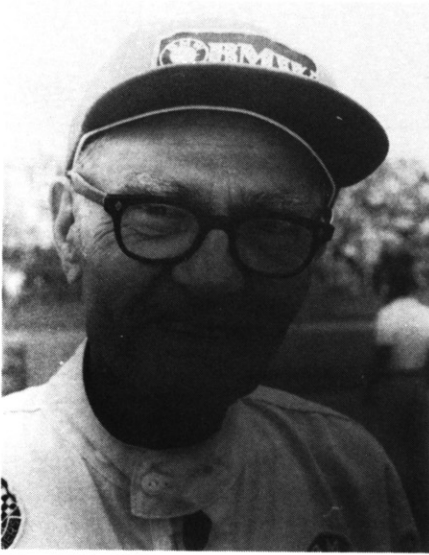


# NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL of FAME & MUSEUM

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**Floyd "Pop" Dreyer**  
Bruce Craig Collection

## FLOYD "POP" DREYER

Floyd "Pop" Dreyer was born in Chillicothe, Ohio in 1898. As a youth, he enjoyed a brief stint as a horseman before throwing himself into motorcycle racing. He had a successful career racing for the Indian factory team, winning numerous events and setting several American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) speed records. In 1925, however, Pop got married and withdrew from motorcycle racing. He was a good welder and the lure of big

money to be had as a welder in the Oklahoma oil fields was too much for him. Pop began the westward trek with his wife and three children, although they only got as far as Indianapolis before their money ran out. While in Indy, Dreyer met up with Fred Duesenberg and proceeded to land a job in the Duesenberg brothers' racing shop. Some of Pop's most difficult metal work in the late 1920's was in making the elaborate aluminum intercooler, the device first used effectively by Frank Lockhart. In fact, Dreyer helped Myron Stevens with the bodywork on Lockhart's ill-fated V-16 land-speed-record car. Following the close of the Duesenberg racing shop, Pop opened his own metal working and welding establishment. He made manifolds for Arthur Chevrolet who built and raced Fronty Fords. Pop became a leader in race car design and manufacturing as he pioneered in the areas of driver headrests, overhead conversions for Ford blocks and magnesium wheels.

During the 1930's, his business included the manufacture of race car component parts, complete sprint cars and midgets, and small single-cylinder cars for children (which sold for \$495). It is said that more race cars were built by him than by any of his contemporaries, including the entire front row of one year's Indianapolis 500-mile race. Pop's most notable sprint cars were Clayton "Duke" Nalon's Dreyer which won the 1938 American Automobile Association (AAA)

Eastern title and Jackie Holmes' Dreyer which won the 1949 Midwestern AAA title. Besides Holmes, others who had driven for Floyd "Pop" Dreyer were Tony Willman, Bill Schindler, Tony Bettenhausen, Everett Saylor, Andy Linden, Joe James, Travis "Spider" Webb, Elmer George and Ed Elisian.

During World War II, Pop did sub-contracting work for the Allison division of General Motors. He built manifolds for testing and experimental work with aircraft engines. During the 1950's, racing had gotten increasingly expensive and competitive. Pop sold everything, including his patterns. He soon returned to his motorcycle roots, however, when he became Honda's ninth dealership in the United States and their first east of the Mississippi River. Today, Dreyer Honda in Indianapolis, run by son Floyd "Junior" Dreyer, is the oldest continually-operated Honda dealership in the nation. Although Floyd "Pop" Dreyer is no longer with us, his legacy is still carried on by Junior, who is a master metalworker (with custom automobiles) just as his Pop had been.

