

Merz Drives Burning Stutz Car Last Two Laps as Crowd Cheers

One of the most daring performances ever seen at the Speedway was witnessed yesterday when Charlie Merz, driver of the Stutz car No. 2, drove his car through the last two laps amid a mass of flames. Merz's car caught fire as he was coming into the stretch on his 198th lap. As he thundered past the stands the spectators rose to their feet as they saw the yellow flames leap from beneath the car. When the car approached the pits the pitmen clambered over the walls on to the track, shouting to Merz that his car was on fire.

Merz rose from his seat, saw the tongues of flame and then grasped the wheel with a supreme effort to hold the car to the track as it rounded the south curve. Leaning far out of his seat, he watched the flames, and opening his throttle as wide as it would go, sent the sturdy Stutz leaping ahead. The eyes of every spectator upon him he sped around the track. Into the stretch he came. By that time the flames had almost enveloped the hood. Starter Root stood ready with the checkered flag to give him the signal that the race was over. On came the burning car. It crossed the line, the third car to finish. Deftly Merz guided it toward the pits as his mechanic, Harry Martin, clambered out of his seat and

unstrapped the hood. Immediately a brigade of men armed with fire extinguishers rushed to the side of the car and put out the blaze.

Men who have followed the automobile racing game since its infancy declared that Merz's exhibition of cool-headedness and nerve was one of the pluckiest ever witnessed on any race track in America. Martin later described their fight against flames and defeat.

"We were rounding the first turn in the last lap," said Martin, "when we saw the flames shooting from beneath the car. They finally leaped out in long spirals and almost took the breath from us. We realized instantly what had happened and at the same moment realized the danger of losing the place which we had fought for in the race. We tried everything possible to stop the flames without slackening our speed. They gained on us.

"Charles settled down to fight out the last lap with the flames burning, and he did. I tried to reach the flames with the leather seat upon which I sat and otherwise to extinguish them, but all efforts were useless. However, we finished, and that was what we set out to do."

Neither Merz nor Martin was burned. Martin rode with Joe Dawson when he won the big race in 1912. He was then an employe at the National factory, but left the company's employ to ride with Merz in the Stutz.

and deserve due credit. Both are race pilots with long records and have many a victory chalked up to their credit. Goux, however, had the car with the necessary power and stamina and, without discredit to the other makes of cars, it can be truly said that the best car won.

ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE MAN SAYS LIQUOR WAS ON SALE

Superintendent Hyland Declares Force Was Busy Taking Care of Citizens.

A complaint that saloons were operating was made yesterday to Superintendent of Police Hyland by the Rev. J. S. Shumaker, superintendent of the Indiana Anti-Saloon League. Shumaker told him he had to direct attention to that fact as the case and if he had it would not be the case because he was short of men.

Tower Injured Near Scene of Fatal Accident of 1909

Jack Tower, who was injured yesterday when his Mason car left the track and turned over twice in front of the bleachers at the south turn, has been in the racing game since 1901. The accident yesterday is the second he has experienced.

While riding with George DeWitt in the twenty-four-hour race at Brighton Beach in 1910 the car went through a fence. Tower was injured severely and was in a hospital for several weeks. He re-entered the racing circle immediately after his recovery, however, and has been riding since.

The accident yesterday was directly opposite the scene of the fatality of August 1909 when a National car driven by Charles Merz crashed through a fence at the south end of the track and killed two spectators. Merz escaped, but his mechanic, Claude K. Cook, was killed.

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