



CHEVROLET, C. A. T.

RISKED LIVES ON A DUSTY TRACK

Two Smash-ups Marred the Racing of the Chauffeurs on Hamline Course.

Hard luck in huge bunches marred the automobile racing at Hamline track yesterday and only good fortune saved the lives of two Minneapolis drivers from instant death.

The most miraculous escape was in the finals for the tricity club championship. Four cars were lined up at the start, the four fastest in America, with the exception of Barney Oldfield's Green Dragon. Before the race Mrs. Oldfield, who was sitting in an auto near the track and who has probably witnessed as many races as anyone, declared that it was criminal for the track managers to permit the cars to start, considering the condition of the track.

"How can they do it?" she asked. "There will be an accident before they get around the half mile."

The four cars started, the Winton Bullet, driven by Earl Kiser; the White steamer, driven by Webb Jay; the F.I.A.T., by Chevrolet, and the F.I.A.T. Junior, driven by Charley Meyer. The cars were well together fighting for the lead to escape the dust which rose in thick, impenetrable clouds. At the half mile the White and the Winton appeared to be leading. Suddenly it was seen that there was one car missing.

Meyer in the Dust.

Unable to see a foot ahead and fearful of slowing up the mile-a-minute speed lest a rear-end collision would result, Charley Meyer took the curve as best he could. There was a crash as the Junior shattered the fence and jumped thirty feet across the deep ditch on the outside of the fence. Clear across the ditch and into the fence beyond the car was buried. Meyer hung pluckily onto the seat and altho jolted and scratched, climbed out of the ditch and waved his hands to the grandstand.

All interest in the race was over. In the best of sportsmanship, Webb Jay slowed down his White and carried Meyer to the grandstand. An inspection of the machine showed that a rail had been driven thru the radiator, thru the machinery and under the seat.

The second accident was fully as frightful and was in full sight of the crowd. Just before the half mile M. A. Clark, driving a Rambler, started a spurt and hit a wet spot. How he escaped is unknown, as the car turned completely over twice and landed on the body, the wheels still spinning.

These two accidents were only part of the hard luck. In the second event, entries limited to Minnesota cars, Harry Pence was driving like a veteran for first, when his gasoline gave out and the car died.

"I had been warming the car up and used a lot of gasoline, but thought of course that the tank had been filled up," said Mr. Pence after the race.

Refused to Drive in Dust.

The biggest hard luck of the day was in the finals for the \$2,500 purse. It was generally understood that the big cars had been lying low. In the lesser events Barney Oldfield and Webb Jay, with great good sense, had refused to risk their lives in the blinding dust. In this race everyone was out to win. In the start the White took the lead, the Winton closely following, and Barney on the trail. At the half mile the Winton made a wonderful burst of speed and passed the White and led a mile and a half. Then the White began picking up hundreds of pounds of steam and shot by in its turn. The grandstand was wild. Those who had not felt a shiver for two days were standing on their seats cheering frantically. Then it was seen that something was going wrong with the White. It was afterwards learned that the connecting rod had snapped and the statement made that the steam had died out was erroneous. From that time on the Winton had the ten miles well in hand, altho the last three-mile spurt of Barney Oldfield was one of the best exhibitions of the day. Part of the time Barney was entirely hidden by dust, but kept at it steadily, taking the turns in a masterful way.

Among the professional cars for the two days' racing the Winton never trailed at the finish. The driving of Kiser was remarkable at all times, and when pressed showed the difference between a good driver and an expert. When the race was easy he drove with one hand; when it was close he hung close to the wheel, guiding the car so as to take up the almost imperceptible lost motion.

To the spectators one of the most interesting features was the performance of the local cars and the degree of skill shown by the drivers. The closest contest of the two days was between Harry Pence in a Stevens-Duryea and C. A. Coey in a Thomas Flyer. Neck and neck they spun around the track, bringing the spectators to their feet.

The last event of the day was an attempt by Earl Kiser and Barney Oldfield to lower the world's record for the mile. Barney made his mile in 53 4-5 seconds and Kiser in 54 flat.