

# small TIMES

Volume 7 Issue 1.....Official Publication of the H MOD - Over-the-Hill-Gang Spring 1996

You can tell many Crosley racers by their oily socks.

## H MOD REPORT

### H MODIFIEDS TO INVADE RENO

The huge success of the 1955 race at Reno, Nevada was due to the efforts of many, not the least of which was CSRG, The Hilton Hotel, the business men of Reno, and our own Don Racine. Don in particular was able to get us our own H Modified event. The field of 12 cars raced hard and were certainly crowd pleasing although truthfully there was only about 9 real H Mods.

This year the CSRG has invited H Mod to return and we will return in force. I predict at least 15 cars in our race and most of them legitimate H Mods. When I say legitimate please don't take me for a fool, of course, some of the old cars are a hell of a lot faster than they used to be. I will attend this event once more only this time I will bring the Phoenix Saab as well as the venerable Miller Crosley. Bud Clark, The Ace Saab Mechanic/Engineer/Driver, is currently driving the Phoenix and has wins this year at Phoenix, Las Vegas and Pomona. Both Bud and Kip Fjeld driver of the Miller Crosley have had it pretty easy, since most of the Southern California competition is either broken or hiding. So, if the guys up North won't come to us we'll just go to them. This event promises to be one of those you can't pass up.

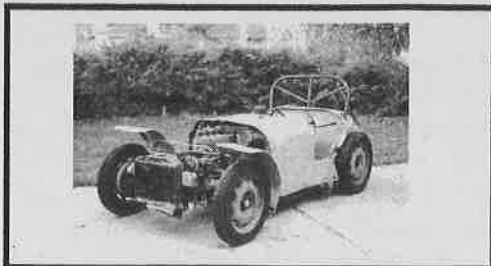


Photo above - Kip Fjeld is seeking info on this 50's, ex West Coast Crosley Special.

## Le Petite' Galleria



Photo above - Charlie Hayes Tanner T-6  
Photo below - Bill McCann's Jabro Crosley



## H MOD CALENDAR

1996 TENTATIVE  
CSRG Wine Country Classic, Sears Pt.  
June 8-9, 1996  
Reno Grand Prix June 15th and 16th  
1996

### POMONA RACES 1996 HOSTS RECORD FIELD OF RACERS AND SPECTATORS

As this column is written the first spectator event in 30 years has just successfully concluded at Pomona Fairgrounds in California. This VARA/Racing Promotions Inc. event featured Porsche and of course some H Mods were there. Like the Palm Springs event, Pomona brings back many memories.

The course remains much as before but the changes made are fairly insignificant, except for the distance which is now 2.2 instead of 2.5. VARA staged a race at Pomona last year and we had a good driver turnout. The above group elected to sponsor a spectator event in 1996 and 1997 to enable VARA to be able (Continued on Page #4, column 1)

### Inside This Issue you'll find these features:

*Reno, Nevada to host H Mod Reunion*

*Pomona, California Spectator Event*

*John Donaldson remembers Viking I*

*Tom Churchill, Jabro Merc & Miller*

*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.

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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 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

As this Spring Issue springs from the computer I'm quick to say It ain't been easy! These first months of 1996 have been a mixture of hospitals, prescriptions, recovery and multiple purchases of racing parts. I'm not a whiner but after being in the hospital with double Pneumonia I finally got to a race in Las Vegas. For some reason the adrenaline overcame the long trip and numerous problems our team had just trying to finish the event. I think I never felt better... But winning helps. Of course I mean winning at the races not at the Casinos. It would have helped to win at the Casinos to pay for the parts I already mentioned!

We must mention the passing of member Emory Smith, who left us recently after a long illness. Emory was the former owner of the Miller Crosley owned and driven by the late Bob Graham. It is for sure there is a place in Heaven for all H Mods to gather and compete once again. Both Emory and Bob are starting at the front of the grid with Chuck Tsigounis.

John Donaldson has conditionally accepted the Associate Editor position with small Times. This assures our members the continued receipt of this publication in the future. John will not do this by himself. We will ask others to assist his efforts when that time comes. Now, don't get the wrong idea, I'm not ready to climb out of the cockpit yet...I think the doctors will simply have to wait. Dr. Kevorkian... FORGET IT!

We are really looking forward to the Reno reunion. Since we are the best class in racing and also the smallest, we should enjoy this bit of competitive togetherness. It is my hope that we will see a whole new approach by the racing organizations to promote the H Mod reunions. VARA does it CSRG and HMSA do it and now VSCCA is considering it for Pittsburgh.

## Jabro Merc and Miller Too! By Tom Churchill

I found Glenn Sipe's H Mod of interest as it was originally powered by a Merc outboard. My Jabro was also Merc outboard powered. I am also disappointed that he is not planning to put a Merc back in the car. I am planning to re-Merc my Jabro and would like someone to share problems with. One of the great things about H Mod is the diversity of cars and engines so those of us with less common engines should try to run those engines if possible.

I vote to keep the "Over The Hill Gang" even though I am making my way around the hill instead of over it.

I am trying to back track on the ownership of my Miller. John Prescott of Phoenix purchased the Miller on July 15th, 1969 from Frank E. Senesac who may have raced the car in California. This was done before Senesac was transferred to Phoenix. Did you know Frank Senesac? (No I didn't know Frank since H Mod was turned into DSR by 1969; Editor's comment.) Chuck Rahn told me the Miller had won the H Mod championship in California. John Prescott won the Arizona State DSR championship, the last year he raced the Miller (Wyvern Special) (Editor's comment: I do not believe that car could have won the H MOD championship in California at that time since in the late 60's the dominance of rear engine cars was so much that front engined cars were backmarkers.)

I have compared my Miller to the photos of Rahn's car that Walker Edmiston sent me. A large number of small details are the same, such as the number and spacing of rivets or screws that hold the doors on. I believe that all the differences or modifications made by subsequent owners like MG transmission and hydraulic clutch. John Prescott removed the aluminum nose and tail section that are on the Miller now.

(Continued on Page 3, column 1.)

(Continued from Page 2.)

He replaced them with the fiberglass nose and tail piece that are on the car now. I sent Prescott copies of the photos that Walker sent. John Prescott wrote me that except for the headrest that was not on the Wyvern Special when he purchased the car, it was one and the same Miller. My thoughts are that my Miller was the one formerly owned by Walker Edmiston. I will send Walker a letter with my evidence for his comments.

My Jabro Mark IV was built by Bob Fox, then of a suburb of Minneapolis. Bob now lives in Santa Clara, Ca. He used a set of plans and body from Jabro. His choice of engine was a 50 horsepower Merc Outboard. The wheels, brakes and transaxle are Fiat 600. The frame was so well done I thought it was Jabro factory made. On my trip to pick up the Miller I stopped off to visit Bob Fox. Bob races DSR today and was a regular visitor to Bob Graham's shop. Fox originally sold the Jabro to Bob Snyder of Milwaukee. Snyder swapped the Merc for a Saab. He later sold the car to Chuck Reupert. I had the impression that Reupert had been involved with racing the Jabro while Snyder owned it. At some time when Bob Snyder or Chuck owned the car, the alloy wheels that are currently on the car were added. Chuck sold the Jabro to Keith Thompson who was very active competitively after initially doing nothing with the car for three years. Since Keith was in DSR, he made some body modifications including flares and the rear deck. He raced it from 7/2/72 up until 8/15/76 with a lot of success. Keith Thompson sold the car to Stephen P. Horn of Omaha, NB. Steve ran the Jabro in solo II events from 1980 through 1983, winning the Central Region Divisionals. Steve sold the car to Neil Kelly of St. Paul, MN. Discouraged by the price of the Merc Outboard and frustrated by the unavailability of Saab parts, he put in VW engine and transaxle. Neil raced the Jabro in Vintage Races over the next several years, with the following results:

Brainerd, 20-22 July 1984, started 19th, finished 15th. Brainerd, 19-21 July 1985, started ??? finished 13th. Elkhart Lake, 4-6 October 1985, started 6th, finished 3rd. I purchased the Jabro from Neil on October 25th, 1986 but couldn't pick up until the Spring of 1987, because I did not have room in my garage!

On the way home after picking up the car I raced it at the Janesville Hillclimb on May 11th, 1987. The car ran well except for very dirty battery terminals finishing 7th out of 28. The following results with the Jabro spanned 3 years: Gratten 8-9 of August 1987, last place in race #1, 7th of 9 in race #3, Rain on Saturday track drying on Sunday morning so that I did not have any dry practice before the races. Discovered that the Jabro would understeer under power coming out of a slow turn. Found that I could catch a slide. The press of work kept me from going to Elkhart Lake in 1988. Belvedere airport time trials July 16th, 1989, 3rd out of 23. I missed Gratten because of a brake leak that had begun at Belvedere. It took a panic search to locate the proper fittings but I made it! At Elkhart Lake September 30th and October 1st, 1989 I finished 24th out of 28th. Never had a good run at the Lake Geneva Time Trials in June of 1990. We had rain all day and the Jabro had a miss. I ended up driving in my mirrors waiting to be passed.

When my Miller is back together I will get back to putting in a 50 HP Merc in the Jabro to return the car to original as constructed condition.

Tom Churchill.



*Photo above - Bob Fox in the Jabro Mark IV - The car now owned and under restoration by Tom Churchill*

### More Reminiscence of the Ol' Days, or Grampaw Throttlebottom on Sportive Automobilism, XI ON CHARACTERS, IIIA

Last issue I alluded that there was more to the Rich Erickson dry sump Viking I story, involving a mysterious footprint on Viking I's tail. There is.

Goleta Airport, Santa Barbara, about 1960-61. Rich had Viking I up on the power curve, loaded for trophies. I had just built a new engine for my Miller. Chuck Tsgounis and Dr. Bill Molle were the men to beat in H-Mod. Tigers were on the prowl.

The green flag flew for Sunday's G/H-Modified race, and away we went. As we sorted ourselves out on lap one, I was second behind Dr. Bill. I had been in this position before, and each time Dr. Bill drove away from me. This time, I stayed with him. My first thought was, "There must be something wrong with his car." Later I learned that my new engine wasn't all that bad. Chuck and Rich filled out the top four.

This was the Santa Barbara where and H-Modified got all out of shape coming through turn 5, got upside down, and hit a turn marshal. Yellow flags flew, confusion reigned, and the whole field slowed for ambulances, and what-have-you. Nobody was exactly sure where they were running, but we all held our positions.

Unbeknownst to Rich, Chuck had a problem and pitted briefly, putting Rich in third place. When the field went green, Chuck came charging up behind Rich, looking for room to pass for position. Rich thought Chuck was lapping him and, ever the sportsman, moved over.

Rich learned that he had shot himself out of a podium finish when he pulled in to the pits to an aploletic pit crew and hee-haws and a pointed finger from a jubilant Chuck Tsgounis.

After trophy presentations, we loaded up and headed back to Los Angeles. The following day we learned from Rich's crew chief what happened next. (Continued on page #4)

(Pomona, continued from page #1)  
to continue using this fine historical facility. Now to the racing. Saturday dawned with a moderately clear day that kept getting hotter and hotter. Funny things always seems to happen to us H Mod types. Mike Cleary up from Arizona in his beautiful Devin-Crosley promptly ran out of gas in the first practice even though his wife had warned him earlier. That little error had Mike on the defensive for the rest of the day. My two cars the Phoenix Saab driven by Bud Clark and Miller Crosley driven by Kip Fjeld would have a few setbacks, but nothing really terminal. That practice saw Clark turn a 1:55 best lap to lead the H Mods. Mike Cleary got a 2:08 lap later, after his gas stop while Fjeld turned a 2:20 lap. Kip Fjeld would later turn a respectable 2:02 time for the tough 2.2 circuit. When I use the term "tough" I don't do it loosely. Pomona is a Fairgrounds with a lot of bumps, pot holes and uneven surfaces. Then there is the "Pomona Bridge" which was challenging but not as dangerous as years ago. Saturday's event started with 47 cars on the grid. We had F production, G production, Formula V and H Mod. It is rather amusing that the Officials decided that a fourth car would be added to H Mod. Since this car was a "Miller Sprint car" it should run with the other Miller even though the Sprint car had a four cylinder Rajo-Ford engine. He should have been fast but all the H Mods lapped him at least twice in each practice and in each race.

Bud Clark was well out in front on Saturday when his right front wheel hit a rubber cone that someone else had thrown in the middle of the track. This strange occurrence cause the Saab to instantly stop running. Bud leaped out of the car and raised the hood looking for a problem. What had happened was the cone had shut off the master switch, under the fender. Moments later the Saab was running towards the finish. Kip actually passed Bud while he was searching for the problem. Fjeld was first, Cleary was second and Clark was third. On Sunday, the skies were blue

with wispy white clouds. The sun seemed hotter than ever, but so was the racing. Our flag event started with a near tragedy as a TR-3 and a Formula V tangled. The driver of the V was pinned against the Triumph until help came. I am glad to say he is OK, he is sore but will drive again. After the fifteen minutes to clear the area the race began again, Clark managed to sweep past Cleary's Devin-Crosley by the second lap and then he passed his team mate, Kip Fjeld, who was battling a Porsche Super driven by a guy who never used his mirrors. Clark went on to win the class and finish 19th overall.

At noon time the Officials decided to honor the cars that had actually raced there at Pomona in the 50's and 60's. This group included the Saab and the Miller, since the Saab had first raced there in 1960 with Merc Outboard power and the Miller had run in 1957 driven without a rollbar by Don Miller. Miller drove the car in clockwise direction which changed in 1958 because so many cars crashed. I hope next year more H cars come to the historic Vintage Event at Pomona.

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(Grampaw...Continued from page #3)  
Rich, still fulminating over his gaffe, and his crew chief proceeded to get a snootful. Two snootfuls, actually. Alas, the booze did little for Ol' Rich's blacker than-six-feet-up-a-stovepipe mood. Reeling toward the tow rig, he staggered to poor Viking I, snarled something unintelligible, and delivered a mighty kick to her beautifully sculpted tail. The resultant footprint further degraded the car's aerodynamics, and did not a damn thing for its aesthetics.

Here's Rich and crew chief, three sheets to the wind, eighty miles from home. Did they find a motel and sleep it off? No. With Rich at the helm of the tow truck (he was in no condition to sing) he and crew chief drove home from Santa Barbara to El Segundo at twenty five miles per hour, on the shoulder of the Pacific Coast Highway. They got stopped by the California Highway Patrol, but Rich was able to convince the CHP officer that he, Rich, had everything under control. Did I mention that Rich could be a smooth talker when he had to?

So, If anyone finds Viking I, they now know the origin of the footprint on the little dear's tail.

*Interested observers note:*

*Your Editor was in that race too. Rich passed me in the early laps at the end of the main straightaway. Later Chuck Tsigounis went by. My oil pressure was around 7 pounds and my temperature 210 degrees. So all I was doing was watching. The accident earlier involved the Berkeley of Lou Ames. Unfortunately the Turn Marshall died later from his injuries. One of the very few H-Mod fatalities.*  
*Editor.*

**Some thoughts on H Mod:**

1. Remember everything to bring before you leave for the track.
2. Pick your pits so no one will see the oil leaks.
3. Never, ever allow yourself to run out of gas.



**Letters to the Editor**

Dear Joe:

With regard to John Donaldson and friends singing the H Mod Lament, they must of been reading the old "H Modified Racing Club bulletins." I thought I had all the words to the original as written by Martin Tanner, but I can't find them. They wouldn't take credit...Would they?

Regards,  
Bill Mundus.

*Dear Bill,*

*Actually John and the Gang were members too and sang the song with reverence. The parities they made up were perhaps a bit more than irreverent.*

*Editor.*

Dear Joe:

My father and I, (Membership #026) both enjoy the small Times arrival very much. We will both like to order a couple of the new H-Mod tees.

Our small Times arrives at my father's house under Phil Jacobson. My father's name is Philo. We really enjoy the news,cars, and racing. Keep it up.

Greg

*Dear Greg and Philo:*

*We have corrected the label and made the change in our Member "Philos."*

*Editor.*

Dear Joe:

Here is a photo of my Tanner T-6 last summer at Meadowbrook. It won a blue ribbon, but more importantly, we received many compliments from the old racers and those who knew Tanner and shared the memories.

I hope you are feeling better, keep up the good work.

Charlie

*Dear Charlie:*

*Look for your car on the first page of this issue. It is a credit to you and those who would accurately restore their H Mods. Editor*

Greetings Joe:

Well done! A real good newsletter makes a guy wish it was a weekly mailing.

I got a call from Bill McCann yesterday. The Bryan special is being painted and will be on the track this year. Famous car in the San Francisco region. The car is an extremely fast rear engine Crosley Special and was the last Crosley running in the S. F. region races.

Tell Granpaw Donaldson not to forget the other end of Rich Ericksons' car. One of the most impressive sights I saw in the old H Mod days was when Rich came up to Cotati race track for a National; which he won. He had a poor mans, quick change rear end. It had two sprockets, one mounted on the end of the driveshaft, one mounted on the pinion shaft and lots of different size sprockets. What made this so outstanding was that this was all done using a Crosley torque tube drive. This all worked with the lay down, dry sump, offset engine to this special casting that housed these sprockets and chain. GOOD STUFF!

Also, I talked to Nancy Graham last nite, she is O.K. and we all want to thank you once again for everyone's efforts on Bob's behalf. A very special man we'll never forget.

Well, back to work on the Jubilee Special. Sounds like there is racing to be done!

Thank you!

Robert Thuander

*Thanks Bob for the kind words. As far as producing small Times on a weekly basis it would probably kill us. We need more contributions/Articles from members all over the Country. There are a lot of great cars out there we need to tell everyone just how great they are. H Mod is a small club of the finest people who ever touched a steering wheel. Bob, your continued letters and information has been marvelous. Keep it up!*  
*Editor.*

*We need articles on racing in the Northern California region, central USA, the North and South areas of the East Coast...Come on Folks, WRITE!*

**Flashbacks to The Past**

by  
**Joe Puckett**

We wish to thank Bill Mundus and the Old H Modified Racing Club for the following 1964 race report.

At the second annual H Modified Club race meeting which was held August 29th and 30th of 1964, a wild time was had by all participants. Held at the Tricky-Hilly-Twisty-1-1/2 mile course at Waterford Race Track, The Club put on 10 races in one weekend. The rate of a attrition was well up to normal H Modified standards. Fay Meerzo was the first to go, that is Fay's crankshaft was. As sometimes happens with SAAB engines, the middle piston got cooked, the pieces jammed things up and the rod went through the bottom of the crankcase. Being a young sportsman of the old school type Fay didn't punch his chief engineer on the nose, however, he did make a remark about it. He said loud enough so all could hear "Oh Pshaw!"

(Courtesy of Martin Tanner)

**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.

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Describe H Car/s owned/did own

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**Want Ads  
Cars, Parts  
n' Services**

From the Estate of the late Bob Graham, the following cars and parts are released for sale through Bob Thulander, 83869 North Pacific Hwy. Creswell, Oregon 97426. Phone (503) 895-4551.

1. Miller Crosley ex-Emery Smith car completely restored and fast! Bob's personal racer. Car does need clutch but is a proven winner for \$12,500.

2. Siata Crosley 300BC ex-Cunningham Sebring Car, ex-movie car from "On the Beach" driven by Fred Astaire. Completely restored dark blue winner. Has quick change rear end minimum work required, \$25,000.

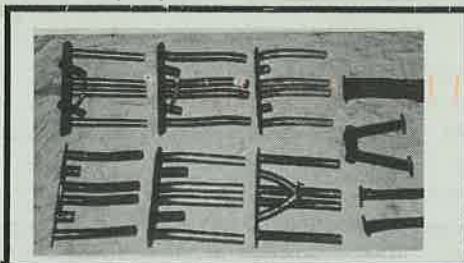
3. 1946 Midget racer full size from Idaho, Crosley Power with trans, rear axle, spot brakes all Crosley. Fiat Topolino Front end. Wonderful hand made aluminum body. Excellent running condition, \$4,000.

4. Crosley Special, big engine, Sprite Trans, rear end. Entry level price \$3,000. Car is 75% complete.

The following is a condensed version of the Crosley Parts inventory from the Graham Estate. See next column.

The inventory includes the following: cases, blocks, cranks, radiators, aluminum valve covers, pistons and rods, rings, oil pumps, tower shafts, water pumps, rotor caps for valves, generators, one rear end, front axles, etc. Neil Lynch will take offers, answer questions on other items which include two Bearcat engines.

56 Jabro MK 1(Vintage Motorsport Nov. 92') includes rolling chassis, Spitfire frnt. end, discs, midget rear, only raced two times. \$3,750. Bud Bossart (414) 639-3099.



Glenn Reynold's cadre of manifolds

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