

NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL of FAME & MUSEUM

TOM HOLDEN

Tom Holden, who originally hailed from the oil fields of western Kansas, promoted midget and "big car" races, many times on the same card, at a multitude of dirt race tracks in Colorado and Kansas during the 1930's and '40's.

Among the tracks that Holden promoted were Dupont Speedway in Denver (Colo.), Sterling (Colo.), Ord (Nebr.), Goodland (Ks.), WaKeeney (Ks.), Concordia (Ks.), Salina (KS.) and Dodge City (Ks.).

Among the "big car" drivers that drove at his events

were Clyde Gilbert, Matt Pulver, Walt Killinger, Angelo Howerton, Waldo Barnett, Tex West, Rhea Bray, Loren Fondable, Vic Felt and Lloyd Axel. In 1939, two drivers were killed and Rex Woodard was injured in one of Tom's promotions at a western Kansas fair.

In fact, Holden is credited with introducing midget racing to the state of Kansas in 1936 in a series of exhibition races. Among the midget drivers participating were Harry Hart, Lewis Durant, George Sparks, D.W. "Loopy" McCauley, Waldo Barnett and Ted Dumbault. Holden promoted the midgets at

Wichita (Ks.) in 1938 on a one-fifth mile dirt oval inside the Bo Stearns horse track. He also organized the midget races at Merchants Park, home of the Denver Bears baseball team, in 1937, '38 and '39.

After his auto racing promotional days, he started Tom Holden's Thrill Show on the county fair circuit, which his eventually son took over and renamed Tommy Holden's Motor Maniacs.

Tom Holden passed away several years ago.