

that of October 12, 1928, at the Rockingham Speedway, in Salem, New Hampshire.

The fans were gripped by the fascinating duel being waged for first place between Cliff Woodbury and Ralph Hepburn. Suddenly during the 25th lap, there came a muffled roar of an explosion from the direction of the turn into the home stretch. Immediately there followed a burst of flame and Fred Comer's motor, like a flaming comet, could be seen riding a crazy course. His car had skidded off the bank, crippled by a blownout tire, and his flying craft, after several mad leaps, finally hit on its side and turned over three or four times.

Comer had been thrown clear of the motor with the first crash, but his body undeniably came in contact with his pitching craft and he finally rolled clear of it and flopped down off the boards and into the dirt infield.

The throng had been subdued by the obvious seriousness of the accident and, in the brief lull which preceded the first outburst of excitement, there came a shrill, piercing shriek of anguish. Mrs. Comer, from the stand, apparently instantly had recognized her husband's car and she collapsed. Comer's requiem had been a whine of rushing motors and a roar of departing mufflers.

With scarcely a glance at their unfortunate comrade, with whom they had been gaily chatting only a short while previously, the other drivers steered clear of the broken and bent frame which had been Comer's motor and on they raced. It was several minutes before willing hands could lift the victim to a stretcher. He was rushed in a waiting ambulance to the hospital, but he was beyond human aid. It's a terrible sight to see a strong man killed in full view.

Scarcely had the first disaster been forgotten in the constant excitement of the continuing race than there came a second. In the 35th lap Jimmy Gleason seemed to lose control of his car as it roared into the stretch in front of the judges' stand. His car shot swiftly to the right, struck the guard rail with terrific force and then hurtled him high in the air. It took seconds for the crowd to realize that the figure was a human being. They let out a gasp that you could feel as well as hear. It was over in a second, but minutes later women were fainting in the boxes. It takes time for a happy holiday crowd to realize that grim death has been swinging along so close.

Gleason landed on his buttocks and slid backwards with tremendous force, conscious and alert. His first reaction must have been one of congratulations. He had escaped with no more than a severe jolting, apparently. He was saved from death.

What a macabre jest! Safe he was for a few fleeting moments, for sliding in the position in which he was, he could see his doom rushing on him as four other cars came bearing down on him at uncontrollable speed.

He lifted his right arm in an instinctive gesture to blot out the sight of the onrushing cars. In a desperate endeavor to avoid hitting the stricken Gleason, Ray Keech jerked his steering wheel to the right. His car went into a side skid. His frantic effort was futile. Wham! His motor crashed violently into the fallen Gleason and apparently annihilated him.

On came Bob McDonough and Lou Moore in swift succession. McDonough's car crashed Keech's and Moore's bounded off McDonough's, as all three mingled in their desperate attempt to avoid death.

Fortunately this crash occurred far enough down