

DEATH'S TOLL IS PAID BY DAUNTLESS DRIVERS IN INDIANAPOLIS RACES

INDIANAPOLIS, Aug. 26.—Death's toll at the opening of the new Indianapolis motor speedway course yesterday afternoon was taken when the two-hundred-and-fifty-mile race for the Prestolite trophy was three-fourths finished.

The victims were William A. Bourque, Springfield, Mass., a famous driver employed by the Knox Automobile Co., and Harry Holcomb, Grandville, Mass., his mechanic. They were making a gallant fight with a Knox racer and had pushed their car past other demons until they were second.

"Wild Bob" Burnam, driving a Buick, with a seemingly frightful disregard for the perils that lurked in every foot of the course, was leading them, and Louis Chevrolet, the darling Frenchman at the wheels of another Buick, was not far behind.

Bourque was not regarded as a contender for the \$1,000 prize until a few minutes before the end came for him and Holcomb. He had been gaining steadily, however, and was fairly burning up the macadam surface. The score board showed the pace was faster than a mile a minute.

Chevrolet Had Stopped.

As mile after mile was reeled off and there were no accidents the big crowd, estimated at 10,000, settled down to enjoy the hazard of the sport with the feeling that the danger had been exaggerated.

Chevrolet, having stopped for repairs after a remarkable fight of over 110 miles without a stop of any kind, had started out to make up for lost time. Bourque and Holcomb were leading him. They fought it out on the back stretch and were giving the crowd a real thrill when the cry went up that Chevrolet had stopped.

His car was creeping, with the gap rapidly widening between him and the Knox driver.

The latter were lost in a cloud of dust at the lower turn leading into the long stretch in front of the grand stand. The crowd knew nothing of the tragedy until at least a minute after it occurred.

Even then it was not thought that any one was seriously injured. In fact, the only merciful feature was that the thousands of women in the grand stand and private boxes were spared the sight of the two mangled bodies. The mystery of the tragedy, for there seems to be one, is how it occurred.

One Left a Wreck.

Bourque was found on one side of the racer and Holcomb was on the other. It is said that Bourque's arms were stretched in the direction of the guide wheel, indicating that even in the closing chapter he made a desperate attempt to hold the car to the course.

The car itself landed against the fence beside the course. The front wheels were shattered and it was said that the spindle of one front wheel was broken off at the hub. The car was a wreck, and bounded along the 40 feet before it brought up against the fence.

Bourque and Holcomb are supposed to have been caught beneath the car and crushed to death before it came to a stop. Different causes are given for the accident.

Private Frank Brander, Company 41, Second Indiana Regiment, saw Bourque and Holcomb rise from their seats and look back to see what had become of the flying Chevrolet.

The car is said to have hit a rut in the course and to have escaped from Bourque's control.

Four More Laid Out.

Shortly after Bourque and Holcomb had been removed Chevrolet staggered into the grounds behind the judges and press stands. He had abandoned his car and had come across the course almost blinded by the dust and oil. He was taken to the hospital but was able to leave within a short time.

Ellis, driving the Jackson to what seemed certain victory in the two-hundred-and-fifty-mile race, stopped on account of tire trouble when he had less than 12 laps to finish, and when he was nearly 12 miles ahead of Burnam in his Buick.

He fairly staggered in making his repairs. He worked with desperate energy, but his car stopped a hundred yards from the tape and could not be started. He collapsed and had to be carried to a hospital.

The killing of Bourque and Holcomb had a depressing effect on the other drivers. The Knox withdrew its cars from the other events, Chevrolet said that the drivers took their lives in their hands in attempting to win on the new course. It was oiled for an eighth of a mile in front of the grand stand, but the rest of the way the dust was terrific for the drivers.

Experts Watched Work.

Automobile experts, gathered here from throughout the entire country, watching with much interest the experiment of racing on a circular track. The speedway is regarded as one of the most complete racing plants in the world, and no details were neglected today to make the opening a success.

Barney Oldfield, driving a high powered Benz, covered a mile in 0:45 1-10, breaking De Palma's mark of 0:51, and Louis Chevrolet in a Buick made 10 miles in the marvelous time of 8:16 4-10, cutting Oldfield's time of 9:12. Both of these are new American track marks.

Robert Burnam won the 250-mile race, the feature of the day, and the contest that cost Bourque and Holcomb their lives. The winner's time was 1:38:57 4-10—slow because of the many accidents that marred the race. The Stoddard-Dayton (Clements) was second in 4:16:01 8-10. Another National, with Kincaid at the wheel, was the only other car of the ten starters to finish the long grind.