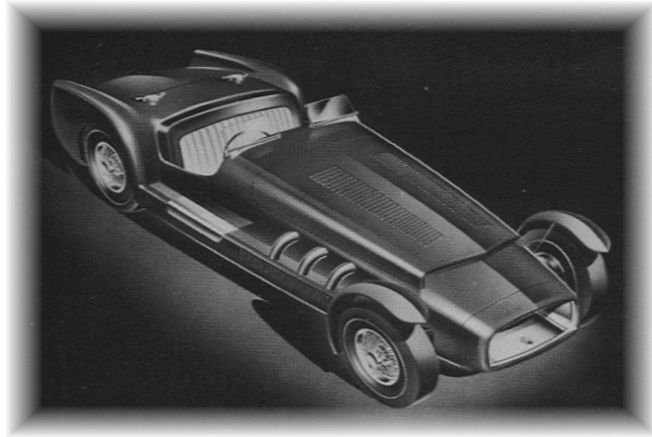


“Kaiser Flyer # 10”

What, Kaiser had two Sports Cars ??



*The Excalibur-J
as Brooks Stevens conceived it before production*

The 1953 Excalibur-J Sports Car

by

Brooks Stevens

In conjunction with Kaiser-Frazer Corporation

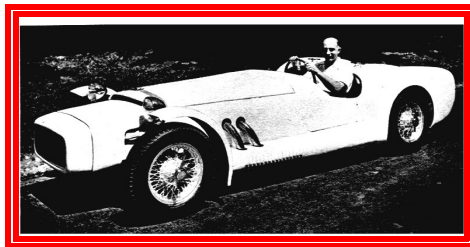
In 1951 famous designer Brooks Stevens (part of the '48 Tucker design team) and of the Sports Club of America, was doing some contract consulting design work for Kaiser-Frazer Corporation when he was intrigued by the small sturdy chassis of the newly introduced Henry-J economy car. He, as well as Howard “Dutch” Darrin (see Flyer #4), felt that the chassis deserved a much more sportier car than Kaiser had produced in the Henry-J. Stevens, along with Charles Cowdin, Jr. undertook his passion to contribute an American sports car to the sports car world, the creation of an American Sports Car. He wanted a true sports car that could compete on a world-wide basis in the major races.

Brooks Stevens wanted a sports car that would have a true European look but use all American components. He designed a very low and sleek-looking racer and actually built three cars.

The Brooks Stevens Sports Car was built in conjunction with Kaiser-Frazer on a Henry-J stock chassis. The Excalibur-J's were originally equipped with the Kaiser Darrin F-Head Six and Kaiser Supersonic Six engines. Most were fitted with multiple carburetors and special exhaust systems. One was initially equipped with a Alfa-Romeo Six engine but this engine was dropped in favor of the much stronger and reliable Darrin engine.

The Darrin engines were slightly modified for better breathing but the bottom end was left stock. During actual racing the little Darrin engine would consistently be turned over 6,500 rpm and never blew. A testimony to the toughness of the original Kaiser Darrin engine.

The cars were actually raced in competition over a two year period and were quite successful. The Excalibur J's finished with nine firsts, seven seconds and four thirds in the twenty-four races entered. An unheard of record for an all-new sports cars. The most notable US showings were a first in class at Watkins Glen in 1953 and a second only to a C-type Jaguar in the overall category. The Stevens Excalibur-J Sports Car development with Kaiser came to a halt with the decline of the Kaiser-Frazer Coropration.



The 1953 Excalibur-J

So it is, that another milestone in American automotive history belongs to the Kaiser-Frazer Corporation. It was the only American automotive company to actually produce two sports cars. Both the Kaiser Darrin and the Excalibur-J were raced successfully.

Not many people today are even aware of this little-told success of the “second” Kaiser Sports Car.

- “Kaiser Bill”