

THREE LIVES PAY PRICE FOR CLOSING AUTO RACES

Mechanic and Two Spectators Killed When Charley Merz's National Car Crashes Through Fence While Great Crowd at the Speedway Watches Three-Hundred-Mile Contest.

YOUTHFUL DRIVER ESCAPES

Buried Beneath Wrecked Car Boy Calmly Turns Off Engine and Crawls Out Uninjured to See Havoc Wrought by Disabled Racer---Lytle's Car Is Ditched Near Club Grand Stands, and When Keene's Machine Is Wrecked Near Bridge Officials Call Long Race Off.

Death demanded three lives as the price for the automobile races yesterday at the Speedway.

Five accidents were recorded when the races were stopped, before the last one, the 300-mile race, was finished. The crowds were becoming frantic with dread and sick with the sight of human life slaughtered on the speed-lustful track.

The Dead.

HOMER JOLLIFF, spectator, Franklin.

Record of Death at Motor Speedway

Clifford Littoral, 27 years old, Dayton, O., mechanic on a Stoddard-Dayton car, struck by a big racing car on the way to the Speedway on Tuesday. Died Thursday in Methodist Hospital.

William A. Bourque, 26, Springfield.

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CLAUDE KELLUM, mechanic, 2322 Bellefontaine street, Indianapolis.

JAMES WEST, spectator, 521 West Merrill street, Indianapolis.

The Injured.

JAMES SCHILLER, mechanic, skull fractured.

HENRY TAPKING, spectator, 219 North New Jersey street, Indianapolis, nose broken, arm and hand crushed and body bruised.

ELMER BOUNDS, mechanic, Jackson, Mich., blinded by dust.

DRIVER HARROUN, blinded by dust.

JOSEPH BITTS, mechanic, Kokomo, bruised, stunned and blinded by dust.

BRUCE KEEN, driver, bruised and shaken up.

MRS. WILLIAM BALL, Dayton, O., wife of a mechanic, nervous collapse from excitement.

DRIVER HOUSE, blinded by dust.

Charles Merz, an Indianapolis youthful pilot, and Claude Kellum of Indianapolis were the victims in the worst accident of the day. Merz escaped and Kellum was killed. Five innocent spectators were mowed down when the disabled machine jumped through the fence.

While taking the southern curve, just before approaching the balloon bleachers, the right front tire blew out on the National No. 10, the car rushed headlong toward the outer fence, carried away five fence posts, trampled the crowd underneath, tore off five feet of the stone culvert railing, turned completely over and fell hot and sputtering on the far side of the creek.

Merz was buried under the debris, but was unhurt. His escape was a miracle, the greatest ever known since time has recorded racing. His mechanic, Kellum, was thrown from the car to the ground with great force and sustained fatal injuries.

Machine Hurled 100 Feet.

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William A. Bourque, 26, Springfield, Mass., driver of Knox car, killed in 350-mile race Thursday when car turned turtle.

Harry Holcomb, 23, Springfield, Mass., mechanic of Knox car, killed with Bourque.

Claude Kellum, Indianapolis, mechanic on National car, killed in 300-mile race yesterday when tire on Merz's machine burst and racer dashed through fence.

Homer H. Jolliff, 20, Franklin, Ind., spectator, killed when National car went through fence.

James West, 20, 451 West Merrill street, Indianapolis, killed when National car went through fence.

legs broken as least, but when I began to crawl out through the mud and water I realized the greatest joy of my life—I was saved. Of course I did not know then who were hurt nor where my mechanic was.

"The first thing that entered my mind was to let my mother and father know I was alive."

Signs Warned of Danger:

No one can blame the police nor the soldiers for the fatal accident to the spectators who were standing near the fence when Merz in his National swooped down on them. The fence was plastered with huge signs, warning the spectators to stay away with large "danger" words printed on them. The police drove the crowd back from the danger zone time and again. The officers said that they were busy getting the crowd back, in fact, when the crash came. It was so sudden that no one had time to move an inch from his position.

The fence posts were cut to the ground like weeds, while several yards of the six-foot wire fence was torn and carried in front of the plunging machine like a spider's web.

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Machine Hurlled 100 Feet.

The machine leaped through the air more than 100 feet after it had crushed the five spectators, slightly injured a score more, and caused a panic among the thousands near by.

All the spectators hurt were men. They were standing near the fence, and did not have a fraction of a second's notice to retreat from the danger zone before the terrible gasoline car had done its work.

When the big National car plowed through the fence and dived into the crowd of spectators, it carried James West, pinned to its radiator across the creek. He fell from the front of the car while flying through the air fifty feet above the ground, and dropped dead a few feet from the machine, which went beyond him.

Homer Jolliff was run over and almost buried in the earth a few feet from the fence. G. L. Bumbaugh, who was standing near, said that he felt the heat of the car and heard the rush as of a mighty wind pass by him, almost sweeping him from his feet, just barely missing him in its death-dealing rush. He declared that no one had time to dodge, and that had the car taken in just one foot more the list of dead would have been more than four times as many.

Merz Displays Rare Nerve.

Merz had presence of mind enough to shut off the engine while lying under the demolished car. When a friend, whom he recognized, rushed to his side, his first words were: "For God's sake tell my mother and father that I am alive." He crawled out from under the car, which operation forced him to travel face downward through the mud and water at the creek's brink, and rushed to the side of his injured mate in the fatal car.

He was forced away weeping and torn with grief.

After the race Merz said: "I think I am the luckiest man on earth this day. As soon as my tire blew out I knew I would have to check my speed, but it was all so quick I was helpless, and had it been any other spot in the whole track we would have escaped with less fatal results most probably. But it was the most dangerous site on the entire course, just by that high embankment and stone culvert.

"I remember my car hitting the fence, there was a blurred vision of men falling beneath us as we swept through the air. Then the rest came in an instant, the car turned over and I found myself under it on the other side of the creek.

"I don't remember when my mechanic left his seat. I don't remember any details—it's all one blot of swift crash-

like weeds, while several yards of the six-foot wire fence was torn and carried in front of the plunging machine like a spider's web.

The Overland Star press car was the first to reach the scene of bloodshed, carrying a Red Cross physician. It was to an occupant of this car that Merz requested that his parents be informed of his safety.

When the plucky driver was crawling from beneath the ruined racer—then a heap of worthless junk—he was smeared all over with mud and dirt, mixed with oil and dust of the track. He looked a dead man, but when he ran his shirt sleeve over his face and revealed his features, whole and alive, it was the look of a man who had missed the gates of eternity by a hair's breadth.

Additional police protection and Red Cross assistance were soon on the scene, the men crawling under the culvert instead of risking their necks by running over the track, which was alive with racing machines.

It was an hour before the crowd had become orderly. Friends ran like mad men hunting one another, not knowing who the dead were. Mothers screamed for their children who had become separated. The bodies of dead and injured were hurried away to the Field Hospital, leaving the excited throng crazed with anxiety to know who were the dead.

The police and armed soldiers kept the crowd back so that the Red Cross ambulance attendants could carry the injured and dead across the track to the interior and then to the field hospital.

Spectators In Confusion.

Wild confusion ruled the spectators, who were made with anxiety to ascertain who was killed. Wives shrieked with fright, not knowing but that their husbands were the victims. Children were separated from mothers, adding to the terror of the scene. No one knew who was hurt, none knew but that it was a dear friend who had a few minutes before been chatting cheerfully by their sides, but had wandered away, lured by the excitement of the races.

G. L. Bumbaugh and H. D. Weller of this city were both eyewitnesses of the scene, and both narrowly escaped death. They helped the physicians remove the mangled bodies, and afterward recited a story of the accident that agreed in every particular.

When night enveloped the battle field of motor soldiers in which several lost their lives, the ruined racer lay, a heap of useless junk, the most graphic story of the worst accident of the day's event, and almost a duplicate of the bloody manner in which Bourque and Holcomb were killed on Thursday.

Kellum Changes Car.

Kellum had been riding with Aitken in National car No. 8 for the first 100 miles when Aitken's car went wrong and he