

ON A CIRCULAR TRACK WITH BARNEY OLDFIELD

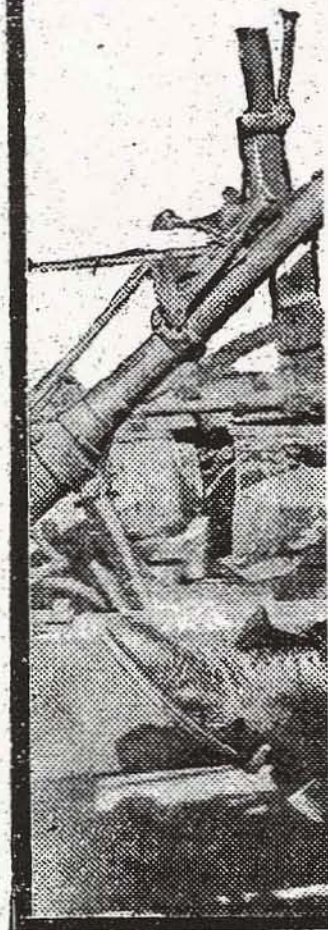
IN EX

BY BOZEMAN C. BULGER.

How would you like to ride with Barney Oldfield on his Green Dragon around a narrow mile circular track? I thought one day last summer in New York that I would fancy the sensation, and so expressed myself to Barney. I had just returned from a trip with the great driver in his touring car, and I guess we clipped off some of the miles in a minute along the Coney Island speedway, but there were none of those dangerous curves to be taken at full speed and no fences to crash through. Suffering from an overdose of enthusiasm which had been administered by the exhilarating ride, I secured Barney's promise that he would take me for a thrilling drive in the Green Dragon on the Brighton Beach track the following Saturday afternoon before the races he was scheduled to drive in. After I had told all my acquaintances how I was to court death, and boasted for a couple of days about my bravery, I had time to figure out what a hole I had gotten into. I then decided to take the press agent's word for the sensations attending such a wild ride, but when Barney called me up the morning of the races and reminded me of our "pleasure" trip that afternoon, I saw it was too late to back out gracefully.

Barney's reputation and record of sensational accidents does not lend a pleasurable anticipation to such a ride. Nor when one sees him whirling around the track, his machine swerving wildly on the turns and passing the grandstand at a speed that raises one's hair, does one like to imagine himself seated beside the dare-devil. But I had thought of these things too late, and my nerves were not the calmest nor my thoughts the most pleasant as I rode down on an express to Brighton Beach. All the way out I was figuring the percentage of my chances for coming out with anything less than ten broken bones and with three inches of whole skin on my body. They were working over the Green Dragon when I arrived at the track. Some one said it was out of fix. I felt like cheering so great was my relief. But my good cheer was of short duration. Barney wiped some of the oil off his hands and greeted me warmly. "The track is pretty rough today, but the machine is all right now. I'll guarantee you enough thrills." That was easy enough to guarantee, but what

to me. As I passed over the top of the hood and looked ahead I saw a fence directly in front of us. I was sure we were going to crash through it. My time had come. I was speculating on whether they would cremate or bury me. But, instead, we swerved and started around the turn. I had heard of the awful dangers of the turns, but somehow I was so relieved to know that we had cleared that fence that I welcomed anything that meant a moment's respite. As we straightened up in the back stretch Barney put his mouth up to my ear and yelled something. I could not tell what he said, but I took advantage of the usual three guesses and guessed it right the first time. It was "hold tight." Then Barney reached for a little lever that I afterwards learned was the spark advance. I felt the machine jump ahead. Now, there was no fence, no landing, nothing but a roaring sound in my ears and a consciousness of eternity looking something like the blur before my eyes. That awful rush and roar of the wind. I could not get my breath and my chest seemed to be caving in. I thought we were going as fast as human ingenuity could contrive to annihilate space. But when we reached the home stretch Oldfield reached for that little lever and pulled it out as far as it would go. The machine seemed to have been transformed into some wild beast of the jungle in captivity. It was in a death struggle to rid itself of its keeper. I remembered that no wild beast had ever been more cruel or blood-thirsty towards its keeper than the old Green Dragon. It snorted, shrieked and groaned and shouted, as the wheels whirled, the engine thumped and the exhaust became louder than that of a locomotive. I put my head under the edge of the hood, just allowing my eyes to be above it. My face was jammed against the machinery of the engine. It seemed but a second before we were at the next turn. I wondered why Barney waited so long before he put that lever back a little. He never touched it and kept the spark all the way up and the throttle wide open. Had Barney gone crazy? Then we struck the turn. I was nearly torn from my frail seat. I could feel my nails imbedded in the steel lining of the seat support. I was holding to. Surely Barney would not attempt another turn without shutting off a little. But he never did. Around the turn we traveled at that awful rate. The rear wheels tried their best to slow around ahead of the front ones. Once I thought they would. But Barney



The illuminated parade of bicyclists last night was not

pleasant as I rode down on an express to Brighton Beach. All the way out I was figuring the percentage of my chances for coming out with anything less than ten broken bones and with three inches of whole skin on my body. They were working over the Green Dragon when I arrived at the track. Some one said it was out of fix. I felt like cheering so great was my relief. But my good cheer was of short duration. Barney wiped some of the oil off his hands and greeted me warmly. "The track is pretty rough today, but the machine is all right now. I'll guarantee you enough thrills." That was easy enough to guarantee, but what I was looking for was one who would guarantee me a sound neck and bones at the end of the ride.

"You will have to hang on here," said Barney; "you see there's only one seat and I am using that this afternoon." I turned and looked at what Barney referred to as "here." It was a battery box about six inches square, with a place for my legs to wrap around the rear axle. The car looked like some green demon. Low, with a sharp pointed hood covering the engine, it looked for all the world like some contrivance of old Nick himself. Near my coat tails was a great set of gears. The fly wheel was a foot from me. My feet were right over a big driving rod. There was room enough to about get one hand on the seat, and that was all. The steering wheel that was to put me into the fence or keep me out of it was right in front of my face. Everything seemed near, even heaven. Barney pulled a lever here and one there. The engines started with their loud foreboding exhaust. It sounded like a cannonade. I vaguely remembered something about so many cannon being fired upon a sailor's death. But it was only vaguely, for we were off. We passed down the stretch rapidly increasing in speed. We struck the turn and rounded it nicely. I thought it not so bad and was beginning to like it when we struck the back stretch. I thought we were flying, yet I knew we were not going nearly as fast as I had seen Barney go. We circled around once more and I knew the "thrills" had arrived on schedule time. The next time around I saw Barney reach over and pull a steel rod, and as we tore past the grandstand I dimly remembered having seen a black spot. I knew it was the crowd there. The ground seemed like an endless ribbon not a foot below me. Then I looked to the side and saw fence posts that looked like one solid board

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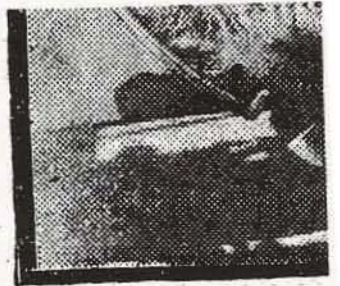
Oldfield's Cigar Science.

A great many people have wondered why Barney Oldfield always has a cigar in his mouth and the newspapers have made such facetious references to it as "the event of the day was delayed several minutes because Oldfield had misplaced his cigar stump." "Oldfield's cigar was an easy winner" and remarks of a similar nature. Barney explained the matter to a crowd of friends at the Hillman last night.

"I use that cigar for a purpose," he said, "and a mighty good one, too. I keep the cigar in my mouth to protect my teeth in case of an accident and it has served me many a good turn. Of all the accidents that I have had I have never lost a tooth and it has been due to the fact that I always had a cigar between my teeth which prevented them from coming together with sufficient force to injure them."

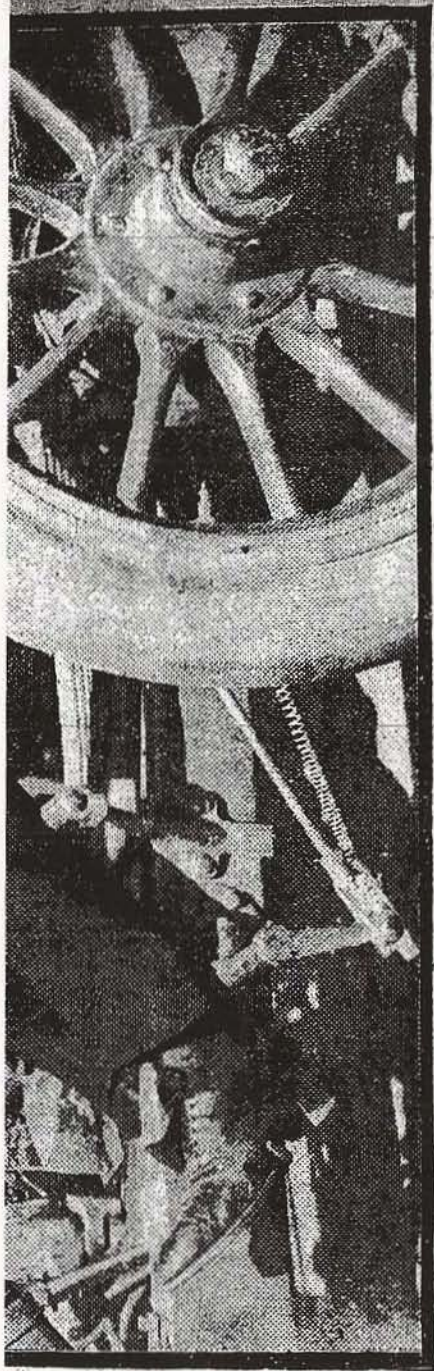
"Just look at this ugly scar across my face that I received in an accident at St. Louis; if it had not been for the cigar in my mouth when that happened I would not have had a front tooth left."

"Laugh as much as you like, concluded the celebrated car racer, "but no cigar, no race for little Barney."



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CLERKS OF COURSE—Mr. Gus Castle, Mr. Frank Steinhauser, Mr. Johnny Toole.
RECEPTION COMMITTEE—Mr. Edward H. Inman, Chairman; Mr. J. F. Dickerson, Mr. J. W. Alexander, Mr. J. B. Connally.
RACING COMMITTEE—Mr. H. C. Stockell, Chairman, Mr. Asa G. Chandler, Jr., Mr. J. H. Nunnally, Mr. Alfred Austell, Mr. W. H. Kiser.



BARNEY OLDFIELD,
World's Premier Motorist, in His Famous Racing Car, "Green Dragon."

The illuminated parade of the automobilists last night was not as large an affair as had been anticipated, for owing to the cold weather and a threatening sky, only about twenty cars lined up at Capitol park for the start. The cars were all decorated with Japanese lanterns. Barney Oldfield and Paul Albert had their racing cars the "Green Dragon" and "White Streak" in line, but the motor machines were towed by two touring

cars owing to the terrific noise which is caused by the exhausts when the racers are running under their own power.

The burning of gasoline on the fair grounds track yesterday afternoon dried up the wet spots and a light harrow was sent around the course which was later scraped. This puts the track in a fair condition for the practice spins of Oldfield and Albert this afternoon. The gates of the grounds will be closed to the public as Oldfield does not drive in public on

Sunday. Work on the track will be resumed at daylight Monday morning and will insure a perfect surface and will enable Oldfield to have perfect control of his car in his record trials.

Albert started last night that the German firm, whose car he drives, cables that they would make him a present of \$500 if he defeated Oldfield by June 1. As Oldfield leaves for Houston Monday night en route to the western coast, Albert will have to defeat the champion in Birmingham to land the prize.

*The Committee on Arrangements announce the appearance of
Barney Oldfield,*

World's Champion Automobilist,

*Driving his famous Peerless Green Dragon, against
Paul Albert, of Germany,*

*Driving the White Streak, in a three heat match race, as the
feature event of Atlanta's first Automobile race meeting,*

Piedmont Park,

Thursday afternoon, March 15th, 3 p. m.

*In addition there will be six events for local cars, and a three
mile record drive by*

Barney Oldfield, on his Green Dragon.

Illuminated parade on the evening of

Wednesday, March 14th.

*Reserved seats and boxes may be secured at the
Atlanta Automobile Company.*

The following gentlemen will serve as officials:

REFEREE—Mr. Edward H. Inman

JUDGES—Mr. H. C. Stockdell, Mr. W. H. Kiser, Mr. Asa G. Candler, Jr.

TIMERS—Mr. J. W. Alexander, Mr. Winship Nunnally, Mr. J. F. Dickerson,
Mr. J. B. Connally.

UMPIRES—Mr. J. H. Nunnally, Mr. F. L. Seeley, Mr. Alfred Austell, Mr. Albert
Howell, Mr. Gordon Kiser.

STARTER—Mr. Napoleon Lajoie, Cleveland, Ohio.

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