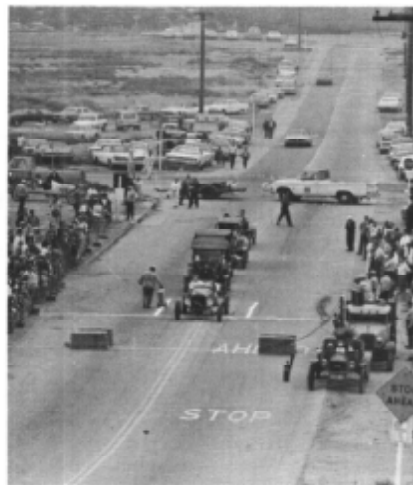




HILL CLIMB!



ON MAY 18th, 1969, THE LONG BEACH MODEL T CLUB HELD ITS 13th ANNUAL SHELL HILL CLIMB

Participation by every enthusiast in the area, regardless of Club affiliation, makes this one of the outstanding events in Southern California. Here is part of this year's event.

Every year, sometime in May, for the past thirteen years, the Long Beach Model T Club has staged its Hill Climb. The event draws participants from great distances, who, it would seem, build their cars for this one challenge.

The Hill Climb is held on Shell Hill, a twenty-two percent grade, in the City of Signal Hill, near Long Beach, California. Shell Hill is a normal public road which is blocked off for this one day so that anyone who is interested can see what his Model T will do. Only Model T Fords are allowed to compete.

The average stock Model T will cover the tenth-mile distance in somewhere between twenty-five and thirty seconds, depending on the body style, weight, engine tune, etc. The fastest time of this day was 8.22 seconds, in a modified speedster owned and driven by Doc Pruden, of Santa Monica, California.

Variety is the name of the game when it comes to Model T Speedsters. Only the builder's imagination seems to determine what the car will be. The following pictures will testify to this.

Cars, which must be powered, at least, by a Model T block, are run in a number of classes and sub-classes, so that every entrant has a chance to compete against cars similar to his own. This year the classes were: Stock, broken further into

Photos and Text by Bruce McCalley



classes of Enclosed Cars and Pie Wagons; Touring Cars and Station Hacks; Roadsters, Pickups and Light Delivery Cars; Speedsters; and Trucks. The Semi-Modified Class consisted of similar cars and sub-classes, but allowed the use of special heads (but not overhead valves), ignition systems and carburetion. A further separation was made for those cars with a Model A crankshaft. The Modified Class was like the Semi-Modified, but allowed overhead valve setups. The Unlimited Class required only that the engine block be Model T Ford.

Trophies were awarded in all classes. In addition, special awards were made for the ladies who drove the Hill; the longest distance traveled; hard luck; and best restored.

Best overall time, as mentioned, was (as usual) Doc Pruden, whose Dual Overhead Cam Fronty race car was also the most impressive. The major threat to Doc's supremacy was the car entered by Ellis Gray (featured elsewhere in this issue). Ellis' first run was hampered when his pressured fuel system failed, causing the car to stall on the hill. Adding an electric fuel pump on the spot, the second run started off with every indication of being a record breaker, but halfway up the hill, the top of the combustion chamber broke through; dumping water into the exhaust and ending his fun for the day.

There were other failures, too. Bill Bloomfield roared off the line with his Fronty '14 Touring, snapped the Ruckstell into high, and coasted to a stop. The Ruckstell wasn't the only thing that "snapped".

Failures or not, it's all part of the game. Lack of a trophy this year only means that they'll be back next year. And the year after that!



All runs were not made UP the hill. Here, Bill Bloomfield coasts down after having snapped something in the differential. Below, Herb Bramley tries the Hill crosswise.



Variety? Get a load of this lineup!





G. Seguire, on his way to market, stops by to "tote that bale" up the hill. This worm drive truck made it in 38 seconds in one run; took almost two minutes on another!



The latest in fire fighting equipment was on hand, just in case. The larger truck acted as announcing and judging stand. Signal Hill is one of the largest oil fields in California; hence the oil well pumps in the background.



Bill Winfield's F-Head Rajo Speedster's best time was 12.38. Naturally, being a brass T, the valve covers must be brass too.

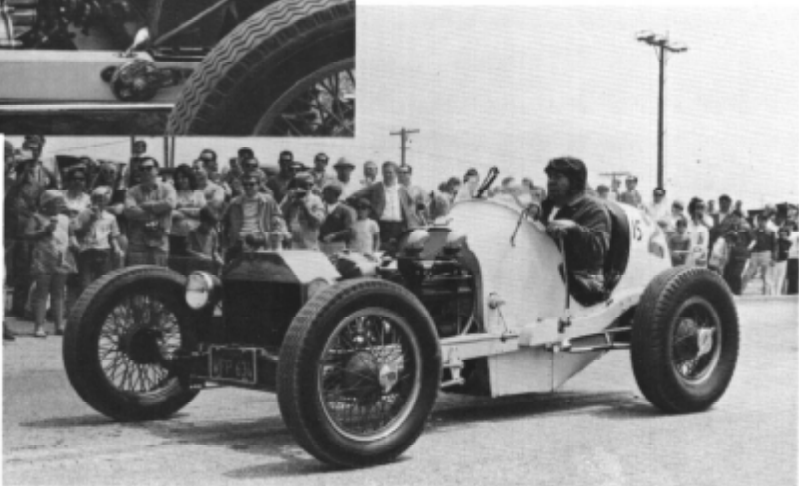
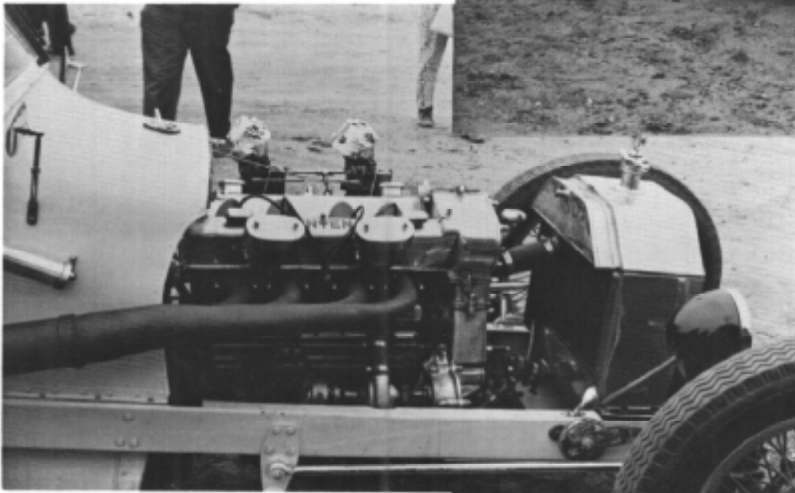


F. Cullins' stock '26 Roadster made it in 29.12 on one run, followed by Howard Genrich's Centerdoor, running in Semi-Modified class, at 14.15!





Doc Pruden's Dual Overhead Cam Fronty race car, as usual, took first place. Doc was overheard commenting: "If the distance was much over a tenth of a mile, I doubt if the thing would stay together!"





Jim Waltz drove his 1920 stock Roadster in about 26 seconds. Note the steel-spoke wheels.



Ed Archer, Member of our Santa Clara Chapter, drove his OHV Speedster over the hill in 10.61 seconds. Later, Mrs. Archer took the same trip in 11.12.



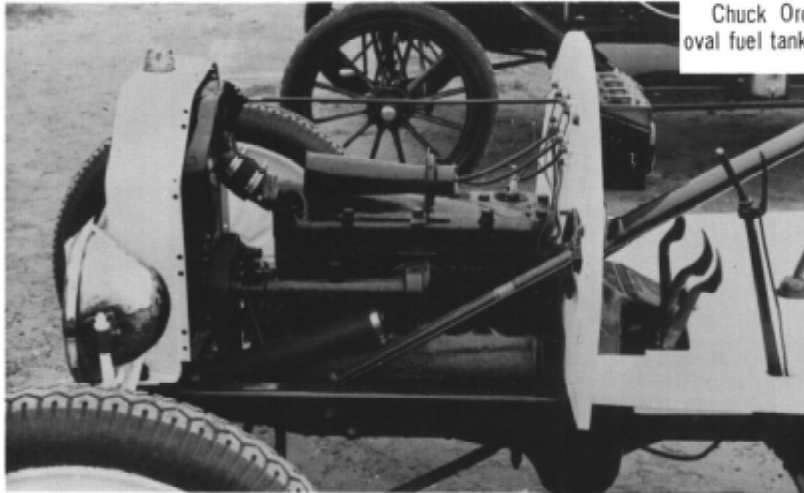


Another Santa Clara Member, Tim Stangland, ran his stock Speedster in 17.50.

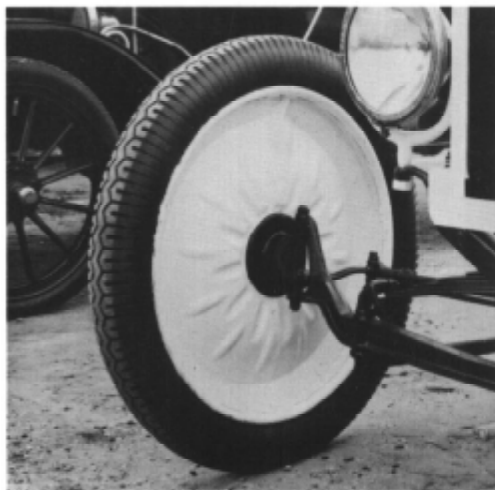
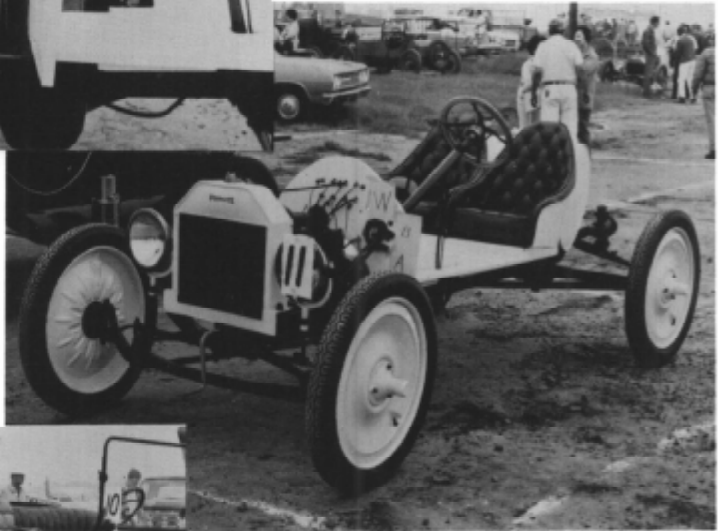


M. Monier's Speedster, running an A crank, made the hill in 12.92, one run.





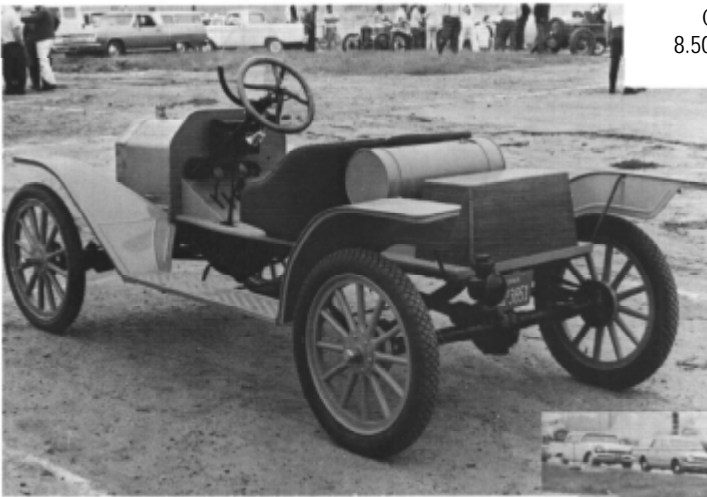
Chuck Orcutt's Stock Speedster. Note the disk wheels, oval fuel tank and Peerless radiator.





Vic Sala's '20 special-bodied speedster. Car ran in Semi-Modified class; has A crank. Best time was 10.47.





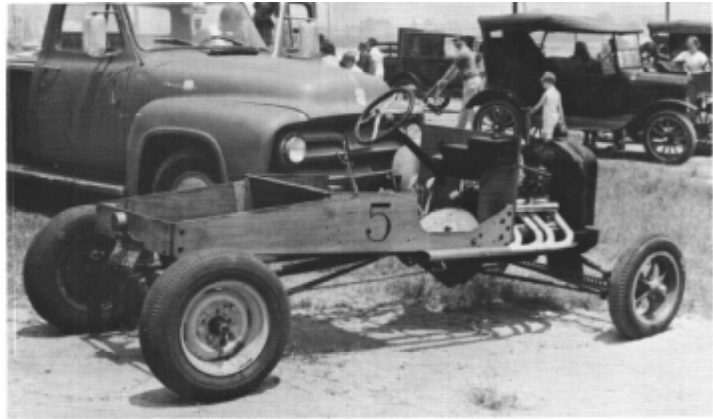
Clem Sala ran this Fronty-powered Speedster over at 8.50, almost giving Doc Pruden a heart attack.

D. Stebler's stock '14 Speedster made 19.69 on its best run. Note the monocle windshield.

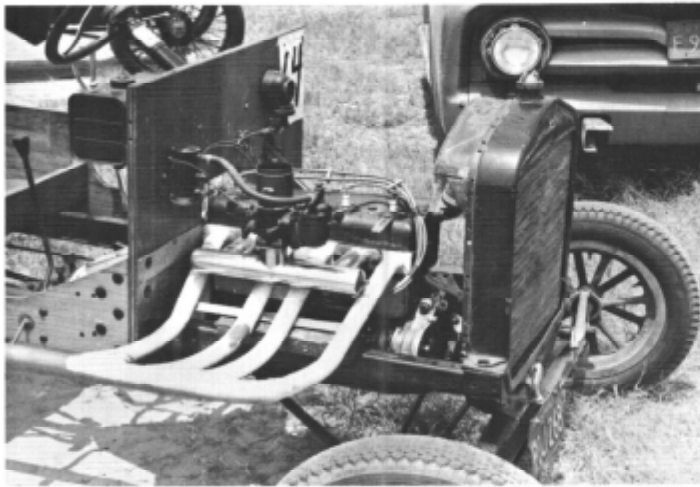


K. Sullivan's '15 Roadster Pickup.





Holes in the front axle, special carburetor, mag wheels, headers, or something prevented this car from competing.

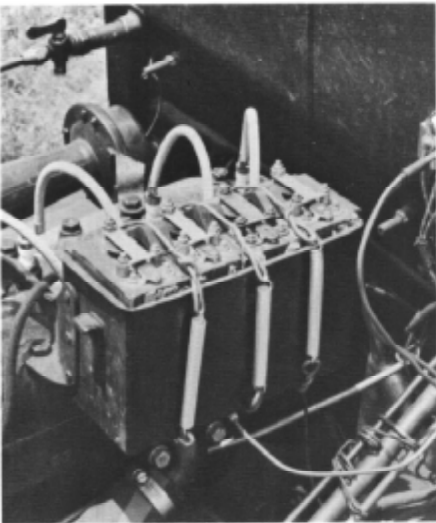


A. Aislangi entered this '13 style modified speedster in the Unlimited Class. No times were available. Car has a Rajo head and what appears to be dual Solex carburetors. Note the special body and the extreme drop at the front axle.

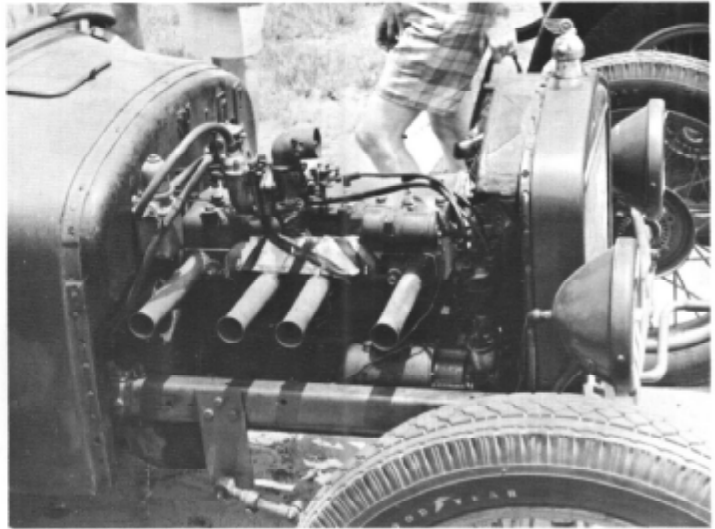




Herb Bramley's modified speedster made 17.95. Note how the cut-off '26 Touring body is sectioned over the frame.



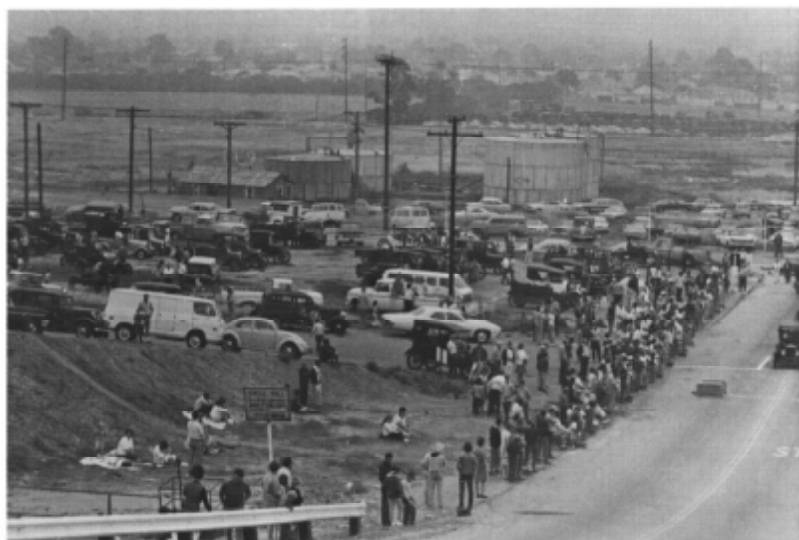
Those of you who haven't been able to find a coil box cover for your '26-7 T might use this novel method of securing the coils. Notice the right-hand horn, no doubt from a Canadian Ford (That's a little humor, son).



Joe McClelland, owner of Ford Parts Obsolete, one of, if not THE first parts houses dealing in old Ford parts. This car seemed to be stuck in a rut; made two runs at 12.12.



Paul McGinnis entered this semi-modified speedster; did only slightly better than the average stock touring cars. Back to the drawing board, Paul.



Typical Southern California weather for this time of the year, it was overcast but not cold; just right for an outdoor event like the Hill Climb. Entirely legal, the activity is not only approved by the City of Signal Hill, they encourage it.

