

Novice Tells of Trip in Racing Auto

[By Roland L. Mellett.]

I long possessed a desire to ride at full speed in a racing automobile piloted by a famous driver on a regulation race course, but I have been cured of it. Three times around the new speedway with Louis Chevrolet in his Buick Cobe trophy winner proved an effective remedy. I have no further wish for that kind of joy riding, if it can be so classed, and I am of the opinion that a few trips of that kind would result in the reformation of real joy riders. I had ridden fast previously on the public highways, but I never before experienced a sensation like that of circling the two-mile-and-a-half course in two minutes and six seconds. The trip was rough, and although I held on with all the grim determination I could muster I would not have been surprised had I lost my seat at any time. The track has the appearance of being comparatively smooth, but mole hills are converted into mountains when going around a banked track at more than a mile a minute. Several times my foot was jolted free of the foot brace on the outside of the car, and frequently my hands slipped off the sides of the seat where I was desperately trying to keep a secure hold. After the first round we stopped for slight repairs and I was rather hopeful that the delay would be permanent as far as I was concerned. We started again, however, and I was good and ready to stop at the completion of the second round. However, I naturally said nothing, and we whirled by the starting point without stopping after that lap. The third round, which was the fastest in reality, seemed to me much longer than it really was.

We came up behind another racing auto in the middle of the third lap and finally passed it after eating its dust for half a mile. During that time I could see nothing. I was without goggles and they probably would have given valuable service at that time. The heavy dust and bright sunshine while we were behind the other car made the atmosphere an impenetrable white. I didn't tell Chevrolet so, but I was really glad to feel the ground beneath my feet when I finally alighted. And I don't believe I would like being a mechanic in a three-hundred-mile race. Riding like that may be all right when one becomes used to it, but I can honestly say that I do not believe it to be exactly the thing for a novice.