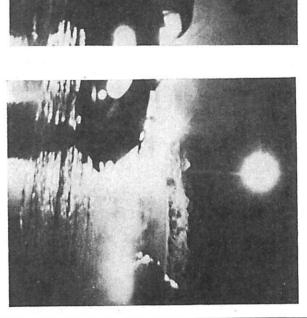
IE MANS

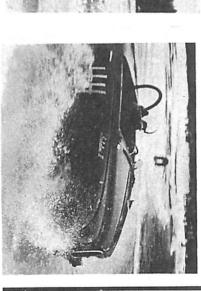
N NO



MADNESS won't promise a win, but it helps in Naomi's "Dark Deepfreeze" race on ice, featuring headlights going away backwards and speeds of 70

COMPACTS often do as well as more exotic sports cars on the ice. The trick lies in the skill of the man behind the wheel, who knows how to use the extra traction provided by a little snow to stop a slide, as shown here

FREEZING SHOWER bathes car and driver as it ploughs through a lake on a lake. In one race, cars collected 200 pounds of ice from spray



*

FEBRUARY 1964

snow tires, in a slithering melec 115 m.p.h. without chains or Road racers take to the slick as that even features night runs

By Richard F. Dempewolf

of sports cars, family sedans and "specials' creeps off the starting mark at a solid one With A ROAR of open exhausts and whining engines, a motley assortmen

wheels, and they're about to fly apart. Practically nothing moves but the drive

sideways (and sometimes backwards). leaders, streaking out at 75 to 100 m.p.h. slide into "S" turns and around bendi ing pack is strung along the straight. The But within a minute or two, the slither-

a few will be busy "shoveling out" for an Most will recover to re-join the race. Bu precious seconds on curves. Some make they go waltzing across the panorama gracefully around and around each other hour or two. it. Others slide into long spins. Looping Experts carom off snowbanks to save

one of the "hairiest" sports ever devised-It's all in a day's fun for enthusiasts o

automobile racing on ice. Thrill-seeking nuts have been dropping

energetic 32-year-old Easterner with a crew cut, named Franklin "Skip" Miller safe, organized basis generally goes to an northern lakes from Maine to Minnesott for putting the madness on a reasonably since the turn of the century. But credi "Detroit iron" through melt holes in frozer

sports car enthusiast, the whole thing for biggest spin-outs, and in due course wound up racing." on it for fun," he says. "Then some neigh blow snow from large areas of glare ice "I used to take my car out and skid around Pines, Pennsylvania—the prop wash would pond at his family's stronghold in Pocono Naomi Lake—a two-mile-long former ice In winter, when he landed his plane or started by accident about ten years ago bors wanted to try it. We began competin According to Miller, a private pilot and

snow to form a two-and-a-half-mile cir cuit with two sweeping hairpins, a pair o In no time, they were scraping awa:

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ship of their Ice Racing Enterprises, Inc., of lively young sons). Under the sponsorannual affair run by Miller and his attracnight racing fans who don't like to see major seasonal events are featured: Sprint "S" turns and two narrow squeezes, or "chicanes." By 1958 it had become an where they've been when they're sliding Races, a four-hour Grand Prix, a Little tive wife, Lorna (who also manages a pair backwards," explains one champ. and a Dark Deepfreeze-"for

spectators line the lake shore, munching contestants on Naomi's ice. Up to 3000 Saturday or Sunday may find a hundred weekend events (at \$10 a head and no cash weather permitting, entries pour in for and stamping to keep warm. Vermont and Virginia. A nice winter prizes) from a dozen states including Ohio, cold hot dogs flavored with mitten wool From January deep into March,

waving friendly fenders, and do-it yourself week in a hearse. Pits, in the center of the regular fan is an undertaker from Endimechanics wearing ice skates circuit, cott, N. Y., who drives down nearly every All kinds of people are devotees. One swarm with convalescent cars

A Saab You Wouldn't Know

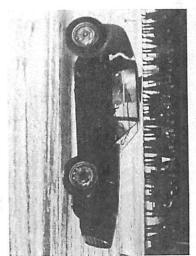
gine boasts three carburetors. resembling the front end of a wingless fying it to produce a long, low single seater running gear of a Swedish Saab, modicar especially for ice racing. He used the Stout, a retired engineer, designed of car, from production models to Allison B. Stout's "A. S. Special," on the lake. jet fighter plane. The three-cylinder en-You're likely to find almost any kind Stout's "A. S. Special," on the lake.

uses this device, Stout races by himself. end up front on the corners. When he end to claw the ice and keep the front drag brakes that reach down from the rear known as the "Ice King." He holds the swept the field enough times to become lawed. But even without it, Al Stout has track record of 115 m.p.h. It works too well, so it has Special features include a pair of forked been out-

who hopes to be anybody must push at up to 70 m.p.h., which means that anybody least 75 to 90 on the straights. Average lap speeds for the circuit run

Even at 20 below zero, hardy contestants downpour is enough to "call" an ice race Only a raging blizzard or torrential (Please turn to page 214)

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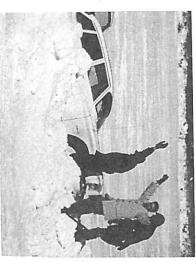


boasts Saab running gear, one-seat cockpit, three carburetors and holds the ice track record of 115 SPECIAL ICE CAR built by retired engineer Al Stout boasts Saab running gear, one-seat cockpit, three

spray that SLUSH and wear masks and drive with their heads out the side coat windshields, water on the track create freezing SO



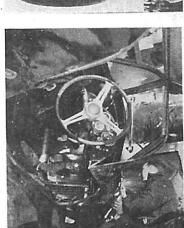
SNOW DIVES result when drivers "overcook" it on the corners and shoot over the snow embankments at trackside. It's the end of the race for this one



POPULAR MECHANICS

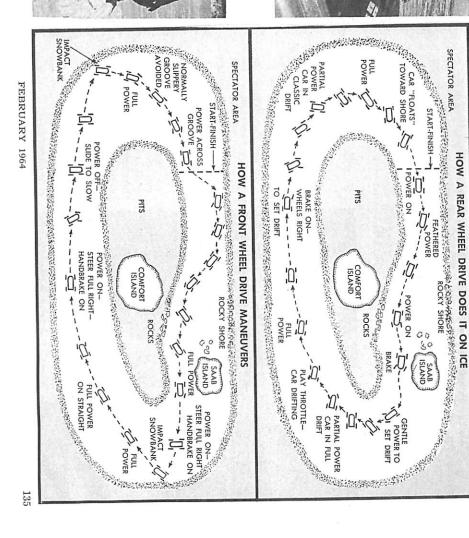


FORKED BRAKES on A.S. Special reach down from rear end to grab the ice, and keep the front end up front on corners. Its use in races is outlawed



THERE'S NO ROOM for anything but business in the A.S. Special's single-seat cockpit. The "pilot" sits practically on the deck, with legs out front

COURSE at Naomi Lake is ploughed over a two-and-a-half mile circuit. The hairpins are a quarter mile wide (for sliding); straights measure 50 feet



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MODEL 250

Little LeMans on Ice

(Continued from page 134)

usual to see an open sports car sliding drive with windows open, and it isn't unthrough the course with top down and reddriver huddled in a bundle of wool

sprouting 30-foot rooster tails. Since windshield wipers can't handle spun from the course; warm winter sun are ideal at Naomi. Loose snow is quickly (it adds just enough traction for high-speed cornering). But conditions seldom more like a hydroplane race, with cars two to four inches of water on top of produces slushy thaws that re-freeze to ice. When that happens, the contest looks inches of semi-packed snow on the lumpy horrors. Races have been run with Ideal conditions call for about ice

Spray froze on everything it hit—including the drivers, who had to be "chipped out" at the finish line. Some cars collected look such deluges, drivers stick their heads out one car pilots simply hoist their tails and the windows into the freezing spray. Open more than 200 pounds of ice. such over the windshield tops. race, temperature skidded During

Rules Rigidly Enforced

cars run in engine displacement classes. "Only experienced drivers race," says on drag strips), and locked differentials are prohibited. Except for major features, roll bars. mets and seat belts are a must, as are fire extinguishers. Convertibles must have Jealous of his remarkable track record, Skip Miller enforces rigid wheels all around (to keep the wild ones Drinking is strictly forbidden. Crash hel-Rules call for uniform diameter rules

"Only experienced drivers race," says Skip. "Newcomers are encouraged to drive practice runs. We give them tips and some coaching if they look as though they can do it. If they don't get the idea, we endough the says of th courage them to take up something else."
Irresponsible drivers are "black-flagged"

them asked to stay away, but such cases are rare. More typical of the spirit that prelow caution flags wave down all cars. mobile communications center carrying the P.A. system. If a pile-up blocks the smashed took vails course, it is known immediately and yelthe track carry radio-transmitters that tie car that had lost control. Spotters along the course, and repeat offenders are to the starter as well as Miller's to was exhibited by the driver his front end rather than hit a the woods, lost a wheel

that racing on ice—once a driver has acquired the delicate sensitivity and judg-Contestants as well as officials

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Little LeMans on Ice

(Continued from page 214)

use of snow tires, chains or other traction road racing, even though track rules forbid ment it demands-is thick during the season, so there's no tricks. First, Naomi's ice runs to 30 inches safer than regular

trucking company traffic man who serves as chief steward for Miller, "he may go skating off in circles for a couple of hundred yards. But traction won't snap him as it does on pavement." at high speed can and do result in comdanger of cars going through. And while slight errors in danger of catastrophe. "When a driver loses it," says Bob Stanton, a Binghamton plete loss of control, there's seldom any in judgment

slide through a corner together, like planes accident was a broken ankle. A photogra-pher running up the track slipped and fell There's always undenting going on in the his window to straight-arm a car sliding into him. He kept it away, too. The other driver sustained when he reached through on the course involved a broken wrist a pits. One of the two most serious accidents in formation. Often, they kiss fenders. It isn't always that simple when cars

More spectacular, but less

circuit. In the season's first race last year, two eager Saab drivers turned over. One lit on its side, bounced back and kept right pled doors shut and finished the race. and potholes develop. Occasionally one of these will "trip up" a sliding car and flip it—or send it hurtling into the sixlife and limb are the occasional rollovers and snowbank dives. Half-sunken snags jut through the ice here and there. Cracks up-ended. But the driver lashed the crumon going. The other had to be dug out and foot banks of snow bulldozed from the jut through the ice here and there.

to his first run on a packed snow surface in a Porsche, piloted by frequent winner Sam Price. Sam swooped into the first "S" other side into the second curve, straight-ened out and drove for the inside of a on the straights. This writer was treated are happiest on a carpet of snow. It gives on the ice-depending on them the traction they need to open up Powerful vehicles with rear-wheel drive before gunning it down the one-mile back ploughed track (standard width at cor-ners but the straights are 50 feet wide) 180° turn Different cars offer different advantages the turn at the end of the lake and used broadside, whole quarter-mile gracefully swung conditions. width

(Please turn to page 218)

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Little LeMans on Ice

(Continued from page 216)

stretch at 90 m.p.h. plus. A hundred yards from the corner at the end, he tapped the brakes hung out a wagging tail, nudged the wheel—and rolled to a halt.

When glare ice exists, the Saab drivers cheer. These little front-wheel-drive bugs, with a top speed of 75 m.p.h. in production models, can out-perform anything on corners. One island around which the track loops is known as Saab Island, for two reasons: First, the curve is just right to encourage Saab drivers to put in everything they've got and jump to lead positions. Second, since they all try their mightiest, more than a few have overcooked it and wound up in the woods.

Since a normal winter weekend usually offers a variety of conditions on Naomi, however, things pretty much equalize.

Ice Magnifies Virtues and Faults

"You handle a car on ice just as you would on dry pavement—only more so," says George Sanderson, a regular Saab entry with a high record of wins. "Every maneuver is grotesquely exaggerated—like a slow motion movie. Different cars have different virtues and faults—all of them magnified by the ice."

In general, a driver sets up a slide for a corner sooner than he would on a road, and puts in corrections sooner. Sliding can often add half a mile to every lap. "It's like going back to kindergarten," says Sanderson. "You listen and feel, your way. I start into corners shallow and get sideways as soon as possible. I look for pockets of snow or slush to provide resistance and slow my drift. High snowbanks help—you can carom off them. Once you've sliced across a corner to the outside, you turn your wheels gently toward the direction of slide until you feel traction; then dive into the straight."

On ice, a firm, confident hand on the wheel wins more races than a courageous lead foot on the throttle. Consequently, a tiny Volkswagen or Saab may run circles around a field of high-powered monsters.

If glare ice, hard snow, six inches of slush or four inches of water doesn't provide enough challenge, you can also try the same recipe with the added hazard of darkness in Naomi's "Dark Deepfreeze." The night race is wild. "There's nothing crazier than going around a corner and seeing tail lights turn into headlights going away from you," says an enthusiast.

But according to anyone you talk to at this winter clambake, once a man has entered an event at Naomi Lake he's an automobile-racer-on-ice for life.