

# NOTES from the ARCHIVE -

## THEN & NOW SPECIALS & SPORTS CARS

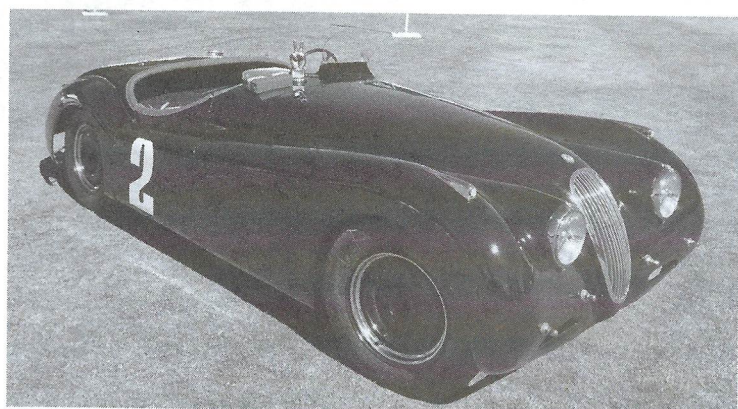
By Gary Horstkorta

Time flies...or so the old saying goes and one good example is the sobering fact that it has been **Seven Decades** since the first running of the Pebble Beach Races through the Del Monte Forest. This series of races (1950-1956) has been recognized as one of the major catalysts in propelling a friendly competition among amateur drivers to a path of explosive growth in the years that followed. The San Francisco Region was there at the beginning lead by Kjell Qvale, Harry Fair Jr., Bill Breeze and Sterling Edwards who had the vision and made it happen. In addition, it brought about the construction of one of America's iconic race tracks - Laguna Seca.



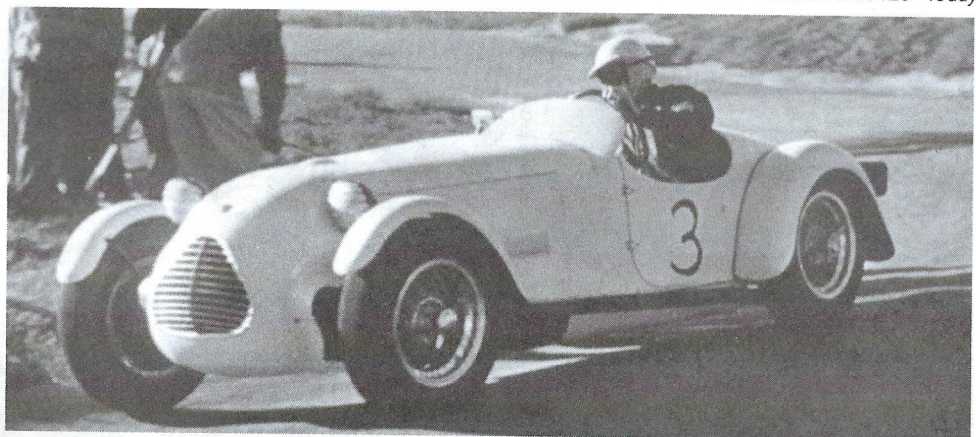
Phil Hill's Jaguar - 1950s

During those seven years the races were held, the number and types of cars that competed changed dramatically. Dominated by British sports cars in the early years they were quickly supplemented with a number of imported cars as interest in the sport rapidly grew. One unique class of cars reflected the true spirit of amateur racing back then, the home-built specials. With roots in the post-World War II hot rod culture, individual enthusiast gathered together a collection of used car parts to build a chassis, dropped in a hopped up engine and went road racing. Others acquired a stock production car then extensively modified them in the hope of making them more competitive. You could call it "American Engine-uity" and a number of these "Specials" did quite well against the production and factory built cars.



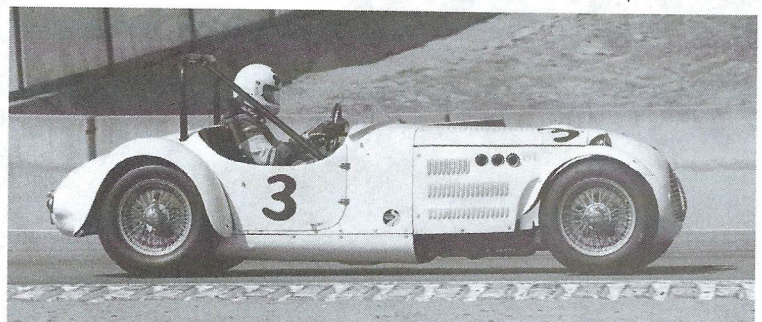
Phil Hill's XK-120 - Today

Many of these specials carried the names of their builders or owners including the Manning, Baldwin, Tatum, Parkinson, Cannon, Huffaker, Hagemann and von Neumann Specials. They raced for several season until eventually being outclassed by more modern cars and an ever changing rule book. However these cars did not just fade away, the were found, restored and had a second life in the growing sport of vintage racing alongside many other former SCCA competition cars.



Parkinson Special - 1950s

One group that has brought these cars back to life for current vintage racing enthusiast to enjoy is the Del Monte Trophy Racing Group (DMTRG), co-founded by Rob Manson and Doug Sallen. Beginning with just a few cars, the groups efforts over the past few years to bring more of these historic race cars into the group has been reward by invitations to participation in the 70th Anniversary Celebration of the first Pebble Beach Road Race and Concours de Elegance. Several of the cars that actually raced at Pebble Beach in the 1950s will be part of the Del Monte Trophy Race Group at the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion. Overall there will be a grid of 30 of these classic race cars recreating what spectators would have seen if they attended the races at Pebble Beach.



Parkinson Special - Today

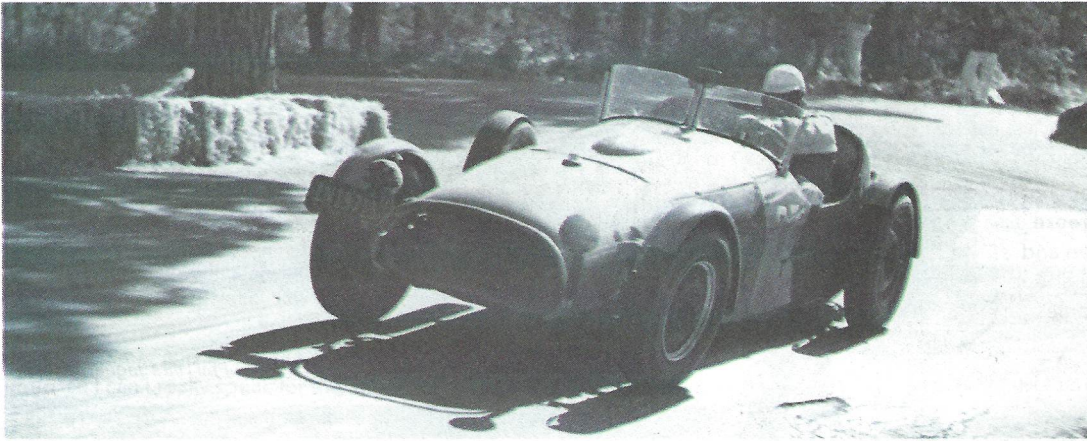
In addition five of the cars that won the Del Monte Trophy at each of the Pebble Beach races will be presented in a Special Exhibition Class at the Pebble Beach Concours and featured at Laguna Seca in front of the Celebration Display in the Paddock.



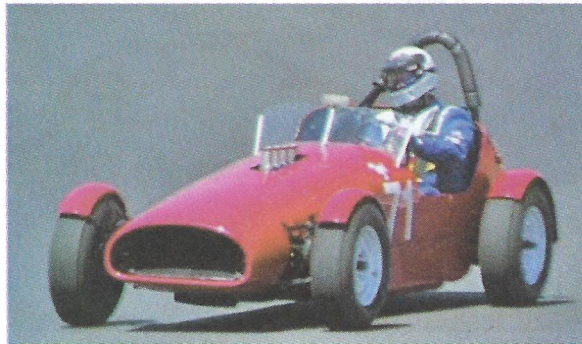
# NOTES from the ARCHIVE *continued*

**Among the cars that will be seen at these various events will be:**

**Phil Hill's Jaguar XK-120** which won the first ever race at Pebble Beach in 1950. The car was prepared by Hill and Ritchie Ginther who stripped off as much weight as possible and enlarged the engine for



*Cannon Mk1 - 1950s*



*Cannon Mk1 - Today*

more power. Despite a blown clutch Hill passed the entire field to win his first important race.

**Parkinson Special** which in its original form as an XK-120, finished second to Hill in the first race in 1950. Parkinson rolled the car at the 1951 Pebble Beach race but had it re-bodied and raced it successfully in 1952 through 1954 with several podium finishes. The car reemerged in 1970 and restored by Marvin Faw who built the original body for the

Special. It appeared at vintage races in the early 1980s and has been raced every since.

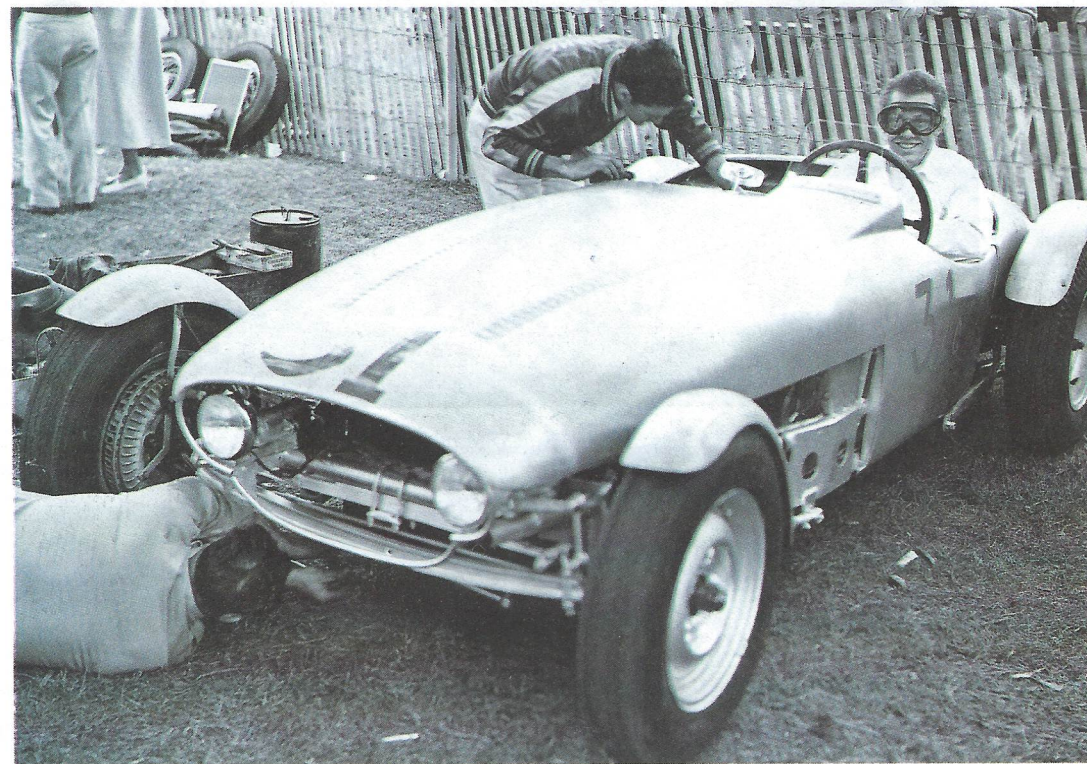
**Cannon Special** which finished third in 1950 behind Hill and Parkinson was a true special built by Ted Cannon and driven by Jim Seely. Assembled from a variety of components at Cannon's shop and powered by a Mercury Flathead V-8 with a Lincoln Zepher 3-speed transmission, Pebble Beach was the cars first race. The car competed in several more races through 1952 before being replaced with a newer Cannon Special.

**Tatum Special** was built in Stockton, California by Chuck Tatum an ex-Marine and oval track racer who felt he could build his own car to compete in road racing. Tatum built the car from scratch during 1952-53 using a collection of parts married to a tube frame of his design. Body by Jack Hagemann and power from a six-cylinder GMC engine the car proved to be successful with temporary driver Chuck Manning at the wheel. After three years of racing at many road courses in the west, the car was retired only to be found years later and restored.

**Baldwin Special** was the second special created by Willis Baldwin. Using a modified 1946 Ford chassis, Ford running gear with a bored out Mercury V-8 engine. The car ran in three Pebble Beach Races 1952-53-54 with a best finish of fourth in 1952 but continued racing until it was badly damaged in a 1959 race. The car was discovered in 1990 and fully restored for vintage racing.

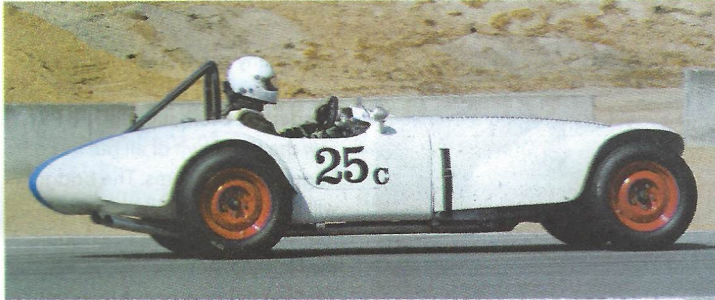
**Carroll Shelby's Ferrari 750 Monza Scaglietti Spyder** was the winner of the 1956 Del Monte Trophy at Pebble Beach and owned by Texas oilman Richard and Jim Hall. The car was raced into 1958 then retired but would stay with Jim Hall until sold at auction in 2016.

These events will once again take place during Monterey Car Week on Saturday August 14 and Sunday August 15. The long list of activities spread over the Monterey Peninsula will be eagerly anticipated and welcome after a one year break due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

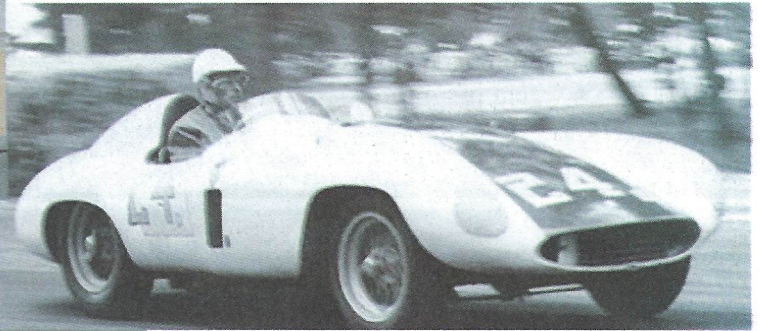


*Tatum Special - 1950s*

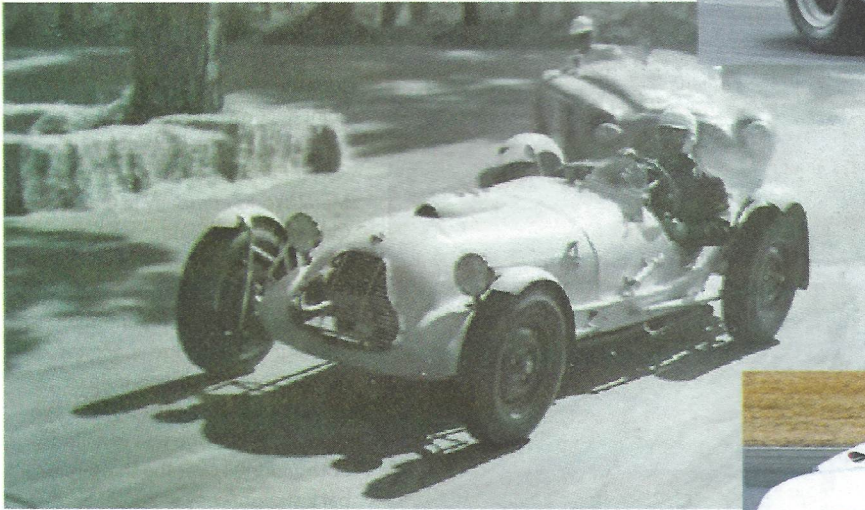




Tatum Special - Today



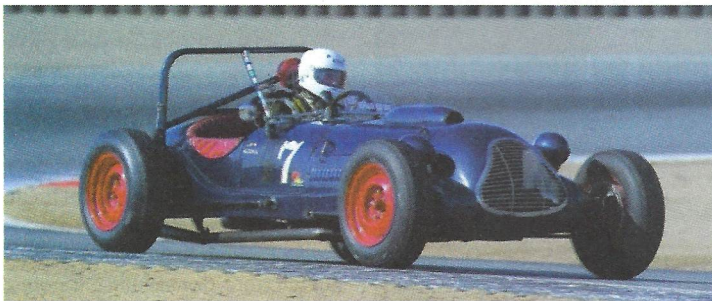
Shelby's Ferrari - 1950s



Baldwin Special - 1950s



Shelby's Ferrari - Today



Baldwin Special - Today

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