

## THE SAGA OF THE ROARING ROAD

In 1927 an invasion of British racers who could find no other course for speeds of 200 miles an hour began the third cycle of speed history, in which the city of Daytona Beach began to take an official interest, and which has developed the trials into an annual institution.

While Sir Malcom Campbell was preparing for an attempt at the Thomas record at Pendine, Major H. O. D. Segrave, captain of the racing team of the Sunbeam Company in England, announced that his organization had built a car designed to travel 200 miles an hour, and that he had completed plans to bring it to Daytona Beach for a record attempt. Segrave was convinced that the limit for safety had been reached at Pendine, and planned for his challenge here—the only place he considered long and safe enough—even before his car was built.

With Campbell's last Pendine achievement of boosting the record four miles an hour to 174 and the death of Thomas in an attempt to stretch the record there still fresh in his mind, Segrave arrived in Daytona early in March, 1927, with the first of the supercars of today, a twin-motored 1000 h.p. monster. He and a group of friends who had accompanied him there, after one unsuccessful attempt, waited until the condition of the beach was perfect, and then, daring the hazard of a 20-mile quattering wind, piloted the great Sunbeam to a new world's record. Segrave's performance and the return of speed supremacy to Daytona Beach were heralded around the world in a few hours.

The motor-minded public received one of the greatest thrills in the history of automotive speed when word was flashed on February 19, 1928, that Sir Malcom Campbell, driving his Napier-Campbell

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"Bluebird," had attained an average speed of 206.956 miles per hour on the closely packed sands of the ocean side. Thus, Sir Campbell shattered the record of 203.79 miles per hour set by Major Segrave and his giant "Sunbeam."

Had Frank Lockhart, the American speedway ace, not swerved as he was roaring over the beach at an estimated speed of 225 miles per hour and injured himself and his machine by plunging into the ocean, it is entirely possible that Sir Campbell might have been forced to make another effort to retain the laurels he had so recently acquired. Lockhart's rescue from the ocean and his escape without serious injury was one of the most sensational incidents in the thrill-packed history of American automobile racing.

The shattering of the Segrave record did not come as a great surprise to those closely following the progress of automotive engineering and the crucial tests of the speedway.

If the "Bluebird" had traveled in a vacuum and over an ideally smooth road, it could have made its record with perhaps as little as a hundred horsepower. But the breath-taking speed records at Daytona Beach required more than engine power.

Sir Campbell's speed creation had an engine designed for the British Air Ministry, one of the Famous Napier motors, with twelve cylinders and rated at 450 horsepower. With this power plant he broke the record made by Segrave in the "Sunbeam," an automobile equipped with two 500 horsepower engines.

Both sped along in storms of their own making. For winds attain velocities of 200 miles per hour, and long before they do, trees are uprooted and roofs are ripped off like sheets of paper. Air resistance increases as