

several capacities of which the general public is not cognizant. It is one of his duties to see, for example, that the spectators get a run for their money and the drivers, in turn, get the money for which they run. The rules of the A.A.A. Contest Board, in fact, stipulate that the promoter must deposit certified checks to the full amount of the purse with the starter or a representative of the Contest Board on the morning of the race, to the end that both the drivers and the public may be protected.

On my arrival in El Paso, I made it my special business to see that such an all-wise rule was observed. My continued attempts to locate the promoter, however, proved quite futile and it was not until after breakfast on Sunday morning that I got into a conference with him. He confirmed my early suspicions by frankly telling me that the advanced sales amounted to only \$750, or one tenth of the promised purse, and I was obliged to issue an ultimatum to the effect that until the entire amount of the prize money was in my hands, we would remain on the American side of the border. I tempered my brutal manifesto with a bit of leniency, however, and gave him until noon to raise the missing \$6,750.

Twelve o'clock came, but no Meek. The hour hand dragged around the face of the hotel clock for another time, and I was still waiting. The races were scheduled to start in another hour, and under the circumstances, they were off as far as I was concerned. The drivers were waiting in the various garages with their cars for orders from me; that is, all except one, and I instructed him to make the rounds and tell the others that Juarez was to enjoy no gasoline-scented thrills that day. When he left, he promised to rejoin me in half an

hour, and I settled back in my chair to study the railroad timetables.

At the end of the appointed half hour, however, my driver-messenger had failed to put in an appearance and therefore I decided to go in search for him. Within ten minutes, another sneaking suspicion of mine was confirmed, when a garage mechanic informed me that all the drivers had left for Juarez with their cars.

Now, race drivers have their peculiarities, and this is one of them: They'll haggle over nickles and dimes in signing up for a meet, but let race day come and they'll go out and put on a show for a doughnut.

I commandeered a taxicab and started in pursuit of them, but never caught up with them until I reached the track. There they all were with their cars all lined up at the tape with an impatient and exasperated crowd yelling for action. Also for a certain race starter's blood, I thought, as I looked timidly upon the shining barrels of the carbines carried by the detachmen of Mexican rurals that were policing the course.

"What's a little matter of \$6,750 between friends," I concluded, for it was a beautiful, sunshiny Sabbath day, and life suddenly seemed very, very sweet.

A hasty observation revealed that the stands were full, and I could hear the crowd milling through the clicking turnstiles. What a fine mob I'd picked out for my final exit scene!

It was Meek, whom I had cursed all morning, that saved my life and my reputation as a stickler for the rules. He rushed up to me, panting, and handing me two satchels that he carried, yelled, "Here's your dough. Let's go."

In all my life, I've never seen so many dollar bills and Mexican dollars as were crammed in those two