

GERALD BRUGGEMAN

Gerald Bruggeman, commonly known as 'Boog', started his racing career in 1951 in Wayne, Nebraska when he sold his Harley-Davidson to build a race car. His first race car was a 1938 Plymouth sedan and he won his very first race he entered. He ran that same sedan for four years and won season titles at Clearwater and Albion, Nebraska. He later built a Plymouth coupe and won the track championship at Columbus, Nebraska. In 1957 he suffered a shoulder injury at Norfolk, Nebraska and spent four years on the bench before returning to action in 1961. He again was the track champion at Columbus as well as Doniphan. "Back in those days a lot of guys raced just for something to do," Bruggeman said. "Not me. Hell man, I went to win every time". In 1971, Bruggeman drew the driving assignment in the Willy Hecke supermodified and went on a tear. He ran the car an incredible 65 times and won 32 features and the track championships at LeMars, Iowa, Scotland, Yankton and Interstate in S.D. and Norfolk, Nebraska. He ran a sprint car for the first time in 1972 and ran at Eagle, Nebraska against the Lloyd Beckman, Eddie Leavitt, Roger Larson and Huset's Hall of Famer Bill Mellenberndt. He also ran the Knoxville Nationals in 1972 before returning to the supermodifieds. Bruggeman first ran Huset's on July 5, 1976 and finished a modest third in the consolation feature, but he was just getting warmed up. Armed with the Don Maxwell built supermodified, Bruggeman made a shambles of the competition at Huset's with three consecutive track titles in 1977-78-79. He became the first driver to win three supermodified titles in a row and the first driver to win six supermodified features in a row during the '77 season. He retired after the 1980 sprint car season and now lives in Arizona.