

NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL of FAME & MUSEUM

FLOYD TREVIS

As are many of this year's National Sprint Car Hall of Fame inductees, Floyd Trevis is known both for his efforts in sprint car racing and for his exploits at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, home of the greatest spectacle in racing. Trevis, a resident of Youngstown, Ohio, is remembered as the builder of one of the most unusual cars ever to show up on an American race track - the Lou Fageol Twin Coach Special #10. The Twin Coach and Trevis arrived at Indianapolis in the same year - 1946. The car used two super-charged 91-cubic inch Offy midget engines, one to power the front wheels and the other for the rear. The Roots-type blowers were in the cockpit alongside the driver, who could use either his front screamer, the back one or both at the same time. The vehicle, in effect, had 4-wheel drive and thus theoretically should have had better traction through the turns. But no special tires were made, and it may have been a victim of stiff "shoes". Paul Russo qualified for a position in the middle of the front row and was in contention for the inaugural post-war 500 when, some 40 miles into the race, he seemed to motor straight into the wall on the northeast turn. He had no explanation for the journey which broke Russo's leg.

Trevis went back to Ohio and was next heard from as a builder of Pete Salemi's Central Excavating Special in 1951 with Bill Vukovich, Sr. as the pilot. From 1952 until 1960 he found being a chief mechanic more lucrative. Dick Rathmann put Floyd's car on the pole in 1958. He went back to car building for the 1960



Floyd Trevis
Bruce Craig Collection

race with two for Jim Robbins. These incorporated several innovations like a built-in exhaust system and a frontal area so low a snake could slither over it. The cars, driven by Eddie Johnson and Bud Tinglestad, finished 6th and 9th, both going the distance. Bowes Seal Fast came to him for the winning 1961 A.J. Foyt, Jr. mount, and Floyd built seven cars in 1963, two for the Brickyard.

As a builder of sprint cars, Floyd has provided the vehicles for a great number of champions, including Dave & Lou Blaney, Larry Dickson, Ray Tilley, Gus Linder, Bobbie Adamson, Ralph Quarterson, Mitch Smith, Kenny & Greg Weld,

Larry "Smokey" Snellbaker, Lynn Paxton, Elmer Ruby, Kramer Williamson, Gerald Chamberlain, Ray Lee Goodwin, Dick "Toby" Tobias, Earl Halaquist, LeRoy Felty, Jerry & Cliff Blundy, Joe Saldana, Roger Rager, Jan Opperman, Keith Kauffman, Gary Bettenhausen, Sonny Ates, Herman & Ted Wise, J.D. Leas, Ralph Liguori, Tom Bigelow, Bobby & Sheldon Kinser, Paul Pitzer, Lee Osborne and Billy Cassella, among others. Among his most prestigious sprint car wins are with driver Kenny Weld and owner Bob Weikert and the 1971 Trevis-chassis sprinter #29 known as "Old Blue". The sprint car won a total of 146 feature wins, including the 1972 and 1973 Knoxville Nationals, 1972 IMCA Florida Winternationals and the 1972 and 1973 Williams Grove National Open 150-lappers.

One of Floyd's favorite reflections is the time in 1938 when Mike Little drove one of his cars at Williams Grove Speedway when Roy Richwine owned the half-mile facility. While warming up the car against all the "hot dogs" of the American Automobile Association (AAA), the clutch went out. He borrowed a clutch out of a 1928 Ford that was in the parking lot and started last in the consy and won it. When they lined up for the feature, Mike asked if he could start last. He did and he won it. Floyd remarked, "That car has memories for me. The driver was an old friend and the car was brand new and it did a great job as far as I was concerned." Floyd Trevis and wife Catherine still reside in Youngstown, Ohio.