

Scale Model Drag Racing

Bob Braverman shows that preparation and practice are the keys to success in drag racing

By Gene Husting

WESTERN MODEL RACEWAYS, located at 13204 South Western Avenue in Gardena, California, was the first shop in Southern California with a drag strip. Moreover, the drag strip was the first track built in the shop. It was followed by the very popular Indianapolis-type circular track, and then by two road-race tracks. These tracks were built with much hard work and great foresight by Hal Prendergast and Violet Jacoby. Most people told Hal and Violet that they'd never be able to pay their rent in a gamble such as this, but in a few

months the shop was so packed that if you weren't one of the first ones in when the track opened, you wouldn't be able to run at all. The waiting line at the drag strip was always long.

Since Western Model Raceways has proved such a success, shops have been opening up all over the Southern California area; there are now more than 70 of them.

When Hal and Violet first started their enterprise, no special parts were being made for slot cars. Hence, they began to manufacture quality parts under the 'Speedway' brand. Since Hal's untimely death last July, Violet not only has kept the shop running smoothly with the able assistance of Jim Currie, but has also expanded the Speedway line to include three winning chassis kits for road race cars.

Western's drag strip is made of white marbled Formica on one-inch plywood. Power is supplied by three 12-volt car batteries and the 12-inch-dial clock is one of the most accurate available.

If the drag meet we're reporting were to have an official name, it would have to be called "The Bob Braverman Benefit", because it sure benefited Bob! But, that's getting ahead of the story. The meet was run very capably by Warren Stone, the 1962 ROD & CUSTOM National Champion, who's just returned home from service in the Army. There never seems to be enough time for tuning, but Warren called a halt at nine PM to get the racing started. Before the meet, judging was completed for Best Constructed and Best Appearing cars. The former award was taken by Ray Yates, who, you may recall, took the same award at the meet we reported in the March 1965 issue of R&C. The fuel dragster he entered this time was an entirely different car embody-

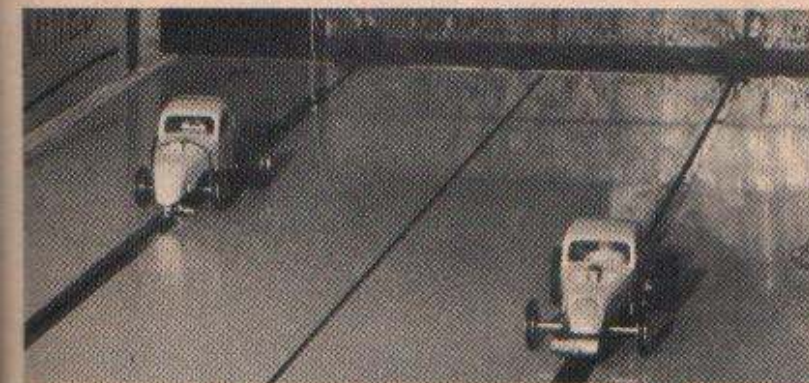
ing many new ideas. As with all of Ray's cars, workmanship was flawless and he certainly deserved the award. Best Appearing car was Rod Owens' entry; we've selected it for "Car of the Meet" coverage.

Now, on with the racing! After the individual little eliminator classes were run, Warren called up the class winners. The first round was between Bob Braverman's Cobra sports class winner and Bud Durbin's Malibu stock winner. It was Bob's race all the way with a very good 1.58 e.t. This brought up Jim Rhoden with his Corvair gas class winner. In the class runoffs, Bob had only a .01 e.t. edge over Jim but that's all he needed, as the Cobra just edged the Corvair at the finish line, giving little eliminator honors to Bob Braverman.

Middle eliminator runoffs started with Bob Nord's roadster class winner, which had a great 1.39 e.t., and Rod Owens' Corvair GT which had taken sports class. Owens was not to be denied, winning with a 1.43 e.t. This brought Braverman's Fiat altered class winner to face the Corvair. With a very close race and another quick 1.43, Owens took the runoff.

Gas top eliminator is becoming an exciting bracket with these 12-volt Ram motors turning *better e.t.'s* than many of the fuel top eliminator six-volt cars. Final runoff in the category pitted Rod Owens' modified roadster class winner against Bob Braverman's Ram-powered drag class winner. (Incidentally, EVERY car at the meet, except the unlimited class machines, was Ram powered!) This promised to be a close race, since the two cars had turned identical e.t.'s in their class wins. The cars were prepared carefully, the track cleaned, and when the start button was pushed, the cars left the line as though fastened together and stayed

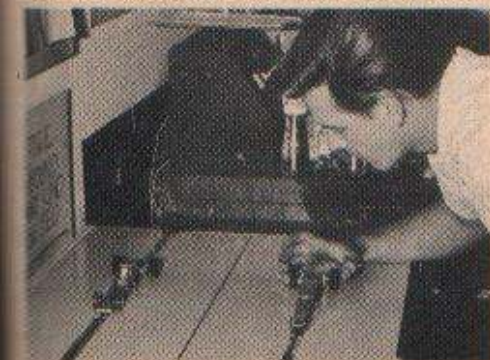
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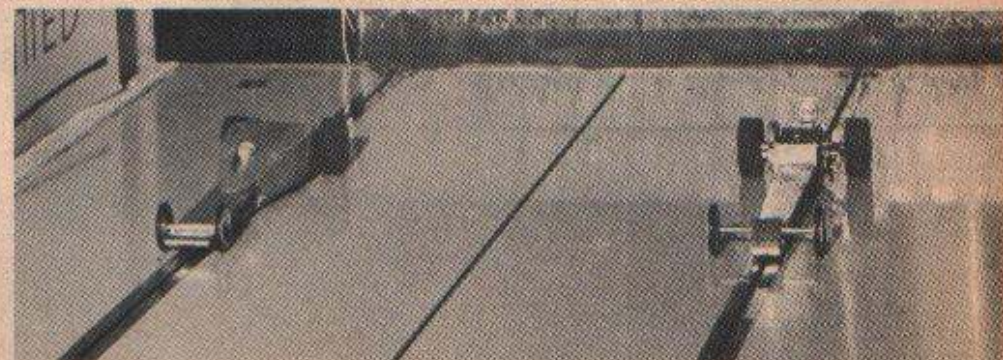
A pair of Altered Fiats charge out of the hole on a 55-foot run that will end less than a second and a half later. Quicker than times at first R&C meet.



The author's Unlimited Class machine on the way to a new class record, an astounding 1.08 e.t. in 55 feet.



Rod Owens 'biting' his tires on run against Bob Braverman, who won anyway with 1.13 e.t.



Final run for Gas T.E. saw Rod Owens modified roadster lock horns with Braverman's potent dragster and come out a close second as Bob turned on a 1.24 winning e.t.