

small TIMES

Volume 6 Issue 3.....Official Publication of the H MOD - Over-the-Hill-Gang FALL 1995

Racing is life... Everything before, or after, is just waiting.

H MOD CALENDAR

H MOD REPORT

Le Petite' Galleria

Palm Springs GP VARA Nov. 16-19
1996 TENTATIVE
Moroso Park, Fl. Spring Fling
SVRA March 7-10, 1996
CSRG Wine Country Classic,
Sears Ft.
June 8-9, 1996

**POMONA REVISITED-
VARA STAGES FIRST
EVENT SINCE 60'S**

On the July 15th & 16th weekend, the sound of racing sports cars returned to Pomona Fairgrounds in Southern California. Vara, after some considerable negotiations with the Fairgrounds Officials, was able to get a single date for racing again at this legendary facility. Your editors last race at Pomona in 1961 was driving the MPX Crosley Special. Considering the fact that so much time has passed the old place look pretty much the same. Vara did not get to use the old bridge turn that once was such a pain in the rear to guys who were trying to pass and were going to fast! Vara had a course based on the old counter clockwise circuit in existence since 1958. Just for your information, Pomona used to run clockwise but was considered to dangerous in that direction. The flat, 2.5 mile course now has only drainage ditches for level changes and is set around the Los Angeles Fairgrounds in the same general area as used by NHRA and The Grand Prix motorcycles.

Now to get to the racing, Pomona reacted just like it use to in past Summers. The weather was hot and the cars were fast. Only 2 H Mods showed up. Gene Leisure returned to the wars with his Tanner Saab and Bud Clark drove the Phoenix Saab. Gene has been waiting for new wheels for an eternity and on this weekend he practically tore the rubber off his wheels. Bud Clark did however, finish right behind him on Saturday's accident abbreviated race. Some Sprite driver turned upside down, stopping the race. Sunday's race between the two old competitor would

(continued on page 2)

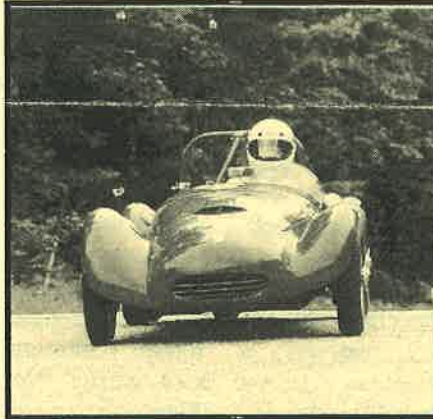
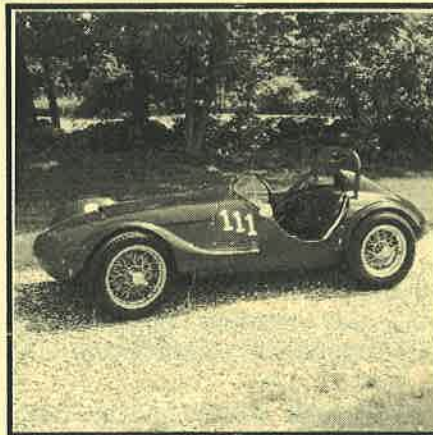


Photo Top-Bottom ...two views of Jerry Greaves' Bandini Spyder as driven at Mt. Equinox by Glenn Reynolds. Story inside this issue.



**RETURN TO
PITTSBURGH**
by
Kip Fjeld

This year I was again accepted for the Pittsburgh GP. It is an incredibly long haul for my old Ford van, but having tasted the VSCCA racing style it was like a moth to the flame.

The less than two mile course winds through Pittsburgh famous Schenley Park on roads commonly used by the public, for picnics, ball games, etc.
(Continued on page 4)

Inside This Issue you'll find these features:

Return to Pittsburgh G.P.

John Donaldson's Turn

Glenn Reynold's goes Up-Hill

Pomona Returns for Vintage Racing

Photos, Ads, and Letters

small TIMES IS THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE H MOD-OVER-THE HILL-GANG. IT IS A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED SOLELY FOR THE MEMBERSHIP. THE ASSOCIATION IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT SOCIAL, HISTORICAL AND RACING ORGANIZATION.

**EDITOR-JOE PUCKETT
FINANCE -TRACY GOMEZ
PRODUCTION-TERE OTEGUI
AND FRANK GOMEZ**

**SENIOR STAFF WRITERS
GLENN REYNOLDS
TOM CHURCHILL
BILL CUNNINGHAM
JOHN DONALDSON
BILL MOLLE
CURT ANDERSON**

**PUBLICATION FACILITIES ARE
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LAKE FOREST CA. 92630. CALL
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H Mod car validation

Do you need to have *legitimate authentication* for your H Mod? Well Gerald Hite, Steve Soenke and Dave Camarano have and recently received a study and certification of their cars authenticity! For our members we have setup a program which researches evidence that you provide, augments that data if possible, utilizes volunteer staff experts to ferret out old records and recollections. For only \$25.00 you receive our study document, and the authentication certificate. *If we can't validate you get your money back. We're the only H Mod info source recognized by VARA, SVRA, Victory Lane and Vintage Motorsports magazines!* Replicas will be a future target for the major organizations!

Editorially yours Joe Puckett

The last issue touched on Bob Graham's passing. It continues to stay on many of our minds. He was an Icon in our sport. Bob Thulander H MOD member and friend, is handling the sale of Graham's race items. (see want ads).

This issue suffered in birth from my idea to upgrade the computer. The Windows 95 is more complex than they say. I also tried to bring in a C D Rom and things just got more complicated. Computers aren't like working on tiny racing engines they required a certain inherent nerdyness that you don't usually find around the race scene. More and more of the big name racers though, are computer dependent today. I just use mine to try to publish a decent newsletter for a bunch of understanding friends.

Despite the fact membership dues are required in November, we have recently had a number of new people join. It is our policy that members joining within 6 months of the due date are paid up for the year to follow. This club depends on your enthusiasm, your letters and of course your dues. We are after all, truly a not- for-profit organization.

Kip Fjeld fresh off his Pittsburgh Grand Prix race says that the officials there are interested in an all H Mod race if we could provide 12 to 15 real 1950's cars in 1996. Please! send your cards and letters to: John Jacobson, 1534 Old Coach Road, Newark, DE. 19711. Ask John for information and tell him what cars you can bring.

We wish to welcome Mike Rosen of VARAC. Mike has recently joined H Mod since his Canadian under 1000 cc. Modified cars are so much like H Mods he expects a good exchange of smallbore information. VARAC is the major racing organization in Canada.

(Continued from page 1)

Gene Leisure tore through the field of production cars and modifieds to finish a respectable 6th overall and 1st in class. Bud meanwhile, had made a slight miscalculation. After examining the plugs at the close of Saturdays event he decided to change the carburator jets. Now, Bud Clark is about the best 2 cycle Saab man on the West Coast, but this time he leaned it out to much and lost so much power he was only able to tour around the track like a bored spectator on a Hollywood bus ride.

Vara expects to race again at Pomona in 1996. They intent to make this a regular event each year, and judging by the turnout and general interest, this will surely happen. I promise you...Next year I'll run all my cars and we'll have the right jets installed. Bud agrees. Don't miss this one in 1996... More cars and drivers will be attending!

Cunningham's Corner

In my non-famous racing career I don't think I ever had a DNF. I do however, remember a DNS (Did not start). The race was to be held at Santa Barbara or Golita or for the old folks who drove there "Santa Bee." As race day dawned I was up and running but the car wasn't. The blankety-blank car wouldn't even drive on the trailer. Since I had paid my entry fee of \$25.00 and already had a pit number assigned, I decided to go anyway. I loaded up a bunch of folding chairs and extra large cooler of beer, an umbrella etc., etc. I figured to set up a nice place for the H Mod crews to relax. I put all the stuff in the back of the tow truck and took off for the track. After arriving early and setting up; life was a breeze. I found myself stuck on the snow fence along the start-finish line like the typical sports car railbird. When the H Modified race started I noticed most of the action as usual was mid-pack. The last turn was a sweeping hairpin that led on to the main straight that H Modifieds usually took in third gear as fast as they would dare. Two cars came out

(Continued on page 3.)

**MORE REMINISCENCE OF THE
OL' DAYS, OR GRAMPAW
THROTTLEBOTTOM ON
SPORTIVE AUTOMOBILISM, X**

**THOUGHTS ON
EXTRACURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES**

Back in the olden days, H-Modified drivers sometimes had interesting misadventures off the track as well as on. Being a sort of endangered species, we clung together for mutual protection, and given a few idle moments, got in to deviltry together. Pomona race weekends were fraught with such.

For those of us who lived in the Los Angeles area, the Pomona races were sort of "day" races, in that we could tow out to the L.A. County fairgrounds on Saturday, race, then return home, leaving the cars and trailers at the track (Boy, things were different then!). We'd go back Sunday, race, and tow home. All seemingly normal and innocent. Right.

In the Pomona hills near the track was the Carbon Canyon Winery. This winery produced the godawfullest red wines it has ever been my misfortune to drink-- every Saturday night for sis Pomona races. Carbon Canyon may have produced some good wines, but I never knew about it. Fact is, if you didn't want to drink the stuff, you could spread it around the baseboards to kill cockroaches. It was loaded with tannic acid, among other nasties.

A bunch of us H-Modified types, folks like Bill Cunningham, Rich Erickson, Joe Puckett and his buddy Lee Herd, me, and our pit crews, would pick up a few jugs of Carbon Canyon red and hop it back to Hermosa Beach to this little Italian restaurant on the Pacific Coast Highway. The joint was located too close to a church to serve booze, but if you brought your own, it was okay. We'd pork out on spaghetti and wine, then go back to our pad in Manhattan Beach to bench race and dip (Continue next column)

our snoots into more of the red, until the pad was littered with dead soldiers and swozzled racers.

Sunday morning it was time to pay the piper. Our heads were about this big around, and squishy. I remember Rich Erickson's eyes looking like two maraschino cherries in a bowl of buttermilk. Alka-Seltzer on the rocks was the drink of choice at breakfast.

Somehow we'd navigate the San Bernardino freeway to the track. Getting the cars fired up wasn't all that bad, because Crosleys, even with open exhausts, weren't all that noisy. However-- Invariably, we had the poor judgment to pit next to a Porsche of some variety. Porsche mechanics loved to blip-tune engines. That is, they would fire up, and blip the engine from idle to redline, for as much as a half hour at a time. I don't recall them making any adjustments during this time; just BL-L-L-A-A-A-T-T-T-T!, bloom, bloom, blup, BL-L-L-A-A-A-T-T-T-T!, bloom, bloom, blup. Porsche people were without mercy. Himmmm. As I look back on it, I can't remember a hangover lasting longer than a Porsche blip-tuning session. Can it be that a hangover cure was beneath our noses and we didn't realize it?

Then there was the track at Del Mar, North of San Diego. Del Mar was an overnighter, so we found local diversions on Saturday nights. A popular watering hole in Del Mar for a lot of racers was the "Power House", a Dixieland jazz joint that served large schooners of excellent beer. The band had a trombone player, 6-4" tall and 250 lbs.on the hoof, who could play the slide of his 'bone with his foot while balancing a full schooner on his head! And you thought we didn't have quality entertainment back then. Our Objective was to close the place, which we usually did.

In the Los Angeles area there was one lounge/restaurant, the "Grand Prix", that catered to the road racing crowd. Had murals of Fangio and Moss on the walls, paintings of pre-war Grand Prix cars, (Continued on Page 5)

(Cunningham from page 2...)

cars locked together in the midst of the turn, going at it hammer and tongs-pedal to the metal; neither would give in. Before they reached the start-finish line, the glass on their tachometers must of cracked with the high revs the two were turning. When it seemed their tach needles surely were bent around the peg, the two shifted into fourth gear. One guy made it a smooth and clean change, the other wound up with a lot of odd sized metal pieces floating in the fractured gear box. We all could hear the tortured drivetrain begin to cease. The noble little car went two more turns and then parked on the grass alongside the course. As the driver climbed out, the tiny little car went tinkety...tinkety...thunk...thud. Anyone who read Morse code surely could get the cars' message to the driver and it wouldn't be printable in this newsletter. That's H Mod, and it isn't like this never happened to any of the rest of us!

Another subject; I think its time someone said something nice about John O. Donaldson. I got to know ol' JOD when we shared a quonset hut in El Segundo, California. I know he is a graduate rambling wreck from Georgia Tech, but there were times I was convinced he didn't know the nomenclature of the hammer. I would hear him banging around in his corner of the garage, muttering, "I'm going to sell this blankety blank car, and get myself a good/bad woman!" Still, John always got on the grid and drove the hell out of that Miller Crosley; this in spite of the fact that when he got his hefty 200+ lbs. stuffed into the car, the power-to-weight ratio must of gone clean off the meat weighing scale!



Donaldsons Miller Crosley

(Pittsburgh-continued from page 1)

The race is run on a scenic route complete with beautiful trees, rock walls and challenging turns. One particular turn is set up by the officials to slow the cars. It is a tightly designed haybale wall that seems to come all to quickly at the end of a straightaway where one can reach their maximum speed. Saturdays race for me was just a try to get the feel of the track again. So what I did was to bump the timing up a little bit on the Crosley engine and just follow some folks around. Passing is very difficult at this course, it usually occurs before and after the straights. One particular turn goes across a bridge at speeds of 60 to 70 mph in the Crosley. I didn't mention though that the bridge has three major jarring bumps that literally drove your rear end into your helmet. The rest of the course was just a lot of interesting turns and big scary stone wall. I was assigned to a race that contained a lot of MG's including TD's and MGA's. We had a Fiat Abarth, Lancia, and a whole host of Turners with Coventry Climax engines! On Sunday, after practice, I finally licked the nagging timing problem and we were competitive. In fact Bob Deull in his Panhard jr. had a good race with me until his engine went away. Later that evening I would follow Bob home to purchase a Crosley Special that had been cluttering up his garage. His wife was particularly happy about the sale. The fact I stayed behind him while racing most of the weekend, was not a ploy of mine to get a good deal! I am proud to say the Miller performed well on Sunday beating most the cars that passed us on Saturday, including the Fiat Abarth, the Lancia and at least one of those pesky Turners.



Photo above-Bob Deull's Panhard jr. as it raced in Pittsburgh.

EAST COAST REPORT BY GLENN REYNOLDS

The VSCCA held the 43rd. running of the Mt. Equinox hillclimb on June 10 and 11. Next to Pikes Peak, Mt. Equinox is the oldest and most popular hillclimb in the USA. This famous course is located in Southwestern Vermont and it consist of 5.2 miles of private roads with loads of switch-backs and tricky turns as it snakes its way to the summit of Mt. Equinox. The view from the summit is absolutely spectacular for those who were lucky enough to make it all the way. This is an event that demands driver restrain as the road is lined with either trees or drop offs that could ruin your day in a BIG WAY!!! I was fortunate enough to be chauffeuring a 1953 Bandini Spyder owned by H Mod member Jerry Greaves. Even though a 750cc is not the usual weapon of choice for a demanding competition, such as climbing a huge mountain, it was a thrill. Especially exciting when one considers all of the great drivers who have driven legendary Mt. Equinox in the past. Look for an article in the December issue of Road & Track.
Glenn Reynolds

Willow Springs Races October 21 and 22

On October 21 and 22 VARA held a race honoring the Willow Springs Track 42nd. year of operation. Unfortunately some Wag had the idea of running all the modified classes together. This classic imbalance put our little 45 cubic inch Crosley 251 cubic inch Saabs and Bim Shooks PBS Fiat 850 cc against 4 and 5 liter Lolas, McLaren's and others just as big. In the long run we all did pretty good. The H Mods could turn corners as good or better than the others but we were blown away on the straightaways as expected. Bim Shook won in his PBS, Gene Leisure Tanner T-5 was second follow by Bud Clark in the Phoenix Saab and Kip Fjeld in the Miller Crosley. It was different, but not fun.

JAMES BROADWELL AWARD PRESENTED

We are proud to announce that the first recipient of the James Broadwell "Spirit of H Mod" award is Glenn Reynolds. This award is strictly for those members in the Northeastern United States. The selection of Glenn by the Staff of small TIMES was an easy one. Glenn continues to be one of our best contributors. He truly exemplifies the "Spirit of H Mod", and he is our Northeastern representative.

New H MOD Tee Shirts! available

rainbow of color blended on white premium 50/50 adult shirts...unique new design... send \$13.00 per ea. to Joe Puckett c/o H MOD shirts, 22901 Loumont dr. Lake Forest Ca. 92630 now! This cost includes s/h. Allow 4 weeks for delivery.
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Photo below- Glenn Reynolds' Crosley endures snow last Winter



Letters to the Editor

Dear Folks,

Since recently acquiring the former Steve Morrison Jabro Mk 1, I'm enclosing a check and application to your organization. For several years I've campaigned a 62' Mini Cooper in various Northeast events, so my learning curve for 4 cylinder, 4 cycle, front drive low revs, to 3 cylinder, 2 cycle, rear driven high revs, will be interesting. So far I've been able to start it and drive it in and out of my garage. I'm hopeful that I can get my sea legs in a hillclimb next Spring and then get some serious track time.

Just for the record I have the 850cc Saab engine in the car. I didn't get to take the super duper 940cc that Steve has. Look forward to hearing from you.

Bob Fairbanks
P.O. Box 53
Portville, NY 14770

Dear Bob,

Welcome to H Mod and the ranks of "loyal Saab owners." One thought to remember...If you don't see smoke...you are in trouble...Too lean is mean! Editor.

Dear Joe,

Just got the Spring issue of "small Times". Read it from kiver to kiver. Enjoyed it hugely. Joe, sorry to hear about your pancreatitis. Hope this finds you in improved health.

I also enjoyed Willie Cunningham's article in the winter edition. If you see him, tell him so. I owe you a follow-on article about Rich Erickson's dry sump Crosley engine, and will attempt to contact Rich for some technical details. More on that later. Meanwhile, enclosed find an article that you can do with as you see fit. I'm not sure it's appropriate for "small Times", but that's your call. I picked up a copy of Victory Lane at a newsstand, read it and subscribed. Joe, I read your column, "Rearview Mirror",

Great! Loved it! Joe, you've got all of my old columns in "small Times". If you want to, please feel free to use them in "Rearview Mirror". You can use your own by-line, or "as-told-to", or whatever. I'm not interested in any credit or anything. I already got that. Anyway, if some month you get stuck for a column, go ahead and use an old one from "small Times".

Best regards,
John Donaldson

Dear John:

Thank you very much for the encouraging words. I consider you a natural writer that I can only envy. You have such a wildly creative use of the language that adds so much color to the ordinary written word.

Regards,
Joe

Dear Joe,

I bought a car from the estate of Dr. William Eschrich of Glendale. The car has the number 56F on it, it once belong to Dr. Troy McHenry, Dr. Eschrich's best friend who was killed in Pomona in October of 1956 in another car. Enclosed are the actual pictures of the car. If you can help me identify this car, please call me at (714) 529-1572, thank you.

Regards,
Roy Hunter

Dear Roy,

We don't do car backgrounds on anything but H-Mod cars. That alone is a huge job. However I do remember both of these gentlemen and the car. This car originally had cycle fenders not an envelope body. I think this body was done by Dr. Eschrich at a later date. I have included your phone number in our newsletter because a bunch of our members are at least as old as I am and may be able to help you.

Sincerely,
Joe Puckett

Dear Members,

We need your letters. Don't worry about the typing or handwriting, just keep the subject on H-Mod, your progress in racing or restoration or just recollections.

(Donaldson Continued from Page 3)

etc. Had abviance in carload lots, and was upscale as a lifted pinkie on a teacup. Some of us went there a coupla times, but it wasn't really an H-Mod kind of place. The Management didn't approve of greasy Levi's and dirty fingernails. A favorite stay-at-home spot for H-Mod drivers was the Passport Inn in Hermosa Beach. Ruthie Levy, a well-known woman racer of the era, bartended. Joe Puckett, your genial Editor, frequented the place to watch "Huckleberry Hound". One such night, Joe was quaffing brews with a few H-Modders. A particularly obnoxious type flipped a lit cigarette butt into the air, narrowly missing a beer pitcher at the next table. A rather large gentleman at that table handed the butt back, with a slightly sarcastic comment. The obnoxious H-Mod type bristled, then offered to take on the whole bleepin' table. Ruthie vaulted the bar with a baseball bat, Joe made soothing noises, and eventually cooler heads prevailed. Which was a good thing, because the large gentleman and his friends were UCLA varsity offensive linemen! The I.D. of the obnoxious H-Mod type is unimportant, so he shall remain nameless...OK, Joe?

Another local bar/restaurant frequented by some H-Mod folks was "Callahan's", in Hermosa Beach. Every Tuesday night they served spaghetti and meat sauce wth garlic bread for a quarter. Twenty-five cents. The fourth part of a dollar. They had huge, steaming cauldrons of pasta and sauce, over gas-fired burners. You lined up, went past the cauldrons, and a server loaded your plate. The line of customers sometimes stretched out the door and around the corner, and with the red lighting, the steam vapors, and the mobs of people, you got a brief view of what hell might be like. The servers sweated profusely as they worked. I can't guarantee that some of the sweat didn't get into the sauce, but what the heck, an Italian dinner for a quarter? Why you ask in this enlightened age of physical fitness, jogging, aerobics, oats, bran, ginseng, Vitamins and political correctness, did we abuse ourselves then? Hell, we were young, self assured, had (Continued on Page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

a few bucks, and raced automobiles. Man, we were IMMORTAL! Though I'm sure that some of us feel that if we knew we were going to live this long, we'd have taken better care of ourselves.

DUES ARE DUE IN NOVEMBER, EXCEPT NEW MEMBERS

New Member Application and Membership Renewals

Prospective new members should fill in the info below and mail the Application and a check for \$15.00 to H MOD 22901 Loumont Dr. Lake Forest Ca. 92630. They will receive the membership packet including the H MOD club charter, membership card and number, and tool box stickers within 2 weeks. Dues for H MOD are \$12.00 every November 31.

Name/Phone

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Describe H Car/s owned/did own

Want Ads Cars, Parts n' Services

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