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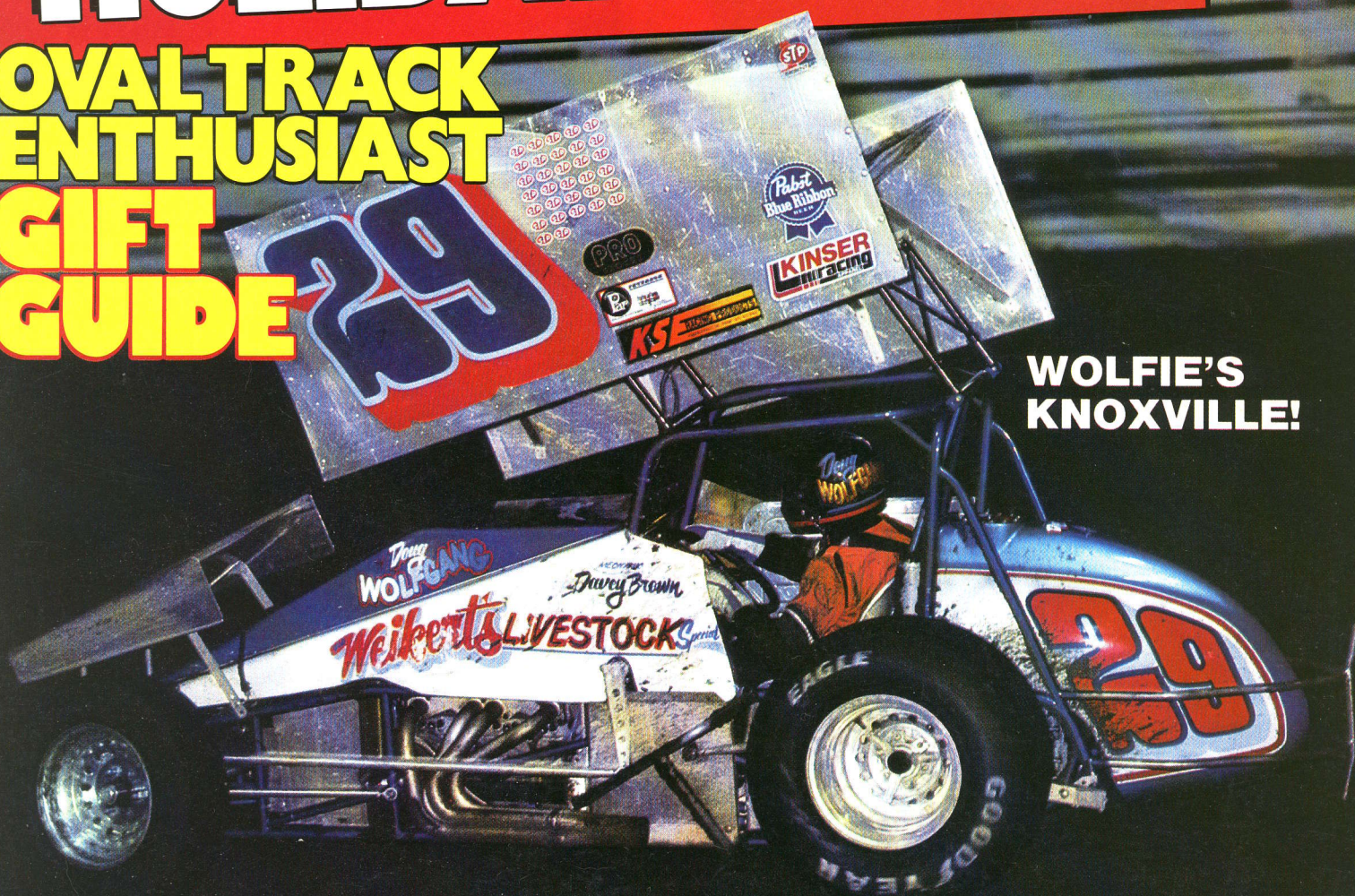
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# CIRCLE TRACK

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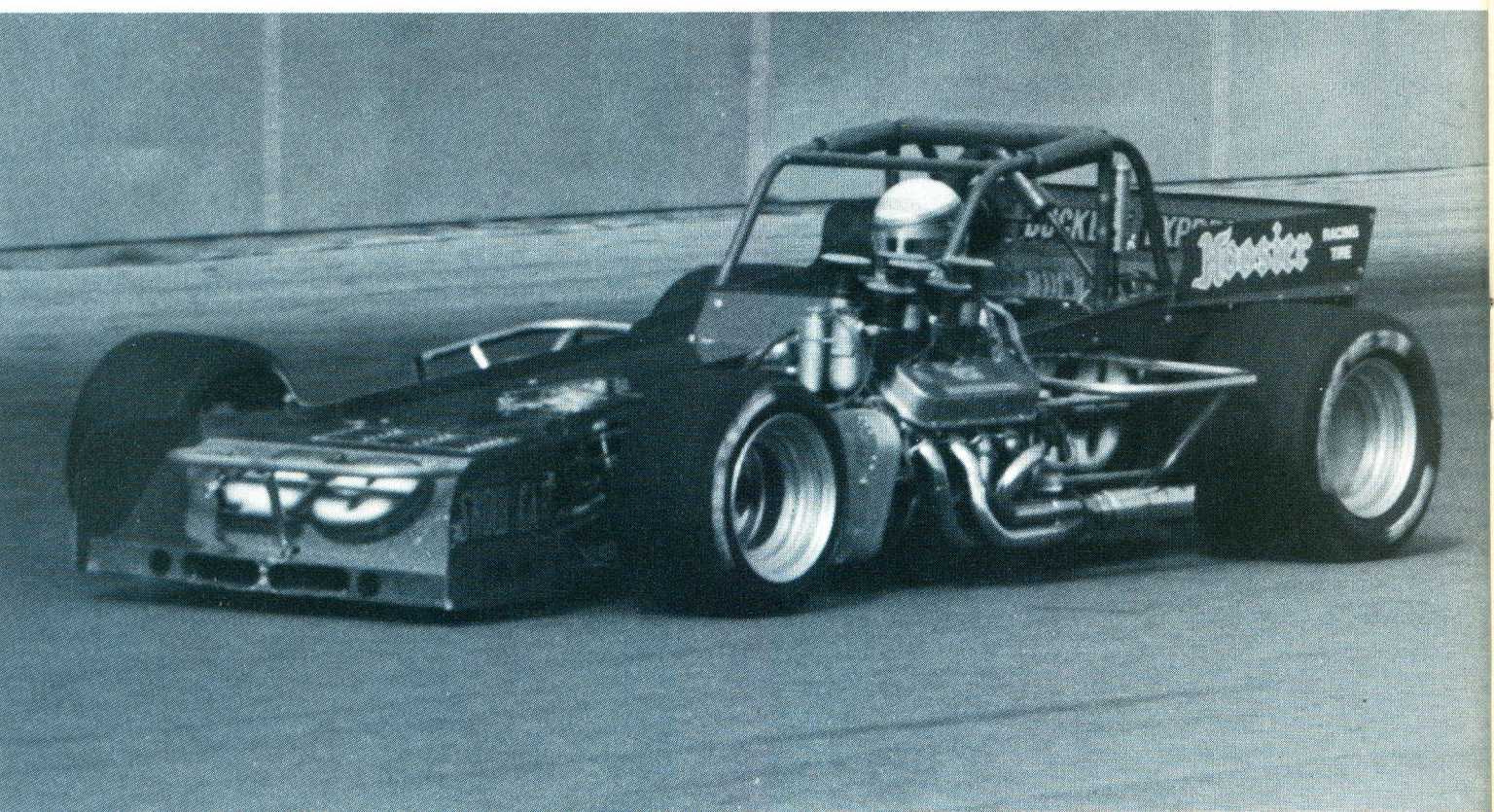
THE TOP 33 INDY DRIVERS OF ALL TIME  
WHO WOULD YOU PICK?



In the exotic world of Super Mods, this chassis is

# Radically CONVENTIONAL

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHY: MICHAEL J. MARRER



**T**he Super Modified class is generally regarded as the country's most technically advanced form of short track racing. Often it doesn't seem possible that further improvements can be made. But each year finds additional refinements being introduced that mark yet another increase in the Supers' speed and handling abilities. This Ohio-based car, with its movable engine and departure from radical chassis designs, drew attention even before it cruised into victory lane.

The new chassis is the latest product from Howard Conkey's Show Car Speed Shop in Waterloo, New York.

Conkey has been one of the class's major manufacturers, with more than a dozen of his cars in competition at Oswego, and several more throughout the Midwest and New England. His latest creation is the result of more than three months of design using drafting paper and paper templates.

Whereas most Supers are known for their extremely narrow chassis, Conkey has made his significantly wider. In this way, all of the suspension components can be contained without the need for outriggers, which are notorious for being hard to build and repair. It also increases the space available for

the cockpit.

Conkey also used an A-frame independent suspension instead of the more common coil-overs. Unlike others who had experimented with A-frames and settled for junkyard components, Conkey custom-manufactured his upper and lower A-frames. The spindles, also custom-made, are of the Modified type, with the ball joint configurations welded onto the ends.

Since the left side of the car is heavier than the right, the left and right A-frame components are quite distinct from one another. When weight transfer occurs in the corners, one side will



# NAL

*The Super at speed at Oswego, with Dave Schullick at the helm.*

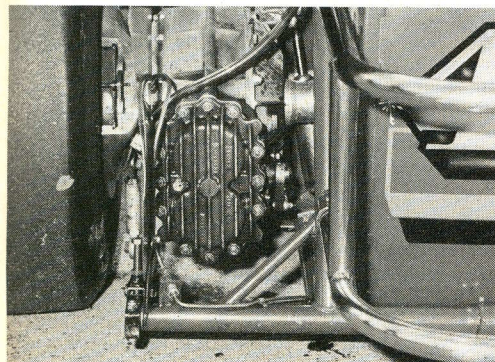
move further than the other and will have a different arc of transfer. The different shapes are required to get the spindles to perform properly.

Similar to a style used by Chrysler, the torsion bars plug into the lower A-frames. Heim ends allow the suspension to be adjustable for camber.

Through the use of adjustable radius rods, the roll steer can be increased or left neutral. Torsion bars run straight across in the rear so that transfer can take place from left to right without the need for one being higher or offset. Steering is with a Ford rack and pinion.

The torque arm is made of carbon-fiberglass and is driver adjustable during a race. The cockpit control moves it forward and back for more or less bite.

The fuel load often contributes to difficulties in setting up the handling for longer races. When going into the corners at full capacity, the rear end wants to swing out, and as fuel burns off, the car gets higher. With the wider frame, Cocke was able to fit an additional



*Vividly showing the amount of offset, the Halibrand rear end with slider shifter is mounted outside of the frame. For quick removal, nerf bars are held in place by farm-equipment hitch pins with safety clips.*

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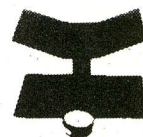
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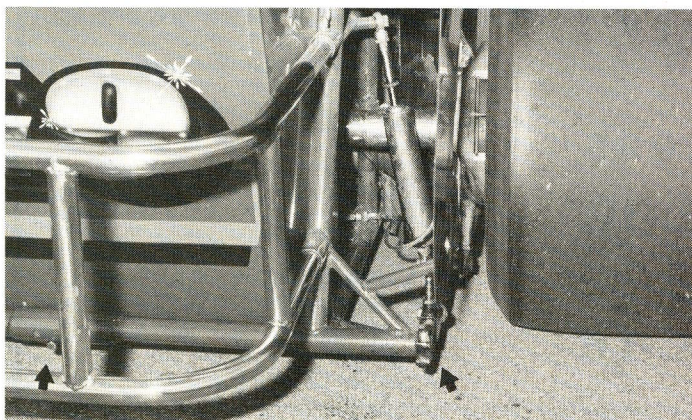
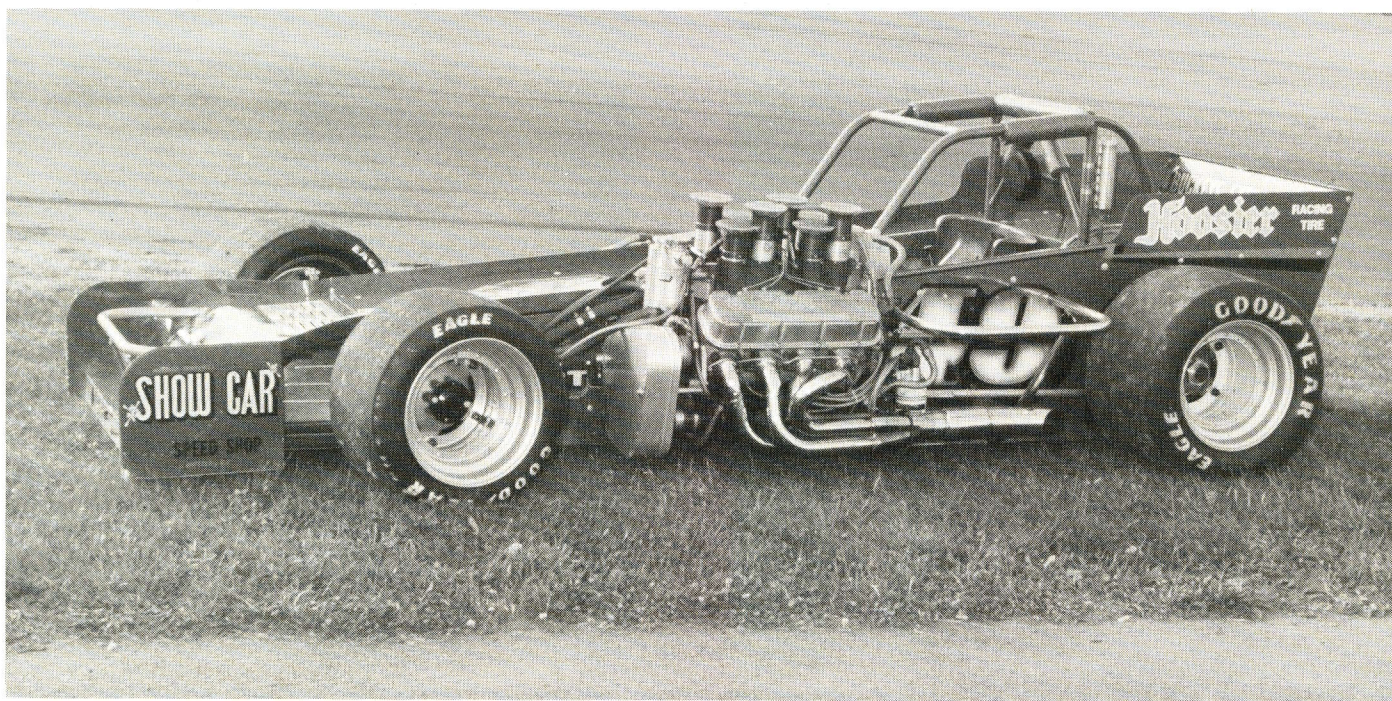
fuel cell in front of the engine. The driver can control which cell he draws from to maintain the handling characteristics of the car.

For increased driver safety, the roll-cage has been designed to bridge the car more, and uses a center upright similar to that found on Sprint car. The design should limit the potential for injuries in T-bone crashes and, combined with the wider chassis, can more easily accommodate larger drivers.

Handling and weight characteristics make giant swings when the Supers are allowed to run wings. Use of the wing holds the back end down, but also lightens the front end. To combat these shifts in weight distribution, Conkey



*The adjustable torque arm and the fuel shut-off cable are just above the drive-shaft. The button controlling the in-out box is next to the steering wheel.*



*Above, the Ohio-based Super Modified is from Howard Conkey's shops and is owned by Tom Port.*

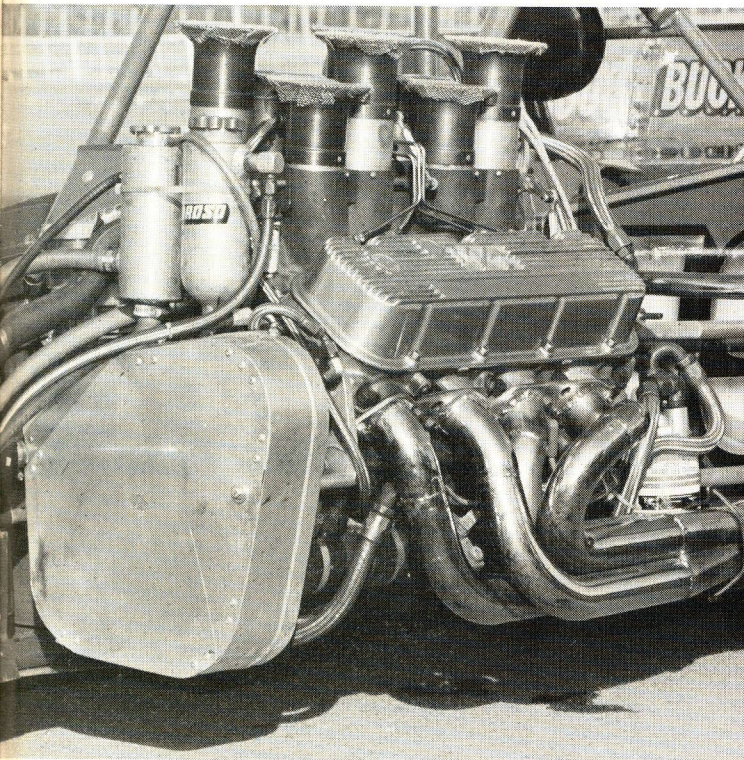
*The two rear torsion arms are mounted butted together. The torsion arms are designed like an elbow to help preload the suspension, and pivot with the jacking bolts.*

devised a movable engine setup.

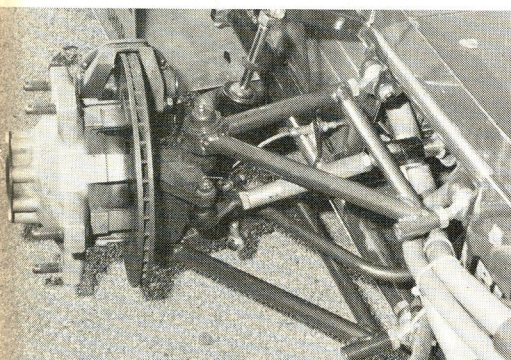
Through the use of 1-inch spacers, the engine can be moved up to 6 inches forward to help tie down the front end. During the move, only the gas linkage and the driveshaft need to be changed. Other items, such as line hoses, come in two sets: short and long. A connector is used to extend the right side exhaust, and the left side remains at a fixed length.

Conkey also modified the bodywork so that the traditional radiator input hole is missing. Instead, cool air is drafted up under the louvers. The more streamlined design helps increase the

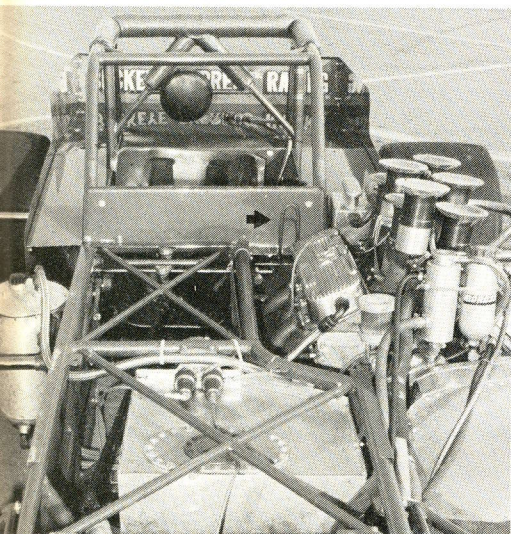




*A cover was installed in front of the engine to keep dirt off the belts and to help prevent wear.*



*Note how the torsion bars plug into the custom-built lower A-frames.*



*The Moroso oil tank has been shortened to the same height as the chassis to keep it out of the airstream. The X over the Fuel Bladders Inc. cell bolts to the frame. In case of an accident, the car is lifted at this hook (arrow), located at the balance point of the car.*

downforce on the nose, whereas conventional layouts only act as an air dam. The side pods are also built with ground effects to create a vacuum that assists in the smooth airflow pattern.

Bill Port, of Rocky River, Ohio, was the recipient of this first prototype chassis. A huge, 468-cubic-inch Chevy (.060 over 454) with Crane cams and Crower injector is mounted offset on the frame. Running methanol for fuel, compression is set at 13.5:1.

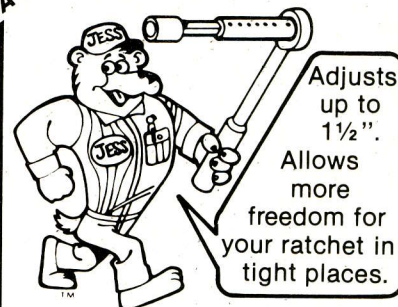
A hook latch, typically found on gas pedals, is also used on the brake pedal. This way, a hard blow won't dislodge the driver's foot. The middle of an accident is no time for anyone to have to be searching for the brake.

Driver Dave Schullick had the width of the seat altered to give him a perfect fit. The sides have also been raised, allowing his shoulders to rest completely within the seat. The higher a driver's body can be supported, the more comfortable he will be when subjected to cornering forces.

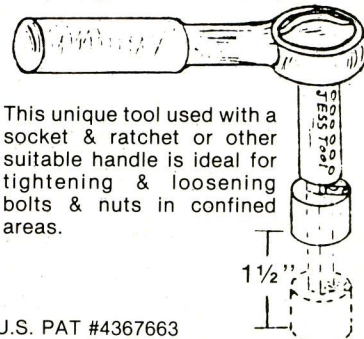
The vehicle also features the new Carman lightweight steel wheels. Weighing in 40 pounds lighter than conventional wheels, the Carman units have an outer edge that's replaceable should it become wrinkled. The edge is also rolled up instead of being manufactured straight, so that the wheels have less tendency to bend.

With Schullick at the controls, the car makes frequent appearances at Oswego and ISMA shows, but calls the Sandusky speed plant its home on Saturday nights. Consistently placing in the top five while still dialing in the car, the team found itself in victory lane before the season was half over. **O**

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Nigel P. Heaton  
Vice President