

Montana 500 Newsletter

Jan-Mar. 2011

Volume 11 no. 1



Montana Cross Country T Assn.
1004 Sioux Road
Helena, MT 59602

www.montana500.org

2011 Officers and Directors:

President: Mike Stormo
Vice President: Mike Robison
Secretary: Jillian Robison
Treasurer: Janet Cerovski

Directors:

Rick Carnegie 2010
Dave Robison 2010
Tom Carnegie 2011
Doug Langel 2011
Janet Cerovski 2009
Mark Hutchinson 2009
Mike Robison 2011
Tony Cerovski 2010
Jillian Robison 2010

Meeting Secretary: Jillian Robison
Correspondence: Tom Carnegie
Newsletter Editor: Tom Carnegie

Membership dues \$10.00
Touring class: \$25.00
Endurance runner: \$35.00

Cover picture: Ed Towe and Skeeter Carlson at the 2010 Montana 500. Their combined age is over 180 years!
Add in Dave Huson and Mark Hutchinson in the background and who knows how high the number could go!

Photo by Lee Burgess

EDITOR'S PROPAGANDA

Tom Carnegie

I should have had this out a few weeks ago. So much for volunteer help. Every month I hear back from a few people that didn't get their newsletter. Sorry about that. I checked the addresses and they were correct. The postoffice must be losing them. This month I will seal them shut with a sticker rather than a staple. Maybe the staples are getting caught in the sorting machine. We'll see how it goes. Eventually all the newsletters get posted onto the web. If you don't have an internet connection you can go to the library and get all of the past information. Or better yet, get an internet connection already. I and Mike Robison have posted a few videos to Youtube. Search for "Montana 500" if you want to find them.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to use this space to write about the upcoming Montana 500.

This year the event is in memory of 5 time winner and long-time member Bud Peters.

A couple of years ago I had the privilege to visit with him for a few hours at his ranch and Model T laboratory. I went to Ledger with Rick and Tom . It was a great afternoon spent talking about Model T's and stories of past 500's.

In that spirit I would like to invite all members present and past to come to Conrad this June. Air up the tires and blow off the dust from that old racer and bring it to the 51th annual Montana 500. I would especially like to invite past drivers, their crew members and families to bring their Model T's , their old photos and their best stories to Conrad. You can enter the race, or the tour class, or just drive around Conrad, a "T" friendly town. So make your reservations for the 19th thru the 22nd of June and enjoy the event.

Finally if you know someone that is not a member that has been associated in the past, please share this information with them.

Mike Stormo

How to CC a Head

Tom Carnegie

A bit of history:

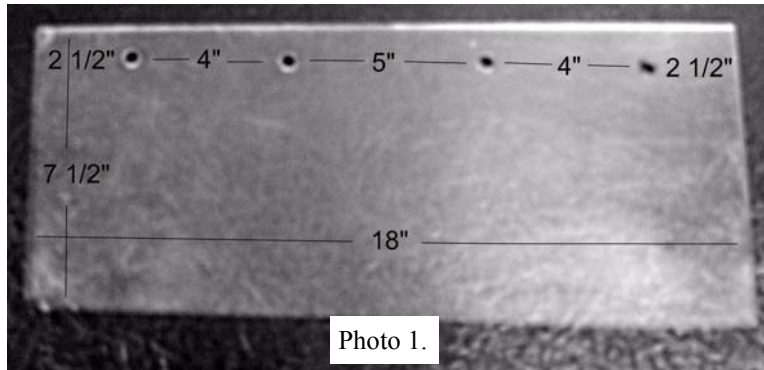
When my brother and I first got involved with the Montana 500, low heads were allowed. The rule was changed in the fall of 1974 to only allow high heads. I believe the thought was that low heads were getting too hard to find, so why not only allow high heads, of which there is a good supply. There also might have been some concern that someone might come up with one of the very early heads made for flat-top pistons that had a far smaller combustion chamber. As time went along, folks did some tricky things under the heading of “no limit to the amount of milling of the head.” I have been told that one guy poured a layer of babbitt into the combustion chamber to increase compression. When he was sure that his car was declared “legal” at the teardown, he proudly proclaimed “look what I done!” As you mill a high head, the section in the center is usually the first part to get weak. To overcome this weakness some folks took to internally (inside the water jacket) bracing their heads with a piece of angle iron held in place by an extra bolt. This bolt was then hidden by a temperature sender, or some such thing. The brace was however discovered during teardown on one car that was so equipped, and the motor (or rather the driver) was disqualified. As time went along people got trickier. The deck of the head and the combustion chamber were sometimes manipulated to allow more milling or to make the combustion chamber smaller. The club devised a contour gauge to try to stop the chamber manipulation. No

rule, nor any way to police the deck manipulation was found or used. There was a lot of argument, or maybe “discussion” is a better word, as to whether this manipulation was illegal or not, with many drivers insisting that it was legal. Some folks also found out that certain heads, either from Canada, or those made in US around 1917 had thicker decks than the later ones. I (and probably others) found that often heads would have a “core shift” when they were cast, so the combustion chamber was noticeably shallower on some heads than others. Also the deck, even on early heads are often thicker on some heads than others, presumably for the same reason. So, if you had a large supply of heads, as I have, you would go through them all and find the one with the thickest deck and shallowest combustion chamber, and mill the heck out of it. Even at that though, the heads would only last so long before they would fold up and die. The group in Spokane got to talking about this and decided that the Montana 500 shouldn't be a contest about who can mill their head the most, which is essentially what it had become. After a bit of thought it was decided to restrict the milling of the head to about .080”. A high head starts out at about 300 CC's. Milling it .080” to .100” puts the CC's at about 275. Then someone said, “why not allow low heads?” A low head typically starts out life at around 280 CC's, so just cleaning it up would put it at around 275. At teardown time as the inspectors were CC'ing a head, there was quite a bit of discussion about the proper method to be used. Should you use the sparkplug or fill the sparkplug hole with a pipe plug, or perhaps clay? Do you include carbon that has accumulated in the combustion chamber or make an allowance for it? Does the combustion chamber include the head gasket or not? The rules were clarified. Clay

would be used to fill the sparkplug hole. Carbon, we didn't address. The headgasket is not part of the chamber. Rather than force people to get new heads to meet with the clarified procedure, an additional 5 CC allowance was subtracted from the original 275 CC limit. The new limit became 270 CC's.

How to do it:

The method we use is to get a big syringe at the farm store. The biggest we could find was 60 CC's. Get a piece of Plexiglas approximately 18" X 7". Drill four 3/8" holes. (See photo 1.) Put a thin layer of grease around each combustion chamber. Use some modeling



clay to fill the sparkplug hole flush. Invert the head and stabilize it so that the valve side is slightly lower. Place the Plexiglas onto the deck, sealing it with the grease. Proceed to fill the chambers with water from the syringe, being careful to keep track of how much water you use.

Official Montana 500 Web Page

The 2011 Montana 500 will be held in Conrad, MT

The 2011 Run will be the Bud Peters Memorial Run in
honor of five time open champion Bud Peters of
Ledger, MT

Inspection day will be the 19th of June

The run begins on June 20th

The base hotel will be the Super 8 the rate will be \$73.85 + tax, reduced
from \$86.00. They will hold 25 rooms until June 12th. Callers are to
indicate they are with Montana Ford "T" 500. The telephone # is 406-
278-7676



Tentative routes:

Routes are subject to change, right up until the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances. Day one: Conrad to Cutbank to Browning to Browning to Pendroy to Conrad. - 243 miles



Day two: Conrad to Chester to Fort Benton to Great Falls to Dutton - 233 miles



Day three: Conrad to Dutton to Conrad - 80 miles

The Footpad

(serial, part fourteen)
Tom Carnegie

He was a new customer, maybe from out of town. Butch was tuning up his Model T coils on a hand-cranked coil tester as the customer looked on. As Butch spun the handle on the machine, a steady stream of sparks, 16 per revolution emanated from the pointer. The customer was intrigued and approached the machine, pointing to the ring where the sparks were landing.

“Whoa! Be careful!”

Butch's warning was enough to stop the man in his tracks. Butch continued.

“ If you get your finger too close to that ring the sparks could jump to you instead of the ring and believe me, that is not what I'd call a good time.”

Butch squinted at one of the recently adjusted coils and then said.

“One of these would make a good weapon.”



“What do you mean?” asked Joseph, who is the manager of the Model T garage where Butch is employed.

“If you wanted to knock someone down or make 'em unable to attack you, you could just shock 'em with a T coil.”

“That wouldn't be too practical would it?” Joseph then continued.

“And I'll tell you why. First off, you would need a big battery to carry around with you. Second is the issue of proximity. One would have to be very near their antagonist to use it on them.”

Butch thought for minute and then said,

“Maybe you could have a pistol that shot out wires so you could shock a person from a distance.”

The customer was somewhat amused by this and joined into the spirit of the conversation.

“Do you think a shock could actually incapacitate a person, especially a determined person?”

Joseph and Butch looked at each other knowingly, as Joseph chuckled he said,

“Butch, tell the man your footpad story.”

Butch looked puzzled. “Footpad story? What's a foot-

pad?”

“A highwayman.” replied Joseph.

“What?” Butch still wasn't tracking.

“Tell him about you and Bettie and young George Mason and the robber.”

“Oh! A Footpad is a robber? I had never heard that before. Sure, I'll tell the story.”

With that Butch continued to adjust coils as he began to relate the tale of the Footpad.

“Me and Bettie liked to go out to that meadow just east of the Doon Fox Farm and have a picnic every so often on Saturday. I would hire the Mason kid, George junior, or Jar as everyone calls him and give him two bits to come along with us and play phonograph records on the Grafonola. I didn't know it at the time, but Jar was being punished and his punishment was to come with me and Bettie. His mom made him work for me because he had electrified the front door knob on his house with a T coil, and his father was not too pleased when he grabbed the knob to open the door after coming home from work one day. At any rate, Jar was irked going with me on a Saturday and having to help me unload the Grafanola. Bonnie's family has a big Grafanola, a floor model, not the table top kind. We would take it along with us so we could listen to music while we ate our lunch. Jar and I would hoist it into the back of the pickup box and then rope it down. For

some reason it also irked Jar that Bonnie had him change needles after each record was played. Bonnie can tell by the sound when a needle hasn't been changed, and she'd let Jar know if he slipped up. She always let him know so sweetly that sometimes I think he'd forget just to be called "dear" or "honey" or something like that by Bettie. I think his mom kept the two-bits that I gave him too, which made him even madder. So anyhow, me and Bettie have our blanket and basket about fifty yards from the T and we're eatin' sandwiches and drinkin' lemonade and listening to songs, which Jar is doing a good job of keepin' 'em playing. What I didn't know at the time was that the kid had a plan to "get" me. He had un-winded a T coil and inside is a bunch of real fine wire – probably a mile long or so. His plan was to stretch a piece of this wire between two tree branches, at about nose high, and when I walked into it, let me have it. He would put on a phonograph, then while it was playing he would figure out which coil would buzz as the spark lever was advanced. He'd put on another record, then string his wire. He'd put on another, then open the hood of the T and hook the wire to the spark plug. We weren't paying any attention to him. The songs were coming and the needles sounded fresh. We should have known something was up from the fact that the needles *were* fresh. Then, something was wrong. The first thing I noticed was that the song had finished, yet no new tune was put on. I was about to yell at Jar when I noticed the robber. He had a gun and was coming toward me and Bettie. I looked around for the Mason kid, but he was nowhere to be seen. Me and Bettie stood up and the robber ordered us to give him my wallet and Bettie's purse. I didn't know what to do other than what he said so I started

to walk toward him to give the stuff. He said "that's close enough, just drop it on the ground". I dropped it on the ground and started to back away. He walked toward the stuff and suddenly he reeled back and fell right over onto his behind, just like he'd been kicked by a mule. When he did, he dropped his gun, which I picked up. I told him to stay on the ground, which he seemed happy to do. He wasn't too happy when Bettie came over and kicked him in the ribs though. It sure enough surprised me at the time to see Bettie do this. At any rate, it seems that Jr was hiding under the dash of the T and right when the robber came in contact with the wire to his nose, which he didn't see, because it was so very fine, the kid pulled down the spark lever and walloped him a good one. We then roped up the robber and brought him back to town and let the police deal with him. Anyway, that is why I think a model T coil would make a good defensive weapon."

The customer was obviously amused by this story. Butch continued to spin the machine as he made the final adjustment to the last coil. As the fly-wheel spun down, Butch straightened the machine on the bench. The customer was even more amused by Butch's reaction after accidentally contacting the spark-ring whilst straightening the machine.

(end of story)

Blast From The Past



Ernie Woodring from 1978. This car now belongs to Dave Huson



Bud Peters from 1973



Al Rieker from 1973. Look at how low that baby sits in back! This car is now purple, yep it's Janet Cerovski's car.



Herb Frick from 1977