

Harry A. Miller Club News

Sixty Years Ago – A Wild, Exciting Time for USAC Racing Fans



A.J. Foyt #5 and Jim Packard #42 duel at DuQuoin in 1960. Packard won at Springfield, Foyt would win at DuQuoin and in the Hoosier Hundred at the Indy Fairgrounds. – Ken Coles photo

When it comes to the 1960 USAC IndyCar season, the highlight of the season was the epic battle between Jim Rathmann and Rodger Ward during the Indianapolis 500. However, the 1960 season was very intriguing on a variety of levels. It was the changing of the guard, new drivers in victory lane, a second-half charge for the championship and a test at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway that would change the sport forever.

Only one race was scheduled prior to the Indianapolis 500, 22 cars started the 100-miler at Trenton, which was promoted by talented old hand Sam Nunis. Some may be surprised to know 21 of the cars were upright dirt cars and that many car-owners wanted to preserve their roadster for Indianapolis, while some just weren't quite ready either. Plus, many drivers liked hustling the upright cars on the tarmac at Trenton and Milwaukee. Veteran Johnny Thomson, 'The Flying Scot' of Lowell, Massachusetts, won the pole, however it was Rodger Ward (Leader Card Spl.) who won over Tony Bettenhausen (Dowgard -Hopkins Spl.) and Jim McWhitney (Hoover Motor Express Spl.). The trio all drove upright dirt cars.

Jim Hurtubise was a "rookie" at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, however he had already been a winner on the Championship Trail. The season prior, Hurtubise substituted for the injured Thomson, winning at Sacramento in his third start. Hurtubise thrilled the crowd at the Brickyard when he broke the track record, in the process, nearly breaking the 150-mile-an-hour barrier. In the race Rathmann and Ward staged their epic battle with Ward dropping back in the final laps to preserve his tires.

At the next event at Milwaukee, another record was broken. One not likely to be broken for awhile, when 47-cars attempted to make the 22-car field for the Rex Mays 100, the most of any race

outside of Indianapolis. Nelson Stacy (Dayton Steel Wheel Spl.) qualified 20th, not generally impressive until you realized he was faster than 27 other cars, including three Indy 500 winners, Troy Ruttman, Jimmy Bryan and Jim Rathmann who won the week prior! Rodger Ward won in the Leader Card Special over A.J. Foyt and Len Sutton (S & R Enterprise Spl.).

The IndyCar circus moved next to the circular one-mile oil-dirt Langhorne track. The tricky, ultrafast dirt track some considered too dangerous. Even some veteran drivers like Rodger Ward declined to drive. Bryan, who missed Milwaukee, asked A.J. Watson to drive the #1 Leader Card dirt car. Watson reluctantly accepted and Bryan rewarded the team by qualifying second quick behind pole-sitter Don Branson. Unfortunately on the first lap, Bryan hooked in a rut in infamous 'puke hollow' and flipped end over end to his death. Hurtubise won his second championship car race over Jim Packard and Gene Force (who later won a USAC midget feature at Peoria on July 20th).

The 1960 schedule was peculiar due to its eight-week break between Langhorne on June 19th and the start of late summer State Fair swing which began with Springfield on August 20th. There was such a gap, USAC scheduled twin 50-lap sprint car races at Milwaukee to help generate money so their drivers wouldn't be tempted to go "outlaw." Jim Packard dazzled the crowd by winning his first National Championship race in the Stearly Motor Freight Spl. The race was halted at 31-laps for rain, resumed 90-min later. Packard took the lead on lap 18 and sprinted across the finish line

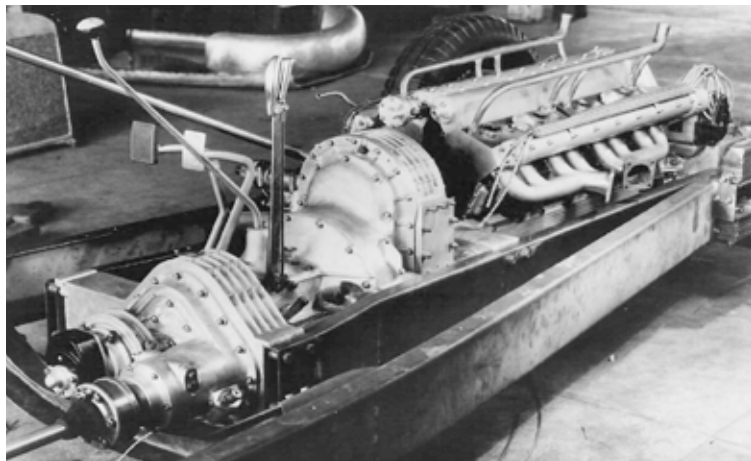
1960 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINT STANDINGS

1 A. J. Foyt, Houston, Texas	1600
2 Rodger Ward, Indianapolis, Indiana	1390
3 Don Branson, Champaign, Illinois	1240
4 Jim Rathmann, Miami, Florida	1000
5 Tony Bettenhausen, Tinley Park, Illinois	940
6 Gene Force, Richmond, Indiana	830
7 Johnny Thomson, Bayertown, Pennsylvania	800
8 Len Sutton, Portland, Oregon	780
9 Lloyd Ruby, Houston, Texas	710
10 Paul Goldsmith, Sr. Clair Shores, Michigan	700
11 Jim Packard, Indianapolis, Indiana	700
12 Eddie Sachs, Allentown, Pennsylvania	650
13 Wayne Weiler, Phoenix, Arizona	480
14 Bobby Grim, Indianapolis, Indiana	480
15 Eddie Johnson, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio	440
16 Jim Hurtubise, Lennox, California	420
17 Dick Rathmann, Roselle, Illinois	370
18 Parnelli Jones, Terrence, California	333
19 Roger McCluskey, Tucson, Arizona	320
20 Al Farmer, Fort Worth, Texas	300
21 Elmer George, Speedway, Indiana	270
22 Bob Veith, Oakland, California	256
23 Ernie Koch, Portland, Oregon	250
24 Don Freeland, Terrance, California	240
25 Bud Tingelstad, Dayton, Ohio	210
26 Jim McWhitney, Anderson, Indiana	160
27 Shorty Templeman, Seattle, Washington	157
28 Bob Christie, Gault's Pass, Oregon	150
29 Chuck Stevenson, Garden Grove, California	130
30 Richard Amick, Muncie, Indiana	100
31 Dempsey Wilson, Lawndale, California	100
32 Jack Rounds, Huntington Park, California	80
33 Chuck Hulse, Downey, California	70
34 Duane Carter, Speedway, Indiana	50
35 Jack Turner, Seattle, Washington	50
36 Bill Hameler, Pacoima, California	50
37 A. J. Shepherd, Mitchell, Indiana	50
38 Bruce Jacob, Salem, Indiana	50
39 Leonard Stephens, No. Reading, Mass.	40
40 Johnny Boyd, Fresno, California	40
41 Lee Drilling, Springfield, Illinois	40
42 Don Davis, Phoenix, Arizona	40
43 Bill Cheesbourg, Tucson, Arizona	10
44 Fred Peters, Nashon Station, New Jersey	10
45 Bob Cleberg, Tucson, Arizona	10

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“The Heart Beat of a Miller Supercharged V-16”



Original Miller Burden drive train.

Just a few weeks ago on a wooden worktable in the pattern room of a building bearing the name “Harry A. Miller” above the curved top window resembling Harry A. Miller Inc.’s previous buildings, a neat historical event occurred.

For the first time since 1938, historians, car enthusiasts and Harry A. Miller LLC employees laid eyes on the magnificence of what the complete Burden supercharged V-16 303 cubic inch engine assembly looked like. Measuring in at nearly 6 feet long, from front gear/oil case to the rear face of bell housing, the highly polished monstrosity stops any shops visitors in their tracks!

It is no secret in Miller enthusiast circles that a recreation of the ill-fated William A. M. Burden FWD “Pleasure Car” has been underway at various times over the last 10 years. At the time of his passing, legendary collector and Miller aficionado, Buck Boudeman, had assembled and created a substantial start to bringing the “Pleasure Car” back into existence. Using a few



original Miller components, sourcing new castings and parts from Miller’s original patterns and drawings, tenaciously determined Buck gathered an impressive pile of parts. Fast forward to today, and that same project is now taking form into a rolling, steering, bodied continuation of the infamous Miller-Burden Pleasure Car at the headquarters of Harry A. Miller, LLC in Troy, Michigan.

The crank driven supercharged 303 cubic inch V-16 engine shown here has not been together in complete original configuration since 1938 when Burden sold it back to Harry A. Miller, Inc., led by chief engineer, Fred Offenhauser, at that time. In the years following the sale, the crank driven supercharger intake, blow-off valve, headers, and rear adapter housings were removed. The blocks and crankshaft were switched out to convert the V-16 to a naturally aspirated 270 cubic inch displacement to comply with Indy racing regulations, and the engine was never returned to its original configuration.





Like many of Miller projects today, creating the Burden V-16 in its original form wasn't as simple as casting missing parts from original Miller patterns, machining components to original specifications laid out by Leo Goossen drawings (most of which reside at Harry A. Miller LLC in Troy, MI) and simply assembling the engine. Many obstacles have been overcome by the team of Ed Linn, Joshua Shaw, Wes Linn, and a tight group of machinists, fabricators, metal shapers, and craftsmen.

Only three photos exist of the original chassis and running gear, and those few images were taken only partway through the original build. Components such as the entire intake and blow off



system had to be fabricated by studying early conceptual drawings of the car and similar intake setups of other Miller engines at the time, such as the massive 1,113 cubic inch supercharged marine V-16 engines.

At time of publication, this magnificent Miller is being torn back down to finish all the internals, and the team at Harry A. Miller LLC hope to hear it make noise by early Spring 2021. This engine claimed to produce 500bhp in 1932... it will be an exciting venture to confirm these figures upon completion of this immaculate conception.

—By Joshua Shaw



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A Decade in the Works – Rewarding Achievement

About ten years ago, Miller Club Member Jim Beck of Utah, and his friend, Hugh Coltharp, were talking about how much fun it would be to build a Miller. Hugh is a superb mechanic, as well as a collector of vintage cars and parts. Jim had experience with sheet metal, fabrication and painting. Jim graciously shared their story about his project, as well as numerous photos.

Shared Talents Made it Happen

We decided to work together and build a car for each of us. It was a part time venture, so it took about ten years to complete. We enjoyed the project and worked on it off and on over the last decade.

We started by using a photo of the Miller 91 plan in the Mark Dees book. We computed all the dimensions from that plan. I built a buck from those dimensions and formed the frame and aluminum body from that.

I think that I enjoyed building the body panels most. The aluminum is so easy and pleasant to work with. The frame was interesting also. Each side rail required seven separate pieces and all were welded together, metal finished, and powder coated. Building the grille shell was probably the most



Jim Beck

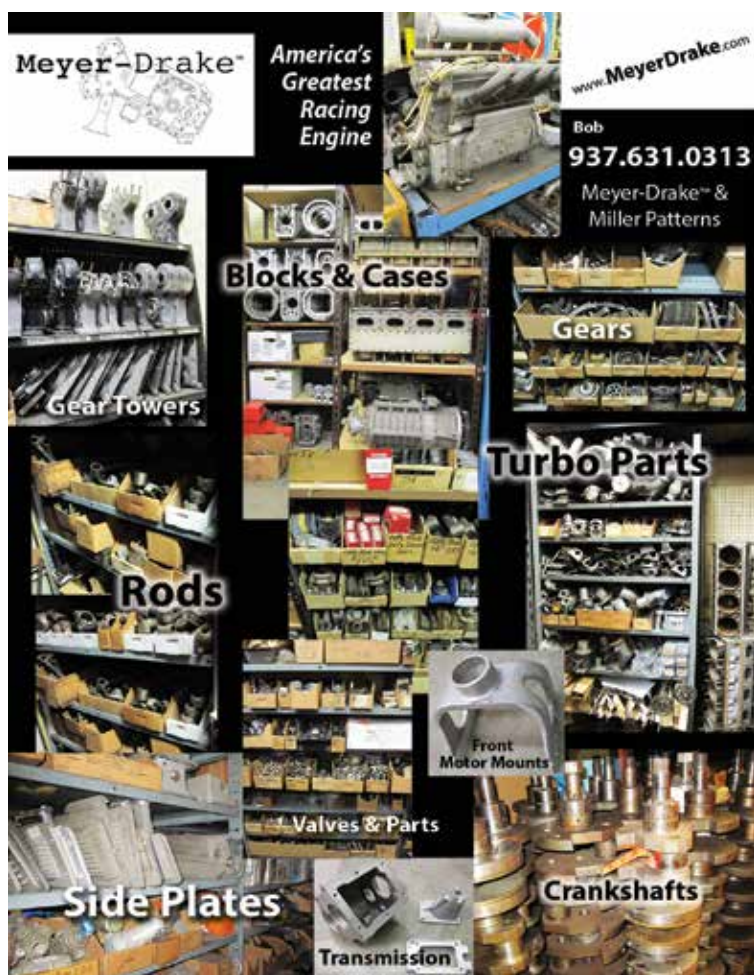


Hugh Coltharp

challenging part to build.

Hugh did all of the work on the engines, transmissions and rear axles. The cars are identical except for the colors and lettering.

–By Jim Beck

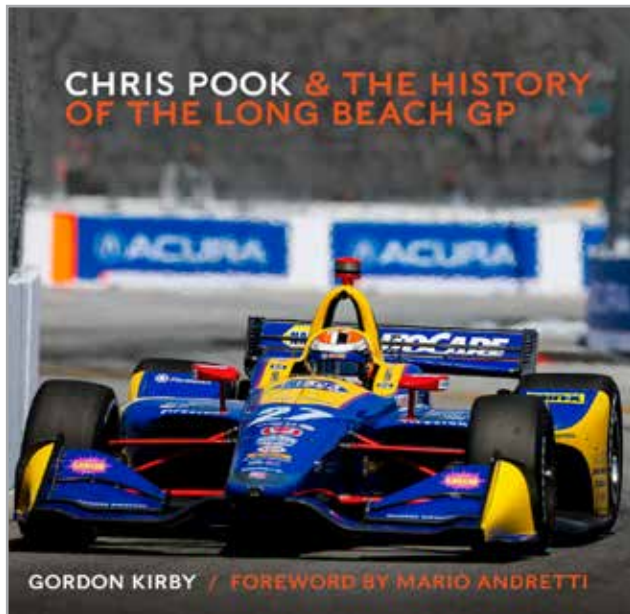


Jim's completed car.



Hugh's finished car in black.

Jim's Car in Progress



Chris Pook & the History of the Long Beach Grand Prix

In Gordon Kirby's latest Racemaker Press biography, Chris Pook relates the story of his life. Born and raised in England, Chris emigrated to the United States in 1963 and founded the Long Beach Grand Prix in 1975. Since that time, the event has established itself as America's longest-running, most successful street race. Kirby and Pook tell many tales about the difficulties Chris faced on the way to making the race succeed. The book also covers Pook's ultimately unsuccessful efforts to help promote the Indy Lights and Toyota/Atlantic series, as well as the Laguna Seca racetrack. Finally, the book details Formula One's FISA/FOCA war in 1979-1980 and the CART/IRL war twenty years later. Pook tells this story very frankly and in considerable detail, providing a rare look inside the business and politics of big-time automobile racing in the United States.

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Message From Club President – Tedd Zamjahn

I think we all agree this has been a strange and difficult year. I'm sure I'm not the only one who has found extra time to work on projects which have been sitting around. This summer I took the time to complete an old midwest fairgrounds dirt car with quite a history. The first driver, who drove for the Lawhan Brothers, was Lew Irwin. He raced the car with great success, winning several races. After his wife had a baby girl, he decided this type of racing was too dangerous for a family man. Smart man, he lived well into his 80's.

The Lawhan Brothers replaced Irwin with Joey Chitwood and built him a new car. For the 1935 season, the car was raced by Benjamin Franklin Musick, AKA, Bill Morris. Musick had to use an alias since his day job was a wheelman for Bonnie & Clyde! The car is powered by a Frontenac with a twin plug SR cylinder head, just like the engine that powered L.L. Coram to a fifth place at Indy.

After gathering many parts from one of our founders, David Uihlein, and many other additional sources, the car is about to be fired up after a long, dormant period. I found the car in the remains of a shed at Henry Adamson's home approximately 15

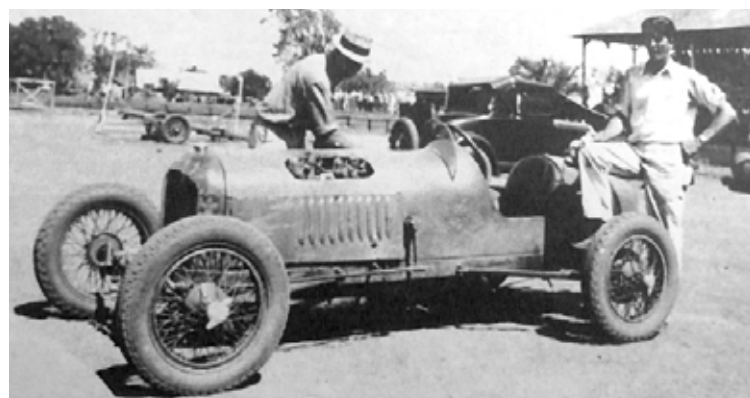
years ago. Henry had acquired the car from the basement of a bar in St. Louis through the Tarwaki Brothers. Like many of our cars, it's path to restoration has been interesting. The attached photographs show Lew Irwin standing next to the car, Ben Musick with his foot on the rear axle, and then finally me.

We all have stories attached to our old race cars which makes our hobby so fun. I thought you'd enjoy this little piece of racing history.

Hope you all stay healthy and well, and it goes without saying that I hope we can all gather together next summer at the Milwaukee Mile.



Lew Erwin stands beside car number 5.



Ben Musick at rear of car.



Tedd with his completed dirt car.

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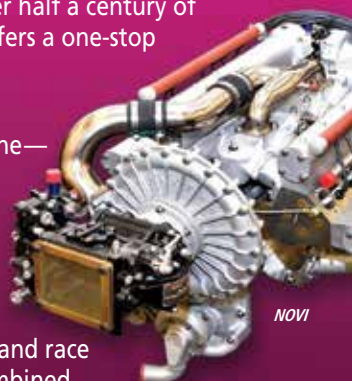
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almost a lap over Eddie Sachs (Dean Van Lines Spl) and Elmer George (HOW Spl.) who finished a lap down. Ward led the points standings with 1200 over Rathmann who had 1000 pts with his "500" win. 3 - Goldsmith 700, 4 - Branson 660 and 5 - Thomson 540.

The second Milwaukee race saw Len Sutton (S&R Enterprise) outpaced Foyt (Bowes Seal Fast Spl.) and Dick Rathmann (Jim Robbins Spl.). It was Sutton's third National Championship win and the second time in a year that Foyt finished second at Milwaukee. Popular Tony Bettenhausen (Dowgard Hopkins Spl) was in control of the race with a 19-sec. lead with 20-laps to go when an overheated rear-end started his interior on fire. Bettenhausen boldly rode on the roll bar guiding his roadster to a waiting fireman and safety on pit road. This put Foyt in the lead but later when he had to pit for fuel. Parnelli Jones (Braund Plywood Spl.) took the lead and then unfortunately the rookie ran out of fuel handing the lead to Sutton.

DuQuoin, Syracuse and the Indiana Fairgrounds rounded out the summer swing. At DuQuoin, Jim Packard in the burgundy Stearly Motor Freight Spl. looked like he may win his second in three tries. However, while leading, Packard had to pit to replace a tire on lap-77 handing the victory to Foyt. Bettenhausen finished second with Cotton Farmer (Glessner Spl), Sachs (Dean Van Lines Spl.) and Packard filling out the top-5. With his inaugural victory, Foyt moved into third place in points, 400 behind the leader Ward.

For the third time in four races, the USAC National Championship

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A physically spent Jim Hurtubise sits on the roll bar of the Peter Schmidt Special #44 after winning at Langhorne on June 17th, 1960.

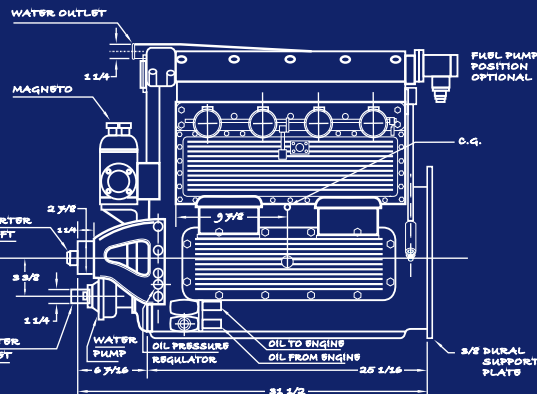
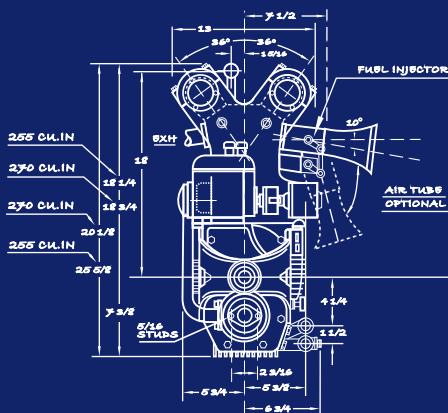
- Steve Zautke collection

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trail crowned a new winner. This time Bobby Grim driving the Bill Forbes Racing Spl. edged Tony Bettenhausen and reached victory lane at Syracuse on September 10th. Thomson won the pole as Packard led the first three-laps. Thomson took over until Grim took the lead at the halfway point. Foyt, Thomson and Ernie Koch (Jewett Cameron Spl.) filled out the top-5.

Foyt would win his first of six Hoosier Hundred victories on September 17th. Ward who was on a points drought, scored the pole position with a new one-lap track record. Ward would go on to lead the first 68-laps before he was sidelined once again with mechanical woes. Ward had started off the year with a first, second and first but had not scored a point since his Rex Mays 100 win in June. Foyt's win over Bettenhausen, Branson (Bob Estes Spl.), Force (Tiz-So Spl) and Thomson (Hoover Motor Express Spl.) moved him into second place in points only 60-pts behind Ward.

On September 25th an upright dirt car once again ended up in victory lane in Trenton as Eddie Sachs edged out Ward (this time in a Watson roadster). Foyt remained hot and accumulating more points in the Bowes Seal Fast Kurtis-Epperly roadster. For the fall race, 14 upright dirt cars fought tooth and nail with the remaining eight roadsters in the 22-car field. A two-race shoot out on the West coast would conclude the season.

In early October, Formula One World Champion Jack Brabham

tested John Cooper's rear-engine "Grand Prix" car at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Brabham accepted Rodger Ward's invitation to test the car at the Speedway after a Formula Libre race at Watkins Glen. The quiet but talented Australian rather easily lapped in the 144-145-mph range.

The West Coast swing began with Foyt winning the Golden State 100 at Sacramento on October 30th. Desperately needing points, Ward's car would only last two laps finishing 17th in the 18-car field. Rookie Parnelli Jones (Detroit Mobile Homes Spl.) finished second with Branson, Another rookie, McCluskey (Fike Plumbing Spl.) and Bettenhausen rounding out the top-5. Foyt led the point standings 1480-1360 over Ward only needing a sixth place finish to clinch.

The finale was held at the fairgrounds in Phoenix on November 20th. Foyt left no doubt as he won the finale leading the final 78-laps lapping the field in the process. The unexpected front row of Bob Cleberg and Cotton Farmer led the field to the green flag. Farmer led the first 20-laps only to crash spectacularly on lap 73 but escape injury. Hurtubise led a pair of laps before the 25-year old Foyt led till the end. Foyt became the youngest National Champion in thirty years. Sixty years ago Foyt dominated the summer, and later would dominate the decade. – Steve Zautke



The 26th Annual



Millers at Milwaukee Vintage Indy Car Event July 9-10, 2021

**Be sure to mark your calendars for our
2021 Miller event at the historic Milwaukee Mile,
located at the Wis. State Fair Park. We are looking
forward to an exceptional weekend event!
See club website for upcoming details.**

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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 December 15, 2020.

