

Hercules Engine News



By Glenn Karch

Hercules Model EK

A 12 HP Hercules Model EK engine is always an attraction at a show. Jerry Sprinkle had always wanted one of those to go with his collection of other gas engines. He was able to buy the one pictured from Russell Cashion of Antiock, Tenn., some years ago. Jerry was proud to show it off at southern Indiana engine shows. With its big chrome exhaust stack it would run with a steady *thump, thump, thump*. Well, sometimes it would run that way. Most of the time it would run unsteadily and miss every other beat.

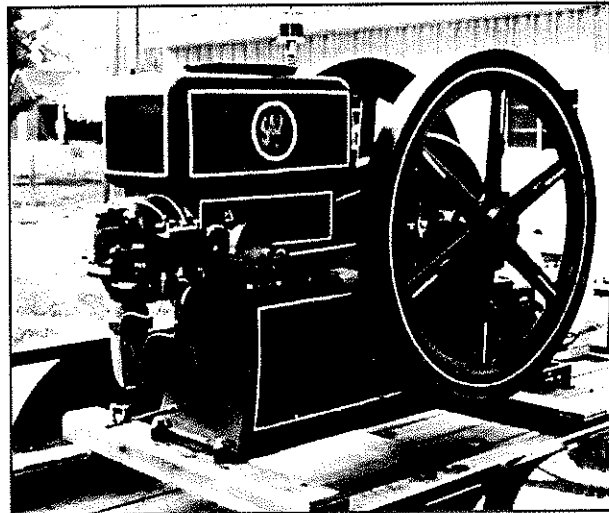
Jerry tinkered with it all the time, trying to get it to run with a steady *thump*. He tried different fuels; others helped him or gave their advice. Sometimes they would get it right, but most of the time it just ran skipping a beat, and Jerry would be there with a rather forlorn look, still trying to figure it out.

On May 31, 1999, Jerry passed away. About a year later his widow, Glenda, called me. She said several different people were interested in buying some of Jerry's engines, but she didn't know what price to ask. She asked me to come look over the

engines and other related equipment, and make a list of them and their values.

I made up a list with my estimated value of each item. I explained to her she could go up or down from those prices, depending on how quickly she wanted to sell them. Within a few weeks, they were all gone.

The Klueg family of Evansville, Ind., bought the 12 HP Hercules, and after a couple of years, they offered it for sale. Jim Swank of Pylesville, Md., purchased it in 2003. At the Coolspring, Pa., spring show that same year, the 12 HP Hercules sat on Jim's trailer, along with another big engine. The Hercules was happily thumping away, just like you would want it to. I asked Jim what he did to it. He said that a simple timing adjustment



Hercules Model EK 12 HP engine once owned by Jerry Sprinkle, now owned by Jim Swank.

did the trick.

Last March, one of my sons attended a funeral and cemetery burial north of Fort Branch, Ind. He told me about parking near a tombstone that had a gas engine engraved on it. He wondered if I knew a guy named Sprinkle. Of course, I had to go and see the tombstone. Sure enough, there was that 12 HP Hercules EK, with its chrome stack engraved right on Jerry's stone.

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Left: Jerry Sprinkle's tombstone with the engraved 12 HP Hercules Model EK.

Inset: A close-up of the Hercules engine.