

Harry A. Miller Club News



Photo taken 2011.

Millers At Milwaukee - Vintage Indy Car Event

July 8 - 9, 2022

It's Time to Submit Your Entry!

Be part of this exciting weekend event! Our schedule includes two days of unlimited track time on the historic Milwaukee Mile, as well as a Thursday evening welcome dinner, and Friday Silent Auction and Banquet at the Sonesta Milwaukee West Hotel. Our entry roster is limited to 60 cars!

For entry details or to request an entry application, go to harrymillerclub.com or
Email harrymillerclub@sbcglobal.net.



The Kelso Auto Dynamics Special and the Exceptional Woman behind the Team



Lloyd Ruby in the Lindsey Hopkins Special. Still wearing the Kelso Logo on the helmet, Ruby qualified second fastest overall on the final day of qualifying.

A popular saying is, if a car looks fast, it should be fast. Quality craftsmanship, a good crew along with some strong financial backing usually means success on the racetrack. However, at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, nothing is given. The Kelso Auto Dynamics Special is one such example.

Coming to Indianapolis in 1960, the Kelso Auto Dynamics Special No. 25 was entered by Mrs. Harry Clark Boden of Newark, Delaware. The sleek roadster was striking in appearance with its gorgeous livery of black with gold-leaf lettering and red trim. Built in Los Angeles by Lujie Lesovsky and Ronnie Kaplan, with its laydown Offenhauser engine it was one of the lightest cars scaling in at 1,560-lbs. Kaplan explained to the Indianapolis Star on May 11, 1960, "there isn't a piece on the car going for a free ride." 40-year-old Jack Turner of Seattle was assigned as the driver when the entry was mailed to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in February.

62 cars were in Gasoline Alley ready to find the speed necessary to make the illustrious "500." Most thought 144-mph was the target needed to make the 33-car field. Arriving a bit late, Turner fought handling issues all month as the car tended to oversteer and want to dip down in the turns, topping 144 on May 20th, he remained optimistic, "I think the car will be very successful this year. After we get some more practice, I think we'll show you some real speed." Sadly, with only two full days of practice, the car, didn't show the speed necessary with Turner abandoning the Kelso car after an aborted qualifying run in the 142-mph range on the final day of qualifications.

In 1961, the car was back, now number 9, listing sophomore driver, Lloyd Ruby behind the steering wheel. This time it was 1957-58 Indianapolis 500 winning crew chief George Salih who had reworked the car hoping the solve its handling issues. But those same handling woes dogged the car again as Ruby tried to gain speed. On May 5th, Ruby spun and slid 350 feet in turn one after a shock absorber bracket broke. On May 12th, the Friday afternoon before Pole Day, Ruby was the only other car on the track when Tony Bettenhausen took his ill-fated test run in the Stearly Motor Freight Watson roadster. Ruby logged many miles in practice, "I must have run about 1,000 miles in the Kelso. I guess I'm ready for the 1,000-mile check-up." Ruby joked. The Kelso Special did show glimpses of speed, as once again the car hit 144-mph in practice but couldn't maintain consistency. The frustrated Ruby listened as he had two offers to drive less finicky cars.

Fate came to a head just before 6pm on Friday May 19th as the engine blew on the Kelso Spl. as it sped down the front



Crewman work on getting the handling issues solved on the Kelso Auto Dynamics Special at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in 1960. Photo courtesy of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.



Visitors arriving at the Indianapolis Airport was greeted by the Kelso Auto Dynamics Special on display courtesy of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum. Steve Zautke collection

wrist pin failure. It cut the engine most entirely in two, severing even the header and all fuel, oil and brake lines. "I never saw one cut that bad." Salih who was overseeing the operation. "If you take the cam housing off, the engine would fall completely apart." Later, it was decided to withdraw the car as the laydown Offenhauser engine was not repairable and a proper replacement was not available to convert in the limited time available.

Due to the Bettenhausen testing fatality, Tony's original No. 5 Lindsey Hopkins-owned roadster was available. Earlier in the week, Ruby had test hopped it, and became the early favorite to replace Bettenhausen. Hopkins requested permission from Salih to pull Ruby from the Kelso car for the Hopkins entry and it was granted.

Sadly, after two years, missing the "500" both times, the

straightaway. With hot oil flying everywhere, Ruby deliberately spun the car down into turn one as he received minor burns on his legs and left wrist. "I was just trying to get the car stopped." Ruby explained afterward. Chief Mechanic Edgar Elder said the mishap was caused by a piston or

car was retired and today it resides in the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum looking exactly as it looked in 1961. It is one of the few roadsters that was not converted to race as a pavement super-modified. She's a beautiful salute to the true unforgettable roadsters of the 1950's and early-1960's.

Kelso Auto Dynamics was the brainchild of Marguerite duPont Ortiz Boden who was a dynamic woman whose interests included, 18th-century antiques, American history, and fast cars. As a member of the famed duPont fortune, she had the means to satisfy her tastes along with promoting her interests through philanthropy.


In 1957, she started her racing team, Kelso Autodynamics initially campaigning an ex-Bill Lloyd Maserati 300S, driven by drivers such as Fred Windridge. Kelso is a family name dating back to her great-great grandfather. Further lived on by "Kelso" a famous gelding who was Man-O-War's grandson.

Mrs. Boden was a Jaguar distributor in Wilmington, Delaware and one of four U.S. distributors of the English-built Lister sports cars.

Bonhams.com recalls a Mrs. Boden story, Dana Freeman was office manager of Lister's other East Coast distributorship, Auto Engineering of Marrett Road, Lexington, Massachusetts and he recalled how in 1958, Mrs. Clark Boden had flown in to collect a brand-new Lister-Chevrolet which they had been able to obtain quickly to satisfy her order from England.

However, Mrs. Clark Boden took one look at the brand-new

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car – commented that it was equipped with cast-iron brake calipers instead of the lightweight alloy-bodied type that she had specified. She reacted volcanically by tearing-up her contract, scattering it like confetti, telling the salesman to keep 'his' car as she swept off to the local airport.

She promptly called Carroll Shelby in Dallas, found that he had a Lister-Chevrolet immediately available, and so it was that car – chassis serial 'BHL 114' – which subsequently became famous as her 'Kelso Lister-Chevrolet' or 'The Kelischev'. The almost matte, black-liveried car was prepared in her own workshops in Washington DC, at a location known as Foggy Bottom, and the car's nickname – 'The Black Beast of Foggy Bottom' would be inscribed in discreet gold letters on the car's ebony flanks.

This sequence of events left Auto Engineering in Lexington holding Lister-Chevrolet 'BHL 115' as unsold stock. Having lost their demanding original customer to Shelby-Hall in Texas, there was little Auto Engineering could do with the car save advertise and hope it sold. However, it remained unsold into 1960, some of the time in store as Dana Freeman recalled: "The mechanics found it a handy place to sit in and eat their lunches". Nothing ages so rapidly as last year's obsolete racing car.

Mrs. Boden, a winning car owner in the SCCA, was also member of the Championship Car Owners Association, the United States Auto Club, and the Madison Avenue Sports Car Driver and Chowder Society.

– Steve Zautke

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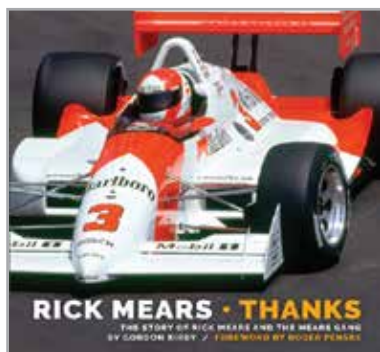
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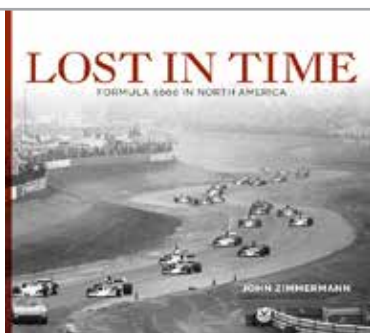


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Rick Mears - Thanks The Story of Rick Mears and the Mears Gang

Racemaker presents a second edition of Gordon Kirby's biography of four-time Indy 500 winner Rick Mears. Rick announced his retirement from racing in 1992, just after his forty-first birthday. He went out a winner with four Indy 500 victories, three CART Indy Car World Series championships, twenty-nine individual race victories and forty pole positions. He was the most successful Indy car driver of his era.



Lost In Time: Formula 5000 In North America

During the 1960s and 1970s, American road racing flourished, with hard-fought championships for the Can-Am, the Trans-Am and last but not least the Formula 5000 series. Formula 5000 attracted excellent entries from well-known teams such as Dan Gurney, Jim Hall, Carl Haas, Parnelli Jones, Roger Penske and Carl Hogan. The series led manufacturers to develop relatively affordable chassis designed to compete on the road courses across the U. S. and Canada.



The Cellini of Chrome The Story of George W. Walker / Ford Motor Company's First Vice President of Design

In the same flamboyant vein as design greats such as Harley Earl, Gordon Buerig, Vergil Exner, Raymond Loewy and William "Bill" Mitchell, Walker developed the standard for key Ford Motor Company Products for the 1950s and '60s. Beginning with the enormous success of the 1949 Ford, George elevated Henry's company to one of the all-around best-selling automotive operations in the world.



Chris Pook & the History of the Long Beach GP

When Chris Pook declared his intention to run a Grand Prix race through the streets of Long Beach many people thought he was out of his mind. But with the support of racing legend Dan Gurney, and many other enthusiasts, Pook built the most successful street race in American history. Pook's crazy idea turned into a model for bringing racing to the people and using the surrounding event to rebuild a flagging community.



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Message From Club President – Tedd Zamjahn

27th Annual Event Fast Approaching

I'm happy to report we already have a good number of entries for our July 8-9 event, and we are looking forward to another great weekend on the Milwaukee Mile!

Remember, our deadline is June 20 for the review of all entry applications, so don't miss out!

As I mentioned in our last issue, the Board had decided to invite owners of Pre-WWII open wheel Grand Prix cars to join our event. We are looking forward to that unique group running on the Mile with us! Of special note, Gordon White will speak at our banquet about the history of open wheel racing in the US.

In addition to our deadline for entry applications, we also have a deadline for meal reservations during our event. July 1 is the last date we are able to take Thursday social and Friday banquet reservations. Lenore must have your check for any last minute add-ons by July 1. There will be no reservations made after that date.

See you in July for another great weekend at the track!

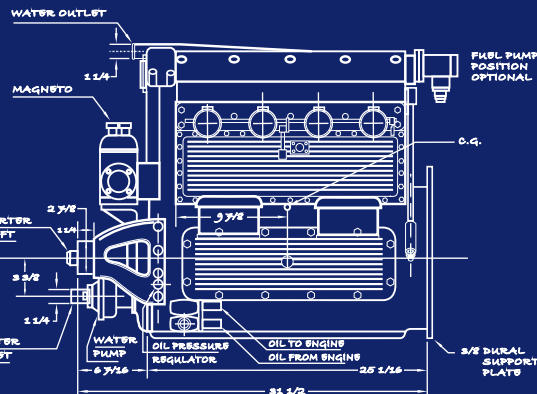
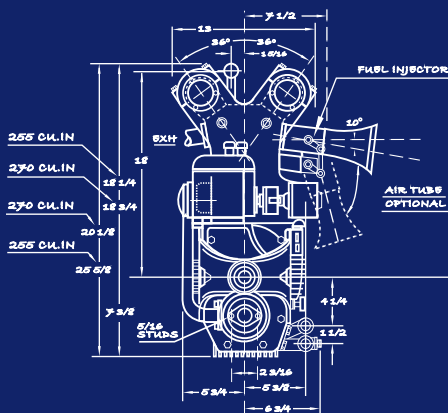


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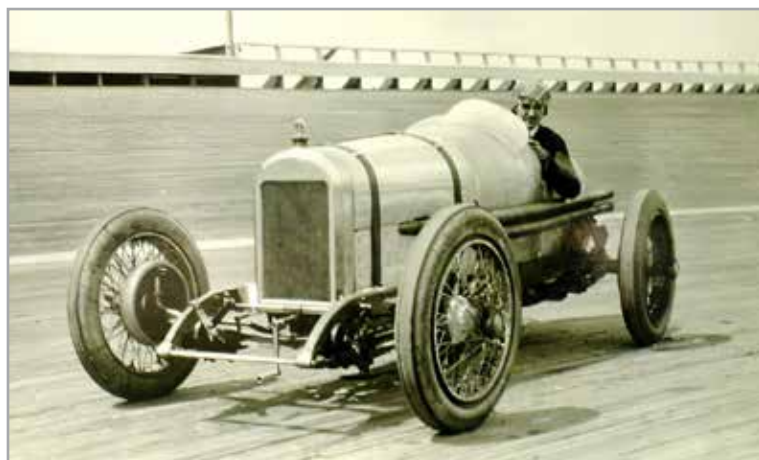


Peugeot

MEYER-DRAKE

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The Miller 8-cylinder 183 Chassis – Part 1



Ira Vail in 1921 with the first 8-cylinder 183 engine in the last Miller 4-cylinder chassis.

Although Mark Dees allocates a whole part in his Miller Dynasty book to the 8-cylinder 183 engines and cars, and Griff Borgeson describes in considerable detail how the 8-cylinder 183 engine came to be, little has been published regarding the Miller-built chassis into which these engines were installed. Contributing to this is that, in contrast to the hundreds of 122 and 91 drawings that remain, only about eighty 183 drawings exist, mostly engine related; no original 183 chassis drawings are known to exist.

As I described in the Miller Club's 2021 Winter newsletter, "The Saga of Miller's 4-cylinder 183 Racing Cars", the first Miller 8-cylinder 183 engine went into the last Miller 4-cylinder chassis, for Ira Vail (Leach Special), and although tested in early 1921, was first raced at Indy in May. This is a sister chassis to the TNT.

The second Miller 8-cylinder 183 engine went into the first Miller 4-cylinder chassis, which Cliff Durant had loaned to Tommy Milton (Milton-Durant Special), and it first raced at Beverly Hills on Feb 7, 1921. This is a sister chassis to the Junior Specials.



Brent Castle's Milton-Durant Special, the first Miller 4-cylinder chassis, with 8-cylinder 183 engine #2 or #3.

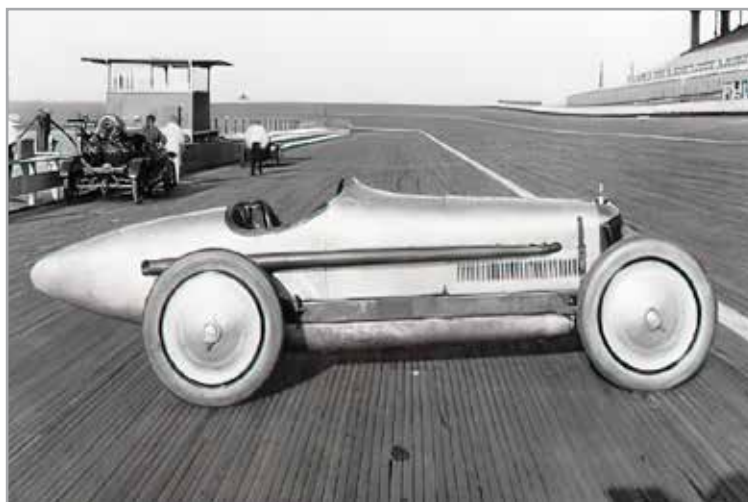


Tommy Milton in 1922 with the third 8-cylinder 183 engine in his Miller-built cross-spring chassis.

The Leach Special has not survived, but the TNT and one Junior Special have, enabling the Milton-Durant Special to be reconstructed by Bill Castle. Both the TNT (Dan Davis owner) and the Milton-Durant Special (Brent Castle owner) are regulars at the Miller Meet.

These Peugeot-influenced, Leo Goossen-designed, Miller 4-cylinder 183 chassis have a 104" wheelbase, 58" track, and 5"x1½" C-channel parallel frame rails that are 26" wide up to the cowl whereafter they kick-out to 28" wide to the rear. Wood fills the frame rail from the front frame horn casting to one-third up the rear axle pickup. The front and rear frame horns are curved in large arcs typical of teens-era designs.

Because of a Durant dealer's misleading advertisement printed on April 5th, 1922, Milton's car was suspended by the AAA, and he had no alternative but to give it back to Durant and then, in his own words, "...rushed out and hired everybody in Southern California to build a new car around a new Miller engine." This was a one-off Milton design with transverse front and rear springs. It was



Benny Hill's "McDonald Special" at its Beverly Hills debut.



Benny Hill's "McDonald Special," with engine #5.

completed in the Miller plant barely in time for the 1922 Indy and raced successfully through the remaining 183 formula period. The car has not survived, and little is known about this chassis.

After winning the Fresno race on April 27, Jimmy Murphy bought and installed the fourth Miller 8-cylinder 183 engine into his Le Mans-winning Duesenberg and won at Cotati ten days later (!) on May 7, and thereafter won at Indy, Uniontown, and Tacoma, securing the 1922 AAA National Championship. (Although Dees writes this was 183 engine #3, the dates indicate it is more likely that Milton already had engine #3 in his cross-spring chassis by the time Murphy arrived requesting an engine.)

Goossen's first 8-cylinder 183 chassis was a transition from his Peugeot-influenced 4-cylinder chassis to a design of his own that culminated in the distinctive chassis shape of subsequent Miller 183, 122, and 91 chassis.

In this one-off chassis, Goossen moved the rear springs from under the frame and axle to the side of the frame and above the axle, suspended by shackles at both ends, and eliminated the large rear frame horn arc, using a small kickup and converging straight lines instead for the rear frame horns, a layout that would become a distinguishing feature of Miller chassis. At the front, a straight tubular axle was used for the first time, with the drop being created by the axle ends: the distinctive Miller front axle. This axle design also permitted a reduced arc on the front frame horns. The frame dimensions were as for the 4-cylinder chassis, but the track was increased to 60". The only visible carryover from the 4-cylinder 183 chassis was the front spring rear mount.

This low sleek car used the fifth 183 engine, was funded by McDonald, and raced by Benny Hill as the "McDonald Special". But it was called "Benny Hill's job" on the Miller drawings, which are dated between May and June of 1922. The car first raced at Cotati on August 6, 1922 and was fast and a frequent winner for Hill. This beautiful car has unfortunately not survived.

In Part 2, I will describe details about Goossen's six Durant 8-cylinder 183 chassis.

- Photos and Article Provided By Harold Peters

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The 27th Annual Millers at Milwaukee Event Milwaukee Mile July 8-9, 2022



Entry applications and car history forms can be found at harrymillerclub.com, or you can request them via email: harrymillerclub@sbcglobal.net. A photo and car description are required with your application, to be received no later than June 20. Hotel reservations can be made at the Sonesta Milwaukee West Hotel, formerly the Crowne Plaza – 414-389-8563 (Mon. – Fri.).

Our weekend of fun activities begins with a Thurs. evening Welcome Dinner starting at 5:30 p.m. Gates open

at the Mile Friday at 8 a.m. with the group photo shot at 9 a.m. Cars run on the Mile beginning at 10 a.m. both days. The social gathering at the hotel begins Friday evening at 6 p.m., with the Cocktail hour and Silent Auction. Our delicious banquet follows at 7 p.m. Please consider helping the club financially by providing an item or two for our silent auction. Books, and interesting memorabilia are always welcome!

There is a 60 car limit for our event, so please get your entry applications in early! Entry slots are filling up – so don't delay.

To Join the Harry A. Miller Club

Membership renewals for members who have held continued membership for more than ten years is \$25. Please mail your check (made out to The Harry Miller Club), along with your name, address, phone, and e-mail to:

**Harry Miller Club
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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 who began membership after 2011 is \$40.

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