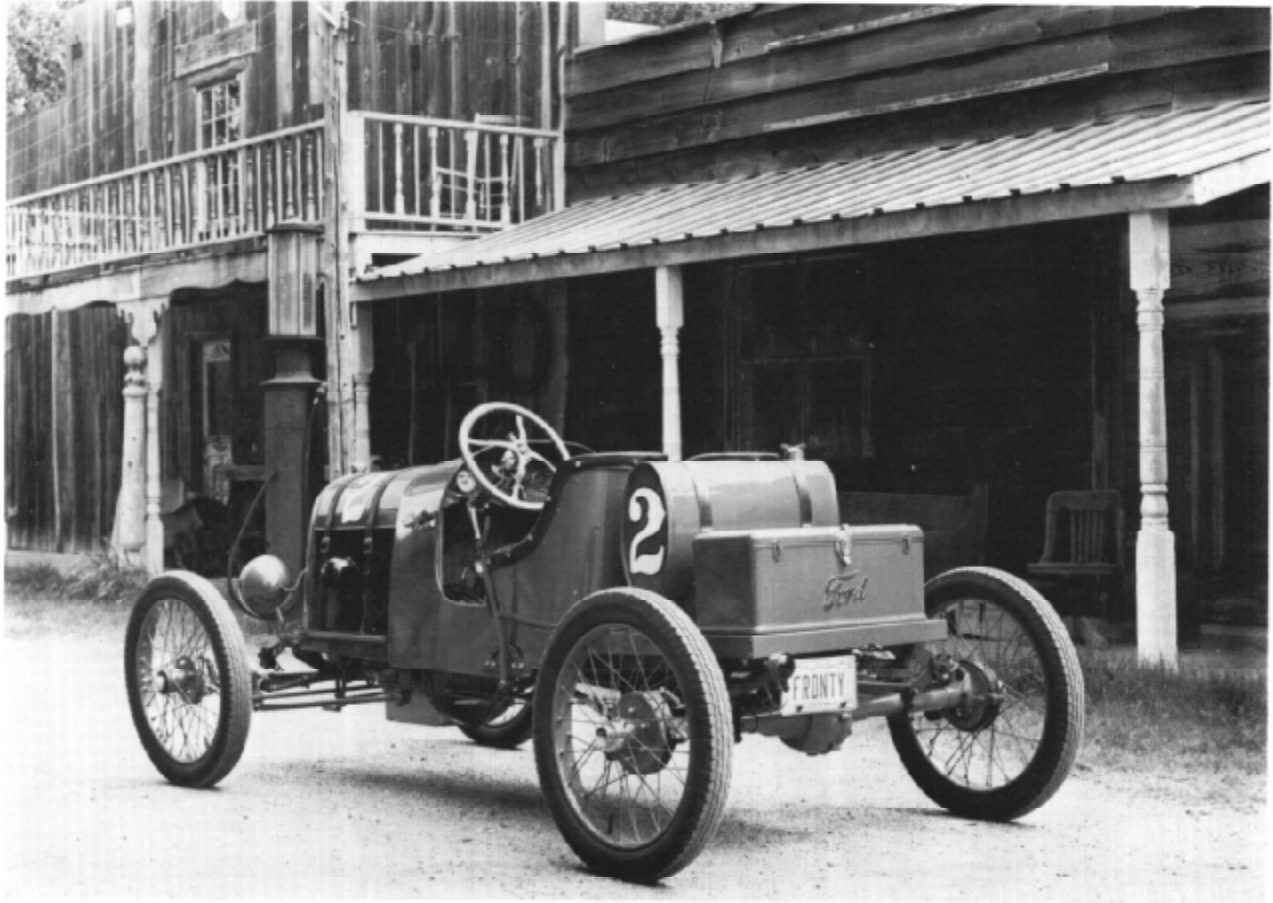


Red Deuce

By FRED HOUSTON

Photos by Neal East



ENGINE SPECIFICATIONS

Frontenac Model R S-valve overhead.
Model A full pressure crankshaft with oil pump on rear of camshaft.
American Bosch front plate ignition system, distributor, coil and dash switch.
Ball bearing fourth main.
Aluminum pan (original).
Blackhawk Chief water pump.
Winfield Model H carburetor.

OTHER ACCESSORIES

Ruckstell full ball bearing rear axle with 3 to 1 gears.
AC outside brakes.
Faultless lowering brackets.
Fat Man steering wheel.
Friction shocks.
Buller Coupler trailer hitch.
Rant-Slip clamp-on pedals.
Williams gas pedal.
Wheels - 30 by 3% Universal.
AC speedometer.
Rim-wind clock.

The idea for building the "Red Deuce" was conceived in 1971 when Fred Houston attended the MTFCA "Rocky Mountain Ramble" and developed a friendship with member Wayne Atkinson of Provo, Utah, along with a budding appreciation of Wayne's 1927 Model T speedster.

Soon after returning to Oklahoma, Fred acquired the two Dan Post books which are considered the "authority" on the Model T speedster; *The Fast Ford Handbook* and *The Model T in Speed and Sport*. The annual *Vintage Ford* speedster issues and the past exploits of past-president, Ed Archer provided additional information and encouragement. Careful study of these materials along with several original *Ford Owner and Dealer* magazines provided the information necessary to construct this authentic Model T speedster.

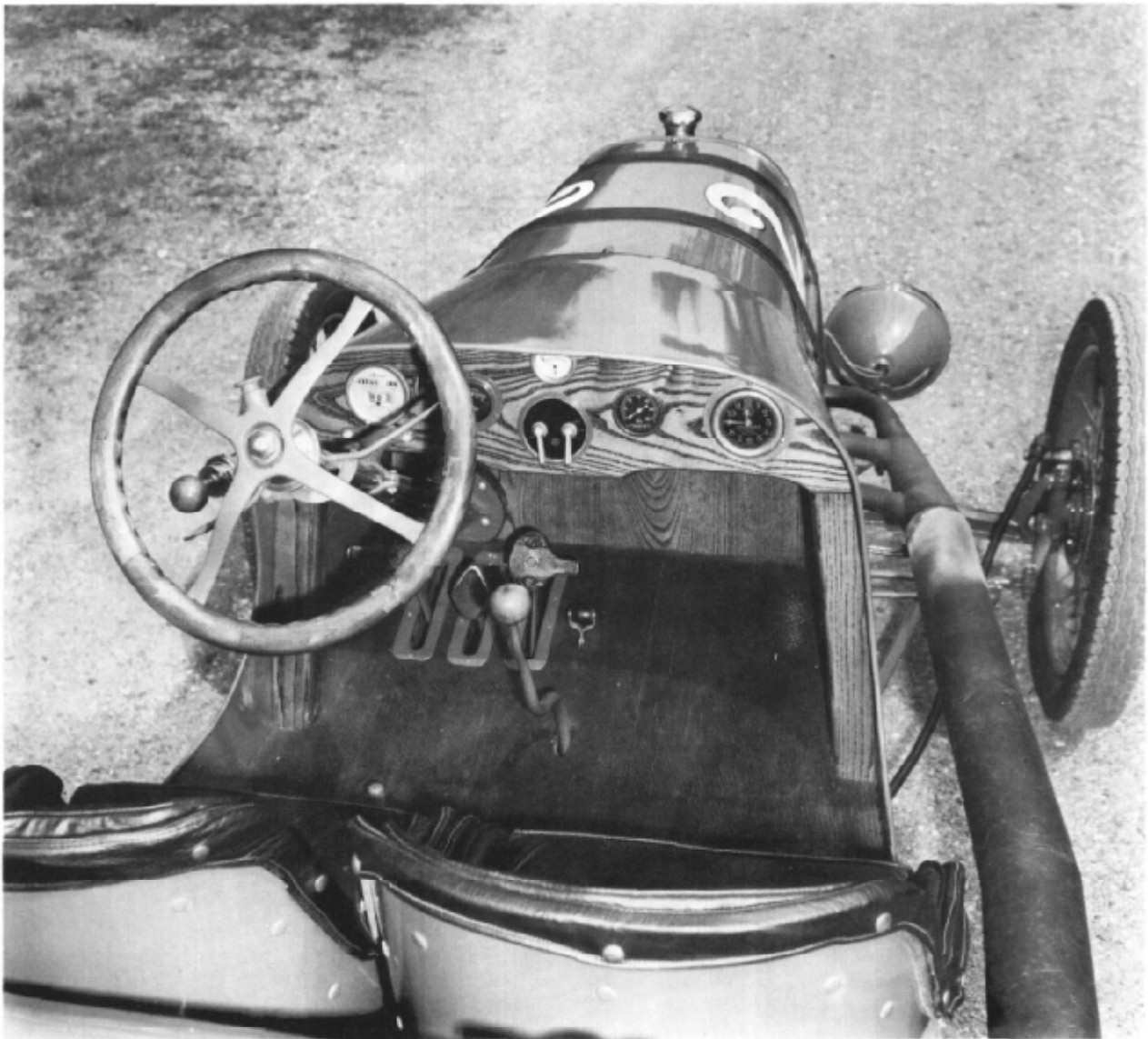
Thus was developed the challenge for the construc-

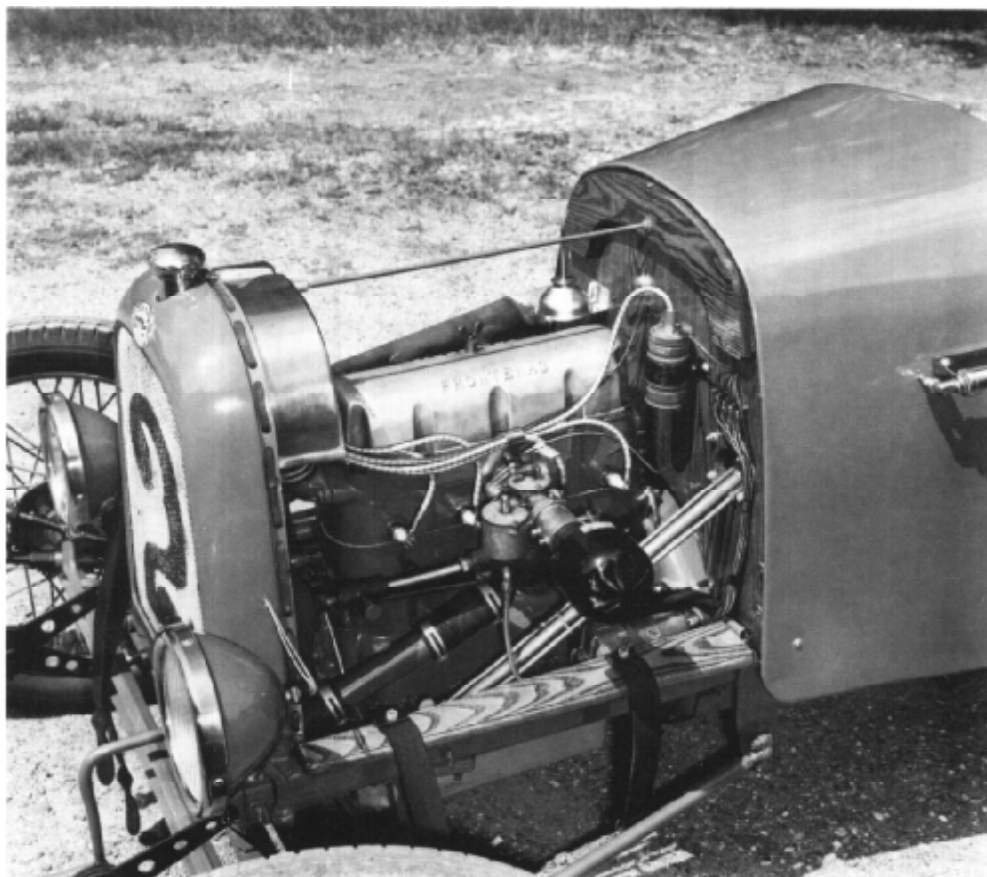
tion of the 1922 Red Deuce - to construct a Model T speedster which is a composite of the better techniques used by the sports-minded Fordists of the early twenties. In other words, to build a dependable touring machine that could have been built fifty years ago, using the "proven Model T accessories and techniques available in that era.

The components were gathered over the next three years via purchases from ads in *Hemmings Motor News* and *The Vintage Ford*, swap meets, and many phone calls.

The chassis used was from a 1922 touring retrieved from a farm gulley near Cushing, Oklahoma. It had been the family car for the eleven-member William Wolff family during the twenties. William was the grandfather of Lavina Houston, Fred's wife.

The Ruckstell rear axle was purchased via *Hemmings*,





“sight unseen from a Chicagoan who had rescued it from a corn field in Iowa. The Ford had evidently been retired to the cornfield soon after the Ruckstell installation as no wear could be found in the unit.

The Fiat-style radiator shell is Willys-Overland which, interestingly, fits exactly between the Model T frame rails. Mounting brackets riveted to the shell (now sporting a Frontenac emblem) provided an easy installation. Model T inlet and outlet connections replaced the original Overland connections.

Much good advice and encouragement was provided by an old friend and Model T authority, Felix Graves. It was Felix's instructions and hand tools that resulted in the twenties-style 20-gauge steel body and bucket seats with a rolled wire bead. Solid ash was used for the body framing, firewall, dash and gas tank saddles.

The 30 by $3\frac{1}{4}$ wire wheels are Universal on the rear and Stewart on the front. Hubs from Ford wood-spoke wheels are used. Another pair of Universal wheels have since been acquired and will be installed on the front to complete the set.

As was expected, the Frontenac head proved to be the most difficult component to locate. After searching for a year and a half, a lucky break came when a phone call to Doc Pruden, of Santa Monica, California, regarding a Model T distributor advertised in *The Vintage Ford* produced not the distributor, but the Fronty head!

Doc had attended a swap meet that very day and had taken the Fronty owner's phone number. Another phone call soon resulted in the purchase of the Model R head along with an original aluminum oil pan and a Winfield Model H carburetor for good measure! All were installed on the Red Deuce.

The large metal tool box, which by happy coincidence is exactly the same length as the early Hupmobile gas tank, was one of two owned by Tulsa member, Bob Boward, a frequent *Vintage Ford* contributor. Bob's father, a career army officer (and incidentally one of the Flying Tigers of WW-II fame), had removed the tool boxes from WW-I army trucks. Bob's father had used them during his service career to provide additional trunk space during his travels.

Restoration was completed in July 1975, just in time to be driven 2000 miles round trip to the MTFCA Kentucky Tour. The Red Deuce today has been driven over 5000 trouble-free miles, including several tours and hill climbs. With the versatility provided by the Ruckstell with 3 to 1 gears, she is quick and responsive in the hills and “double nickles easily on the expressways.

Although not intended to be top hill climber with the original equipment, high-speed gears and stock cam, she is the second fastest Oklahoma hill climber, only twelve-hundredths of a second off the hill record.



