

## SCALE MODEL DRAG RACING

There were contestants from seven different drag strips at this meet, and it was pretty easy to tell which ones were used to using the buttons and which ones were not. There were some pretty good hole shots pulled on some of the newcomers, but in time this will even out. Also each entrant is required to drive his own cars, preventing the teaming of a fast car belonging to one fellow with a fast thumb belonging to another, making an almost unbeatable combination.

But let's get on with the racing. The first round of Fuel Dragster paired Otis Austin with Joe Monahan. Austin put a big hole shot on Monahan and won the race with a 1.19. Incidentally all of these fuel cars are powered by six volt Ram motors. The next race was a good start with Richard Wilkinson taking the run over Steve Monahan with a 1.18. Joe Merrill's 1.22 time was quick enough to take the win from Craig Smith. Bob Murdock's good 1.11 run did the job on Jim Benson. Two very fast cars were brought up for the next round, but a hole shot by Jim Rhoden along with an equally good time of 1.11 was what it took to beat Warren Stone's car. Another fine run of 1.12 by John Cukras was enough to beat Don Dieckman.

The next car up, belonging to Ray Yates, won best constructed car of the meet. I think I should get a rubber stamp made saying "Ray Yates wins best constructed car again." This is the fourth time in a row

that Ray has won this honor. And with the fourth different car and the third different judge! There just isn't anybody around here that can build them as clean as Ray. He also made a "Magi-car" out of this one with a trick front end. It's very ingenious and very simple. The biggest problem with these fuelers is traction, and having almost exhausted the German tire possibilities Ray next started on making the chassis work. He mounted the car's single nose weight on two swinging mounts. One is attached to the front of the car's frame and the other point attaches to the front wheel axle. The front axle is mounted to trailing arms from the frame, allowing the frame to rise  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch up and still have the wheels on the track. Ray says this gives much better and smoother weight transfer and that this car required less nose weight than any of his previous fuelers. Chalk another innovation up to Ray. While we're on the subject of clean cars, best appearing was won by Ed Sager's Chaparral modified sports car. Our judge nearly went out of his mind trying to judge between Sager's entry and Dave Scott's beautiful Willys.

Back to the racing bit. Ray Yates' opponent was the youngest entrant of this class, Gary Venem. Ray must have thought he was struck by "venom" as Gary put a big hole shot on him. Although Ray was pulling on him, Venem took the race with a 1.26. Carl Carlson then came to the line to face Jim Gallagher, owner of J & J's Raceways, with Jim winning the race in a close one. Final run of the first round had Jim Kirkwood, the manager of Western

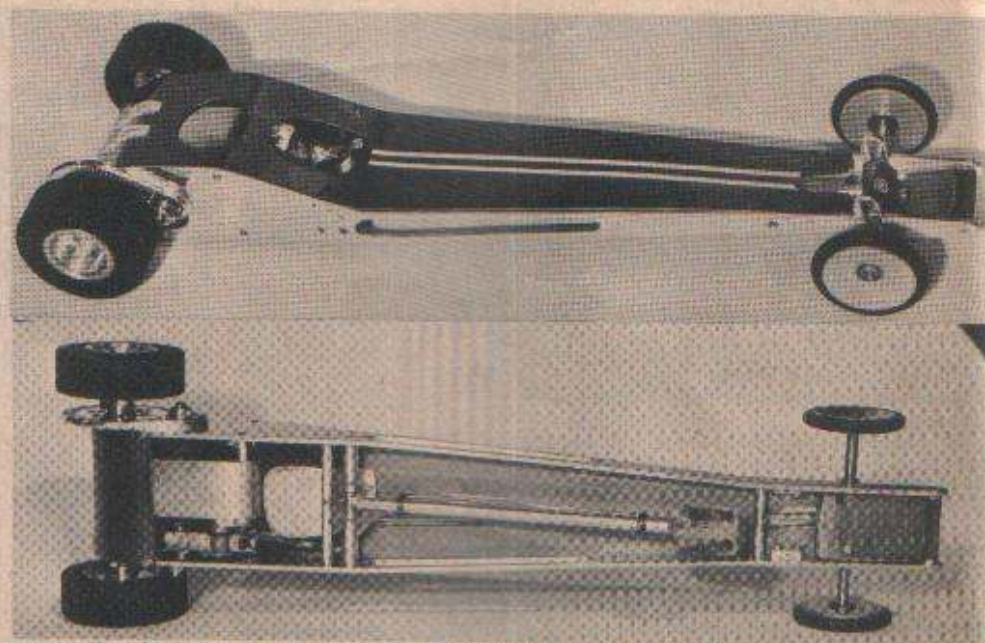
Model Raceways, making a bye run of 1.09 on 30 volts, the lowest e.t. of the meet so far. Going briefly over the next few rounds: Austin 1.19 over red lighting Wilkinson, Merrill 1.13 over red lighting Bob Murdock, Cukras 1.10 over Jim Rhoden, Venem 1.22 hole shooting Jim Gallagher. Round three saw Austin quicker on the buttons than Merrill, and in what could have been one of the best races of the meet, Jim Kirkwood losing a heartbreaker as his car jumped the slot giving the win to John Cukras. In the next round Austin made a 1.16 bye run leaving Venem and Cukras to do battle. Cukras beat Venem out of the hole and with a great 1.09 won the race, leaving the final round Cukras versus Austin. Both wanted the win very badly, and thoroughly prepared their cars for the final run. It was a fairly close start with Cukras taking a small lead off the line and holding it all the way for Fuel Dragster class winner, with another GREAT 1.09 e.t.

You'd think that wading through a field of fuelers like this would be enough to ask of anyone, but there were still the winners of Fuel Modified Roadster and Fuel Competition Coupe to contend with for Fuel Top Eliminator. Or should I say winner, as both classes were won by the 1962 Rod & Custom Nationals Top Eliminator, Warren Stone. Three coins were tossed to see who would get the bye run. Cukras lucked out on this, and Stone elected to withdraw his coupe rather than have to race himself. This was the one for all the marbles, and the fellows really knew it as they carefully cleaned their tires with Energine and al-



**ABOVE:** Youngest entry at meet, Gary Venem, is shown cleaning his German slicks with Energine. Car really gets good bite.

**BELOW:** Frank Varnelli's rail is not quite finished, but we had to show you the beautiful workmanship. Note wild gear guard.



**ABOVE:** For the fourth time in a row Ray Yates won Best Constructed Car of the meet. It runs a highly modified six-volt RAM 850.

