

Part of the young man's collection - l. to r. Alfa Romeo Giulia 1600 Cangaro, Porsche 912, Alfa Romeo GS Zagato, from Italy by Politoys.

## 'Twas the Night Before Christmas...

It was Christmas Eve. The young man had spent some time making absolutely certain that his stocking was in just the right place over the fireplace, before going to bed. He had constantly been telling my wife and myself that, once in bed, he was destined to lie there all night, with eyes open and heart pounding with anticipation. He had attempted, with all of the logic that he could muster, to convince us that it was a complete waste of time for him to go to bed at all this evening. Parental authority had finally prevailed over the young man's logic.

He had celebrated his eighth birthday some four months before. And for the past two Christmases and birthdays had displayed a definite preference for model cars as gifts. He "vroom..vroomed" around the living room with quite a collection by now.

However, the young man's imagination had come to bear on most of the models. Some now had three wheels where before there had been four. Tires had been exchanged between models, and bodywork had been drastically modified in many cases.

But there was one model, if you could call it that, that had not been modified at all. It was an almost shapeless blob of metal, no more than one inch long, with four crudely molded metal wheels. It had come in a packet of cereal or something, and the young man had added it to his collection almost two years ago.

I frankly disliked it. As a model car it bore no resemblance whatsoever to any full-size car that I had ever seen. It had no detailing and no features. It rather reminded me of a disfigured lead fishing weight, with four wheels attached.

My wife didn't like it either. When the young man "vroom.. vroomed" with it around the living room, she complained that it scratched the furniture. Which it did. But in the face of the young man's obvious personal attachment, we could do nothing.

Each year, buying gifts for Christmas seems to take more and more time. This year, at least it seemed to me, we had spent about twice the time that we had spent last year in choosing presents for the young man.

It had almost become a birthday and Christmas ritual by now to buy two or three model cars to add to the young man's collection. And so it was that my wife and I, one Saturday afternoon, found ourselves in a well-stocked model shop. I went to great lengths to explain to her that this year, we would buy him a couple of authentic, highly-detailed "replicas" of classic cars...give him a taste of the history of the automobile, I believe I had intoned.

We spent some time in the store. I was determined to purchase a couple of the finest miniature models that I could find in the place. I carefully checked the detailing and the working features, as well as each model's ability to run in a straight line when pushed. I don't believe that I made "vroom..vroom" noises while enduring this chore, but I do remember that my wife became a little impatient. Unlike myself, to her the automobile is purely a means of transportation, of course.

I finally decided on two models, the first a beautifully finished 1/43 scale die-cast model of the Alfa Romeo Grand Sport Zagato of the thirties; the second a handsome and equally beautiful die-cast model of the 1930 Bugatti Royale Coupe Napoleon. Both models featured doors

that opened, an opening hood, and finely-detailed engine. In short they were superb examples of the die-cast model maker's art.

As we anticipated, the young man was up early on Christmas morning. My wife and I woke up to the unmistakable sounds of packages being hurriedly unwrapped, and occasional exclamations of an eight-year-old-boy's glee.

We walked into the living room just as he was about to open the package containing the two model cars. For some strange reason my own heart missed a couple of beats as the paper was torn off the package, and the boxes were slowly opened.

The look on the young man's face as he held the model of the Alfa in his two hands, utterly fascinated by the opening doors and minutely detailed engine, brought a warm smile to my wife's face and made me feel pretty good too. Then to the other box, and slowly out came the model of the Bugatti. The young man immediately started "vroom..vrooming" around the living room, oblivious for the moment of several other presents that were still in the stocking. We left to have some breakfast in the kitchen.

A couple of days later I arrived home from the office to find that the young man had his entire collection of model cars out, and was "vroom..vrooming" about the living room accompanied by his friend Ted.

As I stood there and watched, I noticed that Ted was "driving" the Bugatti Royale, while the young man was zipping along the imaginary freeway with his disfigured lead fishing weight.

The car collection was forgotten about for a few days after that. The next time that model cars figured in the young man's activities, six models were retrieved from the closet in which they were stored. Five of these were placed at strategic points on the living room floor and remained there, while the young man "vroom..vroomed" again with the shapeless, wheeled blob of indeterminable metal. The Alfa Romeo and Bugatti remained, ignored, in the closet.

The next occasion the young man decided it was "vroom.. vroom" time, the only car to appear from the storage closet was "the thing"...as I had referred to it one evening when discussing the young man's playing habits with my wife.

Finally, after not having even seen the Alfa or Bugatti for almost two weeks, I could contain myself no longer.

The young man was "vroom..vrooming" again with the blob on wheels. I called him over as I put the evening newspaper down, and asked him gently why he seemed to prefer playing with "this", as I picked up the blob between forefinger and thumb.

He looked at me quizzically for a few seconds, and then said simply: "Cause it's small."

Everything is relative...after all.



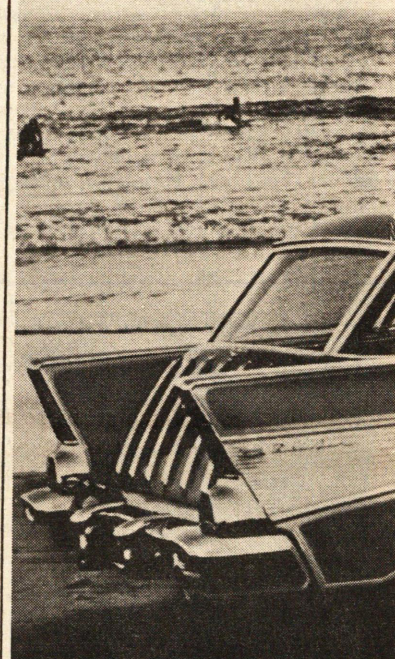
## Model Car Contest To Be Featured At U.S. Grand Prix

The First Annual Watkins Glen Grand Prix Model Car Contest is scheduled to be held just prior to the running of this year's U.S. Grand Prix at Watkins Glen, N.Y., Oct. 6.

Contest judge Oscar Koveleski has announced that 4 classes of model cars are eligible - sports cars, drag racers, Grand Touring and Grand Prix cars. Trophies and prizes will be awarded to the winners along with a visit to the Glen on practice day.

The Auto World Grand Prix trophy will be awarded to the builder of the best GP car entered. There is no entry fee and contest entry blanks with rules and information can be obtained by writing to John Kessler, Contest Chairman, Kessler's Glen Newsroom, Watkins Glen, N.Y., where all models will be displayed.

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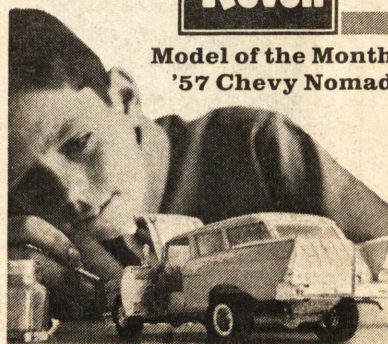


## Surfing Nomad

Surfers really dig the '57 Nomad. In fact, young people across the nation consider this eleven year old station wagon an "in" machine. The '57 Chevy Nomad is well on its way to becoming a classic, and demand far exceeds the somewhat limited supply. A good one seldom stays on the market for more than a day or two. Real Nomads are scarce, but Revell's new Nomad model kit is available now. And it's almost real. The doors, windows and tailgate open and close. Wheels roll and front wheels turn. It's beautifully detailed. Front and rear can be adjusted to three different heights...just like they modify the non-plastic version. Fun to build, for less than \$2.00. For a catalog of 200 Revell model kits, send 25 cents to: Revell, Inc., 4325 Glencoe Avenue, Venice, California 90291.

**Revell**

Model of the Month  
'57 Chevy Nomad



## Los Angeles Club Follows the Season

Some of the members of the Los Angeles-based MESAC model car racing club in action on their impressive layout. MESAC is one of the oldest slot car clubs in the country having been established over 4 years ago. The club was founded by a group of slot car racers who wanted to take their sport more seriously than was possible at regular commercial raceways. The impressive track layout has a length of 230 feet with 6 lanes, and some of the most complete scenery ever developed. A series of shunts and by-passes makes possible a combination of 8 different courses. The current season features sports racing and GT classes, in both scales - 1/32 and 1/24, Trans-Am sedans and 1/32 formula cars for the Club Driver's Championship. The formula selected for this season was the Tasman series. As there are few models of Tasman cars commercially available, most club members have had to construct their own bodies.

