

Work of Technical Committee Was Feature of Speedway Battle

BY CHESTER S. RICKER.

The work of the technical committee, to which fell the duty of seeing that there was no "crookedness," was an interesting feature of yesterday's 500-mile race which did not come to the general attention of the crowd.

The committee had to begin its work about two hours before the start and to examine each car. During the week prior to the races the cars were "pulled down" and the cylinders measured so as to ascertain definitely the cylinder displacement and find out if it was within the 450-cubic-inch limit. Last year the limit was 600 cubic inches. Yesterday's record is wonderful considering the size of the cars. After finding this out and examining the various parts of the cars in order to insure that the accidents due to poorly designed parts would be a minimum, it was necessary to inspect the seals on the motors just before the start and see that no changes had been made.

One thing which is not permitted in the races which are held in America is the "doping" of the gasoline. There is a practice of putting picric acid and also ether in the gasoline to increase the strength of the explosions and thus get greater speed out of the cars. This is particularly a foreign practice, and the technical committee was very careful to take a sample of the gasoline in each car before the start in order to determine if there was any such "dope" in the fuel. The technical committee made this examination of the gasoline just before the start so that the contestants would not have time to make any changes. Small samples also were taken from each tank so that they might be used for an analysis in the event that a dispute arose.

JENKINS FIRST TO STOP.

Johnny Jenkins, the Indianapolis boy who drove the Schacht, was the first man to come into the pits. Early in the race, about 10:20, to be exact, he came up to his pit minus a right rear and a right front tire. These he changed in very good time, taking 1 minute and 32 seconds to stop, pick up the new shoes and

count of lack of fuel. He took no chances of having his car disqualified due to pushing it by hand and coasted to the starting line, across it and to his pit. This time Hughie determined to get the Keeton in such trim that it would keep on running and devised a clever repair for the gasoline tank. He opened the hole up so that he could clamp a couple of pieces of rubber on either side of it. This effectually stopped the hole and the car had no further tank trouble.

CHANGES IN THIRTY SECONDS.

The Stutz and Mercer teams had the finest examples of pit work. The Stutz made some tire changes in 30 seconds flat. This was measuring from the time the wheels ceased to rotate until they began to roll again. The Mercer team did almost as well, often making the change in 45 seconds.

It is interesting to note that the Stutz cars were equipped with wood wheels and Michelin rims, while the Mercer 22 had wire wheels. Very often these changes had to be made before the tires had blown out or had become deflated. When a tire had to be changed under these circumstances it was necessary to deflate them as rapidly as possible when a Michelin demountable rim was used. The Mercer 19 had wood wheels equipped with Michelin rims and it was often necessary to use a sort of triangular dagger to puncture the tires in order to remove them.

One of the most phenomenal features of the race was the use of only one set of tires throughout the race on Ralph Mulford's Mercedes. Ralph had equipped his car with Braender tires. These tires looked as if they had only run 100 miles on a touring car rather than on last year's almost winner for 500 miles. The only other car which did not have to stop at the pits on account of tire trouble was the Mercedes-Knight, 23, driven by Pilette. At 12 o'clock he first came into the pits. He took on gasoline and oil and changed all four tires, although they looked almost new. The Mercedes-Knight made only one other stop, late in the day, when it came to a standstill on the southwest turn by grand stand B. He was going fast down the stretch when his engine ceased to fire. Judging that something was wrong, he tried to stop at his pit, but had coasted so far beyond that it was useless to return. It proved to be carburetor trouble, the gasoline line

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Goux was the first of the Peugeot drivers to come to the pits for tires and had to replace a right rear tire, the right rear tire being the most troublesome of all four tires on every one of the cars.

The Peugeot used long lever jacks with a sliding wedge beneath the pry bar, so as to permit them to be released very rapidly when the tires had been put on. This first change was one of the slowest that was made during the day at the pit. The wedge stuck and it was necessary to borrow another jack from Zuccarelli's pit. The Peugeot crews have a most unique method of operating their jacks. For example, the jack, instead of being put under the end of the axle, is placed under the center. The axle on the side where the wheel is to be placed is raised high enough by the mechanic, who throws his weight on the axle on the opposite side of the car. This has a decided advantage when changing wheels. There is constant danger where demountable wheels are used of the car falling off the jack when the wheels are being changed. If one should do so it is almost certain to cause a loss of several valuable minutes, for a jack can not be placed under the axle readily. Usually it is necessary for the driver to lift the whole car and put it back on the jack. No accident of this kind happened, although there were a number of narrow escapes.

NYBERG IS UNFORTUNATE.

The Nyberg entry, driven by Harry Edgworth, was very unfortunate. He started the day running well, but was forced to the rear by a series of critical mechanical troubles. About 12:30 he came into the pits and could not overhaul the engine, so that he had to stop the day's running in an endeavor to repair the engine.

When starting a race, every car is checked from the rear by the steward. It is the duty of the steward to see that the car is in proper condition and that the driver is ready to start. The steward also checks the car's weight and the driver's weight. The car's weight is checked by a scale and the driver's weight is checked by a scale. The car's weight is checked by a scale and the driver's weight is checked by a scale.

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ISOTTA WAS UNFORTUNATE.

The Isotta racers were very unfortunate. They arrived so late for practice that the crews were unable to tune the cars up and so had to start the race with green machines. In each case the cars were running fine, but were put out on account of the failure of the gasoline tanks. This was the cause of Grant and Trucco withdrawing. Then the most unfortunate thing occurred to the remaining Isotta which was running. Lewis, who was relieving Tetzlaff, together with Gilholly, had a driving chain break on the north turn. Instead of trying to coast down to their pits they stopped at once to examine it. Then they proceeded to push their car to the pits. The pushing of the car by hand was sufficient ground for disqualification according to a rule which had been made the night before at the drivers' meeting. Hence the third Isotta, the one which was running the best and upon which the team depended the most, was disqualified when it was running well.

The Mason cars and the Henderson, which were driven by Dunsberg motors, had a very unfortunate time with their distributors, which constantly slipped during the whole day. This proved such a handicap that they constantly lost ground until they were practically out of the race. The little 1000 cc. car, driven by Harry Edgworth, was one of the worst offenders of the day. It had a slipping distributor. The distributor was not tight enough to drive the car through the race. The distributor was not tight enough to drive the car through the race.

