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S U M M E R 2 0 0 5

Rat Rods..

Bob Millhouse's '34 Ford truck

Jack Briggs' '46 Chevy with Rod Austin's '36 Lafayette

Rod Austin's '45 Chevy

another shot of Rod Austin's '36 Lafayette

Photos by Rod Austin

..Something Old Is New Again

In garages, workshops and well-maintained barns all across the country, veteran hot rodders and neophytes alike are embarking on projects that are variously referred to as "rat rods" or traditional hot rods. It would be a safe bet that you would not have to travel very far to find such a rodding project underway. Even out here in the "sticks" it only took a few hours and one five minute phone call to uncover not one, not two, but FIVE rodent rods in various stages of completion.

Leading off the report on the traditional rodding scene, let's stop by the garage of Rod Austin in Hartford, Michigan. Rod lives right on one of the main thoroughfares in H-town and his large garage faces the street. Anything he is working on is viewed by hundreds of motorists who pass by on a nightly basis so Rod's vehicle projects are never a secret for very long. Already the proud owner of a righteously built '35 Chevy cabriolet, Rod felt the need for a less formal, down and dirty type of rod. A rat rod filled the bill exactly.

Starting with a '45 Chevy truck (not a lot of these around as wartime production was virtually non-existent), Rod deeply channeled the cab over the frame rails and added a "Z" at the rear to really bring the rear end down low. The pickup box will be severely abbreviated, but that's OK because the hauling done by this truck will be of the figurative variety anyway. Speaking of hauling, a 406" small block Chevy V8 is waiting in

the wings, nestled snugly under a 6-71 GMC blower assembly, and will be installed soon so that the rest of the truck can be built around it. Traction? If you look closely, you can see that dual rear tires will bring up the rear. The long and low '45 will see sunlight before summer's end.

Down the road a bit to the south, two other rat rods are being planned. Bob Millhouse, who lives in suburban Keeler, Michigan, is gathering the pieces to assemble a 1934 Ford pickup. So far, he has a reasonably sound cab that languished in a field nearly within the city limits for the last several years, and recently acquired a 401 cubic inch Buick nailhead V8 that was still on board a '59 "deuce and a quarter" headed for the scrap heap. There's a lot of traditional type potential here, folks.

On the outer fringes of Hartford township, longtime hot rodder, Jack Briggs, recently acquired a rust-free '46 Chevrolet truck cab and sheet metal and plans to do the rat rod number on as well. The truck will keep Jack's other street rods, a '47 Ford coupe and a '36 Chevy pickup, company in his spacious barn. (That other body lurking in the shadows is a future project of Rod's, one half of a '36 Nash Lafayette four-door that will eventually become a pickup.)

So, there you have it. Right around the corner, in small town America, backyard craftsmen are hard at work building personalized transportation that can't be matched anywhere. The modern iron aficionados can have their Cobalts and their SSR's...Rod, Bob and Jack have better ideas. **R&R**

Motorsports News

US 131 Big Money Bracket Race Winners



US 131 Motorsports Park in Martin MI played host to the second annual Lane Automotive/Crane Cams Big Money Bracket Race on Saturday and Sunday May 21-22. Wakarusa, IN driver, Glenn Ornat, who normally pilots commercial airliners, drove his Big Block powered dragster to a \$5000 victory in Top E.T. US 131 regular, Justin Wanamaker, topped all comers in Modified-No Box, driving his "Daddy's Dart" entry to a \$5000 winner's check. Another local racer, Brian Oros, won the \$1000 Second Chance Race in the beautiful Cruiser's Pub sponsored S-10 pickup. A field of over 150 racers enjoyed a perfect race day on Saturday only to have Mother Nature wash out Sunday's scheduled events. Lane Automotive and Crane Cams would like to congratulate all of the winners and thank drivers and teams for coming out and supporting the event **R&R**



Glenn Ornat



Justin Wanamaker



Brian Oros

Photos by John Berglund

Brian Robbins Scores NMCA Pro Street Win At Bowling Green, KY.

The 4th Annual Lunati NMCA Hot Rod and Muscle Car Nationals at Beech Bend Raceway in Bowling Green, Kentucky is in the history books. Those competing this year found the temperature and humidity intense enough to push the heat index over 100 degrees, wreaking havoc on the traction situation. In the end, it was not horsepower that won the races, but how well each team overcame the lack of bite on the track surface. After qualifying sixth in the field of 13, Lane Automotive salesman Brian Robbins and car owner Keith Engling finessed their way to the final, and the eventual win over Steve King, by taking about 12 degrees of timing (and a resultant 500 horsepower) out of the engine in order to keep the car hooked up from start to finish. Given the conditions



PHOTO BY: JoHnBoY Photography.com

at Beech Bend that weekend, Brian's winning performance, a 6.87 at 209 mph, was outstanding. It was doubly sweet for Brian and Keith as this was the car's first outing following a complete rebuild after a hard crash into the wall at Bradenton, Florida in January. **R&R**

MOTORSPORTS NEWS DRAG

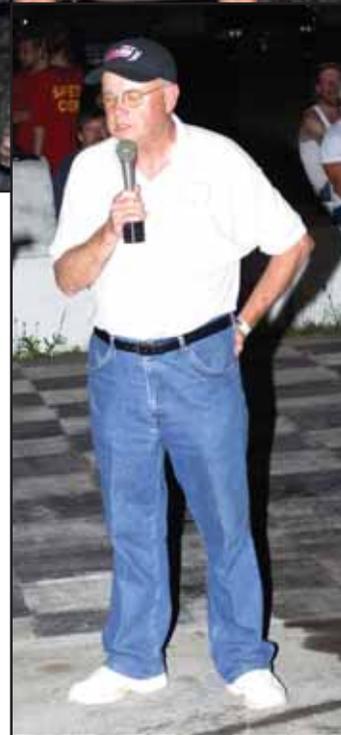
Michiana Vintage Racers Hall Of Fame Induction

Eight Michiana area men, including Lane Automotive founder, George Lane, were inducted into the Michiana Racers Hall of Fame in ceremonies held at South Bend Motor Speedway on Friday June 24, 2005. Joining George on the list of inductees were Dave Roahrig, Chuck Engle, Bill "Mr. Cigar" Smith, Jim Teske, Johnny Croy, Herb Christie and Mike Miser, Sr.

The Michiana Vintage Racers Organization is dedicated to preserving the early auto racing history as it relates to Indiana and Michigan. The first Michiana Racers Hall of Fame induction took place in 2002 making the 2005 affair the 4th annual.

Those attending this year's banquet, held on South Bend Speedway's Old Timers' Night, were treated to an evening of stock car racing and a special VROA (Vintage Racers of America) modified event. In addition to racing, several MVR members had vintage racing photographs on display and several vintage race cars were on hand to take to the track for exhibition laps.

The MRV Hall of Fame inductees are nominated and voted upon by a board consisting of nine members. The organization was started by longtime race fan, Ron Verash, and the banquet was organized by racer and board member, Pat York. **R&R**



1. Chuck Engle 2. Herb Christie 3. George Lane
4. Bill "Mr. Cigar" Smith 5. Jim Teske 6. Mike Miser
7. Johnny Croy 8. Dave Roahrig

Photos by Ron Harner

New Products



Longacre No Sweep Caster/Camber Gauge (LON78280)

Checking critical caster and camber settings has never been easier. Gauge is no sweep type and reads directly without having to turn the wheels. Gauge will read +/- 8 degrees caster and +/- 6 degrees camber. It's packed in a neat carrying case and includes an adapter for use with wide 5 wheels. Longacre also offers a Spindle Modification Kit (LON78402) which must be used with the gauge. **R&R**



Shock-Proof Pressure Gauges

It seems that everywhere a small pressure gauge needs to be mounted turns out to be an area that is also subject to abnormal vibrations. Think about that pressure gauge attached to the fuel line at the carburetor. At idle, the gauge rocks enough that it can't be read clearly so you can imagine the severity of the ultra high speed vibrations that occur at 7,000 RPM and beyond. These vibes will soon frappe the internal mechanisms of most standard pressure gauges. Allstar now has the answer with four new Shock Proof 1-1/2" diameter pressure gauges with ratings of 0-15 PSI, 0-30 PSI, 0-60 PSI or 0-100 PSI. All are liquid-filled with stainless steel cases and bezels, brass internals and attractive damascened dial faces. All connections are 1/8"NPT. **R&R**



Lund Tri-Fold Ramp (LUN602010)

Loading ATV's, motorcycles, snowmobiles and other items into pickup trucks is now much easier and safer thanks to Lund's new Tri-Fold Ramp. Made of aluminum, the 45" wide x 77" long ramp has a 2,000 lb. capacity and its pivoting, angled ends secure the ramp to the tailgate. Cleverly designed, the ramp folds to 15" wide for storage and transport. **R&R**



Oversized Bronze Distributor Gears

Accurate engine timing relies heavily upon having as little backlash as possible, especially in the distributor drive gear. One way to reduce distributor gear backlash is to increase the contact area of the teeth. Machined from 630 bronze, the Allstar Oversized Distributor Gear provides .005" more contact area for less backlash, longer gear life and improved compatibility with roller cams. Choose a gear with a .491" diameter shaft (ALL81312) or a .500" shaft (ALL81313). **R&R**



KS Gen 2 Power Steering Gear (KSEKSGEN215650)

KSE's Generation 2 steering gear has a 4 degree valve with a 20% quicker lead ball screw for quicker feedback and improved stability, two characteristics of great importance to circle track racers. The second generation KSE steering gear mounts inboard, strengthening the top mount and eliminating the gear box as a structural member of the chassis. The gear box has a reservoir built into the live hub, for turbulence and aeration prevention, as well as wing slider ports sealed by O-rings. **R&R**



Photo by Matt Hauch

NEW PRODUCTS

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New Products



The Classic Column

When it comes to installing a new steering column in a hot rod, especially if that hot rod is a Model A or Deuce coupe or roadster, the late model tilt jobs just don't cut it. Sure, they work fine, and there's a ton of aftermarket wheels and dress-up kits to doll them up even more, but they just look too large and bulky. Ididit's Classic Column is a non-tilt, straight unit with a short, stylish head and small 1-3/4" diameter tube which combine to give it a very traditional, almost stock appearance. The column has a 3/4"-36 splined end and is wired for turn signals, four-way flashers and horn using a 3-7/8" GM-style plug. It's available in chrome, nice for open cars, or plain steel which looks great in closed cars. Ididit offers the Classic in 30", 32", and 35" lengths. Come to think of it, a guy building a rat rod could spray bomb the plain steel column with flat black primer and it would look right at home while offering the safety and wiring convenience of a modern column. **R&R**



1964-66 Mustang Floor Shift Tilt Column (IDI1120647110)

The original Mustang used the same steering column as the early Falcon...not exactly a high point in steering column evolution. This new beauty is specifically designed to fit the early Mustang and to look like it belongs. Ididit's custom touches include self-canceling turn signals, four-way hazard flashers, knobs, handles and a wiring harness with popular 3-7/8" GM-style plug. Please note that this column will not accept the stock Mustang steering wheel, so an aftermarket wheel is in order as well. **R&R**



Early Mustang and Camaro Rack and Pinion Conversions



Let's face it gang. We have become old timers. Lots of things have changed in the last 40 years. Our bodies just don't react like they used to, our joints have deteriorated and we sometimes have trouble maintaining a steady, straight ahead course. Early Mustangs and Camaros have suffered a similar plight. The Mustang has already passed its 40th birthday, and the Camaro is rapidly running out of thirty-somethings as well. We have knee and hip replacements to put a little bounce back in our steps and now, thanks to Flaming River, our Mustangs and Camaros can step out into modern traffic with a new measure of confidence, too. Flaming River's bolt-in manual rack and pinion steering conversions for these "pony" cars snug right up to existing chassis holes and require no drilling, cutting or welding.

The Mustang manual unit fits 289 and 302 equipped cars with stock or high performance manifolds and 351W, and 351C cars with stock manifolds. Kits are available with (FLAFR300KT) or without (FLAFR300NC) tilt columns and both include steering shaft, tie rod ends, U-joints, hardware and instructions.

The Camaro manual rack and pinion bolts right into existing chassis holes on small block cars with stock oil pans and stock exhaust manifolds or Hedman or Hooker headers. Stock Camaro steering column is retained and kits contain steering shaft, tie rod ends, U-joints, hardware and instructions. FLAFR303NC fits '67-68 Camaro and FLAFR304NC fits '69 Camaro. **R&R**



Photo by Matt Hauch

Rodding Journal

WHAT GOES AROUND...GETS AROUND

If you'll recall, in our January-March Racing and Rodding we printed an article about Richard Reiter's '66 Chevelle, built by Richard and painted and lettered by Jim Fogle's Color Connection to be a replica of Dale Earnhardt, Sr's first asphalt stock car. After Richard read the piece, he called to thank us, and then asked if someone here was interested in getting behind the wheel of the car. Seems he wanted someone to drive it as the pace car at Kalamazoo Speedway's Intimidator 100 race on April 9. It was my good fortune to be the one who ended up piloting the pretty little machine that night, not only on the pace laps, but the parade laps during the National Anthem as well. What made it extra special was that April 9 just happened to be my birthday.

I only had one major concern. How was I going to insert my 250+ pound carcass into the relatively cramped confines of the Chevelle when the only means of entry was through the driver door window? I worried for naught. When Richard came here to remove the Chevelle from the foyer to the Lane showroom, my concerns were laid to rest when I was able to climb (squirm) in with relative ease (and a firm tug on my trailing left foot by Richard). At this same time, I fired up the car and made several "somewhat hot" laps around the Lane parking lot to get the feel of the triple-disc clutch. I was ready to go.

Saturday night, April 9 was uncharacteristically warm and sunny for Michigan. A near record crowd filled the stands at Kalamazoo for a full night of racing which included the 100-lap Intimidator super late model race. Before the big race, I had a chance to ride with Kalamazoo's pace truck driver, Nate Newcomb, to get a feel for the speeds we'd be running and to come up with a game plan that we both agreed upon. Nate said we'd run four laps and then both dive down low on the backstretch to pull into the pits. The race cars would then pass and take the green flag out of turn four.

Back in the pits, two fellows from the local newspaper came by to interview me and take some photos. I told them they should really talk to Richard, since it was his car and he was just letting me drive it. I turned to get Richard's attention

and he had disappeared. A moment later, he reappeared on the roof of his trailer with a conspiratorial grin on his face that told me he wanted no part of the interview.

After all the other features were run, including an accident-marred limited late model race, we were told to line up for the big feature. The pace truck pulled out on the track, followed by yours truly in the Chevelle and a field made up of the fastest twenty four super late models, all ready to do battle. The four laps went by quickly and before I knew it, Nate was signalling and pulling down to enter the pits. I quickly followed and the race was on a scant few seconds later. Now, I'd never run a lap on a circle track before, but even at the 60 mile an hour speeds we ran on the pace laps I could see where it would be loads of fun. In fact, I kind of hoped that the pace truck would get out of my way. The old Chevelle is a full-on race car and it wanted to run much faster than I worked it that night. Some full speed laps would have been a real thrill.

I am grateful to Richard Reiter for offering me the temporary ride in his Chevelle, and for making birthday number 57 one to remember. **R&R**



Photo by Kevin Smith

New Open Wheel Catalog

Our newest Open Wheel Racing catalog is just back from the printer and we couldn't be happier. The product of a great deal of communication and cooperation among our artists, writers and racers, the catalog represents nearly a year long effort. The 150-page, full color catalog showcases the highly specialized parts that are needed to build a first class open wheel race car, whether it's a sprint car, midget or modified, and offers a wealth of technical information as well. Call 800 772-5266 today to get a copy. **R&R**



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What's New at Lane Automotive

17th Annual Car Show Tops Them All

From down the street, from Ohio, from Grand Rapids, from California, West Virginia and Texas they came. They were driven, they were trailered, they came in convoys. They showed up in bright, candy colors, bold solids, shimmering metallics and smoothly applied, satin primers. Many had high octane gas in their tanks, some had alcohol, a select few were running on 98% nitro and some were not running at all. They all had one thing in common: they were show vehicles in attendance at the 17th Annual Lane Automotive Car Show which took place on Saturday May 28th under beautiful, sunny skies (for a change!). When the final tally was made, nearly 1,000

cars had come to take part in what has become southwestern Michigan's premier automotive event. Spectator attendance was also at an all time high and estimates placed the crowd total at close to ten thousand.

All who were on hand at 12:00 Noon were treated to the sounds and sensations of eight vintage nitro powered front engine fuelers, one vintage nitro funny car and a hemi-powered 1940 Willys gas coupe. As we have done in years past, the entire building was opened up and guided tours were conducted throughout the day. A new attraction this year was the showing of the Lane Automotive Anniversary video. Words cannot describe the event, so feast your eyes on this assortment of photos taken at the show. **R&R**



Photo by Matt Hauch

Photo by Caleb Mullauer



Photo by Dustin Lane



Photo by Caleb Mullauer



Photo by Dustin Lane

NSRA APPRECIATION DAY & Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, September 10, 2005 8:30AM - Noon

Appreciation Day will be held at the Lane Automotive Complex located at **8300 Lane Drive, Watervliet, MI 49098 - Intersection of 1-94 (exit 41) and M-140.** Great Hot Rods, Free Pancake Breakfast, Prizes, and Dash Plaques for registered participants (Dash plaques are limited to the first 100 cars).

Plus, NSRA Safety Inspections. Need parts? Our Showroom will be open until 2:00.

For more information call Scott Wahlstrom at 269-463-4113 ext. 243 or email swahlstrom@laneautomotive.com



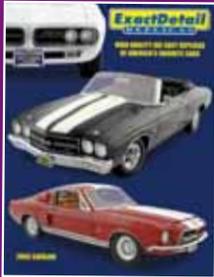
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