

This Weird Front-Wheel-Drive Dry Lake Racer Just Popped up for Sale

It's a purpose-built bullet car with nothing but a cockpit and a turbocharged Pontiac motor.



We're not sure where to begin with this one. This car just popped up for sale on [Bring a Trailer](#), and its name is "Something." Seriously. The builders, Jerry Silverstein, Julian Doty, and Arnold Birner, gave it the name after it was built to race in dry lake events in 1962. From the looks of it, we're sure *Something* was built solely to cut through the air at crazy speeds. Raced until 1989 in [SCTA](#) sanctioned events, *Something* is equipped with a turbocharged four-cylinder Pontiac motor, which is attached to a three-speed transaxle that drives the *front* wheels. It's also got a sweet interior with aerospace-style gauges and steering wheel. Other than that, it's pure race car. No airbags, mirrors, or headlights.



"Something," in period. Sidewinder members all. This is one of the teams that Julian Doty, an icon, ran with for years.

The body was "created from a surplus WWII aircraft drop tank, which has been augmented here with an extended tubular frame covered with custom-fabricated panels."

The car hasn't run since it went into storage in 1989, but is complete with its engine and body. The seller says that if restored, it can most certainly compete again in SCTA events. The seller put together a [display frame](#) with in-period pictures and time slips, one of which reads a *224.7 mph* run in 1986.

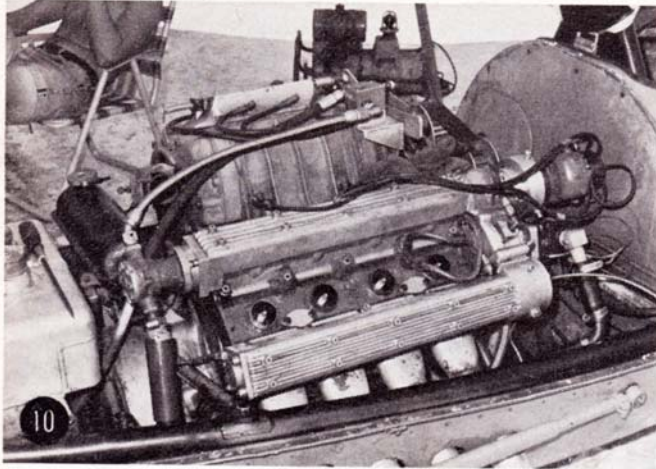
The car is up for auction on [BaT](#), with 7 days remaining. With a current high bid of only \$500, we can't really find a downside to owning this unique piece of racing history.

Photos below are of an earlier iteration of the car 1969 era at Bonneville as it appears in a B&W photo mention in the Nov 1969 issue of HRM
Smaller belly tank chassis w/ rear wheel drive.

According to Rod Hynes Facebook page

"Twin-cam Pontiac 4-cylinder engine in the Baldwin & Sommerfeld Lakester. The DOHC head was designed by the talented machinist and pattern maker, Arnold J. Birner."





10. This pepper-tree Offy, a 181-inch blown Pontiac 4-holer with a DOHC head by Arnold Birner, cranked on a 200.44-mph run.

Jerry Silberstein, out of Los Angeles, checks out his front wheel drive Class E Lakester called "Something" at Speedweek in 1975.

The car was powered by a 180" Pontiac Tempest 4-banger and featured one of Arnold Birner's special DOHC heads. The record stood at 221.819 mph and was set by Timmy Rochlitzer's True Radius Bending Special way back in 1966. After spending most of the week helping the Baldwin-Summerfeld-Williams team run their tank with the same basic engine specs to a speed of 219.11 mph, Jerry could only manage a best of 120.80 mph.

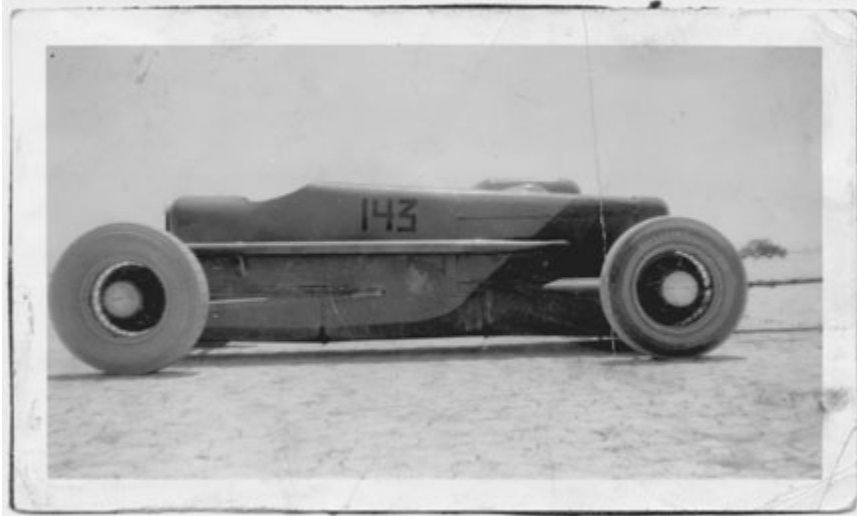
The car and engine still exist today ('12) but in different locations. On the left is Kehoe-McKinney-Sundowner Vette number 42 that still runs today ('12). At this meet it ran 166.66 mph on a 168.897 mph record.



In years prior [Arnold Birner](#) ran this 4-port Riley powered rig at the lakes in 1941.

Arnold Birner was a neighbor of John Athan and owned a modified in the early Forties and a belly tank after the war. He was photographed at Harper with this Riley four-port roadster that came before either of them. When the war ended, Arnold started working as a pattern maker for Ed Donovan, who continued to build four-bangers. The stylized AJB symbol found on Donovan blocks represents Birner's initials.





Arnold Birner ran this 4-port Riley powered rig at the lakes in 1941. At the July 20 meet it ran 118.42 mph. Arnold went on to become a pattern maker and did all the engine blocks for Donovan Engineering including his favorite the D, an aluminum version of Henry Ford's old 4-banger. Jim Miller Collection.