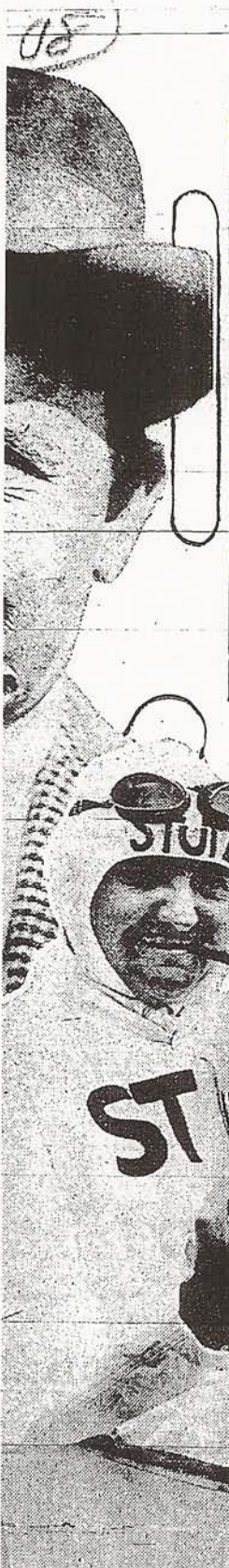


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HAD LOST PHOENIX RACE.

NOVEMBER 12, 1914.

Did not Realize that He had Won the Great Contest.

Louis Nikrent Drove a Red-hot Second to the Speed King--An Exciting Finish Sloshing Through the Mud. Bramlette Came in Steering the Cadillac with a Pair of Fence Rails.

BY AD. G. WADDELL.

[BY DIRECT WIRE--EXCLUSIVE-DISPATCH.]

PHOENIX, Nov. 11.—Splashing through several inches of mud with all the speed left in the first American car to finish at Indianapolis last May, and believing himself defeated, Barney Oldfield finished the seventh annual Los Angeles to Phoenix road race with first honors and won the title of "master driver of the world."

Louis Nikrent on the Paige No. 8, led the veteran to the tape by seventeen minutes; but when time was figured, the mud-stained Stutz had won by thirty-five minutes and fifty-five seconds. Oldfield drove the 696-mile course in 23h. 13-5s. Nikrent's time was 23h. 35m. 56 2-5s. Beaudet on Paige No. 1, was third in, covering the distance in 25h. 4m. 38 4-5s. Durant and Chevrolet in the Chevrolet No. 2, won fourth place although they finished behind Bramlette in the Cadillac No. 19. Just thirty-four minutes and nineteen seconds separated the Chevrolet and the veteran Cadillac when the time was figured.

The cars did not go inside the fair grounds for the finish as has always been the custom. The rain had put the course under water and it was decided to hold the cars off the track until the speed brushes come off Thursday. For miles out on the desert, automobiles were parked along the course and the railroad with hundreds of motor-race enthusiasts waiting for the desert racers. What looked to be the entire population of Phoenix was lined up along the muddy road from the finish line out several miles through the reclaimed lands. Teams worked on the road until time for the cars to come in and the teams were stationed at several washes for the purpose of giving the drivers assistance if necessary.

When Nikrent in the Paige came down the muddy road, there were cheers for Barney. The car was so bespattered with Arizona gumbo that it was impossible to see the number or even the shape of the radiator. Even the passengers on the "Howdy Special," which had followed the cars over the course, could hardly recognize Nikrent as he drove up to the finish.

STEERED WITH RAILS.

Crowds swarmed around the car and it required a force of Arizona militia to clear the course for the next car.

Second to finish was the Cadillac No. 19 with Bill Bramlette at the

thought they had been too slow for the coveted title and pulled away after being checked in without even asking his time. In or lose, Oldfield is the idol of motor sport.

THOUGHT HE'D LOST.

The first thing that the "master driver of the world" did after pulling away from the finish was to remove the clod of mud which had once been a stigma from his face. As he drove up in front of the Adams Hotel, Nikrent was the first to congratulate him. The Paige driver had figured it out and knew that he was only the second-place man.

"It's no disgrace to lose to a white man like you, Barney, and I'm damn glad you won," were the exact words of Nikrent, and he meant it.

Barney came back with the statement that every man in the race had showed true western sportsmanship. He refused to be praised by any of the boys who had battled against him in the strenuous contest.

One minute behind Barney's Stutz came Beaudet's Paige No. 1. It was almost an hour before the Chevrolet and Durant limped in with No. 2, followed by the Ellis brothers in the Buick No. 15, nine minutes later.

There was a long wait, before the Cole No. 21 rolled in, followed half an hour later by the Stutz No. 17, which arrived too late to be counted as a finisher at the checking station.

It rained from midnight to within a few minutes of time for the start from Prescott this morning. The roads were so muddy that it was dangerous to even creep over the mountain roads out of the mile-high city, and in places the mechanics had to get out and place rocks along the outer edge of the road to brace the embankment.

INTO THE DITCH.

The Simplex No. 4 followed Barney out of Prescott at 9:02, and had made up almost two minutes when hard luck sent the powerful racer into the ditch in the mountains, more than 100 miles from the finish. A broken torsion spring and drive chain put the Simplex out of the running, and although Olin Davis, winner of the desert classic last year, drove on, hoping to finish, he gave up the race and took a late train into Phoenix tonight. George Settle, owner of the Simplex, told Davis and his mechanic, Radford, that they could have the entire purse if they won the race. This was a great encouragement to the drivers and they put all their skill and nerve into the race, but fate was against the Simplex ninety and it is now a wreck out on the desert.

Oldfield went out of the Prescott control with the race won and he decided to drive a conservative race and take no chances. After Davis went out, Barney felt safer than ever and just toured over the muddy roads, through Skull Valley, Kirkland and Hillside. The Stutz was still in the lead at Hillside, but at Wickenburg front position had been lost.

At Hot Springs Junction Nikrent was well out in front, driving like a wild man and taking every chance to get the speed out of his car. Chevrolet was in second place at this point with Bramlette less than a minute behind, and Barney running fourth in position.

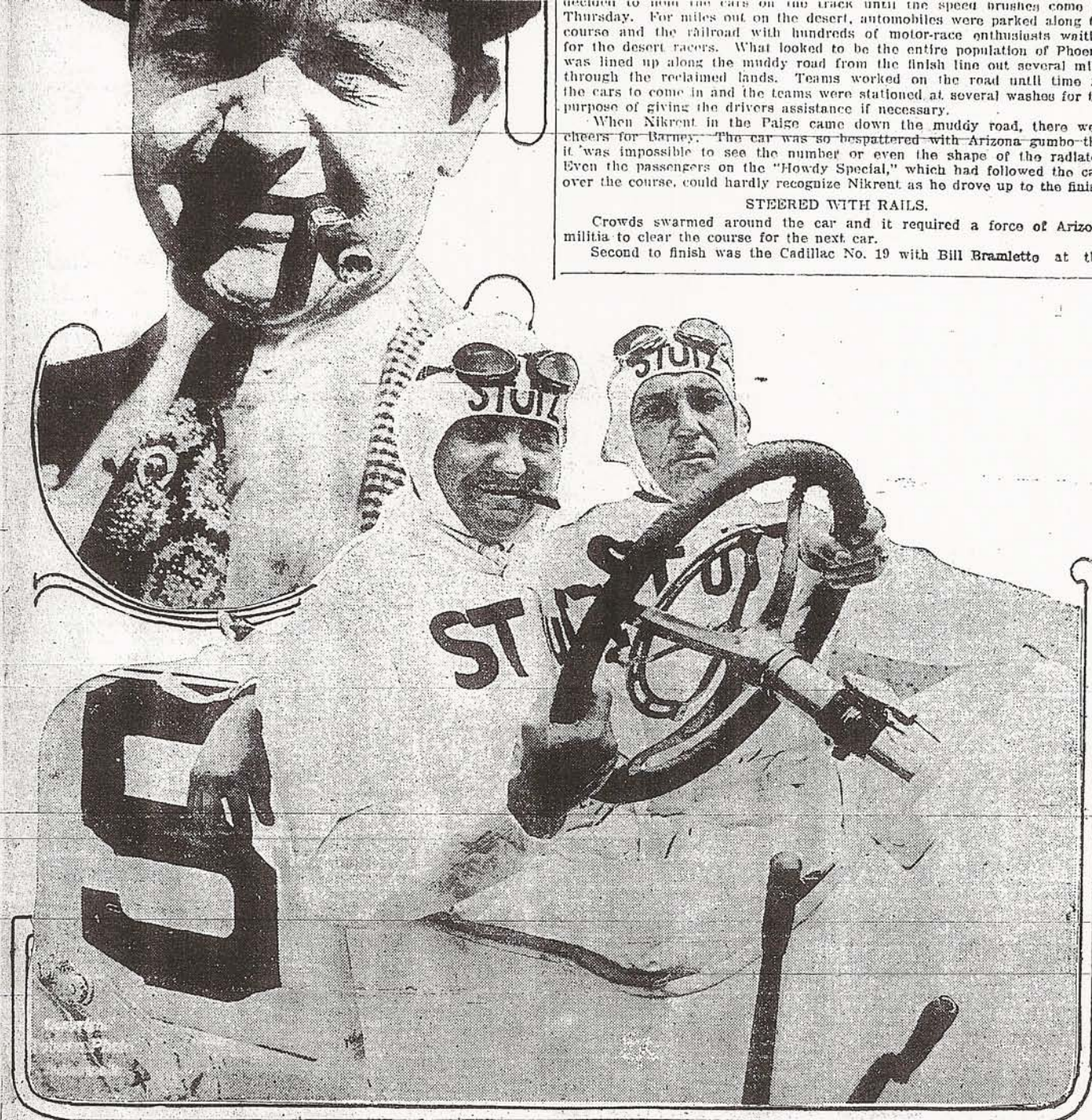
Then it was that Barney began to have trouble. His carburetor picked up a lot of water in going through a flooded wash and when speed was most needed, there was none to be had. Barney lost fifteen minutes at New River. His motor stalled and he had to have spectators shove him to turn the motor over and start the car.

LIKE DE PALMA.

As he started on the last fifteen mile stretch, the veteran turned to George Hill, his mechanic, and said: "De Palma," the mental picture of the great Italian losing the international sweepstakes and then losing the great race within a mile of the finish flashed through the minds of the two men, and without a word the car was opened up.

The last ten miles seemed like an even hundred, Hill said after the great race, and all the time that Barney was sliding over the slippery course, the mechanic pumped oil and yelled "De Palma."

Nikrent and Beaudet both went through New River without having to call in the services of a team. Both Paige cars made better time than third place clinched a hub cap was torn off. The crew was almost out of the race at that time, but Durant got hold of a Silson wrench which he tightened on the axle end and lashed to the springs. This served as a hub for



©Coburn Photo Indianapolis

The hero of the Cactus Derby.

Barney Oldfield, who drove the Stutz into first place in the Phoenix road race.

wheel. This was by far the most unique finish to an auto race ever witnessed in the West. Driving at about thirty miles an hour, Bramlette and his mechanic bumped down the stretch to the finish, steering with a pair of fence rails lashed to the front axle.

A short distance out of Prescott this morning the Cadillac went over a twelve-foot embankment. The crowd of spectators helped to get the car back on the course, but the steering arm was so bent that Bramlett could not turn to the right. He drove on, however, with great difficulty and when overtaken by the Howdy Special, twenty miles out of Phoenix, was in first position, leading Nikrent, Oldfield and Beaudet in place by several minutes.

The Howdy raced along with the old Cadillac for about five miles, to New River.

As Bramlett went into the wash, he jumped from the bank at high speed and broke the steering arm. There was a team at the stream which pulled the machine out after about fifteen minutes work. The driver and his mechanic then broke off two fence rails and lashing them to the axle,

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steered fifteen miles to the finish by rubbing the rail against the tire like a youngster guiding a hoop, with the broken steering apparatus dragging in the mud under the car.

BARNEY'S CIGAR.

Barney's finish was not exactly spectacular. He drove through the mud at a dangerous rate of speed and it was one of the prettiest exhibitions of the entire race, but the crowds stood silently watching the Stutz sloop from side to side in the road, until within a few yards of the finish, then someone recognized the car by the cigar which Oldfield held in the hole in his mud mask.

Wild cheers broke loose. The Howdy band played scrambled notes. The Don Lee drum corps opened up. The whistles on the two engines

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The little Metz No. 9 got as far as Hot Springs Junction, but went out with a broken steering gear, after sliding over an embankment.

The Kincaid Special No. 10 got as far as Hot Springs Junction also, but the car counted out when a twisted axle and transmission trouble overtook her.

With seven cars reaching Phoenix, the race is now recognized as the greatest of all the desert classics.

Oldfield's average time of 29.1 miles an hour does not equal the record made by Davis last year, but when the rain is taken into consideration, Barney's speed is really remarkable and he well deserves the master driver's medal which was presented to him this afternoon by George Purdy Bullard, father of the "Cactus Derby," that of Oldfield between Prescott and Phoenix, the last 134 miles of the race. Beaudet stopped at Prescott to change a tire and radiator, "lost" about an hour, but he made up lost time all the way over.

MORE TOUGH LUCK.

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