

Montana 500 Newsletter

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Volume 1 Number 6



Montana Cross Country T Assn. 7516 E. Mission, Spokane, WA 99212
www.antiqueautoranch.com/montana500

2002 Officers and Directors:

President: Sam Nickol

Vice President: Rick Carnegie

Sec.-Treasurer: Janet Cerovski

Directors:

Rick Carnegie 2003

Tom Carnegie 2002

Janet Cerovski 2003

Tony Cerovski 2005

Rob Flesner 2005

Mark Hutchinson 2005

Doug Langel 2002

George Nickol 2002

Sam Nickol 2003

Date of endurance run is June 17th

Membership dues \$10.00

Touring class: \$25.00

Endurance runner: \$35.00

Front cover: All the cars from the
2001 run.

General News

The fall meeting is history. Thanks to all who attended. We have decided the base city for next year's run will be Helena. Date for the run is June 16th, check-in/inspection day. The run proper will start on June 17th. We have nominated and approved some new lifetime members. They are Ray Habel, Chuck Worthington, Rich Armstrong, John Foos, Tillman Oblander, Frank Iverson, Lewis Rector, Dick Schuler, Gene Hansard, H. H. Wilson, Joe Wilkinson and Marian Cook. We have decided to stop sending out newsletters to people who are past due with their dues. All of the information will be made available on the webpage. If there isn't "LIFETIME", or, "2001" or later after your name, you will get no more newsletters until you have paid up. Speaking of paid up, 2002 dues are due. Please pay early and often. You can wait until the race, but it makes it a lot easier on the bookkeeper if you pay early. We always have to sort of guess how many members to insure with the National club, 'cause a lot of people haven't paid by the time that we send them the info. So please send in your dues today. By the way, all of the directors need to be members of the National Club (MTFCA) in order for our club to qualify for the national insurance. I would like to thank Rich Armstrong and Nan Robison for the driver's profiles that they supplied. I would like for everyone in the club to consider writing a profile on someone that they know. I have managed to badger several different people into writing these for us, and they all have said that it wasn't as hard as they thought it might be. I have written a goofy little piece of fiction that is an imaginary interview with two imaginary people with rather different views on the purpose and roots of our endurance run. Please return the rule change ballot on page 11.

A Polemic

By Tom Carnegie

Interviewer: This newsletter we are excited to announce a conversation between two ardent supporters of the Montana 500. The first one is called “Aged Car”, the second, “Super Cam”. That is not their real names, but is what they’ll go by in this article. I’ll start the conversation by asking a question of Aged Car. Mr. Car, where do you “come down” on modifications to cars participating in the Montana 500?

Aged Car: There are two classes in the Montana 500, the touring class and the trophy class. Any cars may participate in the touring class, but only stock Model T Fords are allowed in the trophy class.

I: Mr. Cam, do you think the cars in the trophy class should be stock?

Super Cam: Of course.

I: With all due respect Mr. Cam, I’ve seen your car, and it isn’t what I’d call stock.

SC: Sure it is. I don’t think that your definition of stock is the same as mine. I’m sure that “stock” means different things to different people. For instance, if you were to ask Jeff Gordon what a stock car was, you’d get a far different answer than one from our friend Aged Car.

I: Mr. Car, what is your definition of “stock”.

AC: Stock means just as Henry made them.

SC: You mean if a T is painted red it wouldn’t be stock?

AC: No, it wouldn’t.

SC: I think that what you are is a “stock fundamentalist”.

You’re trying for an unreachable idealistic goal. The Montana 500 was never conceived as this sort of thing.

AC: I believe it was. Even the earliest fliers for the event said that the T’s must be strictly stock.

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SC: I've seen those fliers. They say the cars must be strictly stock then they go on to say that outside oil lines, water pumps and so on are allowed. Original T's didn't have these you know.

AC: You call me a "stock fundamentalist". I say that you are a "stock infidel". Would you say a T is stock with a water pump on it?

SC: Yes I would.

AC: How about a distributor?

SC: Yes I would.

AC: How can you say a T with a distributor is stock? T's didn't come with distributors.

SC: My Granddad bought a T new from the dealer in Salt Lake City in 1925, and it had a distributor on it.

AC: Ford didn't make the distributor.

SC: True, and Firestone made the tires. I mentioned earlier that Jeff Gordon's definition of "stock" might be different from yours, let's see what Webster's definition of "stock" is.

AC: I'll look it up. Webster's says a stock car is: "a racing car having the basic chassis of a commercially produced assembly line model."

SC: That definition would fit a T with a distributor or even a Rajo wouldn't it?

AC: Well, yeah that definition would, but that isn't my definition. Stock to me is the way they came off the assembly line.

SC: I think that you are mixing up the term "stock" with "original".

AC: Maybe so, but I don't want Rajo heads in the Montana 500.

SC: Me neither. I am content to call a Model T built according to the rules of the Montana 500 "stock".

AC: Since it isn't practical to race original cars, I'll concede to this too. I guess "stock" is a broader term than I thought it was.

I: Thank you gentlemen!

AC: You're welcome.

Fall Meeting 2001

The fall 2001 meeting of the Montana Cross-Country T Association was called to order by President Sam Nickol at 11:15 a.m. Old members present were: Sam Nickol, Tony and Janet Cerovski, Rob Flesner, Mark Hutchinson, Nan and Mike Robison, Rick and Tom Carnegie. New member, Konrad Nickol. The minutes of the last meeting were read and corrected to note that Josh Billmayer and Jerome Gunderson were guests. Treasurer's report was that we have a balance of \$2856.10. Timers and trouble truck drivers are to be reimbursed. Call for the election of new officers. Tony Cerovski, Simon Nickol, and Stan Howe's terms expired. Doug Langel, Tom Carnegie and George Nickol's terms expire in 2002. Janet Cerovski, Rick Carnegie and Sam Nickol's terms expire in 2003. Three new officers were nominated. Tony was re-elected with all voting in favor except Tony. Mark Hutchinson and Rob Flesner were elected by unanimous ballot. Their terms will expire in 2004. Moved and seconded to stop sending newsletters to delinquent members after one year. The following people were nominated and voted to be lifetime members: Ray Habel, Chuck Worthington, Rich Armstrong, John Foos, Tillman Oblander, Frank Iverson, Lewis Rector, Dick Schuler, Gene Hansard, H. H. Wilson, Joe Wilkinson and Marian Cook. Noted: we need more hats. Motion was made and passed to register www.montana500.com as our official web domain. Tom will set this up. A route was voted on, 3 votes for Havre, 4 votes for Helena. The 2002 Montana 500

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will be held out of Helena. A motion was made and passed to have Tom contact a lawyer about some legal aspects on the run. There was some discussion about pulling the restrictor plates in lagging cars. It was decided that in the future, if someone had their plate pulled by the directors, that they could not place ahead of a restrictor plated car. Also, there would be a note on the official results showing that they had finished without a restrictor plate. The use of 14MM spark plugs with adapters was discussed. The general consensus was that they are not stock therefore are not legal. Since they are not stock, no new rule is needed. The use of truck parts on cars was discussed. The general consensus was that it was O.K. to use truck parts as long as the use didn't break any other rules. For instance, a c-cab would be O.K., but a rear end would not, as truck rear ends don't have 40 tooth ring gears, and 11 tooth pinions. There was some discussion on drafting, which Sam will address at next year's driver's meeting. A motion was made to amend rule six to add that drivers must abide by the laws of the State of Montana. After some discussion, it was noted that this provision was already in the driver's waiver so it was unnecessary. The motion was withdrawn. A motion was made to change rule 57 to: Adjustable flat tappet lifters (push rods) of stock dimensions, stem oversize to 1/32" allowed. Motion passed unanimously. A motion was made to change rule 51 to read: Any cam that doesn't require modification of the block may be used. Bearing bores must be standard size, no relieving of the bearing bores. 3 votes for, 2 against, 1 abstain. Motion passed. Motion was made and passed to have club pay for lunch. Meeting was adjourned. Respectfully submitted, Rick Carnegie for Carla Carnegie.

KEN COOK

By Rich Armstrong

Ken Cook, born and reared in Laurel, Montana moved to Bozeman in the late 1940's after serving in the Navy.

He was a salesman for Montana Motors and later sold insurance for New York Life.

Ken's involvement in racing began in 1961 when he and John Foos entered the race at Lewistown and completed the run to Circle.

Ken was instrumental in the formation of the organization we now know as *The Montana Cross-Country "T" Association*. He was a charter member as well as the first President. Ken was proud to be President and he served the office well. Marian, his wife, was elected Sec.-

Treasurer and many years later, she would also serve as President.

Ken entered his 1915 Vegetable Wagon in many of the early races. To my knowledge, he never won a race, but he always finished. Ken's appearance at each race was quite evident! He was a tall, thin man dressed in "T" attire-straw hat, vest and bow tie- sitting in the high profile "T" with a big wide grin. The "T" sported a shiny brass radiator, open wooden pickup box and bright yellow spoked wheels.

Ken passed away in December of 1974.



Ken and Marian Cook in his 1915 Vegetable Wagon. Note the later model fenders. This picture was taken during the 1965 run.

COKEY WILLIAMS

As remembered by Nan Robison

My first recollection of Cokey Williams was in 1972. My brother Rick had decided to try his luck in the Montana 500 endurance run. My Mom and I had been enlisted as pit crew.

When we arrived on check in day, the multitude and variety of T's amazed me. There were T's of every color and condition, but one really stood out. That was Cokey's.

Cokey hailed from Hayward, CA. This was his second race, having entered in 1971. That year he placed 9th, and swore he would come back and win the 1972 race. He drove a 1924 in 1971. He said that he was going to chrome everything if his car didn't win in "71". It didn't, and he did.

Cokey stood out in a crowd. He was a very confident man, and while racing, always wore stylish coveralls, and a very natty cha-peau. I constantly marveled at how his coveralls were always immaculate. I saw him in and under his car's engine as often as any other driver. How he kept them so spotless is still a mystery to me.

His car in 1972 was a beaut! It was a sleek silver-gray and black 26-7 roadster, with Model A wheels, and lots of chrome. He had purchased the car at the Reno swap meet about 2 years before the race. It was a mass of rust and the turtle deck was riddled with bullet holes when he bought it. Cokey stated that "It looked like Bonnie and Clyde's car". You could see the filled bullet holes if you looked in the turtle deck. He estimated that he had

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spent about \$1400.00 and 3000 hours restoring it to virtually mint condition. Rumor had it that he said it had somewhere between 21-47 coats of hand rubbed lacquer. How many it actually had was never known for sure, but that car positively glowed. At that time, race rules required that you have a sign on the side of your car that stated your name and where you were from, but Cokey did not want to put one on his car as he was afraid it would mar the finish. He had made many of the parts he couldn't find for the car himself. The car had a chrome Model A bumper, and both a brake light and a tail light, of which he was inordinately proud.

The race that year was 540 miles long. It began and ended in Miles City. Twenty-five cars were entered, with twenty-four starting. The first leg ended in Sidney, where Cokey led by nine minutes over Dave Ratzburg. He did have some sort of trouble outside of Plentywood, but still managed to come in ahead.

At the end of the race, Cokey came in first with a time of 10:39:54. He averaged 50.63 mph. After teardown, his car was found to have a cast iron head with a combustion chamber like a "Z" head. Whether it was legal or not was put to a vote of the drivers, and after the votes were counted, President Rich Armstrong said; "Sorry Cokey, it didn't go your way". His car was disqualified.

He did not return in 1973.

