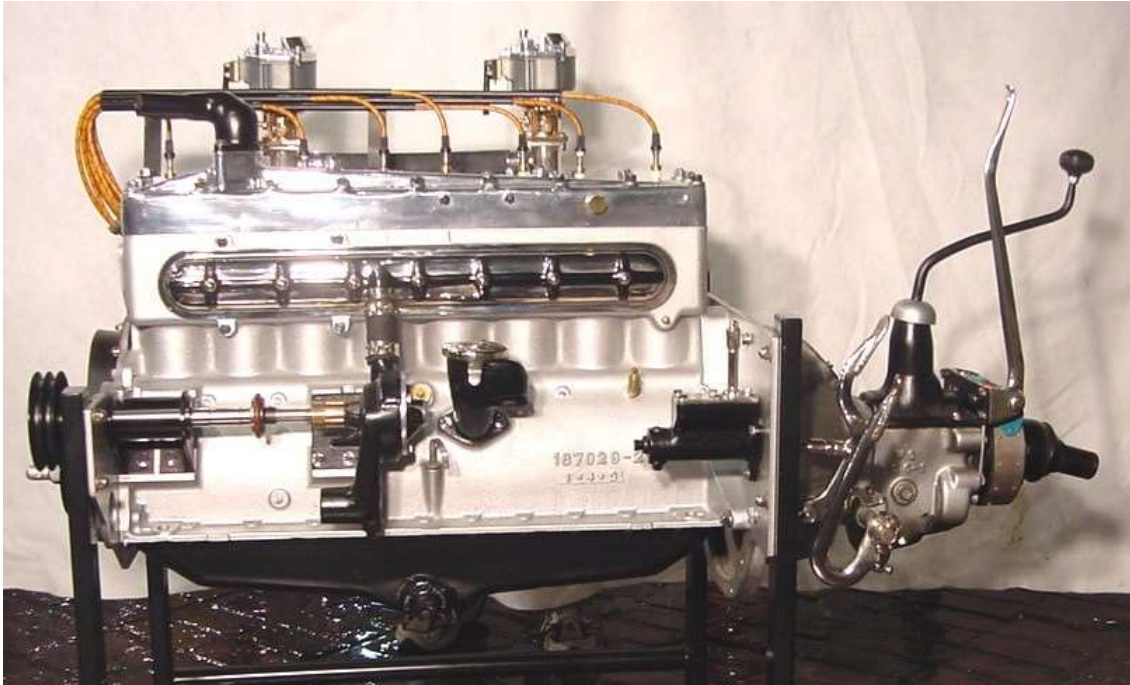


The Studebaker Straight 8 and Indianapolis

The Studebaker 250 c.i. Straight-8 Commander engine is an example of the company's engines that powered very competitive race cars at Indianapolis during 1933 - 1939. Our engine was used as a backup engine, but never actually ran at Indy.



In 1932 and 1933, Studebaker Corporation sponsored a factory team of five race cars in each year's Indianapolis 500-Mile Race. Each of the five cars was powered by the Studebaker 337-c.i. Straight 8 President engine.

These Studebaker-based racers were quite formidable. The company hired Herman Rigling of Indianapolis to build the frames and bodies (the bodies were actually built for the Rigling Shop by "Pop" Dreyer) for five cars, which were assembled with Studebaker running gear and Studebaker-prepared engines.

The stock 337-c.i. straight-8 block from Studebaker's 1931-33 President model had nine main bearings. The factory added a 6.5:1 compression aluminum head, four carburetors from 1931 Studebaker trucks, a Scintilla magneto with added gear drive, and a hot cam to boost the power from about 110 in stock form to 174 h.p. at 3,600 rpm.





In 1932, the five-car Studebaker team finished the Indy 500 in 3rd, 6th, 13th, 15th and 16th places. In the 1933 race, Studebaker-powered cars finished 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th and 28th. Only 14 cars finished the entire 500 miles that year, and half of them were Studebaker-powered – a record that still stands!

Other participants in the Indy races also built cars with Studebaker power, but several of them used the smaller 250-c.i. Commander 8 engine (such as the engine we have) instead of the larger – and more expensive -- President motor. In the 1933 Indy race, Art Rose in a front-wheel-drive car powered by the 250-c.i. Commander 8 finished in 6th place, ahead of the factory cars and their larger engines.

After Studebaker went bankrupt in 1933, the company discontinued all company-sponsored racing efforts. While the factory did not race in 1934, they did offer racing versions of the 250-c.i. engine for sale in 1934 at \$750. Had they been built for a canceled factory racing program? These engines also used four carbs, an aluminum head and a Scintilla magneto.

Block Manufacturer: Studebaker

Block Material: iron

Cylinders: 8

Block Year: 1934 Head Manufacturer: Bonalite

Head Material: Aluminum

Cam: In block

Cam Drive: Gear Driven

Carbs: 2 Langsenkamp-Linkert

Head Year: 1934

Era: 30s or 40s