

Eyerly Crosley Special

Not all of the odd-looking little specials of the day came from British Columbia. The most successful and best remembered of them all came from Salem, Oregon. It is, of course, the Eyerly Crosley Special. Almost unbeatable on the West Coast in 1950s H modified races, the car was the handiwork of its driver, Harry Eyerly, a boat racer who decided that the Crosley marine engine he was using on the water would work equally well at propelling a special on land. He was right: the 750cc engine could make the car go amazingly fast with a claimed top speed of 118 mph, helped no doubt by the fact that the whole thing weighed in at 750 lbs, or a c.c. for every pound! Harry fabricated the special from simple steel tubing chassis and Crosley internal parts, and got the weight so low by drilling out every conceivable piece of metal. It was 82 inches long and stood several inches shorter than a diminutive MGTD. Despite the drilled-out chassis and an engine that had to be revved to the max during racing, the car and Harry enjoyed a very long and trouble-free career. Like the Formula Threes, the little special could really annoy bigger-bore cars by showing them up on tight tricky courses where Harry showed no respect—or fear. One of his secrets was cornering using his e-brake, the car was famous for its abrupt 90-degree turns. The Eyerly Special is still around and at late reports was on display at the Oregon Museum of Speed,