

# SPEEDWAY RACING BEST TEST OF CAR

Construction Frailties Quickest  
Shown by Long Run on Regular Course.

## HIGH SPEED TELLS THE STORY

Continued Strain on All Parts  
Better Qualified as Judge  
Than Road Contests.

BY G. W. DICKSON, NATIONAL.

No automobile manufacturer, automobile engineer or automobile driver of experience doubts for a moment the value of track racing if the cars used in track races are strictly stock machines. Track racing discloses the weaknesses of construction, design, material and workmanship as no other test possibly can. Every manufacturer who has participated in both endurance tours and races will admit that the race brings out every weakness that the tour can develop and a whole lot more.

The tour has a fixed schedule designed to prevent racing at high speed, conse-

## MARMON EXHIBITION AT NEW YORK.

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quently the driver can at all times favor his car, as all he needs is sufficient power and a low enough gear to make all the hills, and pull through heavy roads. When he strikes a particularly hard bit of going the schedule will as a rule permit of his nursing the car over this bad going.

Conservative, intelligent driving will generally pull a car through the average tour with a more or less degree of success.

But in racing the car is given merciless strain at top speed. Not only must it stand the terrific strain on every part produced by the application of all the power the machine has and the consequent racking of machinery moving at lightning speed, but it must meet the fierce impact, the pound, of the road surface.

### Little Bumps Grow Big.

An obstruction that would not be noticed at ten miles an hour becomes a terrific jar at a speed of eighty miles an hour. If there is a little mistake in design, a trifling weakness in material, or if there has been the slightest neglect in workmanship, it will show very quickly when the car is driven at a speed of eighty or ninety miles an hour.

The legitimate purpose of racing, therefore, is not the advertising obtained by winning, though that is a great incentive to the manufacturer, but the development of correct design and construction, which comes by eliminating the weaknesses disclosed in racing. Of all marvelous progress made in automobile construction it is safe to say that one-half at least is



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due to the correction of these weaknesses which have been developed in racing.

As to the question of the relative merits of road races, track races and speedway races, when it is a question between a road course and mile track built for horse races, the advantage is all with the road course, for obvious reasons. But we are now building speedways, such as Brooklands, in England, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the Atlanta Automobile Speedway, thus far completed, and the many new speedways that are projected in this country.

The advantage undoubtedly lies with the speedway. The time made on the speedways thus far greatly exceeds that made on the road courses, with the single exception of the natural straightaway track at Daytona Beach, Florida. While there have been some accidents on the speedways, the causes of these accidents have been discovered and corrected and without a doubt speedway races will be decidedly safer in the future than they have been in the past.

The question of the best sort of surface to use is still an open one. Cement has gone to pieces at Brooklands. An asphaltum mixture proved only fairly good at Atlanta and clay paving bricks are being tested at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. From all indications it would seem that the brick surface is the best, but it is safe to predict that, if it is not the best, the proper surface will soon be found.

### Speedways Reduce Danger.

When all speedways are properly graded from the actual track surface to the infield and are properly banked on the outer edges the danger of speedway racing will be reduced to a minimum. It certainly is much less dangerous at present than road racing, and undoubtedly is the best possible test for the car. In road racing there are turns which must be taken at slower speed and the car gets some relief from the terrific strain in making these turns, but on a properly constructed speedway there will be absolutely no let-up in speed from the start to finish of racing except where tire changes are necessary.

Race results, of course, prove nothing about the stability or value of a car unless it is a strictly stock model, in all respects representative of a manufacturer's product, for a specially built racing car, designed for the purpose of withstanding hard usage that a car must withstand under such conditions, is not a representative of the product turned out by the manufacturer for the trade.

In my opinion, there should be an additional clause in the official definition of a stock car. The identical car in the race should be for sale at the list price of the stock model. There have been many cases, as we all know, where specially

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**DRIVERS HAVE NO TIME TO  
LOSE NERVE IN ACCIDENTS**

**INTERNATIONAL**

**DELIVERY WAGON**



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