

## Four Wheels - Box car racing aprox 1930's

Category: OLD COLORADO CITY - Life and Lore

Published: Sunday, 11 January 2009 17:36

Written by Ira Current

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**(photo) Race car drivers and their attendants are ready for the faster speeds attained coasting down Ridge Road from Garden of the Gods.**



## FOUR WHEELS



**Photos by Ira Current**

**(photo) A "Four Wheels" vehicle is gaining speed as it races down the slope of Ridge Road.**

All that was required were four wheels. They could be salvaged from a retired baby buggy, an old coaster wagon, a small bicycle, or even from a motorcycle. And a pair of metal axles of appropriate diameter was also required. Other than that a good stiff board for a chassis, other pieces for a seat and simulated radiator. The final touch was a piece of sheet metal to serve as the fake hood to end up with our representation of the fast, powerful automobiles that raced to the summit of Pikes Peak every Labor Day.

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Steering was accomplished by mounting the axle and wheels on a wooden support. The rear axle was pinned at the center, with a rope loop tied to its ends and leading to the hands of the driver. A real steering wheel with a control link mimicking that of the Ford Model T was beyond the capability of the racers down White Loaf Hill.

Our hill was at the end of Thirty-second Street in the part of Colorado City that had become West Colorado Springs. The almost barren hill had at times been pasture land and still maintained a horse or two. It served as the material from which was carved our highway. It ran, with curves and rises and falls, from near the top of the hill to the bottom, at the end of the street.



From the summit the drivers were dispatched by a flag drop one at a time. Steeper grades leading to some of the switchbacks provided accelerated speeds requiring considerable skill on the part of the drivers. Some parts of the road held horse droppings, other parts were just rough. There were stalls and accidents on some of the curves, yet some of the vehicles were not swift enough to cover the flat parts of the trail.

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The timer held a watch that was started and stopped by observing flag drops at start and finish. The winners were really faster than many of the other contestants. There were minor accidents and bloody injuries, yet no first aid stations.



In time the home movie camera was brought out to make a film. Then the accidents became staged. The fast cars were documented as well as those that couldn't make it. In the end, the White Loaf Hill races provided the film that the world dared us to make.

Then there had to be speed. The race drivers migrated to the Ridge Road leading to the Garden of the Gods. This steep straight stretch of road accelerated the vehicles to a breath taking speed as the drivers headed into Pikes Peak Avenue. The only protection from disaster was provided by the young "Officials" who did their best to stop traffic as the racers veered onto the highway.

Our race track lasted a few years, and in one of the "Chug Wagon" races sponsored by the Associated Business Men of West Colorado Springs, brother Lynn was the winner in a field of 65.

The Pikes Peak Hill Climb was nothing compared to the daredevils who raced White Loaf Hill. This steep straight stretch of road accelerated the vehicles to a breathtaking speed as the drivers headed into Pikes Peak Avenue.

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**Photo Captions: (top above left) Richard Current negotiates a wide curve on the track at White Loaf Hill. (top above right) Irma, Grace and their mother, Anna Current, in the spectator's stand at the White Loaf Hill racing event. (above left) Ira Current using the first model of a 16mm movie camera to film the action. (above right) The racing crowd on White Loaf Hill. (Everett Decker at left; Richard Current seated second from left.)**