

Harry A. Miller Club News

Millers At Milwaukee - Vintage Indy Car Event July 13 - 14, 2018

Entry Slots Filling Up – Don't Delay!

Our July gathering of the Millers on the Milwaukee Mile is quickly approaching!
We encourage everyone to get your entry application in the mail ASAP!
This 24th annual event is expected to be one of the best attended meets in many years!

Entry applications and car history forms can be found at harrymillerclub.com, or you can request an application via e-mail: harrymillerclub@sbcglobal.net.

A photo and car description are required with your application.

If you have questions, please send e-mail to Lenore, the event coordinator at harrymillerclub@sbcglobal.net.

Hotel reservations at The Crowne Plaza Milwaukee West can be made by calling 414-389-8563 Mon. – Fri. 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. State that you are with the Harry Miller Club and the Millers at Milwaukee Mile group. Your reduced rate is \$119 per night. The hotel is just minutes from the track!



Fees:

- *Car Entry Fee: \$250 for each car (fee includes two pit passes per car)
- *Thursday Social: 2 complimentary tickets per entrant member – additional tickets \$25
- *Friday Banquet Tickets: \$50 each
- *Tent Coverage: \$100 per car

Details:

- *Parking of trailers and cars from noon to 4 p.m. on Thurs. July 12
- *Social on Thursday 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at The Crown Plaza
- *Gates open 7:30 a.m. Friday July 13 and Saturday July 14
- *Photo on track at 9 a.m. - begin parking on track 8:30 a.m.
- *Drivers' Meeting 9:40 a.m.
- *Cars run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day
- *Cocktail Hour/Silent Auction begin 6 p.m. at The Crown Plaza – Dinner at 7 p.m.





Bill Vukovich #9 and Chuck Stevenson #98 lead Larry Crockett #28 and Troy Ruttman #6 prior to the start of the 1954 Rex Mays Classic.
All photos by Armin Krueger, courtesy of Greenfield Galleries unless indicated

Dirt to Pavement, No Problem for Chuck Stevenson

When the drivers and crews pulled into Wisconsin State Fair Park Speedway in June of 1954, they may have looked at the ribbon of black asphalt that circled the once dirt one-mile oval and wondered, now what?

Having just spent the month of May five-hours south in Indianapolis, the next race on the schedule was the "Rex Mays Classic," a 100-mile race on the now paved "Milwaukee Mile" in West Allis, WI. It was the second paved race of four on the 1954 AAA Championship Car schedule. Having been dirt as long as the 1870's and since William Jones won the first "race" in 1903 drivers and crew members started to get familiar with the "new" track. However, it was troublesome for Marshall Teague and Johnny Fredericks who both crashed on the new surface. The Fredericks incident happened during qualifying when the Michigan driver hastily jumped from his Dunn Engineering car when shortly afterwards the leaking tail tank burst in flames. Teague's car actually ended up nosed in the creek that ran through the track.

Having run the "big cars" on the dirt at WI State Fair Park Speedway since the 1930's, the 200-miler in August of 1953 was the last Championship Car race on dirt. It was Chuck Stevenson, the Garden Grove, CA resident wrestled the famous Offenhauser-powered No. 98 Agajanian Special to victory in the 200-

mile AAA-sanctioned to close out Fair Week.

The 200-mile event was one of the better paying races on the schedule, Stevenson won, \$6625 of the \$26,500 purse put up by promotor, Tom Marchese of Wisconsin Auto Racing, Inc. The speedy Stevenson averaged 89.580-MPH on the dirt surface, completing 200-laps in 2-hours 13-min and 57-seconds in front of 24,447 dusty fans. Leading 49-laps, including the last 35, Stevenson held off Manny Ayulo of Burbank, CA for the hard-fought win. It was car owner J.C. Agajanian's third win in August 200 mile race over the last four years.

The crews who had just watched Bill Vukovich win at Indianapolis a week prior, now wondered, can he win again in a different car? Jimmy Bryan was a tough cowboy from Phoenix, but even the large 6-foot 200-pounder who was beaten and battered in his race car during the race because of a broken shock, had to take the week off to heal his body so he'd be ready for Langhorne in two weeks. Vukovich who won the "500" in Howard Keck's Kurtis 500A was entered in the No. 9 Dean Van Lines dirt car, a Kuzma which Bryan took home in second place, just in front of the winning "roadster" of Vuky.

Why the switch to asphalt? Tom Marchese had figured it was the smart way to separate the Milwaukee Mile from the other 'State Fair'

tracks, such as Springfield, DuQuoin, Syracuse and Phoenix.

Vukovich had no problem getting use to the Dean Van Lines 'upright,' wrenched by chief mechanic, Clint Brawner. Vuky outran the 30-plus cars that took time trials to take the pole in the 22-car field, just falling short of the track record set by the late Jim Rigsby on dirt. Stevenson qualified second with Larry Crockett Troy Ruttman filling out row two.

Racing legend and Indianapolis Motor Speedway president, Wilbur Shaw drove the 1954 Hudson Hornet pace car in front of the snarling 22-car field. At the drop of the green flag, it was Vukovich who led the first ten laps before Stevenson took over. Crockett who won 'rookie of the year' at Indianapolis the week prior took over the point on lap-31. Vukovich faltered, and was falling off the pace, dropping to sixth place and later dropped out on lap-71 because of steering issues. He was the first to pull 'behind the wall.'

The only incident of the race was when rookie, Crockett spun coming off of turn four and Andy Linden took evasive action to miss the Federal Engineering Special of Crockett and also hit the wall with his Leitenberger car.

Stevenson, who picked up a nice "nest-egg" of \$6,388, took just over one hour (1:01:31) to pick up where he left off last season when he won the final event of Fair Week a 200-mile duel with Manny Ayulo. But this time the former Milwaukeean just made the grade once again thwarting a desperate challenge by Ayulo, who ended up a bridesmaid again following



about 100 feet behind Stevenson. Ayulo tried his best and had made up almost two thirds of a mile in the last 25 laps. Stevenson led 71-laps including the last 48-laps. The announced

attendance was, 24,447.

Stevenson, whose cream and red No. 98 Agajanian Special was wrenched by the famed Clay Smith, averaged 97.529 mph for a new

record for 100-miles, won the Rex Mays' Classic big car grind before 31,725 spectators who contributed a purse of \$25,550. It was Agajanian's fifth win the Wisconsin State Fair Speedway since 1948.

The cleaner and to some fans, more fan friendly, the track was a hit. Several years later, the Milwaukee Mile was featured on the cover of Asphalt Institute Magazine.

A 29% jump in attendance was noted from the August 1953 and June 1954 events which saw an increase of 7,000 fans who showed up to see the likes of Stevenson, Vukovich, Ruttman and Parsons run on the pavement.

After the second Milwaukee race, the following race was at DuQuoin in which saw tragedy strike the racing community. Clay Smith who was Chuck Stevenson's chief mechanic, was killed in a freak accident in the pits during the race. Stevenson finished second, immediately retired. The Agajanian No. 98 was not seen in victory lane on the championship circuit the rest of the 1950's. Stevenson would return to racing in 1960, although never returned to victory lane. Agajanian's No. 98 returned to victory lane once again, in 1961 when a young Parnelli Jones scored his first victory on the championship trail.

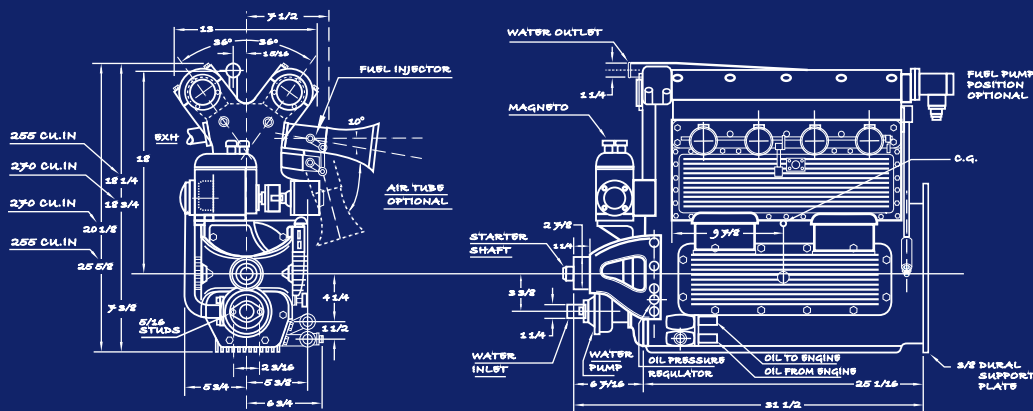
- Steve Zautke

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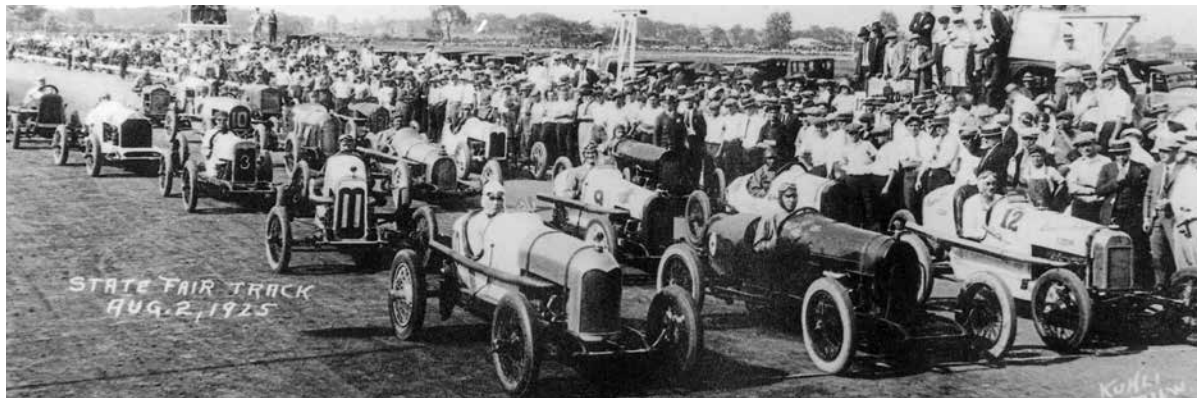
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The Milwaukee Mile in The 20's



Mattes was a popular driver - in Grover Horn's car in 1924.



In the 1920's, the "Milwaukee Mile" at WI State Fair Park Speedway was primarily an "outlaw" track. The cars and stars of the AAA had migrated to the exquisite board tracks that were fashionable in that era. Meanwhile, the "roaring twenties" saw drivers like Stag Nowicke, Bill Laudon, Ted Rostan, Porter Short, Romie Czerwinski and Carl Marchese dominate the newspaper headlines. Jack Mattes was also a popular Milwaukee automobile racer. The "state champion" in 1923, Mattes' familiar #11 was a fan favorite

and usually in contention for the win.

Sadly, as was usually the case in the first half of the 20th century for auto racing drivers, Mattes' luck ran out. During a Tuesday afternoon race on August 30, 1927, Mattes was killed and Patrolman William Tetzlaff was seriously injured when the race car driven by Mattes crashed through the fence during a race at WI State Fair park.

Running in third place, No. 11 Fronty Ford came out of the turn at the north end of the track on the last lap of a 10-mile race when

the tragedy happened. Newspaper accounts mention, "...as he came out of the turn, the spectators saw the car leave the road in a cloud of dust and tear into the fence, knocking a policeman (Tetzlaff) to the ground." The newspaper added, "Mattes generally carried a pair of baby shoes on the front springs of his car as a good luck charm. In Tuesday's race these shoes were not attached."

Mattes is now a part of auto racing history. Tip a drink in Jack's memory. He was a racer.

- Steve Zautke



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Please Consider Miller Club Sponsorship

The Miller Club appreciates all of the support provided over the years to help sustain our annual event at the Milwaukee Mile. In 2018 we will again meet at the infamous Milwaukee Mile to share an exciting weekend on the track with old friends, as well as new. There are various levels of sponsorship participation, which are outlined below. Please consider one of these opportunities, or if you know of a related business that would like to take advantage of the promotional benefits offered, we would be happy to provide additional information.

Executive Sponsorship - \$5000

**Full page ad in Miller Event Programs
3 newsletters and link on Miller Website

Associate Sponsorship - \$2,000

** ½ page ad in Miller Event Programs
3 newsletters, and link on Miller Website

Corporate Sponsorship - \$1,000

**¼ page ad in Miller Event Programs
3 newsletters, and link on Miller Website

Friends of the Miller Club - \$100 and above

**Name listed in Miller Event Program and (1) newsletter

Update from Miller Club President Tedd Zamjahn

I am really excited about our upcoming 24th Annual Miller meet, and am pleased to report we currently have over 40 cars on the roster! We do have a cut off of 60 cars for our event, so I encourage everyone who plans to attend this year to get your application in quickly!

As we announced in our last issue, Dan Davis will be attending this year with a transporter full of Millers! Dana Mecum will be bringing his six fantastic vintage racers, and many of our "loyal" members are returning with their impressive cars! You don't want to miss out!

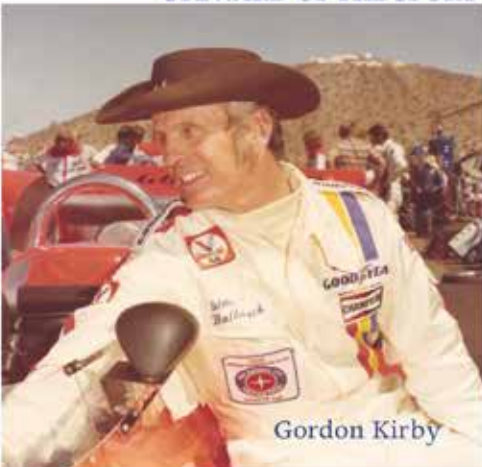
Go to our website, harrymillerclub.com and complete an entry application and history form! See you in July!!



Two of Dan Davis' cars you will see at Milwaukee Mile this July.

Wally Dallenbach

STEWART OF THE SPORT



Gordon Kirby



Coming Soon

A new biography of racing driver and CART Chief Steward **Wally Dallenbach**.

Celebrated author **Gordon Kirby** traces the long and significant life of Wally D. whose contributions to the sport of automobile racing have been enormous over the 50 years of his remarkable career.

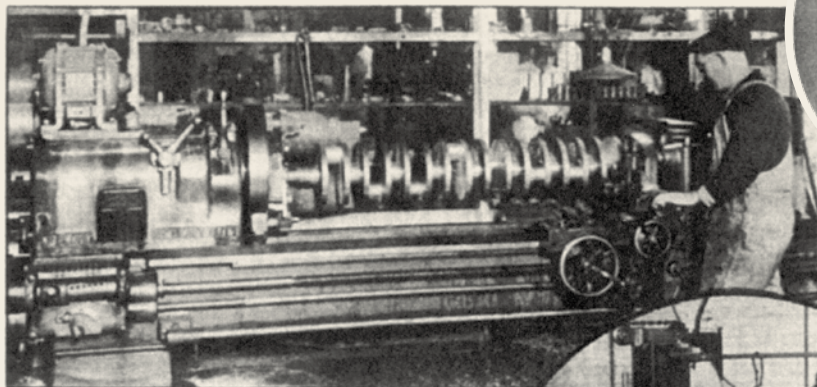
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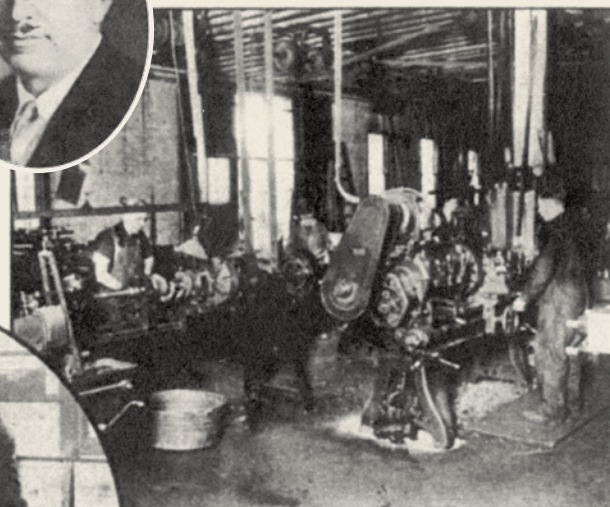
From the Racing Archives

HOW *Harry Miller* ENGINES ARE BUILT



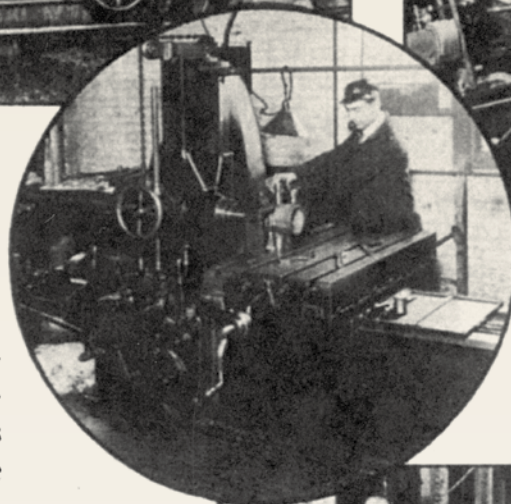
Top—Machining crank-shaft for twenty-four-cylinder, 1,000 horse-power engine.

Right—Milling machine used in manufacturing Harry Miller products.



Top—Turning a crank-shaft for a "Miller 151" hydroplane engine.

Below—Boring a cylinder block for Miller "151" marine engine.

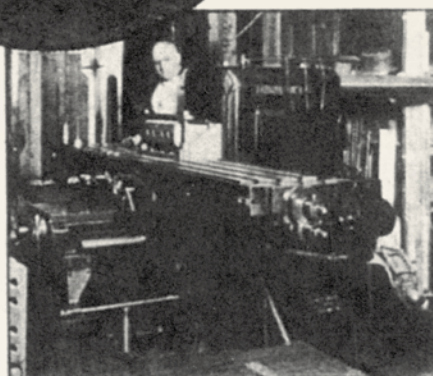


The PATTERN SHOP DIVISION, where skilled wood-workers turn out complete patterns from which aluminum, bronze and steel castings are made.

The FOUNDRY DIVISION, in which the famous Miller castings are poured from special formulas, producing cast metal of proper strength and ductility.

The MACHINE SHOP DIVISION, where the highly skilled mechanics produce, with the best and latest machinery, all of the parts embodied in the construction of Harry Miller engines. Here, special crank-shaft lathes, cylinder boring mills, grinders and gear cutters are constantly in operation.

The CARBURETOR DIVISION, manufacturing Miller carburetors of numerous sizes and various models required for Harry Miller Engines, for racing cars, passenger cars and trucks, Fire Department apparatus, hydroplanes, airplanes, and marine work.



The PISTON DIVISION, where Miller alloyanum pistons are produced for use in Harry Miller engines and as replacement parts for other types of engines.

The SUPER-CHARGER DIVISION, where complete Miller charger devices for

greatly increasing the power of engines are built. So accurately are these parts machined that the rotor in the Miller super-charger revolves at the rate of nearly 40,000 revolutions per minute.

About The Harry A. Miller Club



Harry A. Miller

Harry Miller is quite simply the greatest creative figure in the history of American auto racing. He created the great school of American thoroughbred engine design, which was faithfully followed by those who sought to outdo him. Miller was the first U.S. designer who viewed the racing car as an art object. Miller had a passion for metalwork and machinery that soared above and beyond all other designers. **From The Miller Dynasty, By Mark Dees, The Hippodrome Publishing Co. 1994*

David V. Uihlein, Sr., founder of the Harry

Miller Club, sought to bring recognition to Harry Miller and his vast accomplishments, by sharing his great race car and engine designs with younger generations.

Miller based cars and engines dominated championship competition in this country during the 1920's, winning 39 Indianapolis 500 races!

To Join the Harry A. Miller Club

Membership renewals for members who have held continued membership for more than seven years is \$25.

Please mail your check (made out to The Harry Miller Club), along with your name, address, phone, and e-mail to:

**The Harry Miller Club
P.O. Box 541**

Germantown, WI 53022

New members may complete the membership application found on the Harry Miller Club website: harrymillerclub.com, or call 262-388-5221. The fee for new members, or members renewing after 2011 is \$40.

Harry A. Miller Club Board of Directors

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This newsletter welcomes contributions, photos, and suggestions. We hope to feature stories about members' car restorations or other news pertinent to vintage auto collectors. All items submitted for the newsletter shall be considered an expressed warranty by the author that said material is in no way an infringement upon the rights of others. Editor : Lenore Heinzelmann

The Harry Miller Club News is published three times per year, and is printed for the auto racing enthusiast interested in open wheel history. The next deadline for submission is August 20, 2018.

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Be a part of this Exciting Weekend Gathering!



**Entry Roster
limited to 60 cars
Don't miss out!**

July 13-14, 2018

Millers At Milwaukee - Vintage Indy Car Event

**The Historic Milwaukee Mile Racetrack
Wis. State Fair Park**

**For details, go to harrymillerclub.com,
or Email harrymillerclub@sbcglobal.net.**

