

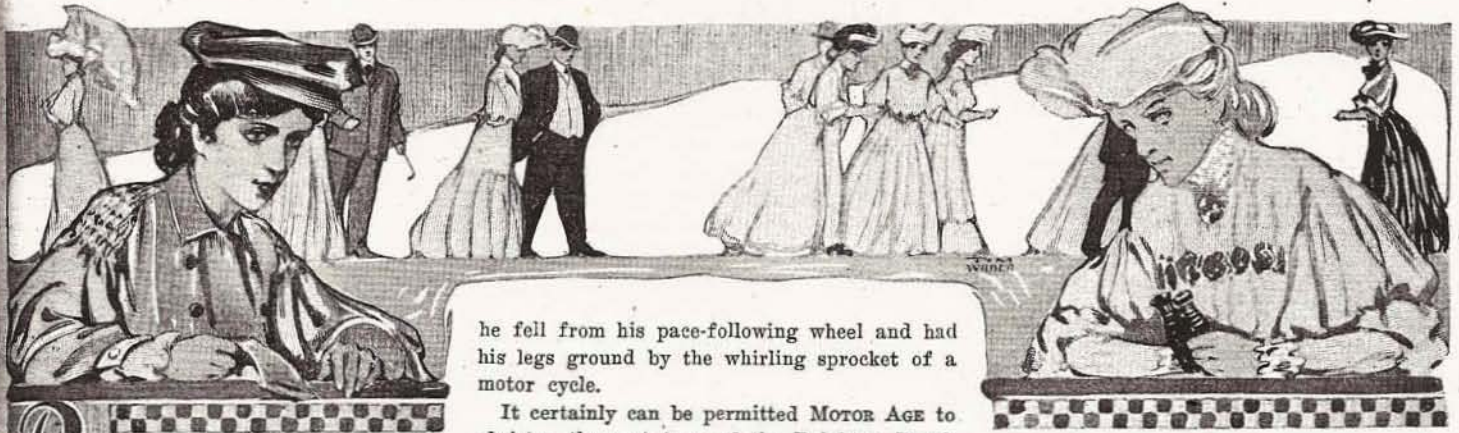
# MOTOR AGE

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## THE RACING SEASON OPENS



he fell from his pace-following wheel and had his legs ground by the whirling sprocket of a motor cycle.

It certainly can be permitted MOTOR AGE to christen the east turn of the Brighton Beach track into the homestretch Calamity Curve. It was here that Albert Champion ran into the rail with the Gray Wolf and sustained injuries that kept him in the hospital many weeks. Rounding this turn one day last year Charley Wridgway had a bad smash-up and a narrow escape. Only last night as it swung toward the last straight Alfred G. Vanderbilt's 90-horsepower Fiat gave way as to a wheel under the strain of the bad rounding, turned a somersault or two and gave Paul Sartori a close call and a battered physiognomy. Calamity Curve is a hoodoo to motor car racers without a doubt.

Little Joe woke the spectators from the

lethargy, into which long waits and dull racing had plunged them, when he came out with the Lightning Bug. It was the first appearance of any of Louis Ross' Yankee speed notions on a metropolitan track. There were many on hand who had seen the little wonder do its clever sprinting stunts on Ormond beach. It appeared in the same form today as it did when it showed its paces on the Florida sands—double pointed tin, cigar cut horizontally in half, and set low on four wheels, with the rounded side up, the driver's head just showing from the cock-pit and a big protruding exhaust pipe raking aft from out the top. It looks like a duck hunter's sneak box, fitted for land navigation.

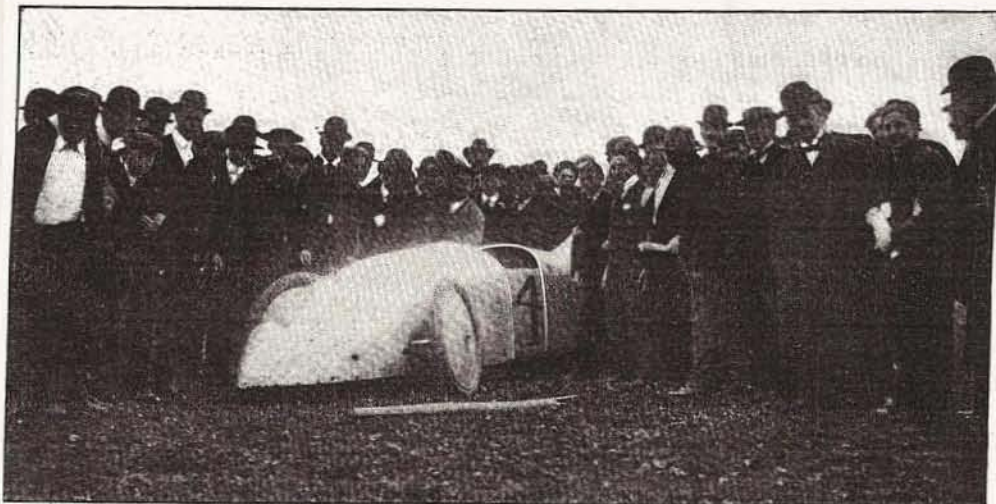
It approached the line fairly slowly from a rather short start for its announced 2-mile trial for the world's track records. At the pop of Starter Wag's gun it quickly took on speed and sneaked around the first turn like a prone flying phantom. Al Reeves's watch said it reached the quarter pole in 15 seconds. Here it shot into a fog bank on the backstretch and one could barely distinguish the land torpedo as it scooted along leaving a long

**B**RIGHTON BEACH, N. Y., May 6—Joe Nelson and the "Lightning Bug" were starred as the feature of the opening meet of the metropolitan track racing season here today. They furnished the only sensation of an afternoon of ill-run and unsatisfactory races. The newly baptized Louis S. Ross steam freak, which won the Dewar Cup at Ormond and gave a whole lot of domestic and imported flyers a bad beating at a kilometer and a mile at the Florida meet, now owned by Charley Heineman, a high rolling pencil of fanning track odds, after showing a meteoric speed flight for a half a mile, dashed into the fatal fence on "Calamity Curve" as it was rounding into the homestretch, and bruised itself badly but luckily failed to murder the late Johnny Nelson's little brother Joe on the occasion of his debut as an automobile track racer. Joe ducked his head under the hood and escaped without injury. Had he not shown this presence of mind the second of the famous Nelson family of speed merchants might have met his death a-racing, as did Johnny that memorable night at Madison Square garden, when



START OF THE FINAL RACE  
SHOWING STEAM CARS

GUY VAUGHAN, DECAUVILLE, AND  
W. F. WINCHESTER, FRANKLIN



THE LIGHTNING BUG AFTER ITS PLUNGE THROUGH THE FENCE

trail of steam behind it. Reeves said it took 14 seconds' run to get to the half mile pole. That made 29 seconds or :58 for the mile. Another less experienced and reliable watch snapper vowed the Bug made the half in :24½. A press agent story has it that Joe drove it in :53 4-5 for the mile in practice. No matter who was right or who was wrong the Bug was certainly not proving false to the adjective end of its new cognomen. It certainly was going when it struck the last turn. Just before it reached the stretch it made a dive for the inner fence, struck a post with a glance, bounded into another, carried away the lower rail, and stopped in a cloud of escaping steam.

Of course there was a yell of dismay from the grand stand and a rush of the crowd across track and field to the scene. Just before the rush started Nelson was seen to leap from the wreck and there was a cheer that the little Swede was alive and moving. He was soon brought before the stand to show that he was uninjured. His story to the MOTOR AGE man was that the track was slippery and the Bug skidded around so badly in the rear that he could not turn it toward the center of the track. He ducked his head and so cleared the upper rail of the double horizontally barred fence. The Bug's forward deck was smashed and its axle badly twisted. In the rush of the crowd and a struggle with a thick headed policeman, Lazarnick, the MOTOR AGE photographer, had a valuable camera stolen.

The meet attracted a disappointingly small number of spectators. Perhaps it was the rather forbiddingly cloudy day. Perhaps May 6 was forcing the season too early. Whichever or whatever it was, the general public stayed away. One hundred or more cars came down. Their drivers and guests, with perhaps one

good trainload of added enthusiasts not owning cars or without invitations to ride in them made up the attendance. If it reached four figures it did not go very high in them.

With the "Lightning Bug" out of the running the meet was starless. To be sure W. F. Winchester was on hand with Colonel E. H. R. Green's new light-weight Franklin racer. It was a disappointment. Perhaps it was too new to have been tuned up sufficiently. Except for a single burst of perhaps a mile a minute speed in the Brighton Beach handicap, followed quickly by a slow-down seemingly through some cylinder trouble, it was an easy mark for such a good car as Vaughan's Decauville and gave no excuse for going out of its weight class much less in competing in a free-for-all.

The racing was a melange of stock car competition with the veteran Vaughan Decauville about the only performer worthy of special mention unless Christie's Christie be deserving. It won both the free-for-all and the middleweight and showed mile a minute speed, the best attained during the day.

The handicaps were as usual unsatisfactory and unusually badly run off. If track racing is to continue its hold on the New York public it is up to Morris Park, Empire City and Brighton Beach to make a better showing than was made today and a far better showing at that.

All races were run from a standing start. The summary follows:

Gasoline stock cars, fully equipped; trial heats at a mile—First heat, 9-horsepower and under, Oliver Light's 9-horsepower Cadillac, driven by owner, qualified by default.

Second heat, 10-12-horsepower, won by American Auto Storage Co.'s 12-horsepower Franklin, driven by Alfred Camacho, time 1:37 2-5; Decauville Automobile Co.'s 12-horsepower Decauville, driven by L. A. Mitchell, second, time 1:48; De-

cauville Automobile Co.'s 12-horsepower Decauville, driven by W. W. Swan, third; H. H. Franklin Mfg. Co.'s 12-horsepower Franklin, driven by W. F. Winchester, fourth; M. J. Wolf's 12-horsepower Autocar, driven by Rodney Peeler, fifth.

Third heat, 13-20-horsepower, C. A. Duerr Co.'s 16-horsepower Queen, driven by A. S. Robinson, qualified by default.

Fourth heat, 31-40-horsepower, won by E. B. Koopman's 20-horsepower British Daimler, driven by O. E. Bush, time 1:24 2-5; Henry S. Houpt's 40-horsepower Thomas, driven by M. Roberts, second, time 1:28 2-5; C. A. Duerr Co.'s 38-horsepower Royal, driven by W. McIlvoid, third, time 1:30 2-5.

Final, a handicap at 5 miles, won by Mitchell, 2 minutes, actual time 8:01 3-5; Roberts, 20 seconds, second; Bush, scratch, third; Camacho, 65 seconds, fourth.

Five-mile free-for-all—Won by Decauville Automobile Co.'s 40-horsepower Decauville, driven by Guy Vaughan, time 5:17 4-5; Colonel E. H. R. Green's 20-horsepower Franklin, driven by W. F. Winchester, second, time 5:40 3-5; Joseph S. Heller's 40-horsepower Pipe, third, time 6:35 3-5.

Five miles for cars under 1,432 pounds—Won by Decauville Automobile Co.'s 40-horsepower Decauville, driven by Guy Vaughan, time 5:13 3-5; Colonel E. H. R. Green's 20-horsepower Franklin, driven by W. F. Winchester, second, time 5:35. Intermediate times, Vaughan leading, 1:13 3-5, 2:13 3-5, 3:13 3-5, 4:13 3-5.

Brighton Beach Handicap, 5 miles—Won by C. A. Duerr Co.'s 38-horsepower Royal, driven by W. McIlvoid, 2 minutes 20 seconds, actual time 6:23; E. B. Koopman's 40-horsepower British Daimler, driven by O. E. Bush, 2 minutes, second; New York Cadillac Co.'s 6-horsepower Cadillac, driven by A. S. Winslow, 5 minutes, third.

Five miles against time—Walter Christie's 60-horsepower Christie. Time 5:11 1-5; intermediate times, 1:02, 2:03 3-5, 3:05, 4:08.

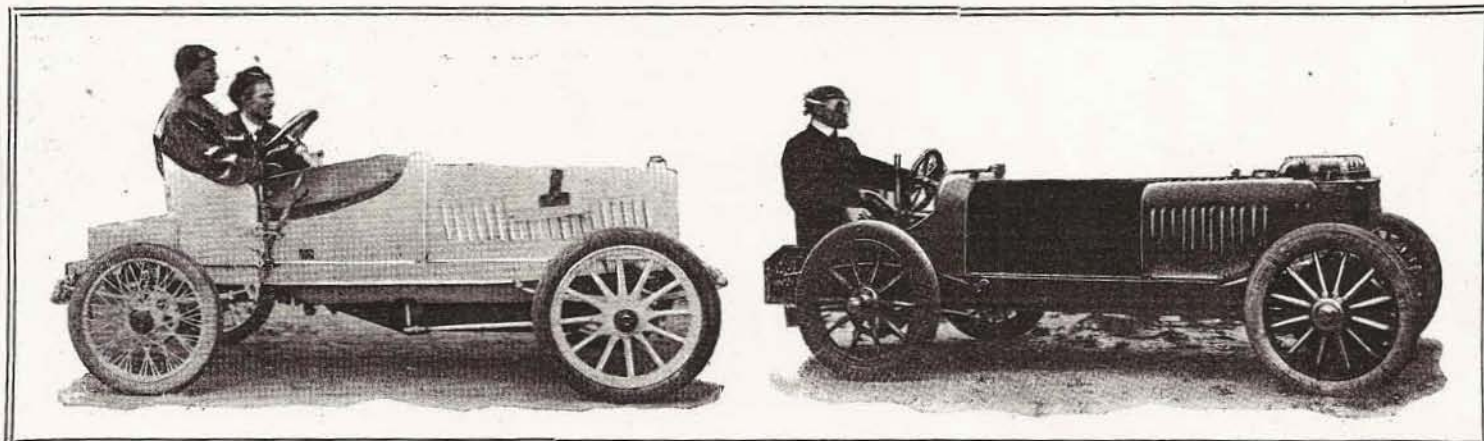
One mile against time—Walter Christie's 60-horsepower Christie. Time 1:02 2-5.

Two miles against time. C. G. Wridgway in 1,000-mile record 24-horsepower Peerless. Time 2:31 3-5; first mile 1:16 2-5.

## TWIN CITY PREPARATIONS

St. Paul, Minn., May 8—The projected St. Paul-Minneapolis race meeting has been sanctioned and the presence of Oldfield is assured, as well as that of Colonel E. H. R. Green, with one or more of his racing machines. Earl Kiser and A. C. Webb may also be on hand.

Work has been begun by the St. Paul club to insure good roads through all the southern counties at the time of the tour to the twin cities. This is being done in a systematic manner, being taken up directly with the county commissioners of each county. A prize of \$500 in cash has been offered to the county having the best roads when the tourists come. A second prize of \$300 and a third prize of \$200 will make the contest profitable for a number of counties. Minnesota roads are improving with each week of good weather, and it is believed the rivalry resulting from the offer of prizes will insure practical turnpikes for automobile week.



WALTER CHRISTIE IN THE CHRISTIE RACER