

# Beach Street moving Mardi Gras of autos

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**SANTA CRUZ** — Beach Street Saturday night was a moving Mardi Gras of customized and standardized cars — cheered on by a young crowd of thousands — as police set up blockades to stop the flow of machines and cool down the celebration.

Saturday was the main night of the Beach Street Revival, a gathering in Santa Cruz each year of owners and their customized 1950-era cars.

The revival continues today on the San Lorenzo Park benchlands at 11 a.m.

It was cruisin' night and an endless stream of cars went round-and-round, from Front Street to Beach Street to Riverside Avenue and then back to Beach Street.

By 10 p.m., police blockaded Beach Street where Front Street funnels in and began diverting cars up West Cliff Drive and in a U-turn route down the wharf.

Still the cars bypassed the barricades by flowing down Westbrook and other streets from the avenues and cruised through to Riverside Avenue again.

Sets of teen-aged girls on roller-skates slipped in and around the rumbling lanes of cars and some lucky soles found their way onto the roof of a local business to dangle their legs and sightsee from above.

Whenever one of the finer 1950 custom rods rolled down the street, the crowd broke into cheers.

One of the biggest attractions was a pair of Ford Roadsters with neon spark plug connectors that flashed with every shot of juice into the hot rods' engines.

Police Lt. Rick Bartle reported at 10:30 p.m. that there were no serious incidents but a lot of arrests for alcohol violations.

The most serious incident was a reckless driver who thought he could wrestle the police and win.

"None of the arrests that I know of had anything to do with anyone involved in the Beach Street Revival," Bartle said.

He said the department maintained a "high profile" again this year and Saturday night had 20 extra officers on duty.

By 11 p.m., Bartle said the crowds were beginning to go home and the cars were heading for their garages.

Early in the day, Indian summer weather beckoned Beach Street Revivalists by the hundreds to the benchlands to check out the display of cherried-up classic cars.

In the park next to the County Government Center, vendors pitched everything from car wax to spare ribs to browsers in shorts and tank tops.

John Campbell of Sunnyvale was one of those whose car was on display. He reconstructed his 1967 Oldsmobile 442 almost from scratch: "I towed it from a junkyard for \$300," said Campbell.

Like many of the Beach Street participants, Johnson works on cars professionally as well as for a hobby.

"I just wish they'd let us cruise. This is a tourist town anyway. It'd be good business," Johnson said.

David Rudy, a mechanic for the city of Santa Cruz, was basking in the "oohs" and "ahs" attracted by his 1936 Auburn. The beige sportscar was manufactured by the Dusenbergs in the 30s, "back when they didn't make cars small," he said.