

SEARCHED FOR THE “HOLY GRAIL” AND FOUND A “HONKER”

By Tony Rinaldi

Contributions from Jim Kramer

With reports from several sources that Chrysler 300s, both Sport and H models, could be ordered with the S42 option, a 426 Wedge Engine with various intake configurations, the most exotic of which could have had all the bells and whistles of the 405 HP 413 short crossram engine but with 421 HP, a search ensued to find the “Holy Grail.”

No 426 wedge engines actually made it to production in 1962 because NASCAR would not approve them. But “Holy Grail” was still to be found. Harry E. “Bud” Faubel, Jr. and his “Big Red” (The Honker) an experimental 1961/1962 mutant based upon a 1962 Sport 300, that unofficially broke the One Way and Two Way Flying Mile records on the Sands of Daytona Beach in 1961, both were found in Pennsylvania. Bud Faubel said:

“If a 426 wedge was available for a ’62 Chrysler, I would have had one.”

Bud still lives in Chambersburg PA and was a prolific and successful Chrysler 300 and later Dodge race driver. I found interviewing Bud a delightful and informative experience. His lovely wife Barbara is also his ballroom dance partner.

When Harry was 16 he wanted to get experience to eventually race Chrysler 300s, so he enlisted in the Navy. By 19, he got his experience flying F-86 fighter jets in the Korean War. At 23, he was a flight instructor in Vietnam.

Bud became the Sales Manager/VP for a Dodge dealership in Chambersburg PA.

In 1960, Bud brought his standard 300-F to the sands of Daytona Beach and wanted to race in the Flying Mile. The Chrysler people would not let him run his showroom 300-F against the 300-F GT 4 speed manual Specials. So insistent, was he, that they relented and allowed him to race one of their engineering prototype Specials under one condition. If he won and beat their regular drivers, he could not show up to accept the prize thus disquali-

fying him. This is the year Greg Ziegler established the Two Way Flying Mile average record of 144.9 mph. Bud finished third with 143.198 mph.

To make up for how he was treated in 1960, the next year Bud was invited to Detroit and allowed to special order “Big Red” for a dollar. He says that they never told him where to mail the dollar so he probably still owes it.

Bud ran his “Red Stepsister Finless Ringer” a 1962 Sport 300 against a field of 3 speed manual GT prepared 1961 300-Gs, some Chevrolets and a Buick in the Class 8 (Unlimited Displacement – 390 cubic inch and up) NASCAR Daytona Beach Runs on Saturday, February 19, 1961.

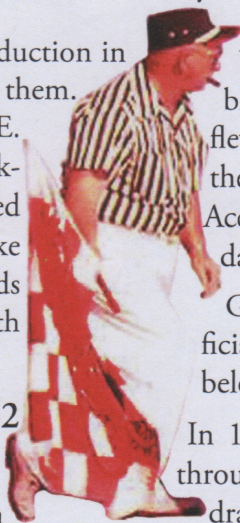
He blew the doors off the competition and his stepsisters with an unprecedented record for the fastest qualifying speed of 156.657 mph One Way run on the sands of Daytona Beach. His average for the Two Way Flying Mile run was 145.9 mph. That would have been a new World Record, BUT, that is not the only thing he blew off. A small piece of Windshield surround trim flew off and disqualified him and additionally two of the Chrysler 300-Gs. Bud won the Chrysler 300 Mile Acceleration with a speed of 90.7 mph held on Monday, February 20, 1961.

Greg Ziegler’s trim stayed on his 300-G and he officially won the Average Flying Mile at 143.027 mph, below his 1960 speed.

In 1965, with his Dodge “Hemi-Honker” he roared through some of the fastest 16 car fields in stock car dragging history and made off with the most coveted trophy for stock cars by winning “Mr. Stock Eliminator” in his 426 hemi powered Dodge Coronet. He is mentioned in the same breath as Andy Granatelli and Greg Ziegler.

In 1950’s California vocabulary, a hot car was said to really “Honk.” “The Honker” moniker, as reportedly, NASCAR driver Marvin Panch jokingly called his unusual 300 “some honker” and the nickname stuck. Bud subsequently named all of his drag cars “The Honker” from 1962 all the way through 1966.

Interestingly, every year Bud raced, he set NHRA records, and each one of his cars ended up in the history books for their mechanical and technical innovations. Arguably, Faubel’s two most famous cars were his ‘64 “Turbo-Honker” Dodge which featured dual aircraft turbo-charged Hemi creating somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,800 horsepower! Almost uncontrollable, the radical Dodge was attaining speeds of 160+ mph in the quarter, which was absolutely unheard of at that time, with tires



blazing the whole way. His 1965 Honker A/FX altered wheelbase car remains perhaps his best-remembered ride, as it was seen all over the Northeast and made Bud a household name in the sport of drag racing. You know that you are successful when they make a Hot Wheels version of your 1965 Dodge Coronet A/FX – “The Honker” racing car.

The House of Representatives of Pennsylvania recognized Bud Faubel’s achievements for numerous victories in Funny Car, Super Stock and A/FX Eliminator Categories for races driven in NASCAR, United States Auto Club and NHRA. He is also the recipient of the Legion of Honor and was inducted into the NHRA Hall of Fame.

This year, Bud Faubel was inducted into the Collector Guide Magazine’s Mopar Hall of Fame in Carlisle PA.

“Big Red” is now owned by Jim Kramer who is having a full restoration done to bring it back to its former glory. Refer to the Back Page for a recent picture of Bud Faubel with “Big Red.” Bud definitely has aged much more gracefully than his old “Honker.”



“Big Red” with Bud Faubel preparing to duel an older C-300. Photo from May 1962 CARS