

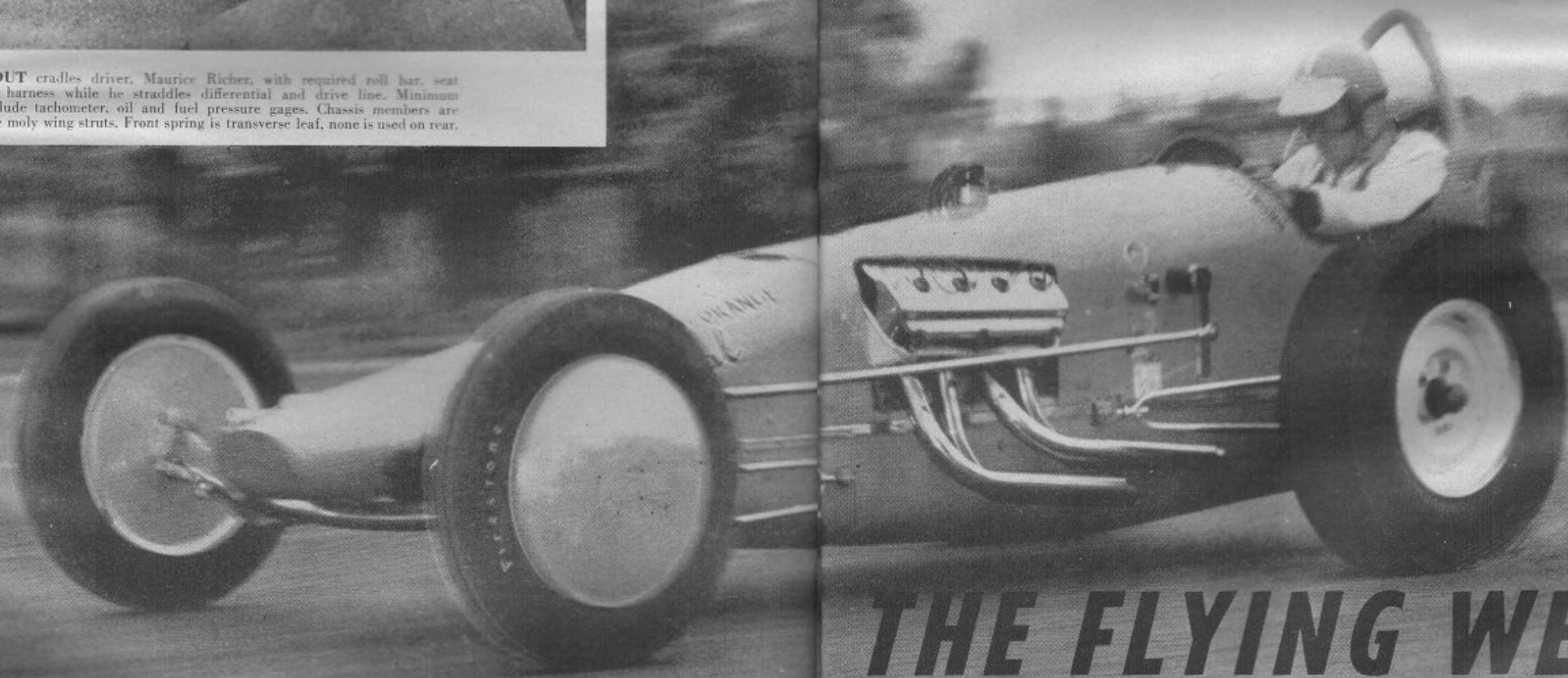
COCKPIT LAYOUT cradles driver, Maurice Richer, with required roll bar, seat belt and shoulder harness while he straddles differential and drive line. Minimum of instruments include tachometer, oil and fuel pressure gages. Chassis members are war surplus chrome moly wing struts. Front spring is transverse leaf, none is used on rear.

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY WAYNE THOMS

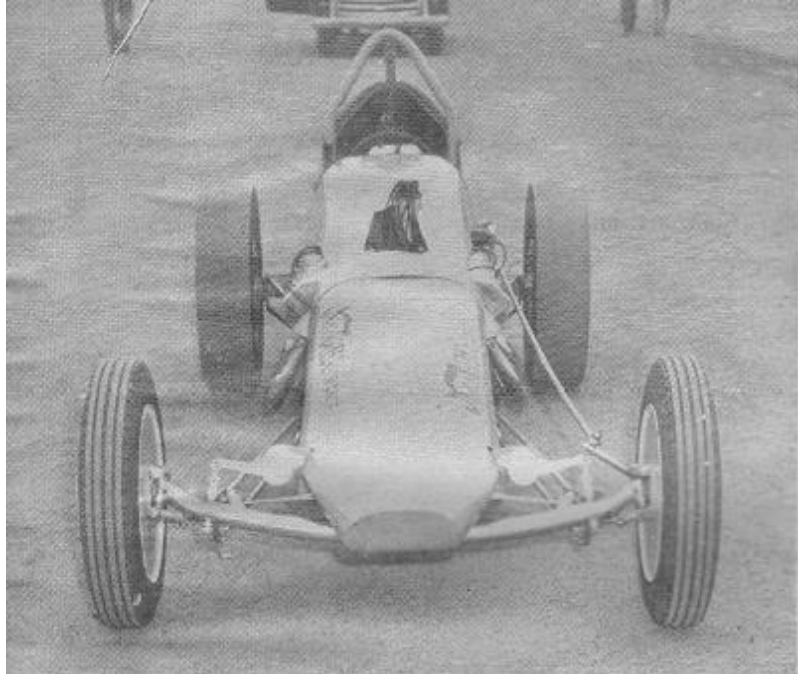
You just can't beat a
good dragster - - it's built
to do a job and
this one really does it

The designers of the 1957-58 Chrysler Corporation cars are fond of pointing to various dart and wedge shapes of fast-moving machines as the sources of their inspiration. The examples they most often cite are jet aircraft, high-speed boats and missiles. Unfortunately, they have overlooked some excellent examples right in their automotive backyard, so to speak, some of which are powered by Chrysler Corporation engines. Dragsters have been on the public scene for about as long as jets and missiles and frequently have assumed, for very functional reasons, the publicized "shape of motion." The case in point here is the vehicle called Nesbitt's Orange Spe-

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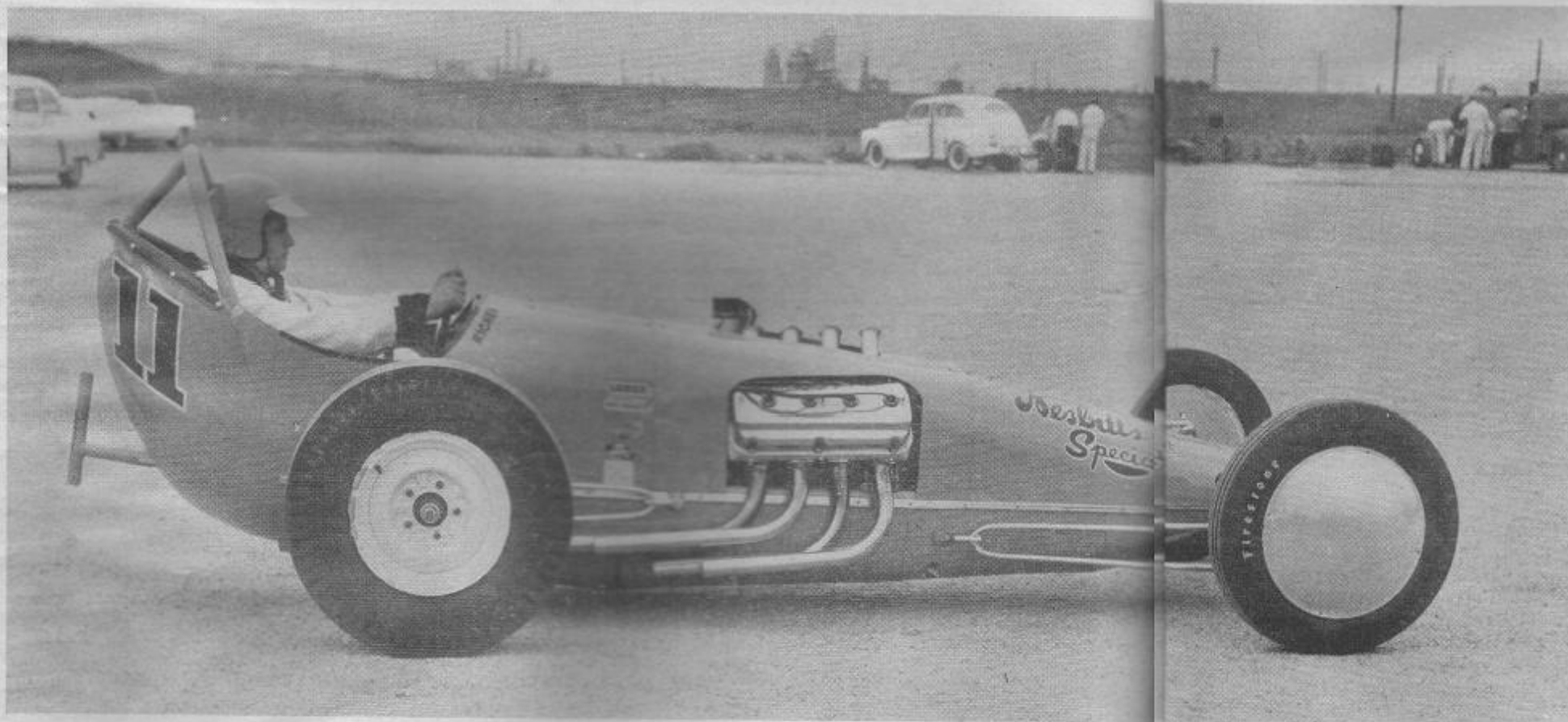
THE FLYING WEDGE



FRONTAL AREA kept to a minimum reduces drag but exposed Ford front axle, suspension components and engine rocker boxes will create turbulence at high speeds. Streamlined fairing would help.

THE FLYING WEDGE

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FLYING WEDGE "shape of motion" is exemplified in profile view which reveals engine better than half-way back in 102-inch wheel-base chassis. Driving position requires arms fully extended for maximum control of sensitive Franklin steering during speed runs.

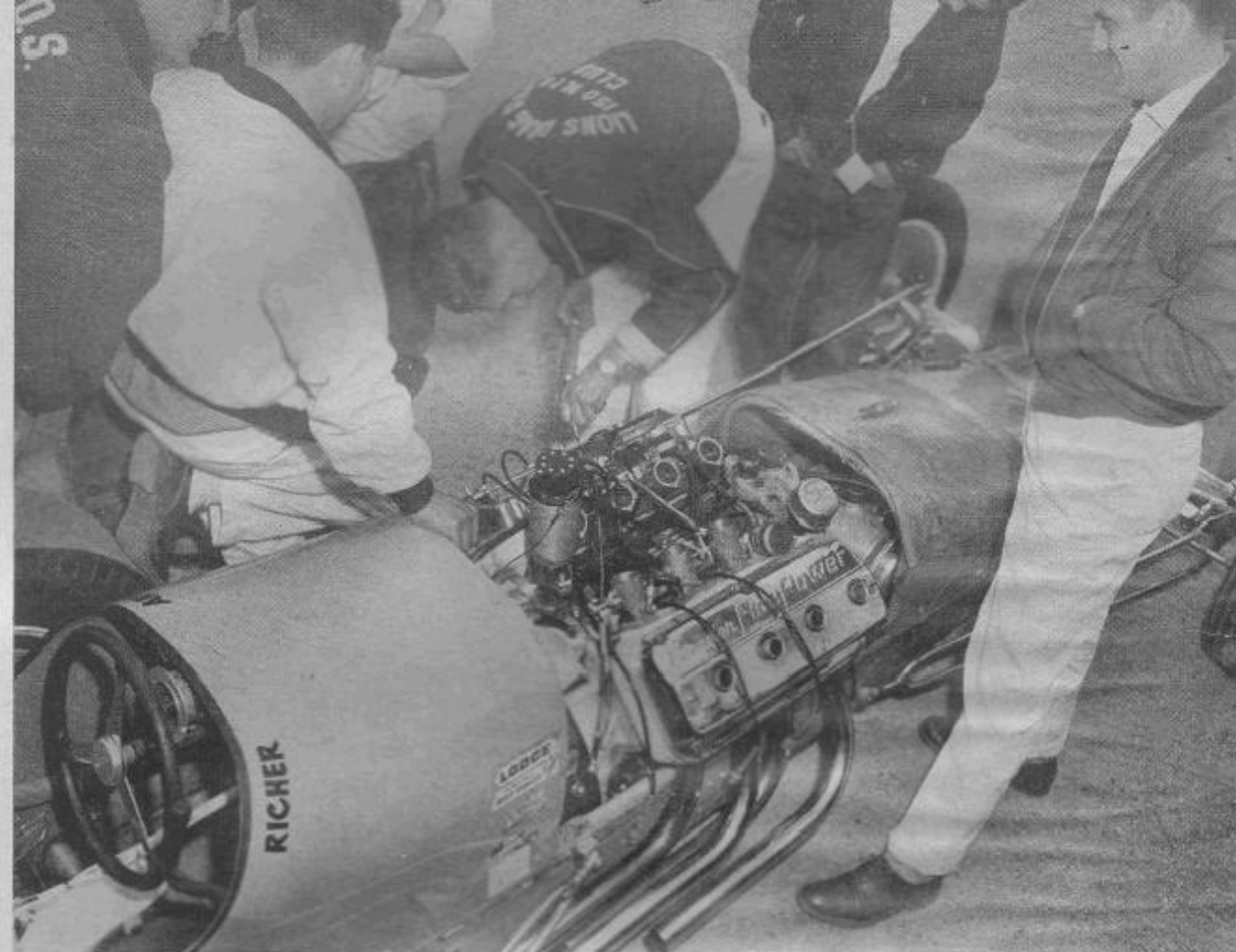
Engine, '51 Chrysler, is bored .080 and features Herbert cam and roller tappets, Hilborn fuel injection, tuned exhausts, 13-to-1 compression ratio and Hunt Vertex magneto. Transmission is '37 La Salle and rear end is Halibrand quick change straddle mount.

cial, which comes from El Monte, California, and is the product of the combined talents and resources of the mechanic-driver team of Bob Armstrong and Maurice Richer.

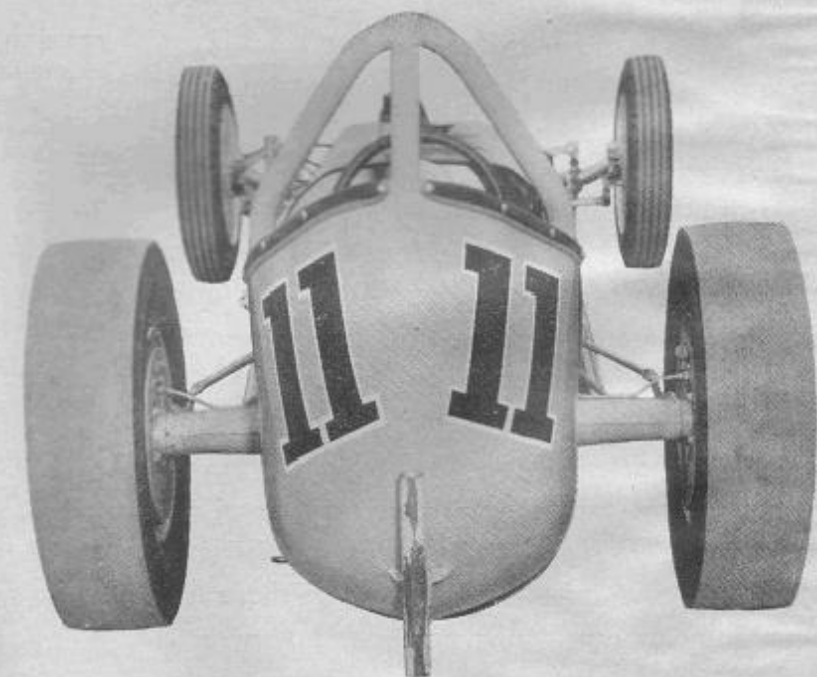
Proof that the car is a good one is "world's championship" collected at the Long Beach drag strip a little more than a year ago.

One major change has occurred to the car since the accompanying photos were taken. The 1951 Chrysler engine has recently been replaced by a 1957 Chrysler V-8—and the elimination of the transmission. (The new setup reportedly delivers nearly 500 hp on fuel from its 392 cubic inches. Both bore and stroke are stock. The wallop to the rear wheels is now delivered direct, driving through a multiple-disk Albros clutch.)

The first engine, and the one shown here, was a real corker, however. Best elapsed time in the quarter-mile was 9.42 seconds—and top time was 155.40 mph. All this was registered in a run at Bakersfield. Since then the revised regulations in effect at some strips have required running on gas, and speeds have been reduced to 136 mph. It is interesting to note that with the new engine, and at strips where super fuels still are allowed, the top speed so far has been 159.17 and elapsed time 9.50 seconds, a hair slower than the preceding V-8. But times change and this probably will, too. •



CLOSE INSPECTION is made by mechanic Bob Armstrong, of Chrysler's combustion chambers after a run. Extremely high humidity, that day, forced removal of velocity stacks from Hilborn fuel injection system and added to speed.



SLICKS ON REAR, eight inch wide pure gum rubber and inflated to only 20 psi, provide terrific traction during initial take-off. Tail section of dragster is fiberglass while all other body panels are formed of aluminum. Dzus fasteners are used to secure the panels and make them easily removable.