

June 27, 1918

Chevrolet Victor in Chicago Derby

In Frontenac Travels 100 Miles at Rate of 108 M. P. H.—Breaks De Palma's 1916 Record

CHICAGO, June 26—Louis Chevrolet captured premier honors in the fourth annual Chicago Automobile Derby to-day, when in a hotly contested race he won the 100-mile event which featured the day's program at a speed of nearly 108 m.p.h. His Frontenac travelled the century in 55 min. 29.6 sec., an average of 107.9 m.p.h., breaking the previous Chicago 2-mile speedway record for the distance of 55 min. 50 sec. made by De Palma in a Peugeot 2 years ago.

Mulford in another Frontenac took second, finishing 1 min. 38 sec. behind Chevrolet, with Vail's Hudson third nearly a minute later.

The other five to register on the timer at the finish followed in the order named: Hickey in a Hudson, Oldfield in his Oldfield Special, Alley in the Bender, Milton in a Duesenberg and De Palma in his Packard.

The 100-mile event was preceded by a 10-mile handicap run in three heats which turned up Resta as the winner, his time being 5 min. 33.1 sec. Chevrolet got second and Oldfield third in the final. The two preliminary heats went to Resta and Chevrolet.

Between the two events De Palma put his Packard around the 2-mile board track in a successful trial for the track record for one lap at 116 m.p.h., bettering the previous Chicago record of 113 m.p.h. for the track set up by Resta 2 years ago.

Times for 100-Mile Race

Handicap Seconds	Driver	Time	M. P. H.
15	Chevrolet	55:29.6	108.12
20	Mulford	57:07.2	105.04
75	Vail	58:14.0	103.03
70	Hickey	58:37.0	102.36
40	Oldfield	58:55.0	101.87
50	Milton	59:35.0	100.69
22	Alley	59:36.0	100.67
00	De Palma

With two track records to his credit the meet can be considered a speed success. Chevrolet's time for the hundred miles is not so good as the record he established at Sheepshead Bay last fall, so no new American records were made. But Chevrolet now holds not only the American record for the distance but the Chicago track mark as well.

To-day's race proved the possibility of getting out a big crowd even in these war times. But it was only done by adopting baseball tactics of popular prices and late starting.

That these arrangements were wise was shown by the fact that fully 40,000 attended, a crowd exceeded only once at the speedway, and that the day the track was inaugurated 3 years ago. Over half the track was lined with double rows of cars in the infield, the biggest turnout of cars ever seen at one time in Chicago.

It is doubtful if another such crowd could be gotten out for another handicap 100-mile race, for with fifteen contestants it is hard enough for the grandstands to follow the fortunes of the individual drivers without, as in this case, starting them out at different times. With the scoreboards two laps or more behind, as is inevitable on a 2-mile speedway, the difficulties of keeping track of the contestants are increased and the interest is lost. Before De Palma, the scratch man, started, the slower cars had made a lap, and so from the start cars were strung around the entire 2-mile circuit and the spectacle of a flying start was lost as was the struggle for early leadership among the fast cars.

The timing and management of the race as a whole seemed to be excellent. The scoreboards were behind and inaccurate as usual and the announcing was much too infrequent and sparse in information.

De Palma played in hard luck. The favorite of the grandstands and scratch man in the handicapping started fifteenth; therefore the Italian had his Packard by the end of 14 miles up into sixth place and was making the best speed. Then his jinx got him and he spent nearly 4 min. at the pits changing spark plugs. When he got under way he reeled off the laps at 109 and 110 m.p.h. But the others had gained too much and toward the last his speed seemed to tell, for Chevrolet and Mulford during the last quarter maintained their distance.

Resta lost to-day his distinction of never having lost a race on the Chicago track. He was given 30 sec. start over De Palma and was climbing into the lead when after the first 30 miles he stopped to change plugs. Later he made a second stop with a broken accelerator spring and a third and final when he withdrew with oiling trouble.

The specially imported Duray, holder of the world's straightaway record, also ran, but not well enough to show. He was never a factor.