

Lister-Chevs, Knobbly & Costin

Brian Lister came of age in an engineering family during the immediate post-war years and his apprenticeship coincided with a burgeoning interest in motor sport. This led to the completion of the first Lister in 1955, a cycle-fendered MG-powered car. Over the next two years early Listers used various small-bore English engines with some success. Next came the full-bodied "Knobbly" which raced in England with a Jaguar 6 engine and proved suitable for a Chevy V-8. This series of Listers—18 were made—were smoother looking than their predecessors, although the alloy body was humped to cover the engine and various components of the tube frame chassis. This feature gave it the nickname "Knobbly." The car was successful in the 1957 season, and

Frank Costin, a famed aerodynamicist was employed to make more streamlined design. He succeeded although to some eyes the resulting body style looks as bulbous as the Knobbly, but in a different way.

During this time Tom Carstens had sold the rather disappointing HWM-Chev hybrid, but he was willing to continue his fascination with English bodies and American V-8 power when a 266-based Chevy-powered Lister was offered to him by no less than a team of Jim Hall and Carroll Shelby, later modified further by Vic Edelbrock. The car ran with success and won the 1958 Forest Festival feature in an epic race with Dr. Becker's Ferrari. Since the new Costin-Lister was available Carstens soon switched to that model, using a new 283 Chevy engine also race prepared by Edelbrock to 338cc. The six-carburetor Costin proved to be troublesome even with Dave Fogg and the rest of Tom's usual crew on hand and not much faster than the Knobbly. Tom did manage to win some races with the car but could not stay with the Ferraris and Lotus 15s of the day in the big feature races. Lew Florence eventually bought and raced the car.

The Knobbly was destroyed in a fire, while the Costin Lister is still active in vintage racing circles today and is a crowd favorite everywhere.