

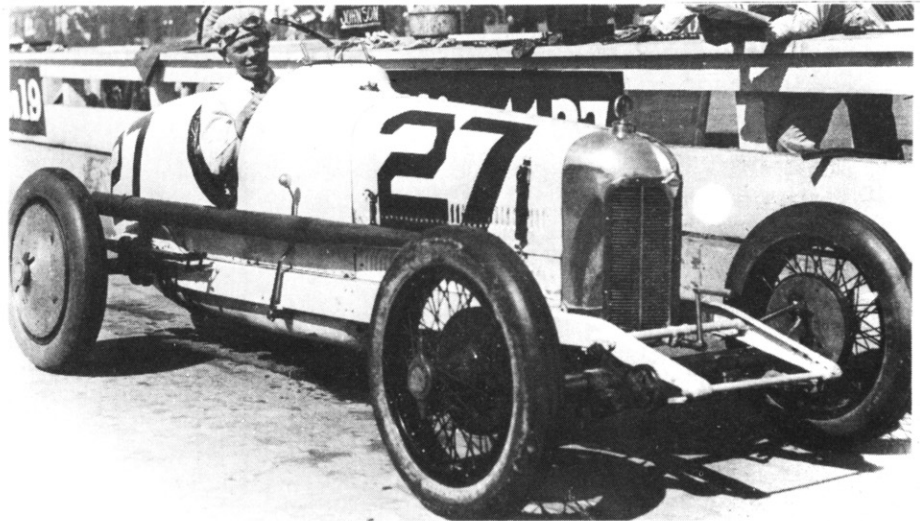
# NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL of FAME & MUSEUM

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## FRANK LOCKHART

Frank S. Lockhart was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1903. His family were next-door neighbors of the father of Orville and Wilbur Wright. Following the death of Casper Lockhart, Carrie moved herself and her two sons to Inglewood, California in 1909. There, Frank began building racing cars and driving them while in his teens. Although nearly illiterate, he was a mechanical wizard and won several "out-law" shows at the old Ascot Speedway in the early 1920's. His rides gradually improved and Frank soon found himself beating the likes of Pete DePaolo and Ralph DePalma on the dusty dirt tracks of California. Promoters began billing Frank Lockhart as "King of the Dirt Tracks."

In 1926, Lockhart signed on with owner Ernie Olson as Olson's back-up Indy driver (Bennett Hill was Olson's primary driver). The day before the 500, owner-driver Pete Kreis came down with the flu and offered Lockhart the chance to drive the already-qualified Miller-chassis #15 ride. Lockhart, with Olson's blessing, accepted the offer and went on to win that year's rain-shortened event, with the rookie dirt-trackin' it the whole way. Following that race in which he lapped board track veteran Harry Hartz, Frank accepted Harry A. Miller's offer to join his factory team as driver on the board-track



**Frank Lockhart**  
Bruce Craig Collection

circuit. In late 1926, the successful combination of Lockhart and Miller split after Harry discovered Frank was also using his mechanical abilities to "tweak" the car's valve system. During the following year, Frank and his new team, including Ernie Olson, continued to be the scourge of America's dirt and board tracks, setting new world records everywhere they went. The fastest board track was Atlantic City Speedway in New Jersey, where Frank Lockhart turned a remarkable 147.7 mph lap. Many credit the team's success to Zenas and John Weisel, who, with Lockhart, designed a new supercharger for

Miller's motors that was far superior to anything else in existence at the time.

However, most of Frank's attention late in 1927 were on his land speed record attempt in a Stutz "Black Hawk" set for early the next year. An accident in February's speed runs caused Frank to go back to Daytona Beach, Florida in April. On April 25, 1928, while speeding over the sand at an estimated 200 miles per hour, Frank's car blew a tire and started flipping out of control. Suddenly, tragically, the driver-designer-engineer was thrown from his car to his death.