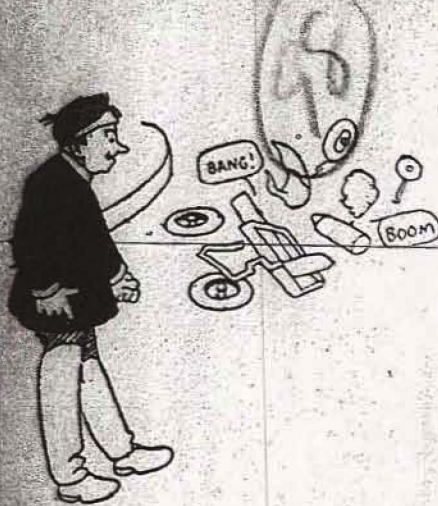


Barney Oldfield Relates How It Feels to Whiz Through Space at Less Than a Mile a Minute



"SOME SWEET DAY."

According to popular opinion, Barney Oldfield is a speed-crazed monomaniac, a motor-mad enthusiast who juggles with life and death for the bare sensation of the thing; a crack-brained youngster who risks life and limb for the tawdry title of champion moto pilot; a notoriety seeker who takes desperate chances for the cheap reward that a cheering crowd can give.

Barney Oldfield, the man, says he is none of these things, and tells his own story to prove it. Barney is a clever talker, and has a way of using his clear brown eyes in a convincing manner. The man is absolutely frank in all he says. Whatever else he may be, he is no fakir.

This is his own story, told yesterday afternoon to a group of local enthusiasts, while lounging in one of the easy chairs in the Piedmont lobby, as he nervously chewed the stump of a big black cigar.

"If there is a man in this country who has a keener appreciation than myself of what it means every time I drive a mile in less than a minute on a circular track, I want to see the color of his hair. They say I am a fool; they say I am a reckless driver; a wild man—I know they do, for I have heard them.

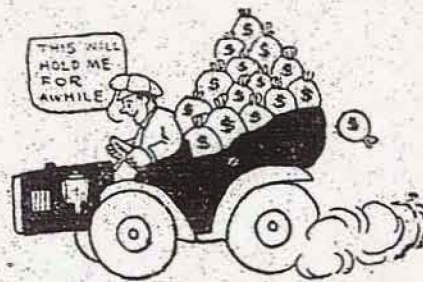
"They say a man would not take such

a chance unless he were half crazy, and I want to be quoted as saying that all these people are dead wrong. There is just one consideration in the world that tempts me to risk my life every time I drive and that one consideration is money. I am a firm believer in art, but I spell it with a capital M and end it with a Y.

"I've been riding too long to care much about the crowds or their cheering. I used to be a bicycle rider and a champion in my class. That was eleven years ago and I am only 27 now. The crowds don't tempt me to take a chance. Don't you think it for a minute. Now, stop and think the matter over.

"I'm a champion automobilist, all right. I'll go through the fence some day. Oh, I know it's coming some day. If I stay in this business, and we may as well look the matter squarely in the face, I go through the fence, and the boys come out to get me.

"They'll pick me up, and maybe some of them will say, 'It's too bad, because Barney was a good fellow,' and some of them may go as far as the cemetery with me, but what does all this get me? I tell you I am as much aware of the desperate chances I take as the most timid little woman in the grand stand, who was never



SATISFIED WITH LIFE.

in an automobile in her life.

"I'm in this game for money, and nothing else in the world. The championship? Bah! That's a detail, and only figures because it helps to draw the crowd to see me work. Glory don't get you anything when your neck is broken, or when your left leg is wrapped around your neck and

held in a fancy bow knot. It's the money, the money.

"I want to get out of this business, but I haven't as much money laid away as I ought to have, and I must make so much before I can quit. You see a fellow leading the sort of life I have been following the past few years must of necessity spend a lot of money, and forms expensive habits that cannot be shaken off.

"If I quit the game with \$25,000 it would not last me long. So the real reason I am driving over these half-mile bush-league tracks and taking all sorts of awful chances is because I have set my figure and need my share of the gate receipts of a big lot of meets to bring my pile up to the mark.

"The fault does not have to be with the driver. A little flaw somewhere in the steel, the crystallizing of a bit of metal that never shows the least weakness until it snaps, and then it's too late, a tire that blows up on the turn and there you are. Oh, I'm not a fool, and if you call me a reckless driver you insult my intelligence. I know what I'm doing and why I'm doing it, and money is the answer. You see I am perfectly frank about it.

"I'm not egotistical to think there are no other drivers of ability in the country. There are lots of them. All I want is to have the credit given me for being the first man in the country to drive a racing car a mile under the minute on a circular track. I showed them it was possible, and after they watched how I made the turns without shutting off and saw it was not an impossible task they took but a fair chance, and America had good track drivers.

"But I don't intend to stick to it. I value my life as highly as any one does. Some day I'm going to quit just like this," and here he snapped his fingers, "and they'll wonder why Oldfield quit the game. You fellows will be wise then—you'll know Barney has made his pile and will never live again—not for a million."

"Message for Mr. Oldfield," sang out a bellboy, paging the champion, who was wanted at the telephone.

Barney excused himself and hurried to the booth.

In the party which had composed Oldfield's auditors was a traveling man from Toledo, the home of the darling motorist. The drummer spoke up:

"Gentlemen, the saddest part of the whole business is that a year ago he told me the same story. He was going to quit when he had made enough money. Since then he has been in two almost fatal accidents, with long hospital sieges for himself, and on a dozen occasions has been within a hair's-breadth of death in a most horrible form."

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Barney Oldfield, Green Dragon

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