

OLDFIELD BROUGHT LOW

Green Dragon's Master Smashes Into Another Fence and Again Escapes With His Life—Accident Occurs at Detroit Meet and Is Caused by Dan Wurgis in Reo Bird

Detroit, Mich., Aug. 8—Barney Oldfield is in the hospital and the Peerless Green Dragon is a bad wreck from an accident which occurred at the Grosse Point track today during the races. That Dan Wurgis is not also in the hospital and his Reo Bird in the scrap heap is due to the good luck of Wurgis. As usual, however, Oldfield went through a smash that would have put the ordinary man out of business completely and came through with only slight injuries. Wurgis, his Reo car running wide open at something like a 1-minute clip, crashed into the Green Dragon while the latter car was almost at a standstill, and the green wagon was forced through the fence sideways, turned over and generally smashed up. But Barney gets out with two or three cuts about the head and face which, while they are mighty uncomfortable, will not lay him up for more than 2 or 3 days.

Taken all together the Detroit meet was most successful, when the handicaps were considered. The meet was billed for Friday and Saturday of last week. Friday it rained almost all day, and Saturday when the wind and sun were just getting the track into good condition for racing a sudden downpour flooded everything and put the racing over until this week. The management lost the benefit of a Saturday half holiday, and many people who had made special trips to Detroit to see the races had to go home without seeing anything except the racing cars in the local garages.

DEFEAT FOR GREEN DRAGON

Detroit, Mich., Aug. 7—While there were no record-breaking stunts pulled off the first day—in fact, no features to make the racing men enthuse much—the program offered was eminently satisfactory from the standpoint of people in the grand stand, who wouldn't have known the difference between 1:08 and 50 seconds for a mile, before the man with the megaphone got busy. There were three features to the program which stood out. One was the defeat of Barney Oldfield by Webb Jay. Barney has always been a well-known figure in automobile racing in Detroit and has lots of friends here. People yelled for Jay, but that was only human nature. Another feature was a hard fought race for stock touring cars, won by a Jackson machine in an eye-lash finish. The third feature, carefully prepared but none the less pretty, was a see-saw contest between Oldfield and Burnam in the first heat of the \$500 trophy race, in which Oldfield got away second, spurted repeatedly without getting the lead, but finally passed Burnam in the stretch on the fifth mile and led him over the line by a few feet.

The heavy rains which had so disjoined the plans of the promoters of the meet last week had made the track hard and less dusty than usual. The delays had seemed only to whet the appetites of the crowd. Even the fact that Herbert Lytle with his Bennett cup racer had been promised for exhibition miles and was not produced seemed to have been forgotten.

The first race was a 5-mile open for cars under 1,432 pounds, and here Dan Wurgis with a Reo made his only showing of the day. His car seemed about as far ahead of the others in that race as it was outclassed later and he took the event handily in 5:40½, with George Soules in a Pope-Toledo second and Fred Tone in a Marion third.

When the second race, a 5-mile open for stock touring cars listing at \$1,500 and under was called four cars faced Starter Wagner. A Queen went astray early, leaving a Jackson, a Buick and an Elmore in the running. The Elmore did not prove a serious contender, but the Jackson and the Buick had as pretty a fight as ever was seen. To the bystander the Buick seemed to be a shade the faster car, while E. F. Scheuffler, who drove the Jackson, seemed to have a shade the best of Brede in driving. For the first 4 miles the Buick had the lead, with the Jackson crawling up a bit on the turns because of better handling and dropping back a bit in the stretches. When the fifth mile came the fight got hotter. In the back stretch there was possibly a couple of lengths between the two machines. At the three-quarters the distance had been cut to a length. On the lower turn and coming into the stretch the Jackson chewed off a bit more and finally the two machines straightened into the stretch almost on even terms. By this time the whole grand stand was up and yelling. With each driver doing all he could to keep his machine working perfectly, meanwhile keeping the corner of his eye on the other fellow, the two cars tore down the stretch, the Jackson gaining, always gaining, until at last, less than 100 feet from the line it forged ahead and went over the tape winner by a scant half length in 7:31.

The first heat of the \$500 trophy race was also spectacular. From a racing standpoint it was not so much of a feature, because the men who knew automobile racing expected just exactly what happened, a hot contest and

a close victory by Oldfield. The entrants were Barney Oldfield in the Green Dragon and Charles Burnam in another Peerless, one that was billed later as a stripped touring car. Oldfield and Burnam had tried out before this race, Oldfield making several miles in :57 each.

There was a bookmaker at the track taking wagers on the events as they came. Just before the first heat of the trophy race a man started for the bookie. He met a friend, somewhat posted, who asked him what he was going to do. The would-be bettor responded that he liked the looks of Burnam's car and the way it ran and was going to take a little of the long odds offered against Burnam. "Don't you do it," cautioned the wise friend. "Just think about it a little first. Here are two cars made by the same company, and two drivers employed by the same company. If the stripped touring car was the better car of the two Oldfield, the star driver, would have it. If Burnam was considered a better driver than Oldfield he would have the Green Dragon. If you bet on Burnam you are betting on the possibility of an accident alone. Besides, Burnam wouldn't be half so much of a card tomorrow in the final of the trophy race against Webb Jay, who will win the second heat, as Oldfield would. Save your money.

"I've seen these machines race before and know exactly what each can do. If you want to part company with a few rolls of long green, why take all the long odds on Burnam that you can get, but Oldfield will win as he wants to and be in the final heat."

But the race was a superb exhibition of driving. Burnam got off to a little better start than Oldfield, and led the green wagon for 4 miles and the greater part of the fifth. Barney made some spurts, just to get the crowd up on its feet and give those who had bet on Burnam, if there were any, a taste of the heart failure they had coming. On the last lap Burnam reached the ½-mile post first, but Barney was coming. Around the lower turn Burnam's lead was constantly being cut down, and then Barney, never content to do a thing by halves, came into the stretch on even terms with Burnam and raced along with him, neck and neck—if automobiles have necks—until the paddock gate was passed and the tape only 100 feet away. Then a little spurt and the green



LARGE CROWD IN THE GRAND STAND—STARTER WAGNER

wagon shot over the line a winner, but by no more than a quarter its own length. But the crowd thought it was great and Barney got the hand in liberal style. He probably deserved it at that, for the nervy way in which he gambled with his chances for competing in the final of the trophy race just to give the crowd the thrills and shivers it came out for. The time was 5:20%.

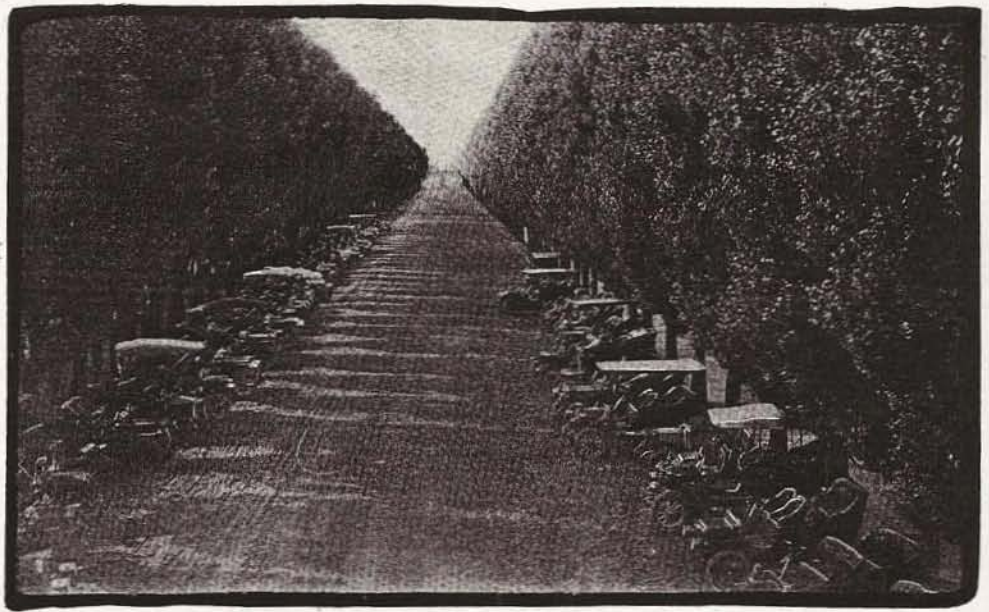
The second heat of the trophy race was not so interesting. Webb Jay with his White steamer was opposed by Dan Wurgis in the Reo and the White hardly got warmed up before it won

Jay's steamer forged to the front after crossing the line, before the first turn was reached he had a lead of several lengths which was doubled on the back stretch before the half-mile post was reached. Jay swung around the far turn and into the home stretch with the Reo far behind, taking all the dust. In the remaining 4 miles Jay took matters easy, realizing that the race was a steam walk-away at the best. At times Wurgis spurted and closed the broad gap, only to see it reopened whenever Jay desired. The time for the 5 miles was 5:15%.

The fifth event of the day was for stock touring cars, stripped, and here the Peerless which Burnam had been racing against the Green Dragon was an easy winner, the Soules brothers in two Pope-Toledos obligingly furnished a second and third. A Jackson car started, had trouble, limped along for a lap or two and then quit. Burnam's time in this race was 5:15%, just 4 seconds faster than Oldfield's time in the first heat of the trophy race and $\frac{1}{2}$ second faster than Webb Jay's time in the second heat of the same race, which sheds a little light on the violence of the racing in the two trophy cup race heats.

Dan Wurgis was billed to start in the last event of the day, a 10-mile open in which his competitors were to be Oldfield and Jay, but one whipping by Jay was enough, and the other two had the fight all to themselves. This race was a procession all the way, with Webb Jay in the role of chief marshal and Oldfield in charge of the second division. The White car made much the better start and before the back stretch was reached Oldfield was 100 feet behind. Along toward the middle of the race Oldfield crawled up a bit, then dropped back again until the seventh mile was reached. Here the green buggy made a bid and Oldfield's friends began to think he had a chance. But they only got a think. He dropped back again and the last mile saw him badly in the ruck. He finished a quarter of a mile to the bad. Jay's time was 9:36%.

Sandwiched in between the automobile races was a motor cycle event which had some interesting features. There were half a dozen entries, mostly local machines. The scratch machine, the only two-cylinder in the outfit, was entered and ridden by Hamilton Carhartt, Jr. Carhartt is a young man who is better known in social circles than he is in the racing game. His father has a big clothing factory. The young man got a notion to build a motor cycle, so he and the engineer of his father's plant went to work at it. They planned the machine, worked out the design, got the castings made and manufactured the motor cycle in the clothing plant. It went up against half a dozen



ENTRANCE TO GROSSE POINT TRACK, USED AS A GARAGE

others, giving them handicaps of all the way from 45 seconds to 2 minutes and got away with the money easily. The time was 7:33%, with Oscar Kratz, a 45-second man, second. The summary:

Five-mile open, cars under 1,432 pounds—Dan Wurgis, Reo, first; George Soules, Pope-Toledo, second; Fred Tone, Marion, third; time, 5:40%.

Five-mile open, touring cars, \$1,500 and under—E. F. Scheuffler, Jackson, first; G. Brede, Buick, second; time, 7:31.

Five-mile for \$500 trophy, first heat—Barney Oldfield, Peerless Green Dragon, first; Charles Burnam, Peerless, second; time, 5:20 2-5.

Second heat—Webb Jay, White steamer, first; Dan Wurgis, Reo, second; time, 5:15 4-5.

Five-mile, stripped touring cars—Charles Burnam, Peerless, first; Charles Soules, Pope-Toledo, second; George Soules, Pope-Toledo, third; time, 5:15 2-5.

Ten-mile open—Webb Jay, White steamer, first; Barney Oldfield, Peerless Green Dragon, second; time, 9:36 3-5.

CLOSE CALL FOR KING BARNEY

Detroit, Mich., Aug. 8—The card of the second day was partially spoiled by Oldfield's accident. One race in which Jay and Oldfield were to have competed was awarded to Jay because Oldfield was out.

The accident occurred in a 5-mile open for a purse of \$150, in which there were four starters. Oldfield has often declared that not more than two or at the outside three racing cars had any business to be racing on a circular track at the same time. Today's accident bears him out. The starters were Oldfield and Jay, Burnam and Wurgis. Jay had beaten Oldfield once earlier in the afternoon and Barney was out to get everything that was coming to him in the speed line. Jay took the lead at the start, and on the first turn had the pole, with Barney close behind and the other two somewhat behind Barney.

When the leaders struck the back stretch it was seen that the green wagon was not working well, as Jay pulled away rapidly and both the smaller cars commenced to come up on Oldfield. Going into the lower turn Oldfield had the pole and was slowing down rapidly. Burnam had the middle of the track, on almost even terms with Oldfield, while Wurgis, who was coming fast, had been on the pole and following Oldfield. Barney shut off his power and put on the brakes to stop his car. Burnam pulled up a little further into the center of the track, but Wurgis was so close behind Oldfield that

before he could turn out he crashed into the rear right wheel of the Green Dragon. The crash as the two cars came together could be heard in the grandstand, although the collision occurred on the lower turn of a mile track. Then came a splintering and cracking of timbers as the wrecked Green Dragon went through the fence on an angle. About 50 feet of the infield fence went down and the green wagon rolled over in the weeds of the infield and disappeared from view.

In the meantime Wurgis had instinctively thrown in his reverse. His car slowed around from the force of the blow it had given the Green Dragon, then the reverse took hold and the Reo went through the outer fence backwards, right opposite the spot on the infield fence where Oldfield was.

The nearest spectators rushed for the scene of the accident, regardless of the fact that the White machine and the other Peerless were still shooting around the track at a high rate of speed. The first men to arrive on the scene found Oldfield lying by the wreck of the machine, covered with blood and unconscious. He soon revived, and almost his first words were addressed to Dr. Burton Parker, one of the ambulance surgeons. Parker used to ride bicycle and Barney recognized him instantly and wanted to know if the doctor remembered a bicycle smashup both had been in years ago.

Before Oldfield had been carried to the ambulance Wurgis appeared, sound and uninjured.

Between races Webb Jay attempted to go 5 miles for a record. He tried twice, in fact. The first time a tire went soft on him after he had made a mile and he stopped. Then Burnam went after the track record for stripped touring cars, 5:09, with his Peerless. His mark was 5:12%. Summaries:

Five-mile open for cars under 1,432 pounds—Dan Wurgis, Reo, first; Fred Tone, Marion, second; George Soules, Pope-Toledo, third; time, 5:28 4-5.

Five-mile, Diamond cup race—Webb Jay, White steamer, first; Barney Oldfield, Peerless Green Dragon, second; time, 4:52 4-5.

Five-mile open for stock touring cars selling at \$1,500 and under—G. Brede, Buick, first; M. Meyers, Elmore, second; time, 8:07 2-5.

Five-mile open, \$150 purse, unfinished owing to accident—Entries, Webb Jay, Barney Oldfield, Dan Wurgis and Charles Burnam.

Five-mile open for stripped stock touring cars—George Soules, Pope-Toledo, first; Fred Tone, Marion, second; time, 5:49 2-5.