

THE SAGA OF THE ROARING ROAD

Once there, I put to Fisher the question, "What are you going to do about it?"

"Why should we do anything?" that worthy responded. "The pilots complained about the brick dust, and we have found a way to lay it. They should be satisfied!"

"What!" I exploded. "You expect those fellows to go out there and race for you on a track like that! It would be plain suicide!"

"There is nothing we can do now," answered Fisher defiantly. "We have sold out the stands for the race, and it is up to the drivers to go through with it!"

"Unless that oil is removed from the track, there will be no race!" I shot back.

Fisher's face grew livid.

"You would defy me and my associates!" he shouted. "Why . . . why . . . why!"

I did not permit him to go further.

"Either the oil is removed before the morning of May 30th or there will be no race!" I repeated.

Fisher knew when he was licked, but he had his final say.

"You win, Wagner, because we've got to have a contest," he declared. "The A.A.A. has sent you in here as the starter of that contest, and we can't fire you. But remember, this race will mark the last time you'll ever preside at a meet on this speedway!"

"That, Fisher, is as I want it to be," I replied, and strode out of the office, followed by De Palma and his crew.

By working an army of men with scrubbing brushes in eight-hour shifts, 24 hours a day, the last of the oil had disappeared as the sun rose on the morning of

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Memorial Day. That removal process cost Fisher and his fellow financiers better than \$100,000!

As I furl'd my flags at the close of the 500-mile grind a page boy handed me a note from Fisher. It contained a request that I meet him in his office before leaving the speedway.

As I entered the room, he rose from his desk.

"Fred," he said, "we've been friends for a good many years. I am sorry for what I said when I 'blew up' the other day. Tell me you'll forget it, because we want you back here as the starter next Spring!"

I accepted the apology, but not the reinstatement. I was through of my own accord. I wanted no further part in the Indianapolis murder factory. I attended ensuing meets there as a spectator, but never again as an official.

The Speedway corporation has continued to reap its golden harvest, but it has spent little for the upkeep of its plant. Dangerous holes now dot the brick surface, further adding to the perils confronting the drivers, but apparently unseen by the owners.

The drivers know that Death lurks in those dents and crevices, but their protests go unheeded.

The track has long since needed a complete new surface.

The Indianapolis race is a "color classic." The start is always an event that causes the greatest of thrills, and the thousands of spectators in the more than a mile of grandstands form a giant's chorus that cheers the starters on their way.

Following the parade of a thousand or more musicians from the many bands attending the event, the cars take their places, and after listening to instructions from the racing officials and others directly inter-