THE FOURTH TIME AROUND

If you don’t believe a hot rod is never quite finished, take a look at Clarence Catallo’s fantastic ’32 Ford coupe. At first it was a street coupe, then a drag coupe, then it became a mild show car, and now five years later it is a really radical show machine.

Clarence "Chill" Catallo hails from Deerborn, Michigan, became interested in rods as a natural progression of a general interest in cars. He originally purchased the coupe for $15 in 1956 when he was but 16 years old. By ’57 he had built it up for street use and in ’58 he was using it on the drag strip. First shows came in 1959 and now account for many of the trophies in Catallo’s home. Clarence says his main problem is never being satisfied which results in constant rebuilding.

Even the most die-hard the west portal would have to agree that this front end is clean and functional looking, without being bizarre. Aluminium bars mounted horizontally on expanded metal grilles provide necessary illusion of width. Quadruple headlights use Lucas lamps. Note ground clearance.

Alexander Brothers Custom Shop of Detroit handled the job of forming the grille shell, body channeling and sectioning, and other special items of body work. Tubular front axle is from a 1927 Ford, carries ’27 Ford spindles and out-of-production Kimont disc brakes. Wheels are Imperial centers on reversed Mercury rims. The special blower drive does not leave room for the stock Oldsmobile water pump, therefore a Jahee electric pump has been installed on the front crossmember. Monroe shock positioned by mount with specially fabricated base shows work that helps win at shows.

Photos by Eric Rickman
LEFT — Although the three-window '32 body has been channeled 6 inches over original '32 frame, the doors have been shortened until bottoms are in same relative position as originally. Aluminum sheet stock has been formed into horizontal fins for design effect and fitted below shortened doors. George Barris chopped the top 2 inches, then painted car Pearl and translucent Oriental Blue.

BELOW — Powerplant is a 1958 Oldsmobile V8 of 344 cubic inches. Chrysler intake and GMC exhaust valves are actuated by a Clay Smith cam and Iskenderian cam kit. Johns supplied blower type pistons with Grant rings while the 6-71 blower and installation kit were provided by Cragar. Ignition is by stock Olds distributor and flywheel/clutch unit is also stock Oldsmobile item.
RIGHT — Special rolled rear pan is foundation for plastic taillight lenses and plastic base for horizontal tubing. Two mufflers make provisions for four tail pipes. Rear end is a 1955 Oldsmobile unit located by a transverse spring and homemade radius rods.

ABOVE — Front view reveals engine reflection in the highly polished firewall. Cowl vent has been welded shut, accounting for unbroken lines in that area. Padded and tufted top might not be absolutely practical but it certainly helps draw the crowds at car shows.

ABOVE RIGHT — "Chili" has plenty of room in cabin that has been lowered a total of 15 inches. Interior was stitched up by Larsen upholstery shop in white Nuvagahide. Stock dash has additional instruments plus more gauges and switches in panel above windshield. Transmission is from a 1937 LaSalle.

RIGHT — Alexander Brothers sectioned the machine 6 inches. Rear wheels are composed of Olds centers grafted to Lincoln rims, mount 8.20 x 15 Inglewood slicks. '34 Ford steering is topped by a '59 Continental wheel. Best time car registered during dragging days was 112 mph in 12.90 seconds, highly creditable for a car that has seen action in nearly every phase of hot rodding.