Half-Scale Model T Built From Scratch

"Whenever I take it to antique tractor shows, people often ask me where I bought it," says Dale Lemmerman, Wyoming, Minn., who built a 1/2-scale Model T car from scratch that's powered by a Honda 5 hp gas engine.

The car measures 70 in. long by 32 in. wide and rides on 12-in. high wheels equipped with wooden spokes. The body is made from 18-ga. sheet metal and is painted black, while the spokes are painted red. To make the wheels he cut all the spokes out of a pair of 16-in. bicycle wheel rims and made a hub for each wheel, then attached wooden spokes to each hub. The front axle was made from 1-in. sq. tubing, while the rear axle was made from 1-in. dia. round tubing. The differential was designed for a go-cart and was purchased from Northern Hydraulics.

The engine and transmission are located on back of the car. The transmission has two sets of sprockets, with one small sprocket driving another bigger sprocket and a slide between them. There are two forward speeds and one reverse.

The seat is made with foam rubber, tucked and rolled, over a metal frame. A plexiglass windshield protects the driver.

"It took me about seven months to build, but it was worth it," says Lemmerman. "Our grand kids have lots of fun with us driving this car. Top speed is about 15 to 20 mph. It's equipped with a centrifugal clutch so as soon as I step on the gas it goes.

"The headlights are just for looks. I made them out of 4-in. dia. stainless steel mixing bowls. I made small plexiglass lenses for the bowls and rolled a welding bead around the lenses to hold the plexiglass in place. Then I mounted a small light bulb in each bowl."

Half-scale Model T car is powered by a Honda 5 hp gas engine. "Our grandkids have lots of fun with us driving this car," says Dale Lemmerman. "Top speed is about 15 to 20 mph."

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1901 Oldsmobile Replica Took 1,000 Hours To Build

Allen Turner, spent about 1,000 hours building a 2/3-scale replica of the 1901 Oldsmobile, one of the first horseless carriages.

He started with nothing but photos and dimensions of the car. While it's not an exact replica, Turner says that cosmetically, it's almost identical. Using wood and steel, he made every part of the basic automobile except the wheels, horn, transmission and engine. "I started with nothing and made all the parts, from the axles to the springs, hubs, frame, body, and seat," he says.

The body is made from metal and the seat is made from wood, with hard foam laid over it. The body is painted black and the seat red.

The original car featured a big, heavy "hit and miss" gasoline engine that had to be cranked. Turner decided on a 7 hp lawn mower engine with electric start. The engine belt-drives the car's rear axle. The series of pulleys reduce engine rpm's from 3,000 down to 26.

The car rides on four 20-in. bicycle wheels, which are only 2 in. smaller than the wheels used on the original car. It has tiller steering.

"As far as I know the Oldsmobile was the first mass produced car ever made. It was quite a little car," says Turner. "They were made from 1901 to 1908, and the design stayed almost identical throughout that period. There were between 12,000 and 13,000 of them made," he notes.

The 1901 Oldsmobile was one of the first horseless carriages. Allen Turner of Motello, Wis., built this 2/3-scale replica. He started with nothing but photos and dimensions of the car.

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Home-Built Replica Of "World's First Car"

According to most historians, the world's first commercial car was built in Germany in 1886. It was a 3-wheeled model called the Benz. Jerry Becker of Algona, Iowa, built a full-scale working replica of it entirely from scratch.

The 3-wheeled car is equipped with a pair of 41-in. rear wheels and a 29-in. caster wheel on front. It has a vertical tiller steering rod and a two-person upholstered seat on an oak platform.

"It's almost identical to the original," says Becker. "It generates a lot of interest whenever I drive it in parades or show it anywhere. Over the years I've won a shelf full of trophies which I keep in my garage."

The original Benz was built by Carl Benz in 1886 and was a predecessor of the famous Mercedes Benz car. Benz produced several car models, and one of them can still be found in a museum in Stuttgart, Germany. It was the first car ever equipped with an internal combustion engine – a 4-stroke model not all that different from today's engines.

Becker's car, however, has a "fake" 4-stroke engine that looks like the real thing. The car is actually powered by a 7 hp Briggs and Stratton engine. The engine belt-drives a hydrostatic transmission out of an old riding mower and also chain-drives the car's rear wheels. The engine also belt-drives a 2-ft. dia. flywheel that's built into the fake engine and causes a crankshaft to turn. "You can look inside the fake engine and see a piston going back and forth," says Becker.

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Jerry Becker built this full-scale working replica of a 3-wheeled Benz car built in Germany in 1886.

Horseless Carriage Has Model T Parts

Marvel Nelson recently built this horseless carriage out of some Ford Model T parts. The car is powered by a 2-cyl. engine and has a body made from red oak, with pin striping and a 3-bow canopy. There are two homemade kerosene head lights on front. The rig can go as slow as 2 mph in first gear. Top speed is 30 mph.

"I enjoy driving it in parades and at antique shows. It'll carry two adults quite comfortably," says Nelson.

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"Built-From-Scratch" Horseless Carriage

"I've always had an interest in building things but this project was special," says Dennis Gimberline about his home-built horseless carriage. The carriage sports a 12 hp Briggs & Stratton engine with a hydrostat rear end. The frame was built with 1-in. sq. tubing, and the steering gears are from a Deere riding mower. The shift is electrical using a 12-volt actuator and a two-way electric switch.

"I followed some plans but sized things differently so I could transport it in my truck," says Gimberline.

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