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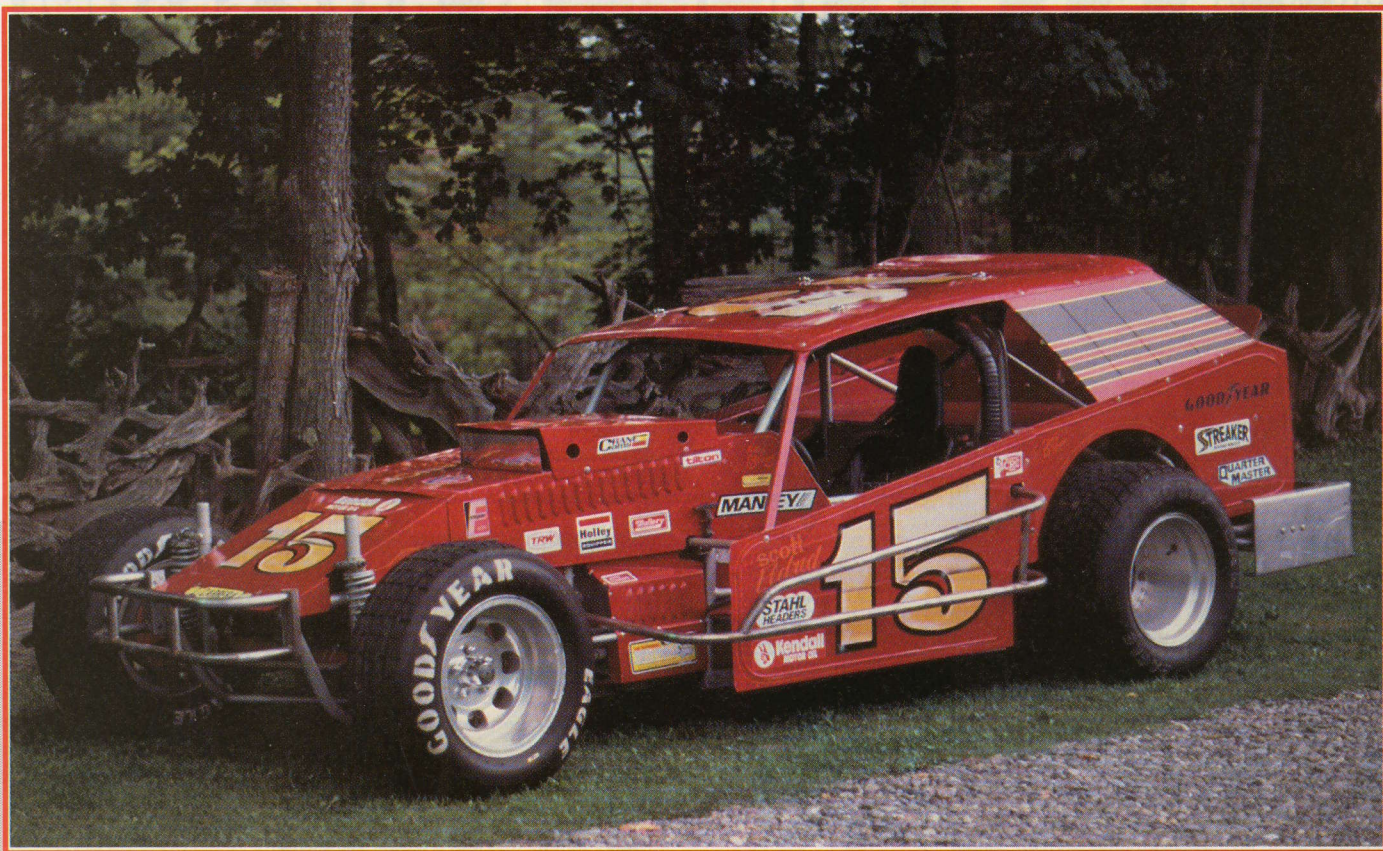
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TEENAGE TALENT

A Mini-Mini Mod

By MICHAEL J. MARRER

IT APPEARED THAT HE WAS GROWING UP MUCH TOO QUICKLY. BY THE TIME HE was 14 years old, he had already reached six feet two inches. At 15, he began hanging around with a fast crowd, and was not coming home on weekends until the early morning hours. ■ His parents wholeheartedly supported his activities. ■ There is no reason to fear that this is the beginning of a "Rebel Without A Cause." In fact, the name of Scott Eldred is being mentioned frequently among the racing community in New York's Southern Tier region when conversations turn to up-and-coming driving talent.

A competitor in the "microd" class (ages 6 to 18) until he outgrew both the cars and other drivers, the Vestal Center, New York, youngster turned his attention in 1983 to the Mini-Stock class at Five Mile Point Speedway (Binghamton, New York). Due to his underage status, his parents had to furnish their written consent. His father, Gary, has provided a guiding hand since the beginning of his son's career.

Unlike most of the Mini-Stocks which compete on the quarter-mile oval, Eldred's car is more of a Mini-Modified. The chassis, built by Bushbaker & Son is 6 inches shorter, yet is the same width as a regular dirt Modified. Offset runs at 4 inches, and the driver sits 18 inches from the centerline. The car has a panhard bar for left- and right-hand adjustment and a full-size Modified front suspension from Castle fabricating. Shocks are Carrera 3173's all around.

The Pinto 2000cc engine was reworked by Bob Chipper, who is well-known for his accomplishments in drag racing. Performance was increased through installation of TRW pistons, Manley valves, a Weiand intake manifold, Holley four-barrel carb, and a Stahl header kit. The distributor was replaced with a Mallory Unilite unit. The four-cylinder engine normally runs in the 7600 RPM range in competition, and the team has found that it was easy to build, yet is rugged and reliable.

Because the rules did not allow use of a dry-sump system, the team had to run with the regular oil pan. To keep the oil as level as possible when the car is thrown into the corners, the engine was mounted in a tilted position. The oil breather is attached to the rear upper left bar of the roll cage so that any oil that did get up into it will drain back into the engine.

The rearend was also built by Chipper, and consists of an 8¾-inch Mopar unit with Zoom gears. The differential was removed and replaced with a titanium spool piece for weight reduction. The transmission is a standard Pinto four-speed, and uses a double-disc Quarter Master clutch. When Scott broke his leg in a motorcycle mishap early

in his career, the clutch was made hand-operable, and remains so today. Eldred points the car using a Newell steering box. Cooling is provided by a three-core Ford truck radiator.

Stopping power consists of Ford Econoline drum brakes up front and Mopar drums on the rear. Centerline aluminum wheels are used for their light weight, and are mounted with Goodyear M-40 rubber in the rear and M-30's up front.

The bodywork was also completed by Castle Fabricating and uses a standard Gremlin fiberglass roof. One of the unique features of the car is the use of hood pins on the upper roll cage to secure the top. It makes for a stronger roof and is easier to remove. The beautifully detailed vehicle, which weighs 1740 pounds, has taken first-place honors in its class for the past two

years at the Race World Car Show in Binghamton, New York.

Gary Eldred is a strong advocate of safety, and Scott has listened to his lessons well. Although the class rules specify 1-inch tubing, the roll cage was built with 1½-inch material for added strength and safety. A fuel cell was installed, even though it is not mandatory. Driver attire consists of Nomex gloves, suit, balaclava, fire boots, and full-face helmet. The driver is secured all the way around by 3-inch belts.

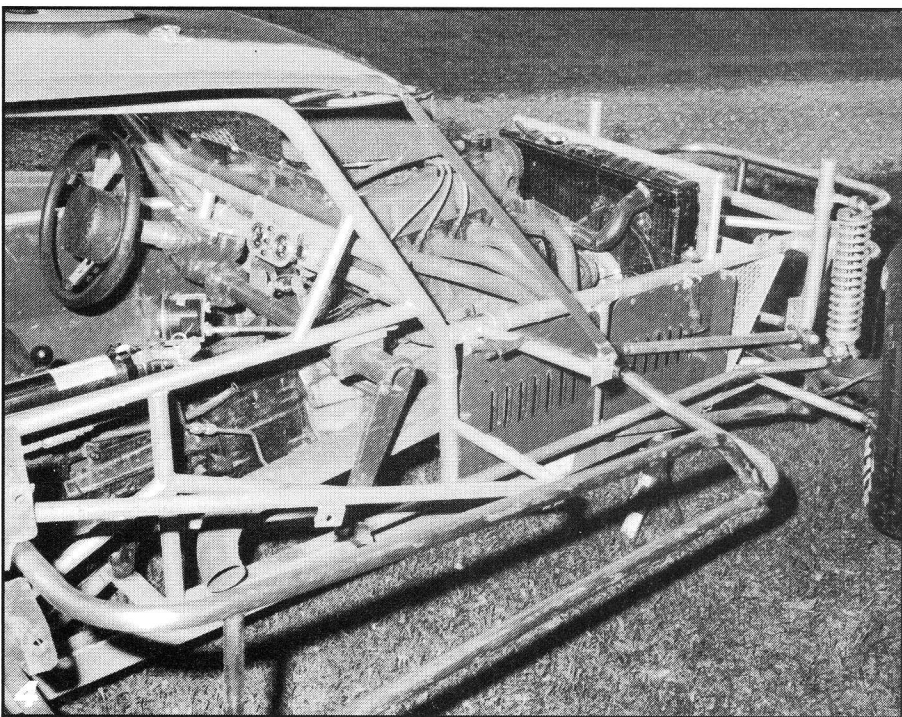
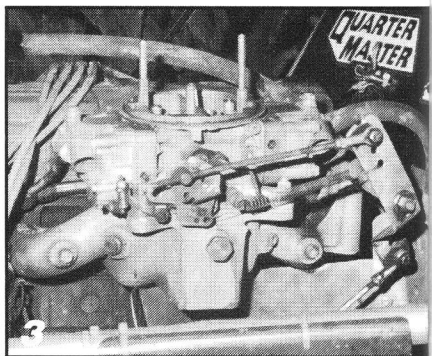
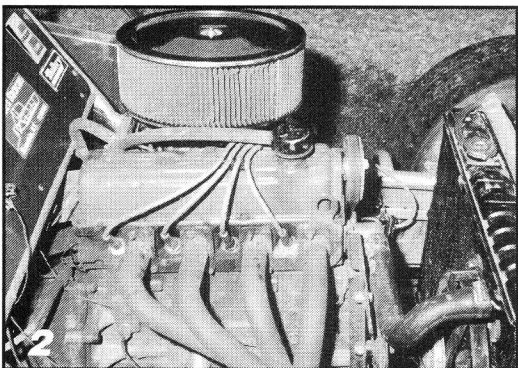
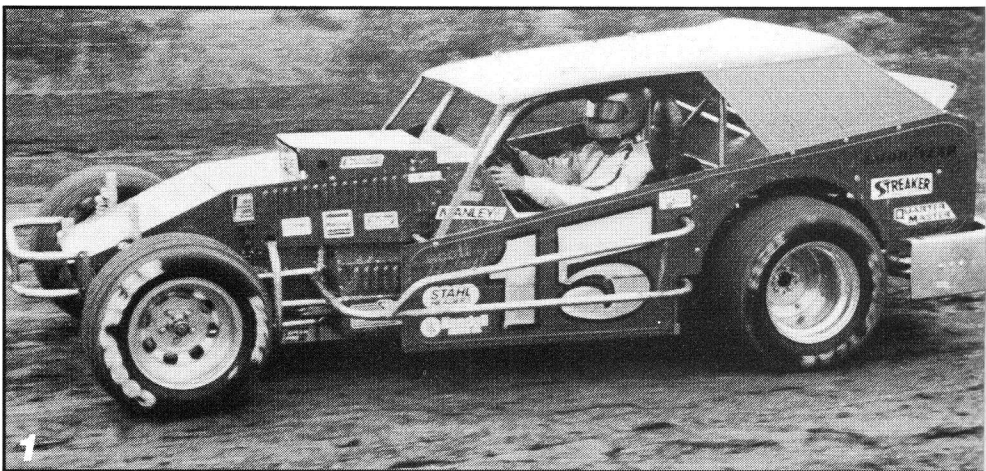
In 1985, his third year on the Five Mile Point oval, Scott attained his first feature win. Despite missing the first five weeks of the season due to an incomplete engine, he still managed to finish an impressive second in the final point standings. No doubt, Scott Eldred is a talent worth keeping an eye on.

(CONTINUED)



Gary Eldred has been the guiding force for son Scott's career.

TEENAGE TALENT



1 *Scott Eldred at speed.* (Tom Shelton photo)

2 *The 2000cc Pinto provides plenty of power in this class. The use of stock components keeps the price of racing down.* (Michael J. Marrer photo)

3 *The 2000cc Pinto engine runs*

with the same 390-CFM carburetor used in NASCAR. The intake manifold is a water-cooled unit from Weiand. (Michael J. Marrer photo)

4 *With the sheetmetal removed, the Newell steering unit and controls are visible.* (Michael J. Marrer photo)