tried sideways. If this didn't do it - well, you can always come down.