

Tenth Annual NTMC

By Wayne Monger

Another FRRS-sponsored National Track Motorcar Championship (NTMC) has successfully passed into the history books. The 1993 version, the 10th annual operation of this event, was held on Saturday, August 7, 1993. This year's turnout of independent motorcar owners and operators totaled just 19, down from the 32 participants in 1992. Though there are now over 400 individual motorcar owners in the West alone and the NTMC is the longest-running organized event for owners of railroad motorcars (speeders) in the Western U.S., this year's decrease in participation can be linked directly to the huge success of recently formed motorcar owner's groups that are arranging frequent multi-day group motorcar excursions on western shortline railroads plus the increasing "political" pressure on individual motorcar owners from some of these groups not to participate in such public "performance events" as the NTMC at Portola. Also contributing to the decrease in the total number of participants in 1993 was the fact that such past NTMC participants as Vic Neves, Gary Cousin, Pat Cousin and Wayne Monger were instead on the sidelines this year helping to operate the event. A few FRRS members and NTMC participants have suggested that for 1994, the format of this motorcar event should be expanded from just the "motorcar races" to include such competitions as "best motorcar restoration job," "ugliest motorcar," and a "safety skills contest" in order to increase participation.

The format for this year's event remained the same as for the past nine NTMCs, except that this year each participant was given just two chances instead of the usual three to run over the 300-meter (976 foot) course of museum trackage for a best time. And like the 1992 NTMC, motorcar owners were able to participate in one of six different classifications. Overall, thanks to the shortened format, the entire event took just under three hours to complete. With the awards ceremony completed inside the enginehouse by 3:30 PM, the extra time allowed for dozens of participants and spectators alike to enjoy a leisurely post-race potluck barbecue at the museum picnic area. Several of the motorcar owners continued running their motorcars on the museum trackage, providing free rides to the visiting public throughout the afternoon.

Like all other events at the Portola Railroad Museum, the annual success of the NTMC is thanks to the efforts of many of the FRRS volunteers. This year's event began months before early in 1993 with FRRS directors Vic Neves and Wayne Monger plus FRRS member Bill Evans taking an active role in smoothing out concerns that the motorcar owner organizations had on the format of the NTMC, as well as handling the negotiations that saw the establishment of the annual FRRS-sponsored motorcar excursion on the Almanor Railroad (Collins Pine Company) as a completely separate event for insurance purposes. Ron Butler provided assistance once again in providing the mailing list to get entry forms out to all possible participants. Lynda Monger also provided invaluable assistance in making sure that the awards were ordered in time and making sure that her husband kept up with all of the associated correspondence. At the museum, the fine skills of Steve Habeck, Gordon Wollesen, Norm Holmes and the rest of the operating department made sure that all of the necessary trackage at the museum was free of rail equipment for the weekend. FRRS members Vic Neves, Errol Spangler, Mardi Langdon, Bill Evans, Terry Decottignies, Bob Lindley, David Dewey, Linda Dewey and Justin Brewer all helped with getting the museum grounds ready in the days before the NTMC. (P.S. If anyone remembers where the "Start Line," "Finish Line," and "Welcome Race Fans" banners were placed during the Fall 1993 cleanup, please contact Wayne Monger!)

Each NTMC operates smoothly due to the excellent collection of FRRS volunteers that handle all of the jobs for this

event. Celebrating his tenth year at the same job, FRRS treasurer Gordon Wollesen handled the unpleasant task of Official Timer at the Finish Line. This year, Mark French and Dave Anderson mastered the very loud task of Starting Line Judges. Pat Cousin and Linda Dewey took care of recording the times of each participant on the scoreboard. Handling the unglamorous job of switch tender was Justin Brewer. The main announcing chore was done by Wayne Monger, with "color" commentary and sound effects provided by our own Portola radio DJ's "Chuck Roast" and "Chili Burger" (a.k.a. Gary Cousin and Vic Neves). Many other FRRS members assisted with crowd control and other behind-the-scenes-jobs. All are hereby thanked for all of their efforts and time in making this event so enjoyable and successful for visitors and participants alike.

For the fifth year in a row, the motorcar events of this weekend did not conclude with the Saturday evening barbecue at the museum picnic area. At 9 AM on Sunday morning, FRRS members and other motorcar owners were lined up outside the main gate of the Collins Pine Company lumber mill at Chester. Here many of the participants from the previous day's NTMC were waiting to unload their motorcars for this 5th Annual FRRS-sponsored Motorcar Excursion of the 13 mile Almanor Railroad. With 13 motorcars split into two separate groups under the command of Vic Neves, David Dewey, Hank Stiles and Wayne Monger, nearly 50 people had the opportunity to ride once, twice or even three times over this remnant of the ex-Red River Lumber Company electrified mainline between Chester and the UP connection at Clear Creek Junction. Twice, the two groups of motorcars met at Kelly siding near the middle of the railroad. Incredibly, the guys powering the six-person rail bike from Marin County made one full round trip over the Almanor Railroad with no problems. So pleased is the Collins Pine Company with the FRRS handling of the event, the company management has expressed interest in negotiating with the FRRS on arranging for a series of public excursions over their railroad next year, using some of the larger 6 to 12 person capacity motorcars that we have at the museum. Considering all of the other events that the FRRS is involved in for 1994, this may not take place until 1995.

1993 Results

Class A One cylinder two stroke	2nd Place Walter Ozanick
1st Place David Dewey	3rd Place Dave McClain
2nd Place Joe Nemmer	4th Place Tom Mercer
Class B Two-cylinder two-stroke	5th Place Dale Greenig
1st Place Hank Stiles	Class E Exhibition Class, all cars that do not fall into the above classes.
Class C Two cylinder four stroke, w/steel wheels	Exhibitor #1 Bill Evans
1st Place Steve Alley	Exhibitor #2 Home-built 6 person rail bike. Crew members: Wes Williams, Andy English, Bob Flick, Fred Chattey, Gary Helfrich and Ron Sutphin.
2nd Place Mark Norstad	Class W Women's Exhibition Class
3rd Place Kurt Dietricit	Exhibitor #1 Gayle McClain
4th Place Glenn Hanson	Exhibitor #2 Julie Anderson
5th Place Richard Brickell	
6th Place Terry Decottignies	
7th Place Joe Nemmer	
Class D Two cylinder four stroke, w/rubber tires	
1st Place Gary Boots	

