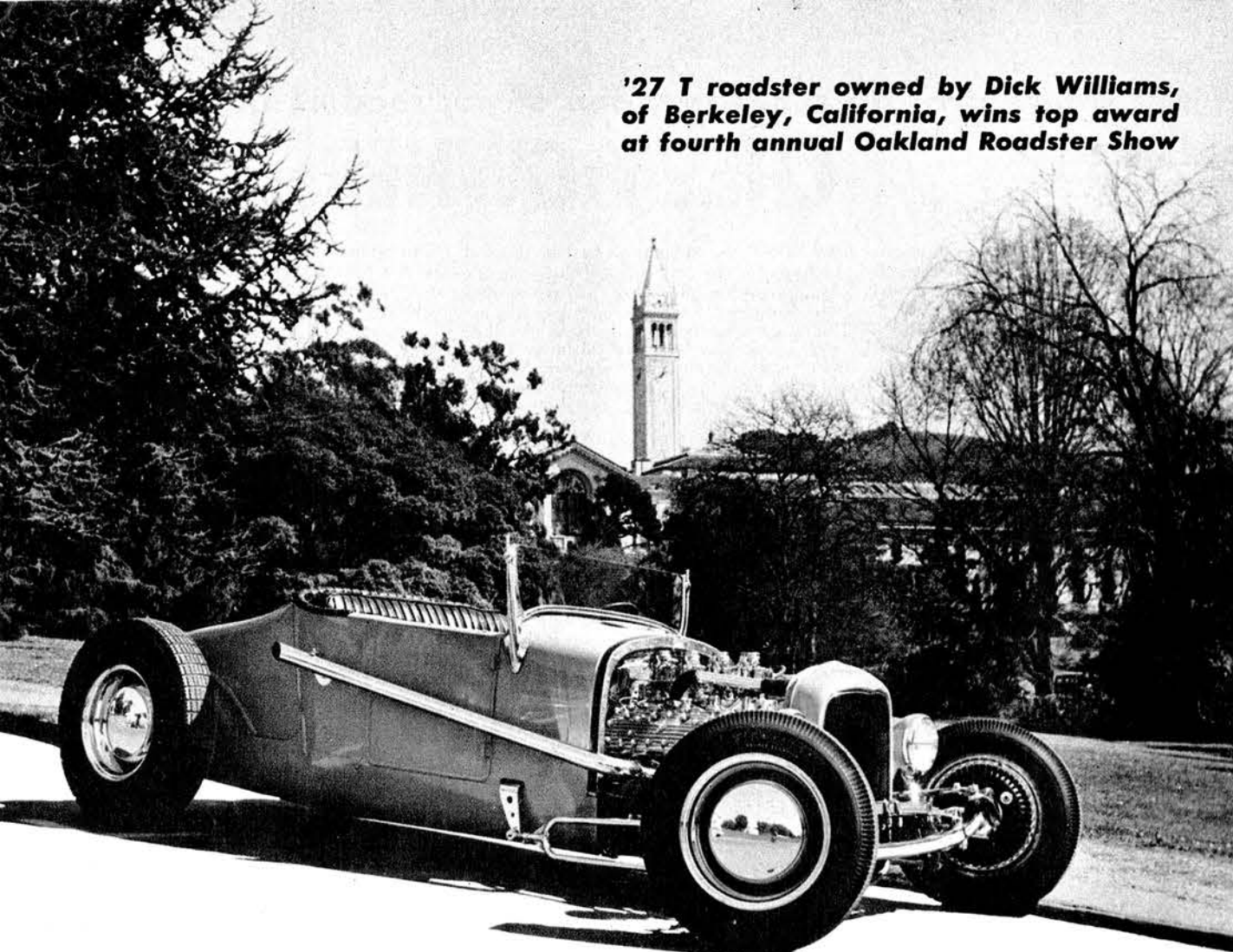


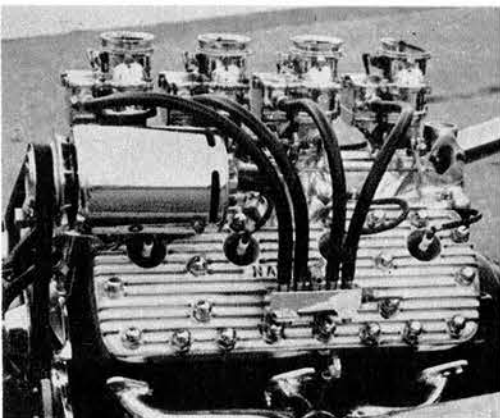
'27 T roadster owned by Dick Williams, of Berkeley, California, wins top award at fourth annual Oakland Roadster Show



photos by Ralph Poole

# Show Winner

Left side of engine in Dick's roadster shows the neat installation of the fuel log with flex lines to carburetors, and much chrome on the engine.



**WHAT DOES** it take to produce a show winner? What body style should I use? What color should I paint it? Should I use white sidewall tires or just plain black ones? How many instruments? What color upholstery? These are some of the many questions that invariably come up when you are planning to build a roadster or custom that is to be pleasing to the eye as well as having the stuff to go fast and be roadable at the same time.

There is no definite answer to these questions. It is largely a matter of personal taste.

This '27 T-Merc roadster, owned by Dick Williams of Berkeley, Calif., recently was judged the most beautiful roadster in America. The award was made by, and at, the annual Oakland

Roadster Show.

It is evident that the year of the body hasn't too much bearing on the subject. The grand prize was won the first year by Bill NieKamp with a channeled '29, the second year by Rico Squaglia with a '23 T, and the third year (last year) by Bud Crackbon with a '25 T pick up (see June 1952 Hop Up cover).

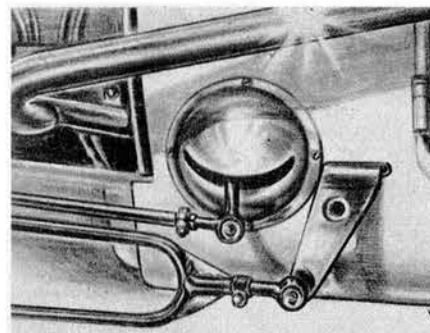
What then does go into a winning car? Let's take a look at Dick's roadster and see what gives.

As I said before, the body is a '27 T Ford roadster and is mounted on a tubular frame (chrome-moly). The main tubes and the front, center and rear crossmembers are 2½ inch diameter with a .125 inch wall thickness. Smaller diameter tubes are used for the fuel tank and battery supports.

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All the wiring on the car is carried inside the left main tube in order to have a cleaner installation.

A late model, wide gear, Halibrand quick change unit is used along with a late Ford rear end. A re-arched model A spring is used in order to clear the quick change unit. Ordinarily, with the spring behind the axle as on all Fords from '32 on up to '48, the chassis has



Shot of the left wishbone mounting and chrome cover for pitman arm. Wishbone hanger bolts to plate welded to frame.

Most of the engine accessories are chromed including the generator, carburetors, water pumps, water tubes, fuel block and pan. The aluminum heads and manifold are buffed.

W type headers, fully chromed, sweep up past the doors on both sides which necessitate climbing over the doors to get in or out.

Gas is carried in two tanks, holding 9½ gallons each, which are located in the rear of the car and extend forward, under the seat on both sides of the driveshaft.

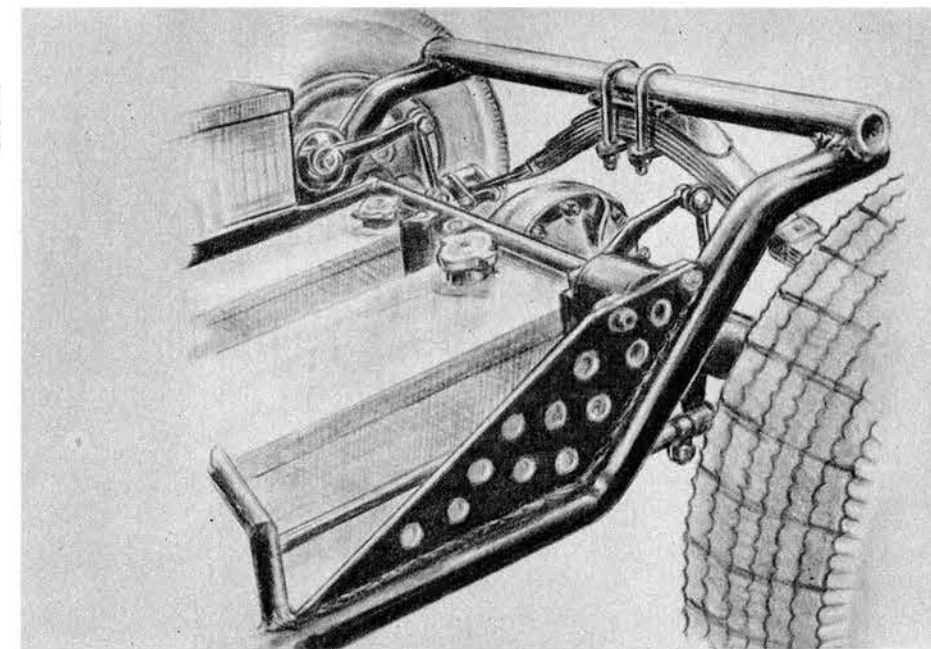
Dick constructed the tanks himself from turnplate which is the same type of steel that a stock car gas tank is made from. Fuel tanks made from other steels are too prone to rust and corrosion. Tanks made from aluminum also present problems from corrosion unless anodized.

Fuel is crossed between the two tanks and is pumped to the engine by an internal electric pump (Carter). This pump is the kind used by many large trucks and is mounted inside the to be blocked to prevent the axles from rising too high on bumps and hitting the quick change against the spring and crossmember. By using the model A spring, which has a higher arch, this blocking is unnecessary.

Stock Ford Houdialle shocks are used front and rear. The hydraulic brakes are Kinmont Disc type.

The wheels on Dick's roadster are unusual in that they are all reversed on the wheel centers. The front wheels are '50 Ford rims reversed on '50 Merc centers and the rear wheels are '50 Lincoln (wide base) rims reversed on '50 Merc centers. '50 Merc plain hub-

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Flat steel gusset welded to frame at rear kick-up helps make frame rigid.

caps are used on all four wheels and the wheels are chrome plated.

Tires are 5.50 x 15 on the front and 8.20 x 15 on the rear.

The front spring is hung on a "suicide" type mounting on the front crossmember and with the radiator and shell behind the crossmember this leaves the spring exposed.

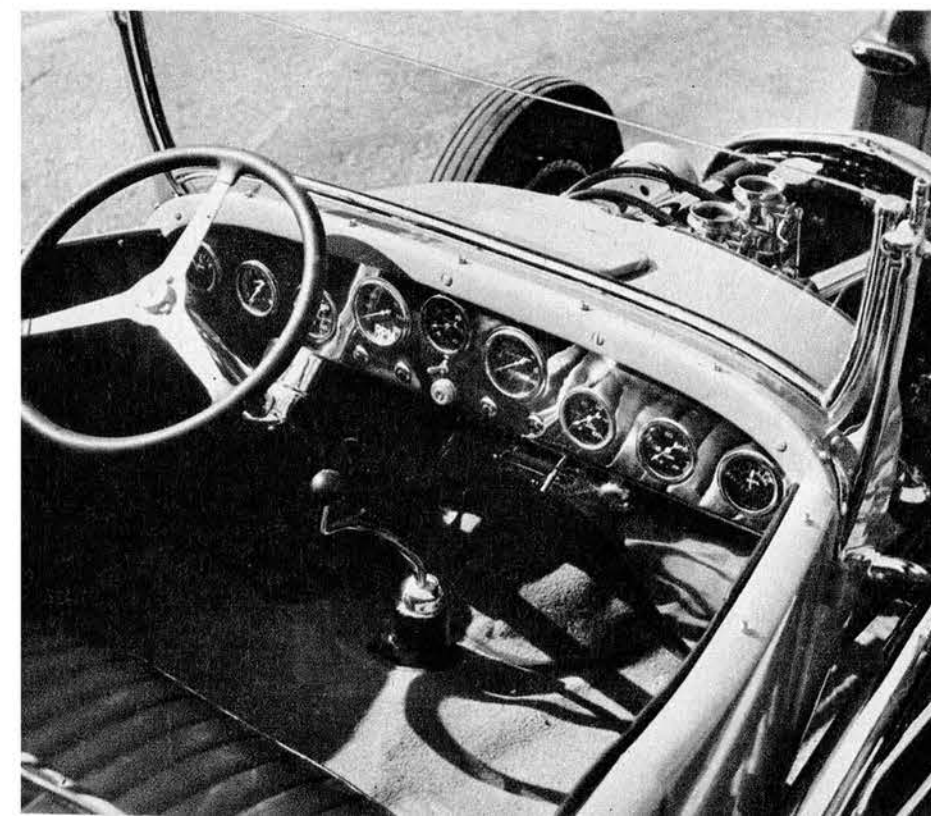
Everything on the front end is chromed. Spring leaves, U bolts, shackles, spring perches, axle, spindles, tie

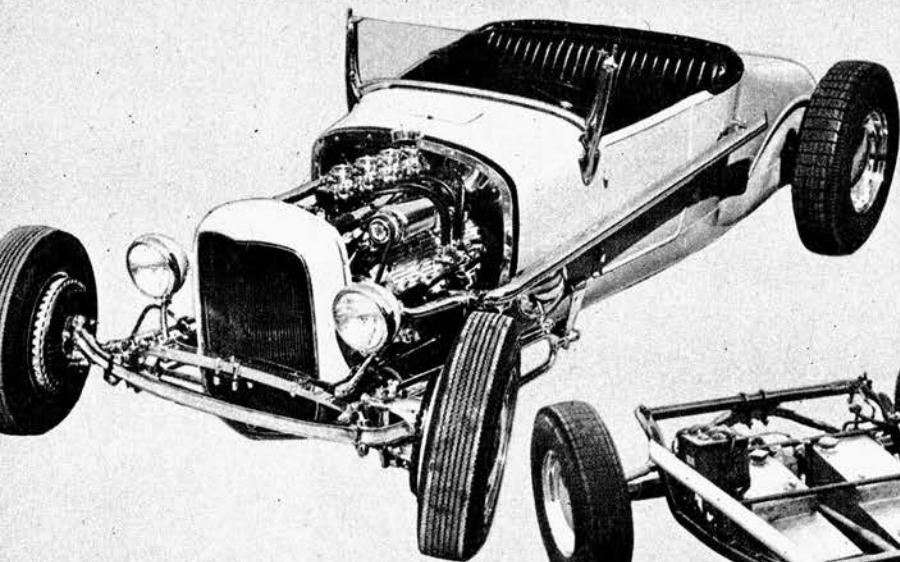
rod, wishbones, shocks, headlight brackets, drag link, pitman arm, rear support bracket for the split wishbones and all nuts and bolts.

Getting up to the engine compartment we find the engine set well back in the frame. So far back, in fact, that the firewall is recessed about six inches from its original location. The firewall is also chromed.

The engine is equipped with Navarro heads, Edelbrock four carb manifold. The ignition, a dual coil unit very similar to a Kong ignition, was built by Dick himself. He used 2 Echlin coils.

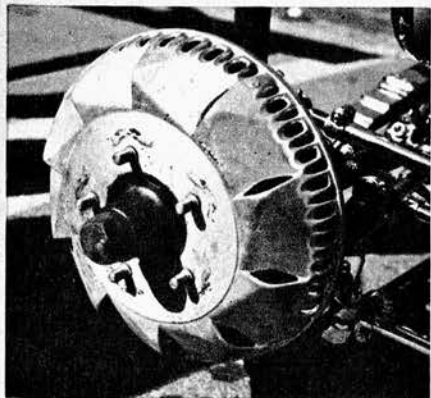
Instrument panel has nine Stewart Warner instruments spread out across it. Tachometer, speedometer, oil pressure, oil temperature, ammeter, water temperature, fuel pressure, fuel and vacuum gauge. Car has floor shift trans.





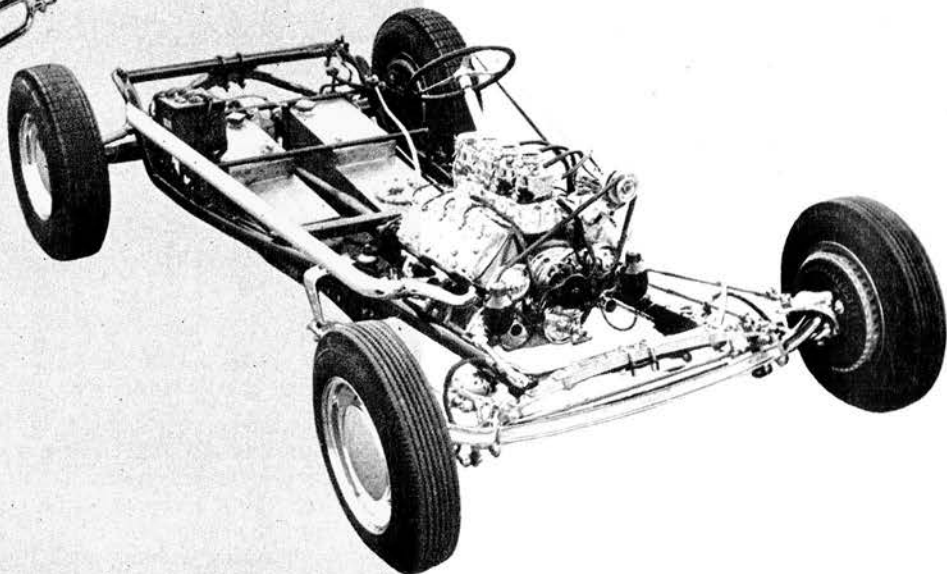
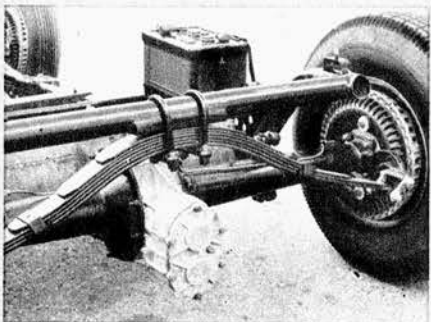
Comparison shot of Dick Williams' T roadster with body on and then with the body removed. Every available inch of space in the small T roadster body is utilized to an advantage.

Chrome plated rear wheel is wide base Lincoln rim reversed on Merc center.

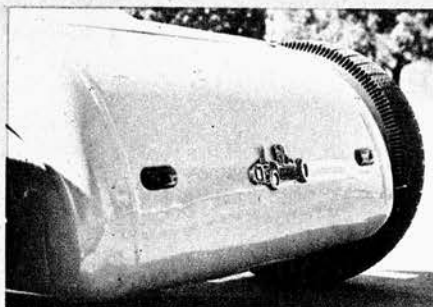


Outer view of Kinmont Disc brake showing built in air scoops, for cooling.

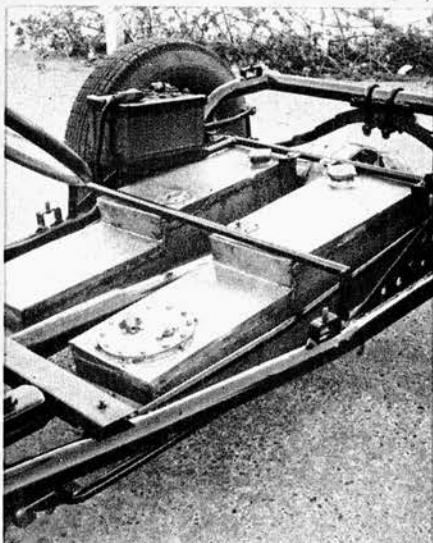
High arch of rear spring clears quick change center section without hitting.



Body rounded under presents a finished appearance to the rear of roadster.



This photo illustrates the positioning of the two fuel tanks and the battery.



tank, in the fuel, and is actually lubricated by the fuel.

The interior of the roadster presents a very neat and orderly appearance. Upholstery is black, pleated leatherette by Hall of Oakland.

Nine Stewart-Warner instruments are symmetrically placed in the panel. They are as follows: tachometer, speedometer, oil pressure gauge, oil temperature gauge, water temperature gauge, ammeter, fuel gauge, fuel pressure gauge, and a vacuum gauge.

A floor shift transmission is used and the steering wheel is a spring steel, rubber-rimmed race car type. Paint is light blue.

The rear of the body has been rounded under to meet the full aluminum bellypan. On this rear panel are mounted two '46 Ford tail lights (frenched) and the club plate of the Elmwood Auto Club of Cal-Neva Roadster Association (of which Dick is a member).

In conclusion we can safely say that no one thing can be pinpointed as being the factor that sways the judges. The painstaking work and the attention to small details put in by Dick in the two and one half years it took him to finish the roadster are evident from the photos accompanying the article. The thought and effort that went into this car has paid off though because the show judges picked Dick's roadster as being the best all around street roadster in the show.