

Spanish hospital. When famous European specialists finally decided he had passed the crisis, Peter still had another battle to win—the fight against total blindness. Only a delicate operation—one of those one-chance-in-a-million things—restored his eyesight. This near fatality occurred after racing in Tripoli and De Paolo was scheduled to compete in the French Grand Prix. There was a race at Barcelona before the Grand Prix and Pete entered this as the only American contestant.

The course ran right through the downtown city streets and while they policed it off for two hours each morning, pedestrians sometimes took a chance on crossing the track.

"I was warming up the day before the race," Pete tells the story. "It was just about time to shoo us off the track and open the road to the public. Around a right angle turn I came at about 50 miles an hour, just sort of tuning up and not trying to make any speed.

"Just as I turned I saw three children in the middle of the course right in front of me. I turned the car toward the curb, just flicked one of the children with the tail of my car as I zoomed around, not injuring the tot, and hit the curb. They told me afterwards that I was thrown out like a rocket as the tail end of my car shot up. I was tossed up about twenty feet and struck a post.

"My trunk containing the pictures of Mrs. Pete and little Tommy, as well as the shoes, was delayed in transit from Paris to Barcelona, and I had to hit the track without them. Had they been in their usual place on the car, that accident would never have befallen me!" the superstitious Peter explained.

When Pete was well again, he was fully determined to pick up the threads of his career where he had been

forced to drop them, but the wife he loves so dearly decreed otherwise. All Mrs. De Paolo, however, had to do to cause her mate to drop the sport he adored was to describe to him the days and nights of anguish she suffered while he lay unconscious in Spain.

Peter kept his promise to his frau, devoting his talents and energies to automotive engineering and golf. I know what giving up racing meant to him, and I know the heart-breaks he suffers as he watches the cars go to the post these days.

Speaking of Peter and golf, though, reminds me of a test we made back in 1925 at the Culver City track. Most race drivers are golf enthusiasts, and a group of them got into a discussion on the Los Angeles Country Club course one morning as to which was the faster, a racing car or a golf ball.

Charlie Guest, a professional famous for his long-distance shots, overheard the conversation, and offered to bet Peter \$25 he could send a ball hurtling through the air with greater speed than Peter could drive his Duesenberg over the track. The Culver City Speedway was picked as the locale, while I was selected as stakeholder, starter and timekeeper.

The distance covered, 350 yards, was determined by the average length of Guests' drives, plus the ball's roll. Under the rules laid down for the contest, De Paolo was allowed a flying getaway and when he flashed across the starting line. Guest was to give his Silver King a ride. The golfer timed his drive perfectly, and the ball and car got away on even terms.

The ball had a little the better of the Duesenberg as long as it was sailing through the air, but after it had hit the track and started to roll, De Paolo gradually