

balloons. When the plane arrived, they would be among the

first pilots to take to the skies.

Carl understood them, spoke their language, knew their needs. He had raced with them against danger and death. He knew the fear of "the hole in the wall," the wall-hopping car, the "streak" in which a driver was given long vision of the track with death waiting at the end. He knew the sick feeling of excitement in leaving the pit, and the hum of the final tune-up and the last "good luck." He knew the importance of never letting a woman lay so much as a finger on a racing car. He knew, because he knew the racing brotherhood—Ed, Chuck, Howdy and the others. Speedway was theirs. Carl built it for them.

He would be with them, before each race began, on his knees in the oily dirt of Gasoline Alley, that double row of garages by the track where the most vital innovations in American automotive history would develop. He would lay his powerful hands on the inner workings of a stripped machine and offer suggestions and show how improvements could be made. He knew cars—had known them from their very beginning. They were part of his life, as they were part of the lives of the men who raced them.

The night before each classic Carl would be in the pit with the racers exhorting them to victory, like a good coach the evening before the fight. For them he had built the little chapel near the track where services were held in the early morning before the race and where were kept ready the records of home addresses and next-of-kin of all those whose lives would be risked on Speedway.

Speedway was to be called "a brick-lined test tube, designed to test the stamina of American machines and men."

The first five-hundred-mile classic in 1911 drew the aristocracy of the sporting world to Speedway. Long before ten o'clock that morning spectators crowded the grandstand, and the press pagoda swarmed with the leading sports writers, the track's builders, and their guests. Women were not allowed in the press pagoda, and later Carl would build me my own little private grandstand on the high banked turn of the oval, gay as a cot-