

NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL of FAME & MUSEUM

LLOYD AXEL

"I race cars because I love to race them. For me there is no greater thrill than barreling down the straightaway, gunning past the starter's stand, and holding a game little car on the curve. I love to push the throttle and shoot by the guy ahead. I love the smell of burning oil and the noise of a pleased and excited crowd. It's in my blood, mister - and it's there to stay!"

Lloyd Axel, born June 27, 1905, was bit by the racing bug when he drove an old Rajo Ford at Ord (Nebr.), substituting for a sick friend in 1926. Axel hooked up with the winner of that Ord fair race, Vic Felt of Deertrail (Colo.), and raced Felt's 'big cars' throughout the Rocky Mountain states for the next seven years. They were regulars at the Overland Park mile track in Denver during the late 1920s and early '30s.

In 1931, Axel and Felt went to California and raced at the Legion Ascot Speedway in the first night race there. Vic drove a Fronty while Lloyd drove Felt's Gallivan.

Lloyd also drove Walt Killinger's 220 Miller number 8 machine, which was built by Myron Stevens, to wins at Danbury (Conn.), Trenton (N.J.), Milwaukee (Wisc.) and Phoenix (Ariz.) as well as numerous Colorado races. Their competitors included Johnny Hannon, Bob Sall, Rex Mays, Chet Gardner and Ernie Triplett.

In 1937-38, Axel drove Felt's Hisso-powered Oscar Norberg Machine Shop number 35 machine throughout the Midwest, including at Winchester (Ind.) where he set a new record of 22.100 seconds on the high-banked half-mile oval. During these years, Lloyd Axel competed regularly against Gus Schrader, Emory Collins, Buddy Callaway, Everett Saylor, Duke Dinsmore, Morris Musick, Paul Russo, Jimmy Wilburn and Cotton Grable on the Central States Racing Association (CSRA) and International Motor Contest Association (IMCA) circuits.

When he wasn't driving the 'big cars', Axel was wheeling the popular midgets in the Denver area starting in 1937. He even became

president of the newly-formed Rocky Mountain Midget Racing Association (RMMRA) in 1940-42. He was also the club's champion the first two years (1940 & 1941).

Axel raced all through the thirties and forties on dirt and pavement, finally retiring after the 1955 racing season. The driver of 'big cars', track roadsters, midgets and Pikes Peak hill climb cars continued to wrench on racing cars for another decade though. In fact, in 1965, Axel was wrenching on an Offy sprint car for owner Bud Shirson when their driver was forced to miss a race at Greeley (Colo.) due to a conflicting super-modified race. Axel got in the sprinter at Greeley, after ten years off, and proceeded to scorch the half-mile dirt oval.

During his legendary career, Lloyd Axel won over 200 feature wins (75 with RMMRA alone). Lloyd, who was married to Emily Axel, died on May 1, 1971.

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