

Great Race 2000 rolls into Heydays

By Jill Zeman

Staff writer

The Historic Haymarket District had its own taste of history last Sunday as almost 100 vintage cars, part of the History Channel's Great Race, made a pit stop downtown.

The cars featured in the race are worth more than \$3 million and include a 1949 VW convertible, a 1934 Ford Indy car and a 1930 Pierce Arrow.

The race began June 11 in Boston and will end Saturday in Sacramento, said Tom McRae, host of the History Channel's Great Race documentary.

Racers are competing for a \$275,000 prize, he said.

Alongside the competitors vying for the cash are eight high

school teams competing for \$25,000 in scholarships, including a team from Kearney High School, he said.

The Great Race is not a traditional race where the winner is the individual who crosses the finish line first.

Rather, the competitors are given a new set of instructions each morning and must reach a certain destination in a specific amount of time, without the use of an odometer or cell phone, McRae said.

The competitor who finishes the race with the lowest deviation from the determined time is deemed the winner.

Lincoln's Gary Kuck, CEO of Centurion International, Inc., has achieved that near level of perfection as he has captured the championship for the past two years.

Kuck's car of choice is a 1917 Hudson Indy Racer.

Sunday's festivities included more than just race competitors as Gov. Mike Johanns joined in on the action.

The governor, decked out in racing gear, entered in a Model T Ford racer.

"Some of my friends call me speedball," he joked.

Jack Gannon, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln sophomore industrial technology major, said along with the cars, what he enjoyed most about the event was the attitude of the crowd.

"People were so nice and awesome about everything," he said.

Gannon also expressed his enthusiasm about the race itself.

"I'd love to do it," he said. "That is, once I get \$20,000."

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