

ON THE STREET

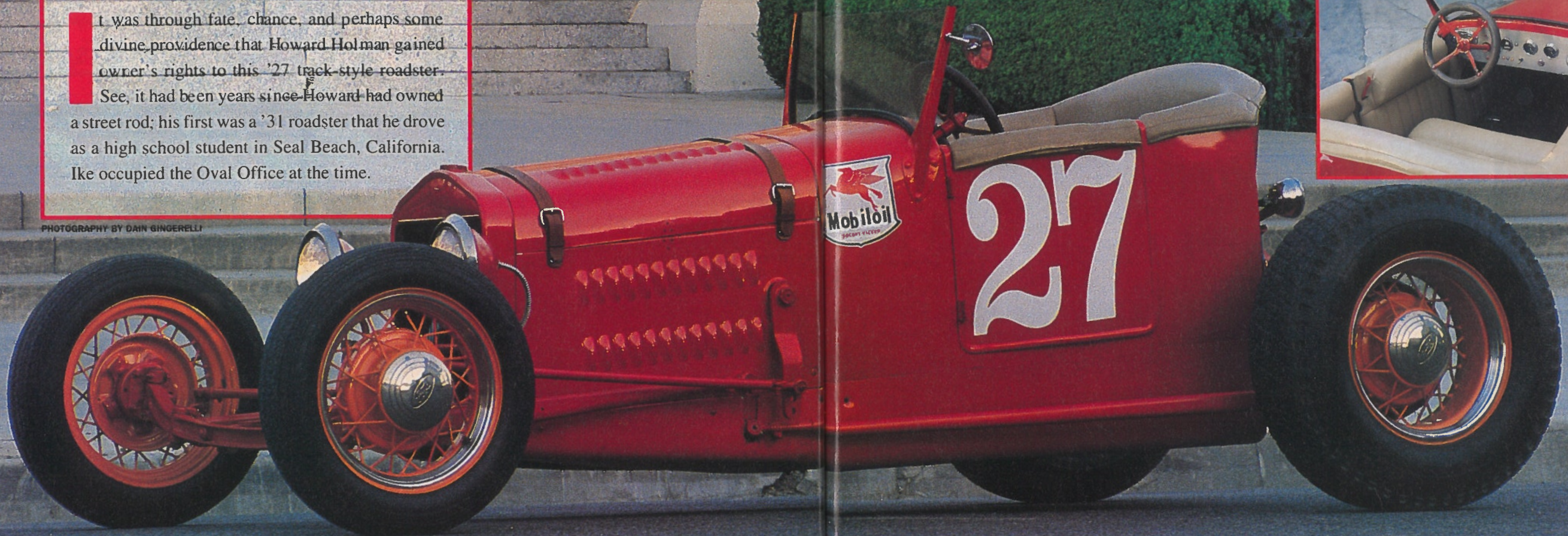
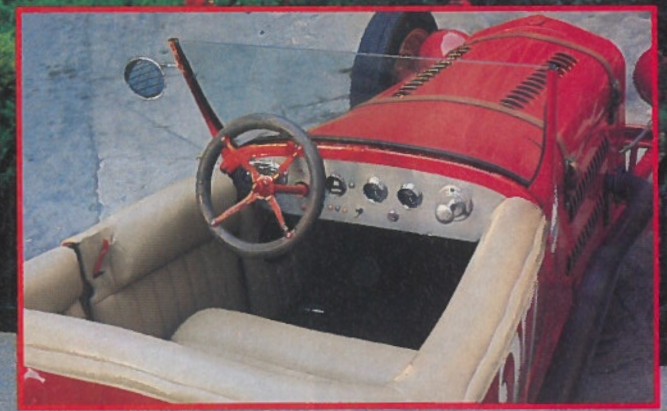
# 1927 FORD ROADSTER



## *On the track to yesteryear*

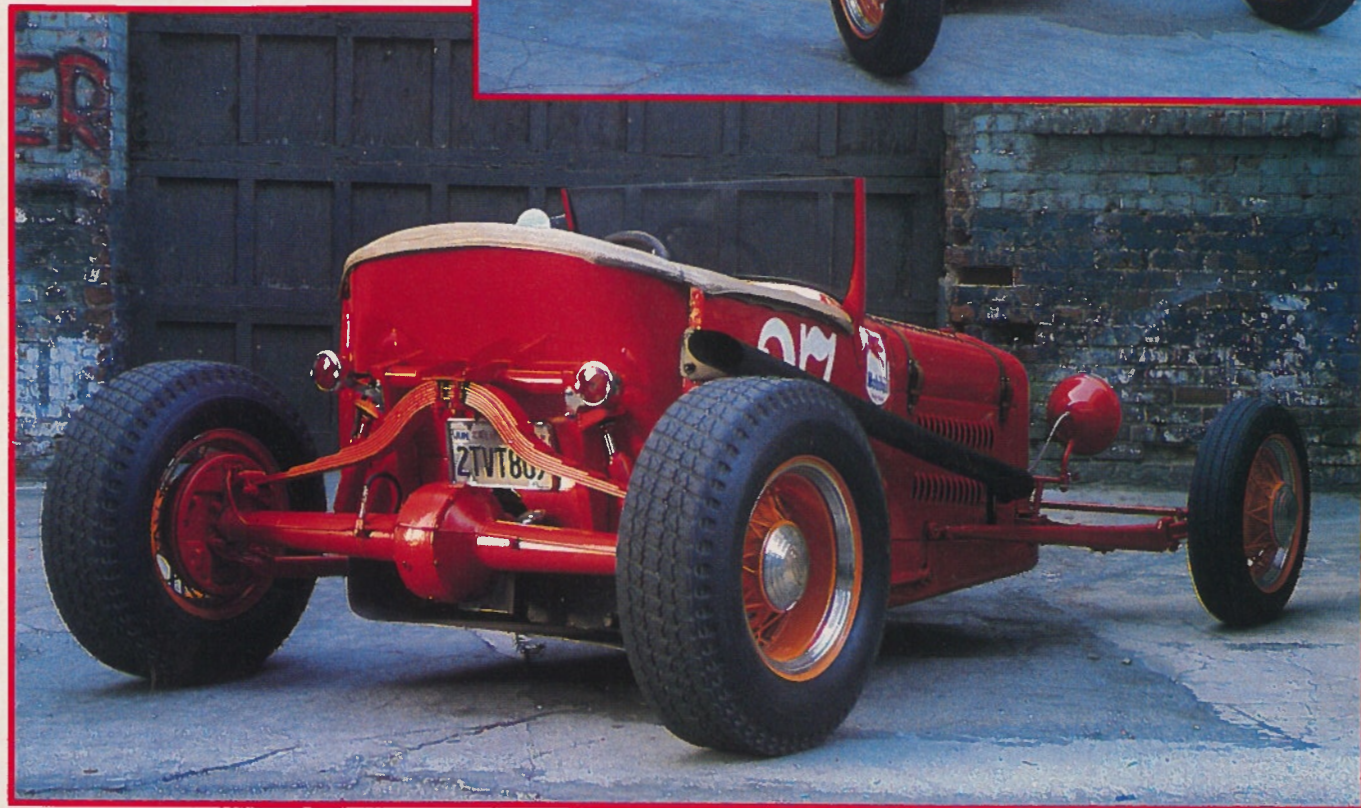
It was through fate, chance, and perhaps some divine providence that Howard Holman gained owner's rights to this '27 track-style roadster. See, it had been years since Howard had owned a street rod; his first was a '31 roadster that he drove as a high school student in Seal Beach, California. Ike occupied the Oval Office at the time.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAIN GINGERELLI



Eventually, Howard traded his rodder wheels for rudders, and began racing drag boats. Two national records later, he took to the skies, becoming a serious airplane hobbyist (he still is today, and owns a fully restored 1939 Piper J4 Cub Coupe). But his wife, Brenda, prefers to keep both feet on the ground—or at least at ground level. If they were going to spend their leisure time together, she told him, it would have to be on terra firma.

Enter this 1927 bobtail T. On a lark, they attended the L.A. Roadsters Swap

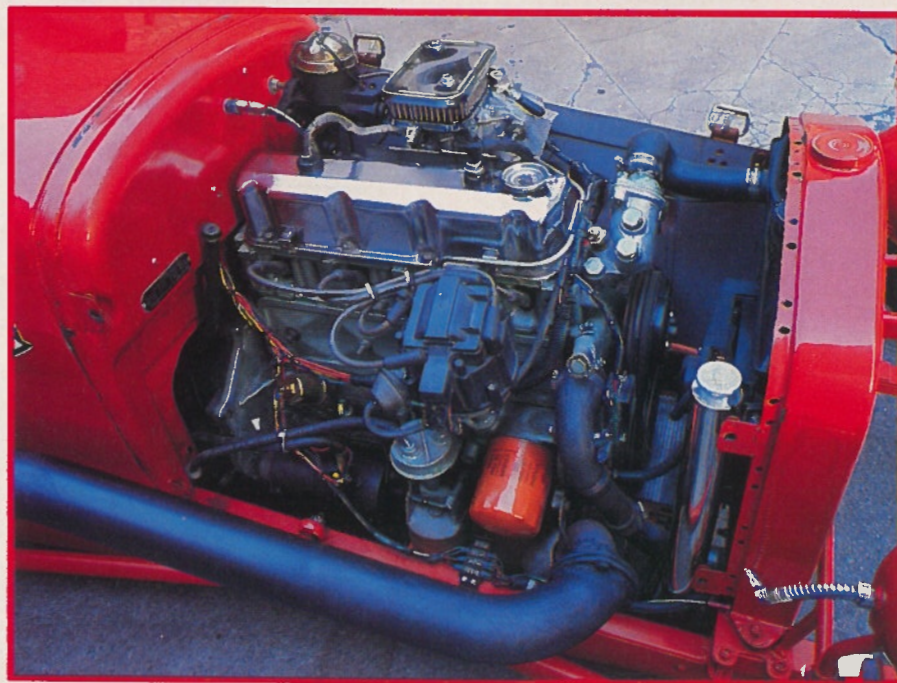


Meet at Pomona last Father's Day, and spotted the roadster for sale. The car hailed from Arizona, and was, in Howard's words, "still in pretty rough condition."

Even so, Brenda was in favor of taking it home. Initial cost was \$5,000, which was followed by a summer full of evenings in the garage. Howard, however, didn't mind the work. "I hate television," he says, "and I'd rather spend the time doing something constructive."

His energies paid off, and before Labor Day he had the track T roadster on the road. He figures the rebuild cost another grand or so to complete.

As near as Howard can tell, the frame—hand built from rectangular steel tubing—was crafted sometime around 1965: "That's the earliest registration slip for the car." The frame was originally built for a '29, he notes, as evidenced by its mounting holes.



Howard left the steel body (which had been narrowed seven inches by some previous owner) intact, but spent a lot of time rebuilding the suicide front end. Thorough attention was also paid to the rear brakes—as was popular for track-racing roadsters of the '40s, this car has no front brakes.

Time was spent under the roadster's hood, too, making the 1977 Pontiac four-banger fire smoothly on all four cylinders. "The engine was barely running when I got the car," recalls Howard. But again, his efforts paid off, this time with a mellow exhaust note terminating in a mild rumble through the single straight pipe running along the passenger side.

Howard gave the tan interior a nostalgic touch, too, installing a Model A speedometer and a Model T magneto switch/amp meter. The speedo works, and the switch/amp meter now serves as the turn signal lever. Keeping in the spirit of the car's theme—the old-time hot rod/racer—Howard put numbers on the body's sides, as well as on the radiator's face. Topping off the competition theme are a pair of old-time Mobil Oil race decals along the sides of the cowl.

The Kelsey-Hayes wheels further add to the nostalgic appeal. "But if I was sticking true to the era," Howard says, "they wouldn't be orange—probably black. But they stand out with this color." He indicates that he might paint them cream at a later date, but absolute authenticity really isn't an issue here.

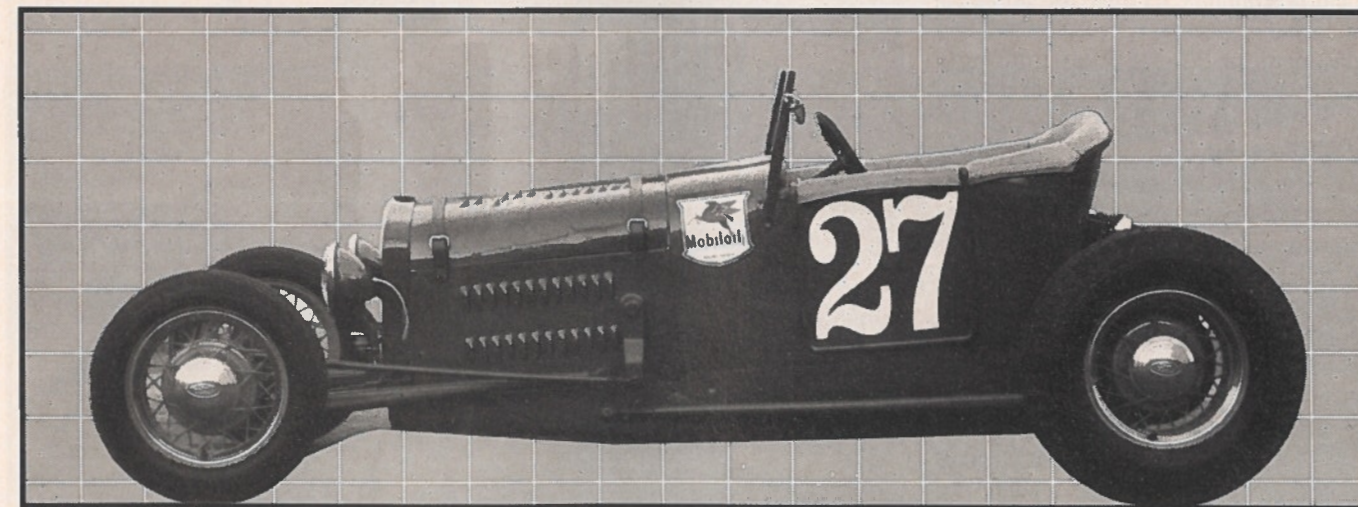
Instead, the plan was to have a car exhibiting the flavor of early-time hot rodding. But Howard also wanted one that was reliable and roadworthy. Indeed, Howard doesn't want to spend time pol-

ishing parts and guarding his car from careless onlookers. "I even brush painted the axles and running gear red. All I have to do is touch it up with a few strokes of the brush, and it looks good as new."

Now that he's been swept up by nostalgia rodding, Howard says his next project will be a '50s-era dragster. The tow car? "I'll get a lightweight trailer, and pull it with the '27." And with his wife Brenda sitting shotgun, you can bet that they'll be riding high in the saddle with this '40s-era bobtail bucket. —Dain Gingerelli



## SPECIFICATIONS



Howard and Brenda Holman  
Riverside, California  
1927 Ford

### ENGINE

Type . . . . . Pontiac; 4-cyl.  
Displacement . . . . . 151 cu. in.  
Camshaft . . . . . stock  
Ignition . . . . . GM  
Induction . . . . . Weber/Holley  
Exhaust . . . . . straight pipe

### DRIVETRAIN

Transmission . . . . . GM 200  
Rearend . . . . . early Ford  
**CHASSIS**  
Frame . . . . . custom;  
rectangular tube  
Front Suspension . . . . . early Ford;  
quarter elliptic  
Rear Suspension . . . . . early Ford  
Steering . . . . . Mustang

Wheels, Front/Rear . . . . . Kelsey-Hayes; 16-in.; widened rears

Tires, Front/Rear . . . . . 16-in.; track style  
Brakes, Front/Rear . . . . . none; Ford drum

### BODY

Model . . . . . front half of '27 touring  
Modifications . . . . . shortened; narrowed 7 in.

Paint, Type/Color . . . . . Du Pont enamel; red

Interior . . . . . tan naugahyde

### FINALS

Time To Build . . . . . 3 months rebuild and detail

Annual Mileage . . . . . 3,000