

FWD INDIANAPOLIS 500 RACER BRING BACK TO CLINTONVILLE FUNDRAISER

In the past 8 years, the 78-year-old FWD Seagrave Museum has become phenomenally successful, mainly because of wonderful volunteers.

BUT, 45 years ago, the jewel of the collection, the famous FWD Indianapolis 500 Racer, which placed 4th in 1936, got away.

Suddenly we have learned it will be sold at auction on March 5. We feel we HAVE to at least make a serious attempt to get it back. By networking with you and everyone of the greater Clintonville FWD Seagrave world, we believe it can be brought home again.

As of February 14, over \$700,000 in commitments have been received! If you will make a commitment, please email: "If the FWD Seagrave Museum is the successful bidder, I _____ commit \$_____ for the purchase of the FWD INDY 500 Racer." Please email your commitment to:
fwdseagravemuseum@gmail.com

As of February 14, the FWD Seagrave Museum has received over \$50,000 for the purchase of the Racer. If you prefer to donate up front, please mail your donation to: FWD Seagrave Museum
P.O. Box 104
Clintonville, WI 54929

Questions? Mark Thomas 248 408-7393

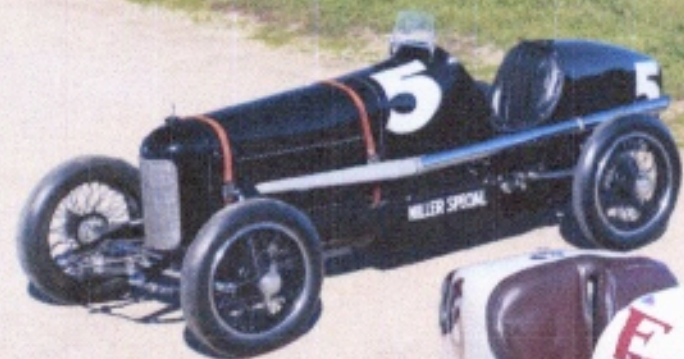
Terry Lorge 715 250-0205

THANK YOU!

Information from the Auction Catalogue is attached. Scroll down. All donors who help make this happen will be recognized.

Amelia Island Auctions

THURSDAY MARCH 5 AT 3PM



GOODING CHRISTIE'S

1932 MILLER FWD SPECIAL

SELECTIONS FROM THE JOHN PRICE MUSEUM OF SPEED

CHASSIS NO. 02

\$2,000,000-\$3,000,000

Over the course of his career, Harry A. Miller – arguably America’s most brilliant and influential racing car constructor – produced some of the most advanced competition machines of the early 20th century. His work evolved steadily, moving from early rear-wheel-drive designs to front-wheel-drive masterpieces that redefined American championship racing. The logical culmination of this progression – the unification of front- and rear-wheel drive in a single chassis – was clear to Miller long before circumstances allowed him to attempt it. That attempt would come at the most precarious moment of his career and would result in one of the most daring, complex, and historically important American racing cars ever built: the Miller Four-Wheel-Drive (FWD) Special.

By 1931, Miller’s once-dominant position in American racing was eroding under financial strain. Credit was scarce in the depths of the Great Depression, racing budgets were contracting, and orders for new cars had slowed dramatically. Yet rather than retreat into conservatism, Miller responded with characteristic audacity. He chose innovation over survival tactics, doubling down on his lifelong quest to engineer what he believed would be the ultimate racing car.

Fresh from victory at the 1931 Indianapolis 500, Miller traveled to Clintonville, Wisconsin, to meet with executives of the Four Wheel Drive Auto Company, a firm founded in 1909 and renowned for its rugged all-wheel-drive trucks. FWD’s products had proven invaluable in military service, logging, oil fields,

HIGHLIGHTS

Among the Most Significant Surviving Miller Automobiles

The Only Remaining Example of the Groundbreaking Four-Wheel-Drive Racer
Six-Time Indianapolis 500 Entrant; Placed 4th in 1936 with Mauri Rose

Raced by Bill Milliken at Pikes Peak, Watkins Glen, and Mt. Equinox Between
1948 and 1951

Provenance Includes Collectors Buck Boudeman, Bob Rubin, and Dean Butler
Extensively Chronicled in Griffith Borgeson’s Book, *The Last Great Miller*

SPECIFICATIONS

255 CID DOHC Inline 4-Cylinder Engine

Two Winfield Updraft Carburetors

Estimated 250 BHP at 5,000 RPM

3-Speed Manual Gearbox

4-Wheel Mechanical Drum Brakes

4-Wheel Independent Suspension

*Please note that this vehicle is sold on a Bill of Sale.



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PROVENANCE

Four Wheel Drive Auto Company, Clintonville, Wisconsin (acquired new in 1932)

Robert J. "Buck" Boudeman, Richland, Michigan (acquired from the above by 1984)

Robert "Bob" Rubin, New York City, New York (acquired from the above in 1989)

E. Dean Butler, Cincinnati, Ohio (acquired from the above in 1995)

John Price (acquired from the above in 2008)

and heavy construction – applications far removed from the glamour of motor racing. Miller proposed a radical new direction: a four-wheel-drive racing car that would demonstrate the performance advantages of FWD's lockable center differential at sustained high speed. As Miller saw it, this was not merely a technical exercise, but a public demonstration that four-wheel drive was not limited to off-road use.

Miller's proposition was compelling. What better way to place the FWD name before the public than through association with a cutting-edge Indianapolis race car? FWD agreed to fund the project and sponsor its entry at the 1932 Indianapolis 500. With backing secured, Miller returned to California to develop what he intended to be the most advanced racing machine yet built in America.

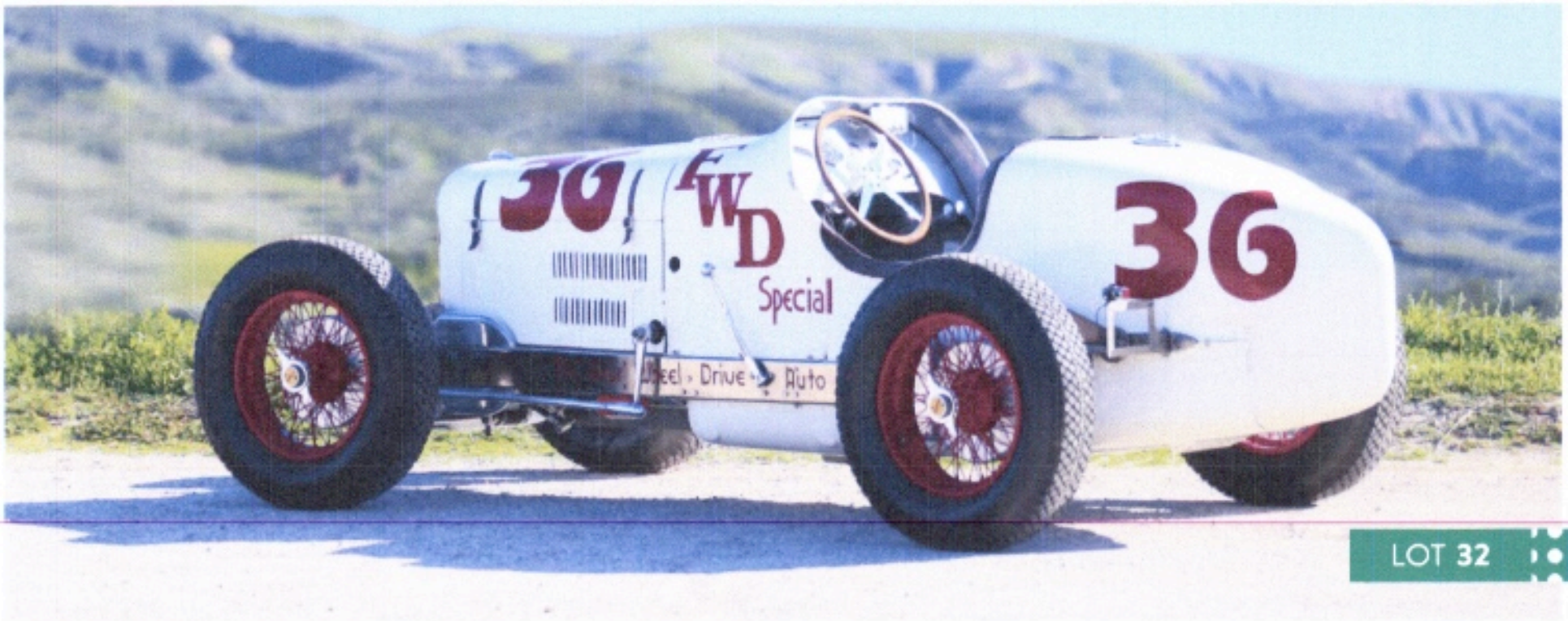
The resulting design was extraordinary. Compact, densely engineered, and years ahead of its contemporaries, the Miller FWD Special featured full four-wheel drive and independent suspension, powered initially by Miller's proven 308 cid, four-cam V-8. The chassis had been laid out with characteristic foresight to accept either the V-8 or Miller's forthcoming 255 cid four-cylinder engine, though the latter was not ready in time for the car's debut. In concept and execution, the Miller stood alongside the contemporary Bugatti Type 53 as one of the world's first serious four-wheel-drive Grand Prix machines, though

the American car would prove the more competitive, if equally demanding.

Two examples were completed just in time for the 1932 Indianapolis 500, with this car finished in "light chrome yellow" at FWD's request. The company's president, Walter A. Olen, selected the name by which the car would become known: the Miller FWD Special. FWD's car, chassis 02, was assigned to board-track star Bob McDonough for his anticipated return to Indianapolis, while Miller retained the sister car, chassis 01, for dirt-track ace Gus Schrader.

In practice and qualifying, the promise of the new Millers was unmistakable. Both were among the fastest cars in the field, immediately validating Miller's belief in the advantages of four-wheel drive. Sadly, the race itself proved brief. Within minutes of the start, both cars retired with mechanical issues – inevitable teething problems for such a radical design. The disappointment was acute, and the resulting financial consequences severe. It has often been said that the four-wheel-drive project hastened Miller's bankruptcy later that year, consuming resources his company could no longer spare.

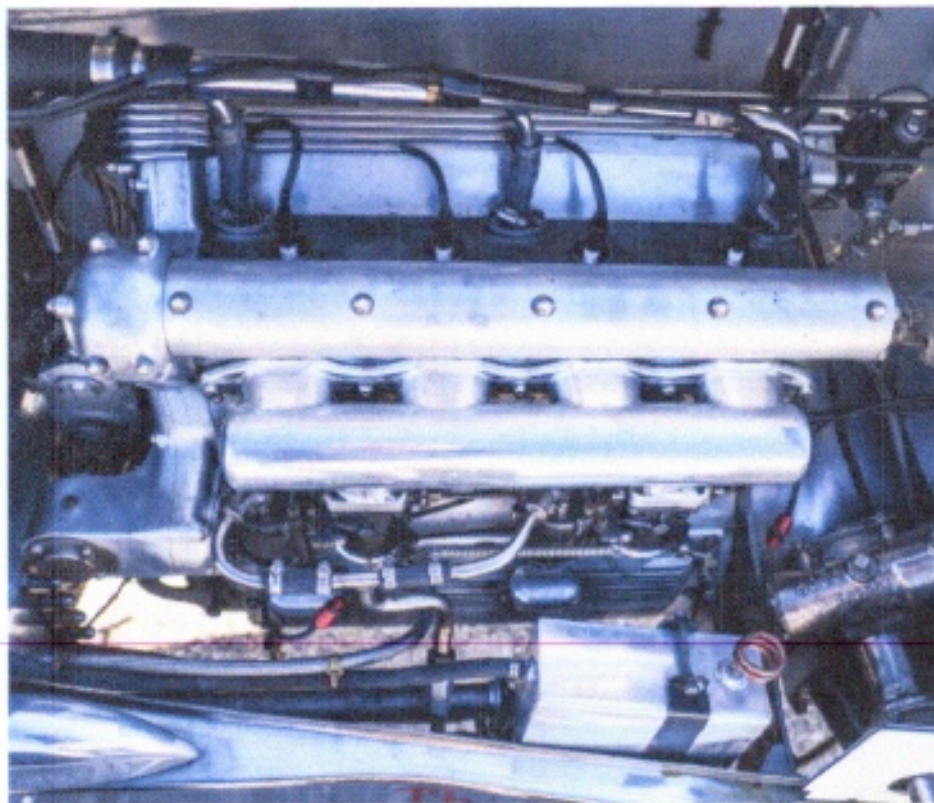
After the race, chassis 02 was shipped to Wisconsin, where it was repaired and updated under the direction of FWD engineer H.B. Dodge, with advice from Miller himself. The objective was straightforward: to eliminate the weaknesses



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RACE HIGHLIGHTS

Indianapolis 500, 1932, McDonough, No. 58 (DNF)
Indianapolis 500, 1933, Brisko, No. 58 (DNF)
Indianapolis 500, 1934, Brisko/Mays, No. 32 (9th)
Indianapolis 500, 1935, Rose, No. 2 (DNF)
Indianapolis 500, 1936, Rose, No. 36 (4th)
Indianapolis 500, 1937, Willman, No. 26 (DNF)
Pikes Peak International Hill Climb, 1948, Milliken, No. 26 (DNF)



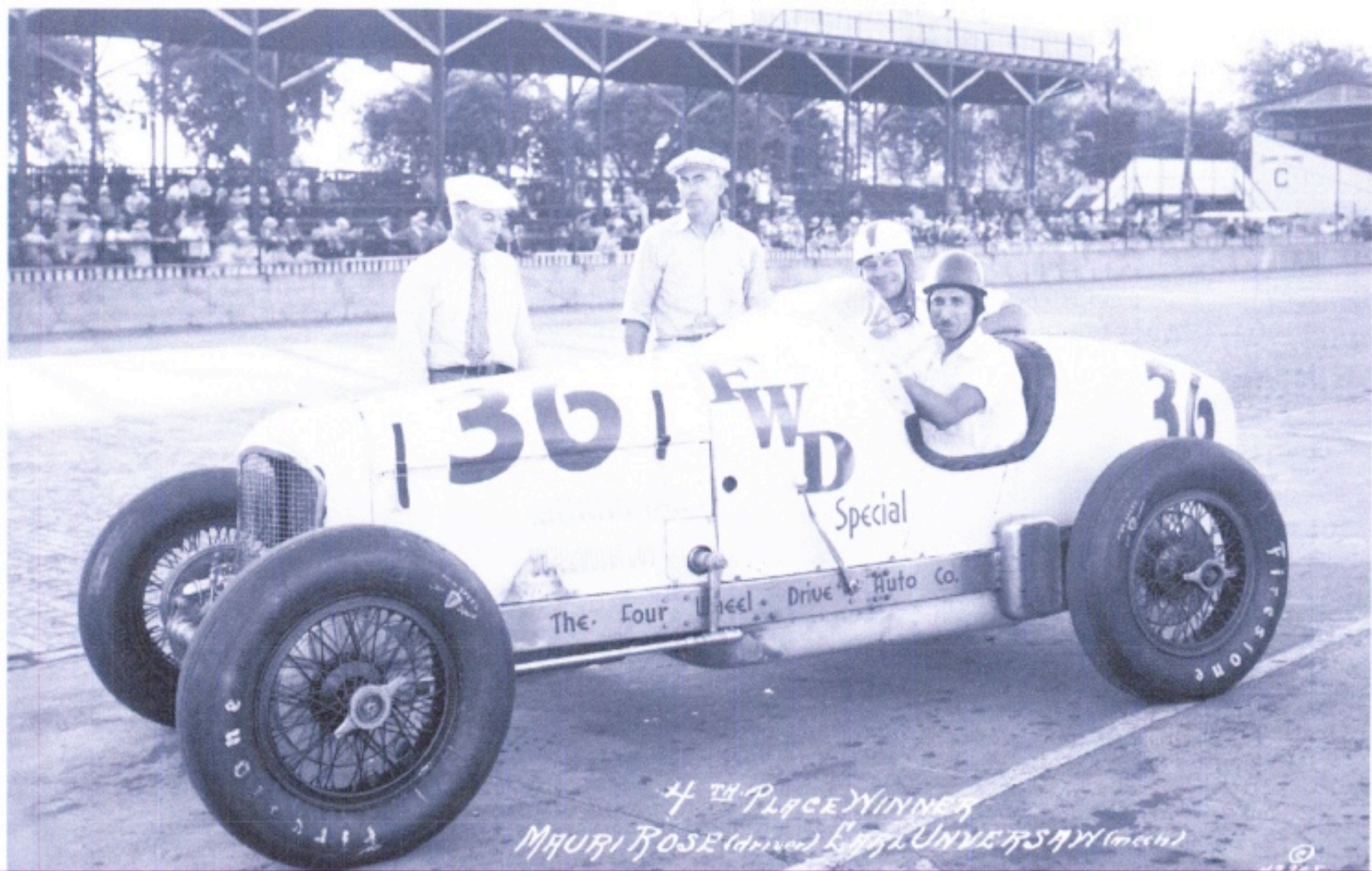
Watkins Glen Grand Prix, 1949, Milliken (DNF)
Mt. Equinox Hill Climb, Vermont, 1950, Milliken (Fastest Time, Course Record)
Edenvale Airport, Canada, May 1952, Milliken (1st in Heat One, 2nd in Heat Two)
Mt. Equinox Hill Climb, Vermont, June 1952, Milliken (2nd)
Burke Mountain Hill Climb, Vermont, July 1952, Milliken (DNF)
Glenwood Hill Climb, New York, May 1953, Milliken (4th)
Niagara Falls Speed Trials, Canada, September 1953, Milliken

revealed at Indianapolis and unlock the car's potential. The work proved effective. Returning to the Speedway for the 1933 Indianapolis 500 with driver Frank Brisko, chassis 02 qualified second fastest at 118.388 mph. Once again, however, reliability intervened, as main bearing trouble led to an early retirement.

Determined to persevere, Brisko undertook a significant mechanical revision. After failed efforts to repair the 308 V-8, he constructed a Miller 255 four-cylinder engine in FWD's own shops. Castings were obtained from Dick Loynes, who by that time owned most of Miller's patterns and drawings, with moving parts manufactured by Offenhauser. The new engine proved an ideal fit, just as Miller had intended when designing the chassis.

With the four-cylinder installed, the Miller FWD Special finally delivered on its promise. At the 1934 Indianapolis 500, Brisko qualified 4th fastest and led the race for more than 60 laps. Ultimately, extended pit stops relegated him to 9th Place at the finish, but the performance demonstrated conclusively that the four-wheel-drive Miller was a genuine contender.

For 1935 and 1936, FWD contracted the accomplished Mauri Rose to drive the car at Indianapolis. Mechanical issues again intervened in 1935, but in 1936 the Miller achieved its best-ever result at the Speedway, finishing 4th. In 1937, FWD



4TH PLACE WINNER
MAURI ROSE (driver) LARRY UNVETSAW (mech)
Indianapolis Motor Speedway 1936

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EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

Colorado Grand, 1996

Goodwood Festival of Speed, 1997

Louis Vuitton Classic at the Hurlingham Club, London, 1998 (Rolls-Royce Award for Engineering)

VSCC Donington, England, 1998

Goodwood Festival of Speed, 1998

Watkins Glen 50th Anniversary Celebration, 1998

Miller Reunion at the Milwaukee Mile, Wisconsin, 1999

Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, 2013

enlisted Pete DePaolo to manage the program, with Tony Willman driving. In its final Indy appearance, the engine threw a rod, bringing the car's championship racing career to an end.

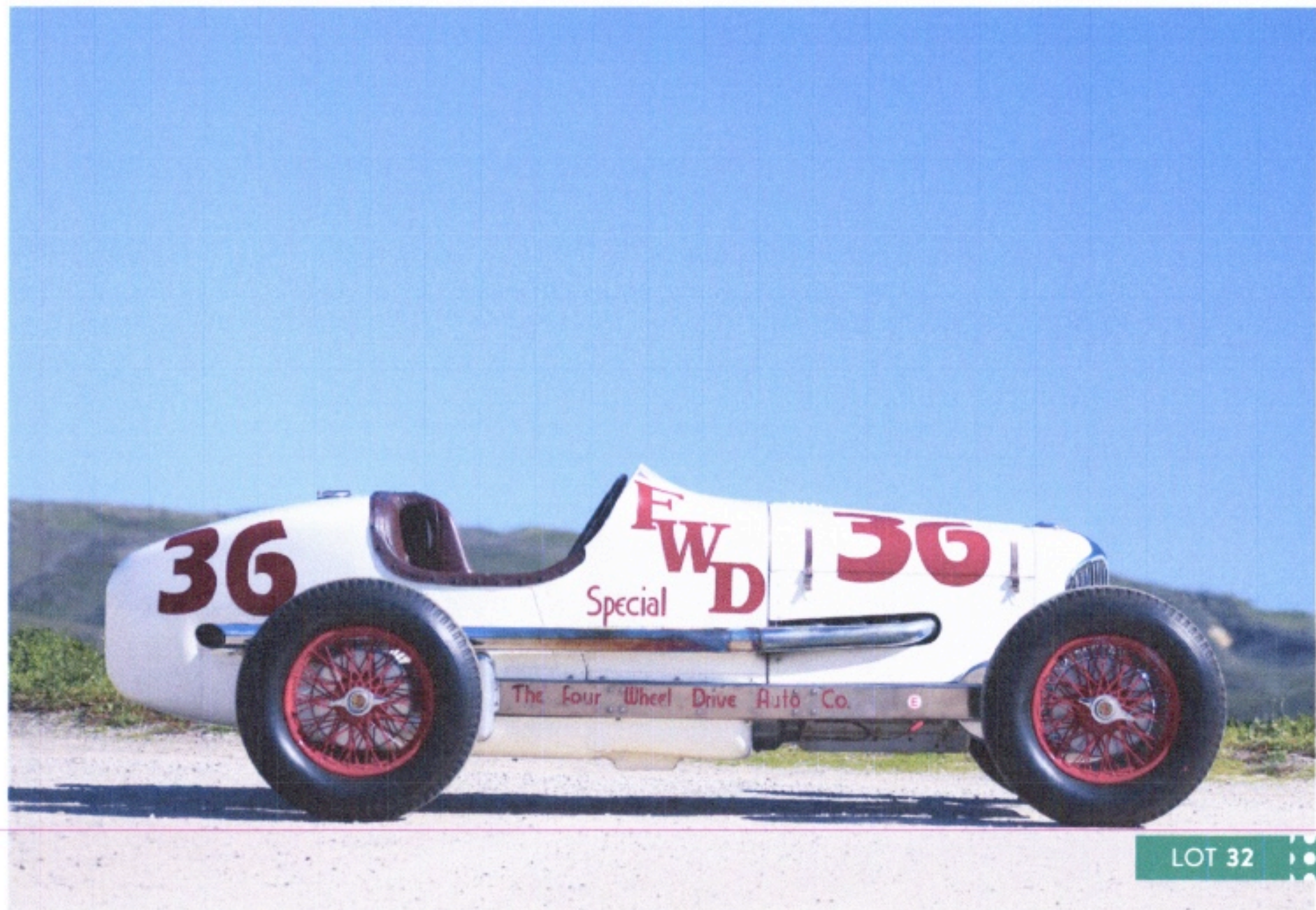
Following the 1937 race, the Miller FWD Special was displayed at the FWD Company Museum, where it remained until 1948. That year, it was loaned to William F. Milliken Jr., a Cornell engineer who would later become one of the world's foremost authorities on race car handling and the author of the seminal *Race Car Vehicle Dynamics*. Milliken campaigned the Miller extensively, entering it in a remarkable range of events including the Pikes Peak and Mount Equinox Hill Climbs, the Watkins Glen Grand Prix, and numerous SCCA events. In 1951, Milliken returned the car to the FWD Museum, where it continued to be preserved and cherished for the next two decades.

In the 1970s, noted Michigan-based collector Robert "Buck" Boudeman became enamored with Miller automobiles and began a determined effort to acquire the FWD Special. As he later recalled, "When I learned that the car was there, I started making inquiries at the Four Wheel Drive Auto Company plant. I called all the way up the chain of command until I finally got to the president of the place. He said, 'Son, the only way you're ever going to get that car is by buying this company.'" After years of refusal, circumstances finally changed

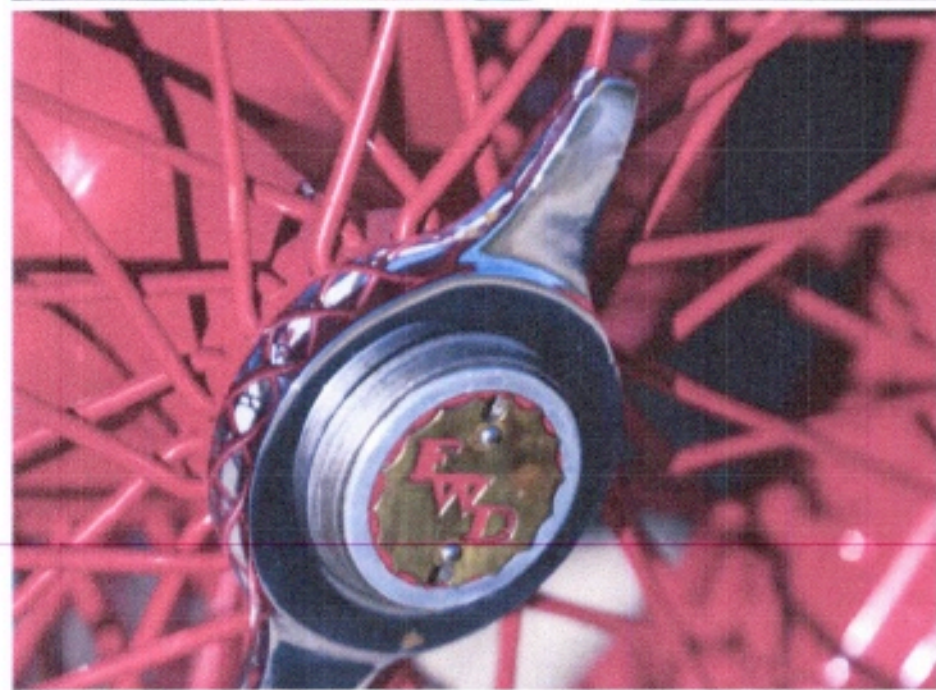
when FWD merged with fire apparatus manufacturer Seagrave. Boudeman seized the opportunity, acquiring the historic, single-owner Miller along with the complete factory file on the racing program, including correspondence and records dating back to new.

The car proved remarkably intact. With minimal effort, Boudeman returned it to running order, and it remained in his collection until 1989, when it was sold to another prominent Miller enthusiast, New York collector Robert Rubin. Rubin, whose collection included exceptional Maseratis, Bugattis, and Ferraris, also owned one of the most celebrated Millers, the 91 Front Drive Packard Cable Special. Of the FWD Special, Rubin remarked, "Having communed with the 91, I was ready to plunk down another seven-figure sum for such an important and interesting machine. That archive of papers was a potent component of the car's attraction for me. I doubt that such complete documentation of a single race car exists outside of the Mercedes-Benz factory. If there."

The car's extraordinary documentation inspired the publication of *The Last Great Miller*, the final work of acclaimed automotive historian Griffith Borgeson. In 1994, Rubin commissioned a comprehensive restoration by Leydon Restorations of Lahaska, Pennsylvania. When Leydon received the car, it remained largely as returned by Milliken in 1951, allowing for an accurate restoration without



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FEATURED MEDIA

The Illustrated History of the Indianapolis 500: 1911-1994, by Jack C. Fox and Bob Mount

The Indianapolis 500: The Story of the Motor Speedway, by Brock Yates

The Last Great Miller: The Four Wheel Drive Indy Car, by Griffith Borgeson

The Miller Dynasty, by Mark L. Dees

compromise. The car was completely disassembled and rebuilt to the highest standard, prepared not merely for display but for active use.

During the restoration, Rubin sold the car to fellow Miller devotee Dean Butler, who saw the project through to completion. The Miller's post-restoration debut was not at a race, but at the 1996 Colorado Grand, a 1,000-mile tour through the Rocky Mountains, which it completed without fault – a remarkable testament to Miller's engineering and Leydon's workmanship. Soon after, the car was demonstrated at Bridgehampton, driven by both Bill Milliken and vintage racer Mark Gillies, who declared, "I could beat Alfa Monzas with this."

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the Miller FWD Special appeared at major historic events including the Goodwood Festival of Speed, the Louis Vuitton Classic, and the Watkins Glen 50th Anniversary Celebration. John Price, a dedicated collector of Miller race cars and American racing history, has owned the car since 2008. Maintained in his private museum, it has made select public appearances, including the 2013 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, where it was featured in a special class honoring the legacy of Harry Miller.

At the height of the Great Depression, when prudence would have counseled restraint, Harry A. Miller chose audacity. His Four-Wheel-Drive Special stands

today as one of the most courageous – and costly – acts of defiance in American racing history. It represents both the summit of Miller's engineering ambition and the moment when his vision outpaced circumstance. Among the precious few intact and well-documented Miller automobiles in existence, chassis 02 endures as one of the last great expressions of a genius who refused to surrender to his times.



1932 MILLER FWD SPECIAL | LOT 32