

1909 SEASON GIVES PROPHECY FOR 1910

Wonderful Showing Made by Auto
Racers But Foretells What
Is Coming.

LOCAL SPEEDWAY IS LEADER

Example of I. M. S. to Be Copied
to Make Dream of Chain of
Tracks True.

BY P. P. WILLIS.

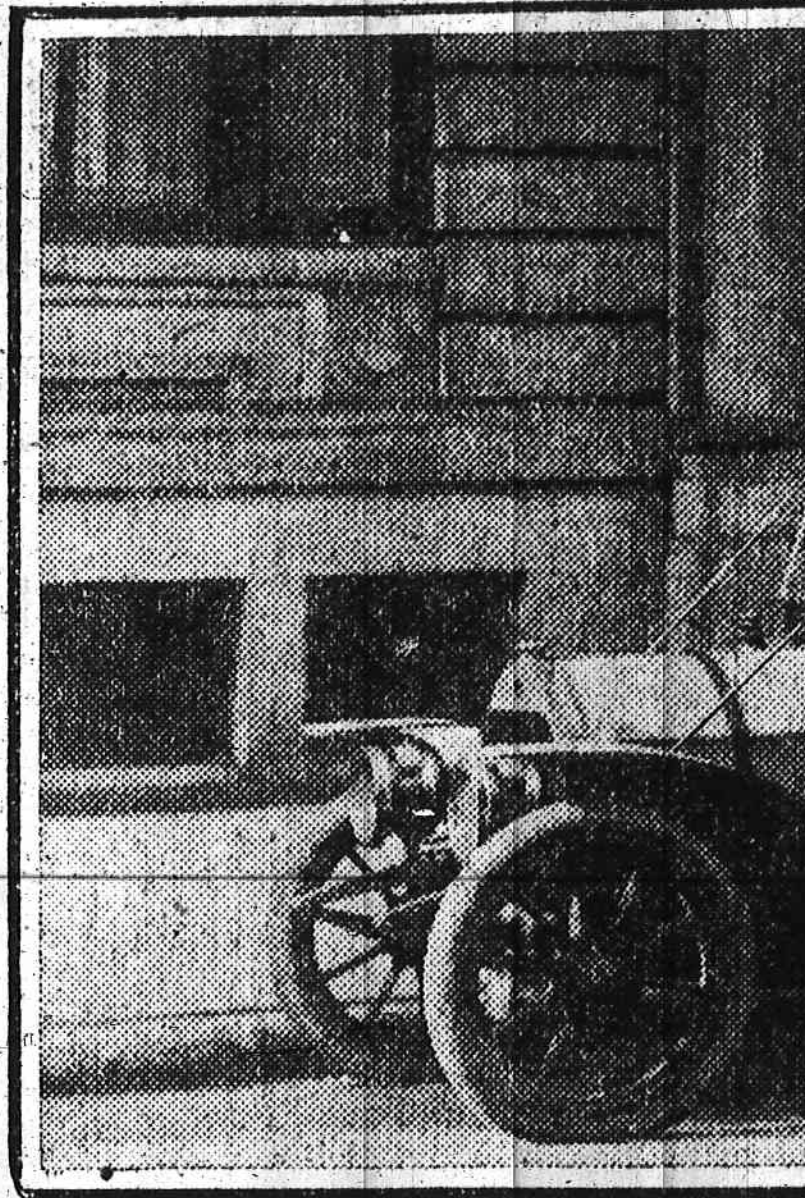
The 1909 motor car season gave Old Father Time the worst chase of his long life. Not only that, but it lasted until so late that he has but a few months' breathing spell before the 1910 season opens with renewed vim.

Thousands upon thousands of dollars were spent this year to prepare fleet gasoline racers, train skillful pilots and build the tracks upon which to astonish the age and demonstrate what cool-headed, brave men, mounted on marvelous steel creations, can accomplish. And Indianapolis came out of the season's fray with flying colors and far in the lead in many respects.

A few significant facts tower above the mountains of statistics, information concerning the various speed contests and phenomenal output of cars, that, to the follower of the trade and sport, are the handwriting on the wall. They are:

Race Tracks Grow In Favor.

1. Track races that heretofore were confined mainly to one-mile tracks of minor importance, were conducted on a much larger scale with an increased expenditure of money and also of success.



plumes were snatched out of Indianapolis's well-feathered cap.

To the credit of the men who are in the automobile game, and especially to the credit of the local citizens, when Atlanta demonstrated that it was on the map to stick awhile, Indianapolis promoters went it one better and paved the local course, making the I. M. S. cost more than \$700,000.

Some Records Made.

A glance at some of the monumental track records that confront the 1910 laurel seekers will suffice to indicate just what they are "up against."

Records Regardless of Class—One mile, Flat (Strang), :37.71, at Atlanta; two miles, Flat (Strang), 1:21.51, at Atlanta; five miles, Flat (Strang), 3:17.70, at Indianapolis; ten miles, Flat (Strang), 7:01.49, at At-

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Race Tracks Grow In Favor.

1. Track races that heretofore were confined mainly to one-mile tracks of minor importance, were conducted on a much larger scale with an increased expenditure of money and also of success. Two big speedways were constructed during the year in response to this growing demand, the first at Indianapolis and the second at Atlanta. So great was the success of these two tracks that many rumors are afloat that similar ones will be built in territory ranging from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Great Lakes to the gulf. Not only rumors, but in some instances the ground has been broken, and in others steps toward organization have been taken.

2. Road racing constituted the greater part of the season's activities, and, like track racing, was conducted for the benefit of stock cars more than ever before. It is predicted that this year will see greater attention paid to stock cars and far less to freak creations, as it is believed that Mr. Common Every-Day Man is interested more in a stock car, the kind he is thinking of buying, than in any pet that some automobile fanatic might construct at enormous expense.

Road racing leaped into the spotlight with a bang this year. The bulldozers and the general public responded without hesitation. So great was this year's success that Fred J. Wagner, the Eastern wizard on motors, said recently when in this city that he knows of six more firms that will join the contest ranks next year.

Europe Falls In Support.

The road races were not supported as much this year abroad as in previous years, largely due to a pact that the leading makers entered into. America met its foreign competition in road racing this year and triumphed.

Concerning the future of road racing there is a vast difference of opinion. Some of the wise ones shake their heads and declare that the tracks will kill this branch of the sport, while others shake just as hard and cry just as loud that road racing will live when track events have been dead and buried. One thing is certain and that is that 1910 promises to have its calendar chock full of both kinds of events.

3. The hill climb contests this year grew in popularity and in their demonstration of the merits of cars, for which purpose they were conducted. Their future is generally conceded to be long-lived. The endurance runs, such as the Glidden tour, in which Premiers and Marmons made perfect scores, are scheduled for a change of diet, as the leaders in the East and West agree with the mighty middle West that some changes are needed in the rules of such runs in order to benefit the most. That these tours will continue is taken for granted.

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Free-for-all Class—Two to ten miles, Flat (Strang), time for ten miles, 7:01.94, at Atlanta; twenty to 160 miles, Flat (Robertson), time for 160, 2:13:44.38, at Atlanta; 170 to 200 miles, Rainier (Disbrow), time for 200, 2:58:48.32, at Atlanta.

Four Hundred and Fifty to Six Hundred Class—Thirty to fifty miles, Flat (Robertson), time for 50, 42:02.98, at Atlanta.

801 to 450 Class—Ten to twenty miles, National (Aitken), time for twenty, 16:18.41, at Indianapolis; thirty to 200 miles, Buick (Chevrolet), time for 200, 2:46:48.47, at Atlanta; 210 to 220 miles, Jackson (Ellis), time for 220, 3:49:37.7, at Indianapolis; 230 to 250, Buick (Burman), time for 250, 4:38:57.4, at Indianapolis.

231 to 300 Class—Five miles, Buick (Strang), 4:48, at Indianapolis; six miles, Marmon (Harroun), 5:40.83, at Atlanta; twenty miles, Buick (Chevrolet), 17:10.70, at Atlanta; twenty-five miles, Buick (Strang), 23:20.1, at Indianapolis; thirty to seventy miles, Marmon (Harroun), time for seventy, 1:03:01.28, at Atlanta; seventy-five miles, Buick (Strang), 1:09:37.5, at Indianapolis; eighty to 120 miles, Marmon (Harroun), time for 120, 1:49:26.94, at Atlanta.

One Hundred and Sixty-one to Two Hundred and Thirty Class—Four miles, Chalmers (Matson), 4:05.5, at Atlanta; five miles, Stoddard (Schweitzer), 5:13.4, at Indianapolis; twenty to forty miles, Chalmers (Knipper), time for forty, 39:40, at Atlanta; fifty to seventy miles, Buick (Nelson), time for seventy, 1:10:31, at Atlanta; eighty miles, Chalmers (Knipper), 1:20:29, at Atlanta; ninety miles, Buick (Nelson), 1:30.28, at Atlanta; 100 miles, Chalmers (Knipper), 1:40:46.82, at Atlanta.

Other Cities Want Chance.

A glance now at the number of hands that are raised by cities dotted over the entire land, bidding for speedways for the coming season, indicates to what extent the future of track racing is assured.

Incidentally almost all of these promoters are looking to Indianapolis for suggestions and in a few cases an insight into the cost and labor of the local track cut in the bud the aspirations to build elsewhere.

St. Paul and Minneapolis have asked for detailed plans of the local track. Detroit is planning two speedways. One will be a combination aviation grounds and the Wright brothers have already looked it over with the view of taking stock in the concern. The other will be a commercial track without a gate. Cleveland is being boomed by real estate men for a two-and-one-half-mile brick track.

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From present indications the track events will bid for the greatest amount of attention in 1910. Builders that never thought of trying to race before will pitch their products in the speed arenas next year and those who are pioneers in the sport are running their factories day and night to prepare for the glorious season-to-be.

Local Track Stands High.

The records of 1909 are the foes that must be conquered. That Indianapolis has a remodeled track upon which all of these records can be annihilated is the belief of the promoters after the recent mid-winter speed trials. The results of these trials are fresh in the public mind; how Johnnie Aitken in his National car broke every record from one to twenty miles for cars in its class and the class higher up; how Strang made a new world's five-mile mark, a new Speedway mile mark and a new American quarter-mile mark in his big Fiat. This goes to show what will be done here when weather becomes favorable. And, as though this is not enough to assure the builders that here is the place to make their best records, it is confidently noised about that another speed trial meet may be held early in the spring, before the regular season opens, in order to give the makers a good taste in their mouths.

The public needs no priming, for while ice formed on its whiskers it was well represented at the recent "polar races at the Speedway and gave testimony to the fact that its interest has not lagged during the overcoat and earmuff period.

Atlanta got busy right after the local track had been dedicated and cut several ditches. On that track (which now is scheduled for another outlay of money for needed improvements) world's records became ancient history in the twinkling of an eye and many of the

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The big fight is on in New York city and the first of the three proposed tracks to get completed will reap a harvest. A. R. Pardington is planning a five mile track along the Long Island Parkway and has organized his company. The McAdoo Tunnel Company is boosting a speedway project to cost many thousands of dollars. They sent a representative here recently to inspect the local track. Senator W. J. Morgan has organized the New York Motor Racing Association, and is planning a three-mile track. He has promoted all of the Ormond Beach races and bids strong to be the first in the field with his speedway there.

Texas Bids for Notice.

Then comes El Paso, Tex., with plans for a five-mile course, and an effort to take away men connected with the local Speedway. Baltimore (without regard for geographical location) is bidding for a track, Springfield, Ill., has its plans, Columbus, O., is boasting of what it will do, San Francisco has started two tracks, Readville, Pa., and Boston has a track in process of construction. Atlanta promises to improve its track since Indianapolis has gone it one better, Chicago has a bee in its bonnet that hums, making a noise like two different tracks. Providence, R. I., is getting busy, and Jack Prince has almost completed a wooden track at Los Angeles. There are others who are knitting their brows and who have donned thinking caps, but are not ready as yet to commit themselves.

One fact is plain that the motorists' dream of a chain of motordomes, from coast to coast, will most likely be

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realized before the fall of 1910. Jack Prince will build three mile tracks of finished lumber. At least track racing this season made a tremendous hit with builders and spectators and its future looks exceedingly healthy.

Next comes road racing. What has been the greatest road racing season ever known in the history of the sport in this country was appropriately brought to a successful conclusion Oct. 30 with the race for the Vanderbilt cup, the blue ribbon of the motor racing world.

Unlike its predecessors, this year's contest, which is the fifth competition for the cup offered by William K. Vanderbilt Jr., was only open to stock classes in Classes 1 and 2 (Class B) as defined by the rules of the American Automobile Association, instead of for specially built, powerful racers, as was the custom in previous years. In other words, this year's Vanderbilt Cup race was open to cars of from 451 to 600 cubic inches piston displacement, with a minimum weight of 2,400 pounds, and for cars of 301 to 450 cubic inches piston displacement, with a minimum weight of 2,100 pounds. While these two classes of cars raced jointly for the Vanderbilt cup, they also competed in their own classes for special trophies donated by Mr. Vanderbilt.

In addition to the Vanderbilt, prizes were also offered in two other classes, Class 3, for the Wheatley Hills Sweepstakes, for cars of 231 to 300 cubic inches, with a minimum weight of 1,800 pounds, and Class 4, for the Massapequa Sweepstakes, for cars of 161 to 230 cubic inches piston displacement, with a minimum weight of 1,500 pounds. It was also provided under the conditions of the contest that in the Vanderbilt Cup race the cars should cover twenty-two laps of the 12.64 miles circuit, of 278.08 miles; in the Wheatley Hills event fifteen laps or 189.60 miles, and in the Massapequa event ten laps or 126.40 miles.

The course is exactly 12.64 miles long, of which 5.15 miles are on the Long Island motor parkway and 7.49 miles on the highways and roads of Nassau County. The course is fast and broad, without a single hill to check the speed of the cars. There are no bad turns and those which do exist have a four-foot bank on the outside, which was carried well around into the straight.

Cobe Race Is Success.

The new star of the road racing season this year was the Cobe Trophy race at Crownpoint, Ind., under the auspices of the Chicago Automobile Club, at which Joe Matson in his Chalmers and Louis Chevrolet in his Buick made such sensational drives. The Marion of Indianapolis opened all eyes by its most consistent of all running.

C. G. Sinsabaugh, in Motor Age, gives

Grant, Matson, Knipper, Burman, See, Monsen, Stutz and De Palma. To go into detail and give credit everywhere it is really deserved would take every page in the largest of the country's big Sunday newspapers. One big feature is the cleanness of the season's sport. The complaints of dishonesty, lack of square deal and other such common grouches after events, were few and far between, showing that both racers and lookers-on were satisfied with the character of the season's contests.

The accidents are lamentable, but they are taken, to a certain extent, as a matter of course because every one knows that the drivers hold their lives in their hands. Everything that man and money can do to avoid accidents was done and is being done for the coming season.

It is interesting to mention here that a lively contest is on for the Cobe race for the coming season. Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin are bidding for this classic. The Hoosiers stand a good chance of getting it, but the Suckers feel that it really ought to be run on their own soil. It may be brought to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

The lessons learned in 1909 are many. The value of them will best be illustrated by the events that will soon be attracting the attention of the wide world when the 1910 season opens. Just what event will launch the new season is not known, but that Indianapolis will have sanctions for many of the best dates in the calendar is the strong contention of all of the I. M. S. supporters.

TAGGART BUYS ANOTHER CAR.

Will Use Sixty-Horse-Power Premier to Run to Capital City.

Probably no motor car in the world receives any more severe use than the cars that are owned by Thomas Taggart. Mr. Taggart uses them constantly between Indianapolis and French Lick, averaging two and three trips a week the year round, and those who are familiar with the steep southern Indiana hills will realize that for such service a car must be absolutely reliable, containing plenty of power, strength and speed for every emergency and capable of repeating its performance day after day.

Mr. Taggart has been using for this purpose a six-cylinder Premier and it has given him such perfect satisfaction that he has just placed his order for another six-cylinder, seven-passenger model, of the same make to be delivered in January.

A duplicate of this sixty-horse-power Premier is on display in the Pennsylvania street salesroom of the Gibson Automobile Company, where it is attracting much attention.

VALVE TROUBLES DETECTED.

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C. G. Sinsabaugh, in Motor Age, gives a clear synopsis of the season's road racing as follows:

"Interesting comparisons may be drawn between 1908 and 1909. In 1908 there were twenty-one road races in this country as against twenty-six in 1909. In 1908 the total distance of the twenty-one American races was 4,814.4 miles, or an average of 229.2 miles per race. In 1909 the twenty-seven races distanced 5,100 miles, or an average of 211 miles. Abroad in 1908 the nine events contested made a total distance of 2,786 miles, or an average of 304 miles per race, while in 1909 the total distance for eight races was 1,747 miles, or an average of 218.5 miles.

"In this country sixty different makes of cars took part in the twenty-seven road races and the first places were divided among fourteen different makes. Abroad the Lion-Peugeot was the star, winning five of the eight races. In the United States it was a battle royal for supremacy between the Chalmers-Detroit and the Buick, which concerns were the strongest supporters of road events among the American makers.

"Road racing statistics of 1909: Number of road races, 27; number of miles, 5,100; average distance of each race, 211; average miles per hour each race, 49.2; fastest road race, Riverhead, class 4, 69.9; slowest road race, Los Angeles-Phoenix, 24.8; longest road race, Los Angeles-Phoenix, 480; shortest road race, Portland, 43.8; number of starters, 223; average number of starters, $8\frac{1}{4}$; number of cars allowed to finish, 94."

When it comes to awarding the crowns of glory for the ring leaders in the road racing circles, the limelight focuses on Dingley, Robertson, Chevrolet, Hanshue, Stillman, Aitken, Harroun, Kincade,

any more severe use than the cars that are owned by Thomas Taggart. Mr. Taggart uses them constantly between Indianapolis and French Lick, averaging two and three trips a week the year round, and those who are familiar with the steep southern Indiana hills will realize that for such service a car must be absolutely reliable, containing plenty of power, strength and speed for every emergency and capable of repeating its performance day after day.

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Too Tight Fitting Causes Failure to Close Readily at High Speed.

Valve troubles usually can be so readily diagnosed nowadays that it seldom happens that any difficulty in that quarter, either on the inlet or exhaust sides, remains undiscovered for any length of time. An occasional exception to the rule, however, may exist when the valve stems are fitted so tightly in their guides that the valves will not close readily at high speeds, or where the lifters are similarly restricted in their action. In such cases the engine ordinarily will perform correctly and develop its accustomed measure of power save when accelerated, when lack of power, popping in the carburetor and even misfiring may result. Especially when only one valve is affected in this way is there liability that the real cause of trouble may remain undetected for some time. A careful examination will show where binding occurs.

DUSTY CAR ROOFS NEEDLESS.

Sights From Second-Story Windows Prove Few Are Immaculate.

You can look down from upper floors of shops and buildings downtown and observe the dusty tops of electric standing in the streets—shoppers' cars that are apparently immaculate from the sidewalks.

In a vehicle in which correct appointments and propriety are so essential, there should be no neglect shown to the care of an electric. The roof should be dusted as well as other parts of the car.

Rain-washed dust also has a tendency to streak the sides of the car. An occasional dusting of the roof would prevent this.

Trophies Won by Nationals.