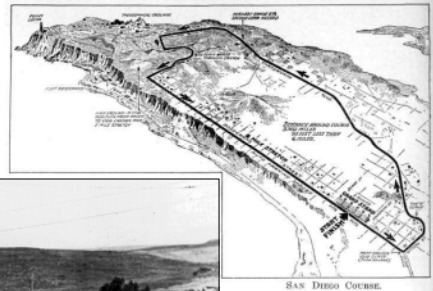


THE 1915 SAN DIEGO EXPOSITION ROAD RACE



As the Panama-California Exposition approached reality for San Diego, it was thought that a big promotion was needed to attract people into town. First mention of a race appears in print on Nov. 17th, 1914. Rapidly, on Dec. 3 a committee of the Al Bahr Shriners officially decided to hold a road race under the auspices of the A.A.A. A.M. Young was designated the business manager of the event scheduled for Jan. 9th, 1915 over a 5.982 mile course on Point Loma. It was to be a 300 mile race (51 laps) on existing city streets. Racing was very popular at the time and the date fit in nicely with other scheduled races, which allowed for several factory sponsored teams to participate. Stutz, Duesenberg, Peugeot, Mercer and Maxwell were all represented. However, as later events proved, the 3 Peugeots were apparently privately owned and entered because the war in Europe was intruding. Peugeot sold the Goux and Boillot cars right after the Indianapolis race of 1914, so was not participating directly in American racing. Most of the drivers who were participating in the Corona race on Thanksgiving were



Cooper's winning #8 Stutz leading the 2nd place Maxwell of Billy Carlson. However, Carlson was never closer than 52 seconds behind Cooper. Therefore, this picture was probably taken mid-race about lap 18 when there was a 5 minute lead, allowing them to be together exactly one lap apart. Note the view of Mission Bay and the trolley sitting at the Chatsworth stop where it was idled during the race.

sports and business sections.

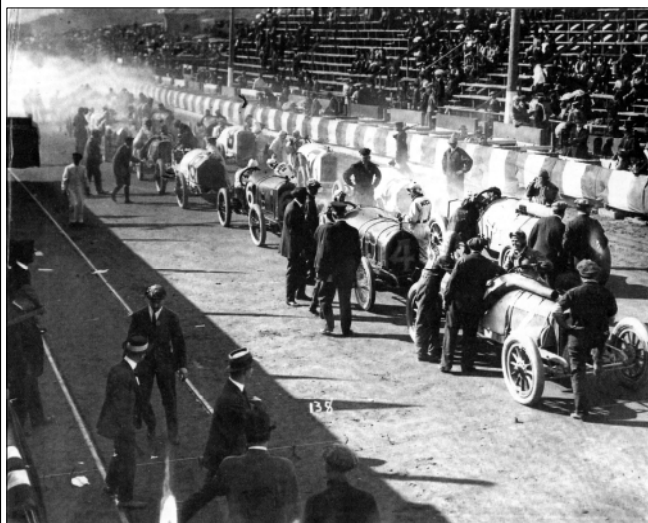
There was a precedent for the race because one had been held in 1913, and the course was established. That made preparations easier. In

expected to enter here. It helped, too, that the Vanderbilt Grand Prix was scheduled to be run soon after in San Francisco. Even so, from the newspaper reports at the time, there was considerable speculation over who would or would not enter the race.

Paid advertising for the race seems to have not been placed in the newspapers, but they certainly managed to generate a lot of print over that last month. Almost daily there were announcements and press releases about the progress of the race to generate interest. There were articles throughout the papers, from the front page to

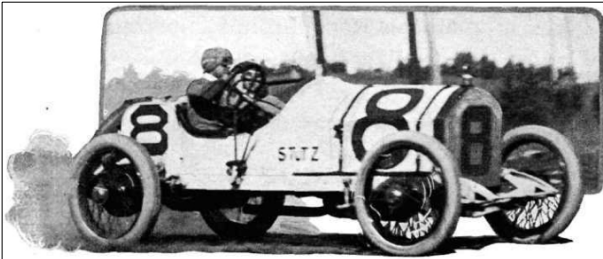
short order, a \$2350 contract was let to Decker & Dryer for the construction of a 6000 seat grandstand, on the west side of Rosecrans St. between Dumas and Goldsmith, with the pits and officials' boxes located on the opposite side of the street. The reporters were provided with the latest in telephone communications direct to trackside. Fencing & a bridge were included in the bid price, along with their removal after the event.

All of the streets were unpaved at the time, and the Point Loma Railroad (trolley) ran down one side of Rosecrans to Wabash (now Nimitz



Just before the start; the cars started in order of their assigned numbers.

Place	Driver	Mechanician	Car	#
1	Earl Cooper	R. Dutton	Stutz	8
2	William Carlson	Paul Franzen	Maxwell	17
3	Tom Alley	L. R. Shipley	Duesenberg	2
4	Glover Ruckstell	John Jepsen	Mercer	4
5	William Taylor	B. Ghinda	Alco	20
6	Eddie O'Donnell/ Jack Callaghan	Peter Henderson	Duesenberg	19
7	Fred McCarthy	O. C. Linthwaite	Peugeot	9
8	Barney Oldfield	George Hill	Maxwell	14
9	Al Lambla (A.T. Dickey)	Ed Frowiss	Carling special	16
10	Eddie Rickenbacher	M. T. Diebolt	Peugeot	7
11	L.B. Shields	Grover Young	Shields' special	18
12	Louis Nikrent	Kenneth Nikrent	Mercer	12
13	Jack Gable	W. H. Carleton	Tahis special	3
14	A.A. Cadwell/ Tony Jannette	Jack Williams	Marmon	11
15	Bob Burman	Eric Schrader	Peugeot	6
16	Jack Callaghan	Louis LeCocq	Duesenberg	10
17	Huntley Gordon	W. W. Gordon	Mercer	5
18	Art Klein	Fred Comer	King	15
dns	Harry Grant	Roxie Pallotti	Sunbeam	1



Cooper behind the wheel of the winning #8 Stutz.



Ruckstell & Gable at the starting line.

Hwy. and out to Ocean Beach and Wonderland. The roads were smoothed and banked to accommodate the racers, and the work was probably a welcome benefit to the local residents, as well.

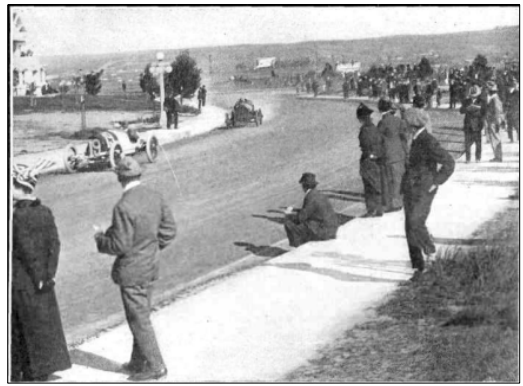
Fred J. Wagner, who had just officiated at the Corona race, was hired for \$400 to be the starter for this race. The race was under official A.A.A. sanction #786. It was to be for one event only; a class "D" non-stock free-for-all race. Prize money was posted for a total of \$10,000; \$5000 for 1st, \$2500 for 2nd, \$1250 for 3rd, \$750 for 4th, & \$500 for 5th place. The entry fee was \$150. Also, a \$2500 prize was offered by the Al Bahr Temple for a new world's speed record over the 300 miles. That was a pretty safe bet, because the hilly course in Point Loma did not compare to other flat tracks, such as Corona. Despite the fact that many of the world's best cars and drivers were

entered, no one really expected to see a world record speed. The Horseless Age said, "[the race] was disappointing to no one, except

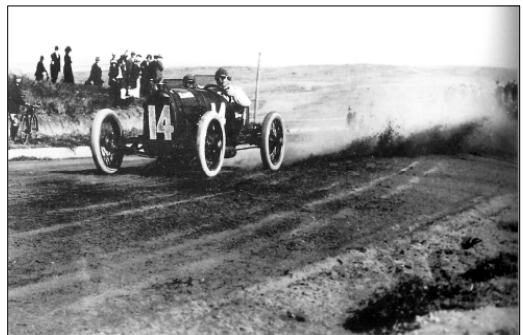
possibly those who came to see serious smashups." There were a few casualties, but nothing serious. The promoters had a number of fully staffed field hospitals and ambulances placed around the course in the event of a serious mishap, which was expected and very common for the racers in those days. They were located to enable recovery and transport without having to cross the race course.

For security, 250 Marines from Camp Howard were detailed to keep the course clear. Al Bahr Shriners sponsored the race and provided members to patrol and sell tickets.

The course was also rigged with an intricate telephone communication system so that the officials could be apprised of any events immediately. This was an innovation that was important to a course that covered almost six miles.



Burman in Peugeot #6 attempting to overtake O'Donnell's #19 Duesenberg at the clubhouse turn (PL Golf Club distant upper right).



Barney Oldfield raises a dirt cloud. The roads were all disintegrated granite, as DG was called back then. This location is probably at the top of Chatsworth about where Dana Jr. High School is today, with a part of Mission Bay just visible over the rear wheel.



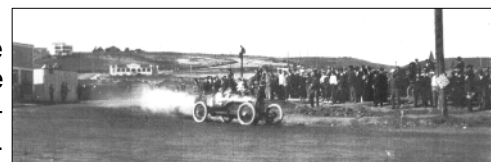
The Roseville corner as it appears now, with the ghost of Barney Oldfield driving the #14 Maxwell with George Hill, his mechanic, superimposed.



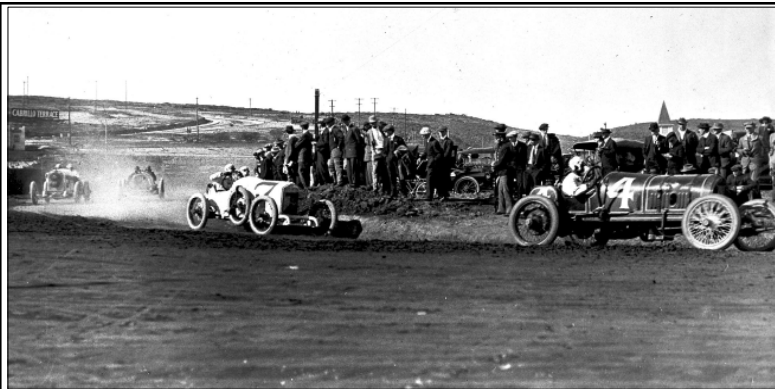
A ghostly Cooper and Carlson are superimposed on present day Chatsworth Blvd., showing the development of the past 100 years.

The layout of the course placed the start in front of the grandstand on Rosecrans St. at Elliot St. heading north. Today, Elliot street is now spelled with two "t's". The first turn was at

Lytton St., called the country club turn because the Point Loma Golf Club was located nearby and Rosecrans ended abruptly at crossing at Wabash and back up



This is the original photo of Barney at Roseville, clearly showing the sparse population of Point Loma. Today, there isn't a vacant lot left in the hills of "Cabrillo Terrace," as a banner in the background proclaims.



Ruckstell #4, leads Rickenbacher #7, McCarthy #9 and probably Duesenberg #2 or #19 around the Roseville turn at Rosecrans & Cañon street. (Note the Cabrillo Terrace real estate banner in the upper left. Rapid development of Point Loma probably prevented subsequent racing.)



TO ADVANCE PURCHASERS

TO FACILITATE MOVEMENT
PLEASE SHOW TICKET
UPON REQUEST

Take Special street cars opposite Grant Hotel direct to grounds.
Automobiles via Broadway, India Street and Pt. Loma Boulevard.
Free Parking Space in rear of Grand Stand. After race starts cars must be parked outside race grounds preferably back of pits.
Foot bridge over course at Main Entrance to Stand.
Watch daily papers for time of starting.

the hill to the crest of Point Loma, onto Catalina Blvd. with an angled left turn. A straight run out the Point to Talbot St., which was called the Theosophical turn due to its proximity to Madam Tingley's Theosophical Institute at Lomaland (and not much else was in the neighborhood back then). This was a double turn because the route immediately turned again to Cañon St., making for a very sharp hairpin turn for those running at high speed. The run was then downhill with an "S" curve through the canyon to the Roseville turn onto Rosecrans St. (which was also very sharp) for a long 2-mile straightaway where the cars really could put on the speed, completing the lap back to Elliot St. and the grandstand and pit area.

19 cars were entered, and all but one made it to the start:

Harry Grant in the #1 Sunbeam was pulled from the race at the last minute by the car's owner. Newspaper articles at the time said it

was because the car had suffered a cracked frame during practice that was only discovered that morning and was scratched.

#2 was a Duesenberg driven by Tom Alley.

#3, the Tahis Special driven by Jack Gable with a special chassis intended for the Elgin races.

#4, a Mercer driven by Guy Ruckstell.

#5, a Mercer campaigned by driver Gordon Huntley as the Gordon Special.

#6, a Peugeot driven by Bob Burman. This was the fast Peugeot driven by Goux at Indianapolis in 1914, (but he was plagued with tire troubles.)

#7, another Peugeot driven by Eddie Rickenbacher. This was most probably the Boillot Peugeot from Indianapolis.

#8, the lone Stutz driven by Earl Cooper, which won the race.

#9, a third Peugeot driven by Fred McCarthy.

#10, a Duesenberg driven by

Jack Callaghan.

#11, a Marmon, driven by A.A. Cadwell, a driver from L.A.

#12, a Mercer driven by Louis Nikrent.

#14, a Maxwell driven by Barney Oldfield.

#15, a King driven by Arthur Klein

#16, a Schacht entered as the Carling Special, driven by Al Lambla and reported to be the race car Hal Shaine was driving when he was killed in the Playa del Rey motordrome in 1912.

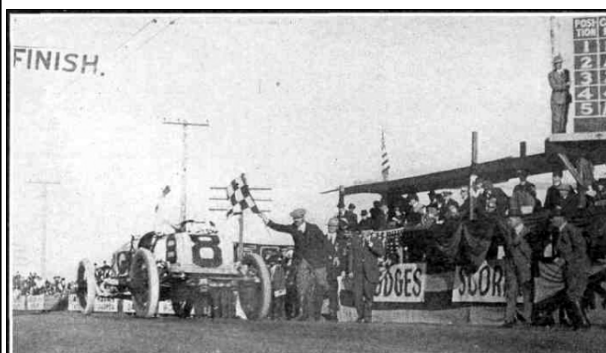
#17, A Maxwell driven by Billy Carlson, who finished second and drove non-stop the entire race.

#18, a 1910 National entered as the Shields' Special and driven by L. B. Shields of San Diego.

#19, another Duesenberg, driven by Eddie O'Donnell.

#20, an Alco driven by Billy Taylor.

The race was to start at 11:00 with two cars at a time leaving at 30 second intervals from the start/finish line at Elliot St. Timing was



Earl Cooper takes the checkered flag, waved by starter, Fred J. Wagner.



Barney Oldfield again, with mechanic George Hill, in the #14 Maxwell at the Theosophical turn at Catalina, Talbot & Cañon.

Snapshots of Race Drivers Who Will Participate in Today's Classic in the Order They Will Start. Top (left to right), Harry Grant, Tom Alley, Jack Gable, Grover Rickstell, Huntley Gordon, Bob Burman, Eddie Rickenbacher, Earl Cooper, Fred McCarthy, Jack Callaghan, A. A. Cadwell, Louis Nikrent, Barney Oldfield, Arthur Klein. Below (left to right), A. T. Dickey, W. H. Carlson, L. B. Shidls, Eddie O'Donnell, William Taylor.



supposed to have been done by six young ladies trained on the new electrical timing equipment (it was reported that many young men were vying for the training jobs), but something went awry, they didn't appear on time, and several well known racing fans were pressed into service at the last minute, including famous aviator Glenn Martin. (Did the young men run off with the ladies?) Perhaps they were just delayed in the traffic jam, as nothing was ever said about it later. Separate score sheets were used for each car, ensuring the accuracy of the results.

Since the #1 car was pulled at the last minute, the #2 car driven by Tom Alley started alone as the first send-off. Of interest to note, the cars were started in order of their racing numbers, and the numbers for this race were assigned to avoid as much repainting as possible. Apparently, this was a common practice at the time, and numbers were not assigned to specific cars for a season. So, many of the cars wore numbers from their previous races. (This can be deceiving, however, when trying to ascertain which actual car participated with a specific driver at any given race.) Because of the timed start, there was no particular advantage to a pole position. However, Tom Alley in car #2 was credited for leading the first part of the race because he was the first one to start and had 30 seconds on the next two cars. This was confusing to spectators, as the first car around was not necessarily the one in the lead based on elapsed

time. The order of cars completing the first lap was thus: 2, 4, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 11, 14, 17, 19, 18, 16, & 20. The #5 Gordon Special, the #10 Duesenberg, and the #15 King didn't make it past the first lap to be counted.

This was a grueling race that ultimately saw only 6 cars running at the end. As was expected, the grades and turns of the course were challenging for both driver and car.

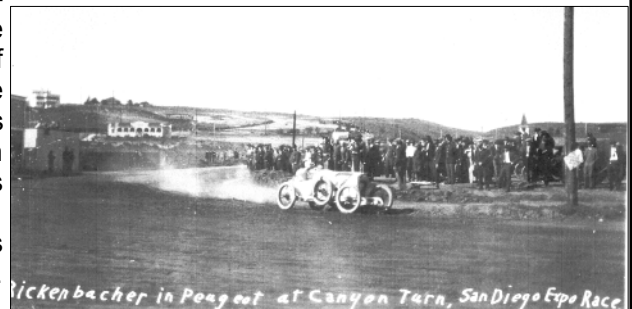
The first casualty was suffered immediately upon the start, when Art Klein, driving the #15 King, popped the clutch, twisting off the pinion shaft, which locked up the entire rear end, leaving it frozen on the starting line. All the officials could not push it forward an inch. With time critical for the next 2 cars to be sent off (with 5 minute laps possible, there was only about 30 seconds after the last car would start before the first cars would arrive, completing their first lap), the starter called for the next cars to roll up astride the disabled King and they were dispatched from that position. After everyone was off, the officials managed to roll the King backward off the track before those first cars bore down on them, and it was retired.

That first lap was disastrous. Gordon's #5 Special, a Mercer,

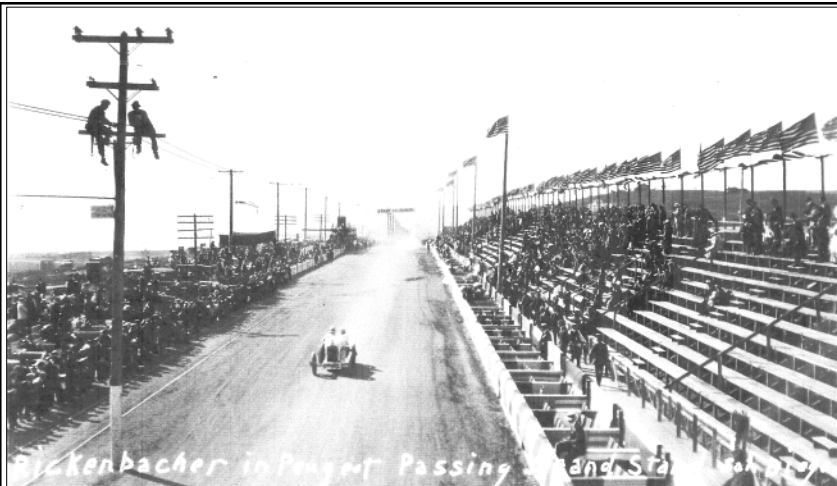
struck the railroad crossing on the backstretch (presumably at the Wabash crossing), blowing 3 tires and hit the curb, barely missing a car full of spectators and destroying his radiator. Gordon was unhurt.

Then, a minute later, Callaghan, driving #10 Duesenberg, lost control at the Theosophical Institute corner (Talbot St.), skidding into a telephone pole head-on. His was the only real injury of the day, losing 2 front teeth from taking a big bite out of the steering wheel in the crash. His mechanic was badly bruised, but nothing broken. It did not seem to affect Callaghan much, as he later took over team mate O'Donnell's #19 Duesenberg (Duesenberg had a team of 3 cars) to finish the race.

Barney Oldfield had a minor mishap on the first lap, too. He roared down the canyon to the Roseville turn with too much speed and missed the turn. He slammed the brakes and reversed the car back up onto the course to continue, dropping 2 minutes in the process. He must have been really moving! Bob Burman also misjudged the turn and did a wide sweep over the curb and through the weeds and back onto the course, just missing



Eddie Rickenbacher and the #7 Peugeot at the Roseville turn.



Looking down Rosecrans from the foot bridge overpass constructed at about Goldsmith for the race. The grandstand was 3 blocks long, with the pit area and the officials and press facilities on the left. Note the trolley tracks along the east side.

a house 25 yards from the corner.

After that 1st lap, the drivers seemed to get the feel of the course. Bob Burman, in the #6 Peugeot, who was one of the favorites along with Oldfield and Cooper, only made it to the 7th lap, retiring with a broken connecting rod.

Cadwell, driving #11 Marmon, sprained his wrist bouncing over the railroad tracks (probably the same place that Gordon crashed) and was relieved by Tony Jannette. Jannette managed only one more lap before having to retire because of a cracked cylinder in the Marmon.

The #3 Tahis Special, driven by Jack Gable, was notable for the rocket shaped oil/water tank above the hood, which was a design attempt at better cooling. The car is still here in San Diego, although much modified (as all race cars were usually improved between

races), without the oil tank. It was described as having a Robinson chassis (Fred Robinson was the owner/builder) with a Wisconsin engine. It was specially designed for the Elgin races. It was running in 4th place when a broken wrist pin stopped it on Cañon St. in the 11th lap.

The #12 Mercer of Louis Nikrent suffered a broken fuel line due to a flying rock in the 14th lap.

Les Shields in the #18 Shields' Special (a 1910 National) managed 22 laps before ignition trouble stopped him.

From the start, Tom Alley, in the #2 Duesenberg, kept in front, with Rickenbacher and Burman hot on his tail. Rickenbacher and the #7 Peugeot took over the physical lead in the 19th lap and held it for 4 more until he, too, suffered a broken connecting rod on the 23rd lap. Rickenbacher drew considerable interest because he was



Harry Grant's Sunbeam #1, withdrawn before the start.



Tom Alley's Duesenberg #2.



The Tahis Special #3, with its oil cooler on the hood.



Glover Ruckstell's Mercer #4.



Huntley Gordon's Gordon Special #5 (a Mercer)



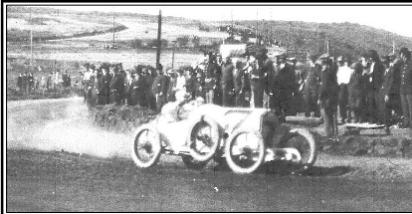
"Wild Bob" Burman and the Peugeot #6.



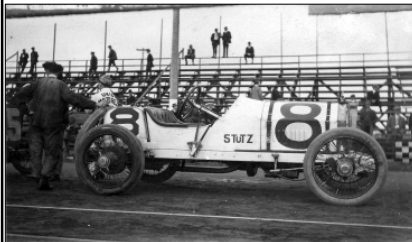
This was the special communication gear that Eddie Rickenbacher (l) invented to better work with his mechanic.



Bob Burman breaks a connecting rod at Roseville. Note the crowd over the rear wheel in the background at the turn.



Eddie Rickenbacher in Peugeot #7.



The winning Stutz #8 of Earl Cooper



Fred McCarthy's Peugeot #9.



Jack Callaghan's Duesenberg #10



A.A. Cadwell's Marmon #11.



Louis Nikrent's Mercer #12

wearing a patented telephone device enabling him to converse with his riding mechanic over the noise of the race car. It combined a helmet (the early racing leather type) with goggles, face mask & speaking tube.

The #16 Carling special (A Schact) burned out a connecting rod bearing while running far back in 9th place on lap 25. It was actually driven by Al Lambla, who is listed as the mechanic in most references. A.T. Dickey, who was scheduled to drive the car, pulled out at the last minute because, "his aging mother was frantic with worry over the danger." (Credit media hype for that one. The headlines for the past two weeks had been all about the "death-defying stunts" of the racers.) Ed Frowiss moved in as mechanic for Lambla. Carling, Dickey, Lambla, and Frowiss were apparently local friends and neighbors.

Barney Oldfield, behind the wheel of Maxwell #14, gamely kept in the race until lap 37, when the car caught fire. Everyone ran out with buckets of water, dousing the fire and got him going again, but Barney was done for. He had been suffering ignition trouble and twice changed out the spark plugs, losing much time in the process. In addition to Barney's trouble at the Roseville turn on his first lap, others also had trouble at this corner, 4 cars retiring there. Despite seemingly adequate practice, some of the drivers must have been on an adrenaline high, considering all the early incidents. The retirements at Roseville were all mechanical problems, despite Burman and Oldfield's off-course excursions.

McCarthy in the #9 Peugeot was in 5th place on lap 41 when he suffered a broken connecting rod on the Roseville turn at the beginning of the Rosecrans straightaway. About the same time, O'Donnell's #19 Duesenberg burnt out

a coil on Cañon, just up the course from the Roseville turn. Presumably because of the telephone network on the course, the Duesenberg pits were immediately aware of the problem. Callaghan ran from the pits (a very long run) with a replacement coil and relieved O'Donnell as driver, resuming the chase after some quick repairs. On first review, it would appear that O'Donnell was being relieved involuntarily, but the rules required that only the driver and mechanic could make repairs while on the course. Obviously to save time, Callaghan, who was already retired and back in the pits, was sent out with the replacement coil. By taking over as driver, his actions were legal. Amazingly, #19 was only about ten minutes behind the fifth place car (the somewhat aging #20 Alco) after all this.

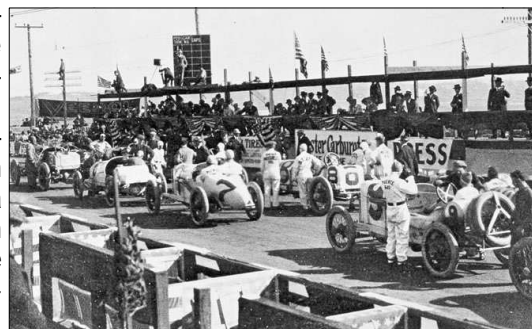
After Rickenbacher had retired at lap 23, Earl Cooper took over the lead in the #8 Stutz and held it to the finish, averaging 65.333 mph.

William Carlson (a San Diegan & local favorite) in the #17 Maxwell, was 2nd, averaging 64.961 mph. He accomplished the feat without any pit stops, and was within 52 seconds of Cooper at one point.

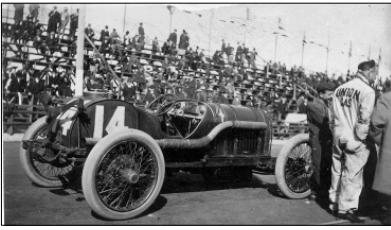
Tom Alley, who had managed to stay out in front with the #2 Duesenberg for the first 18 laps, finished 3rd at 62.704 mph.

Maintaining a steady pace and low profile, Glover Ruckstell in the #4 Mercer, finished 4th at 57.568 mph.

Likewise, William Taylor uneventfully drove the outdated #20 Alco



The start looking from the grandstand across to the scorers' boxes, press stand and scoreboard on the east side of Rosecrans with the pits beyond.



Barney Oldfield's Maxwell #14

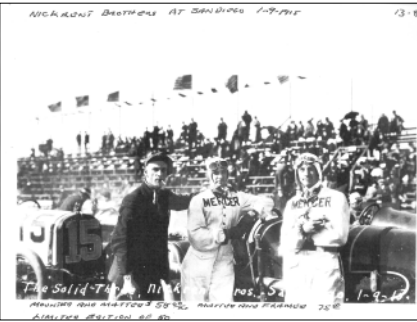
to a 5th place finish at 53.938 mph.

Still gamely running at the end, Callaghan (substituting for O'Donnell in #19) was flagged down out of the money on his 49th lap.

Because of the staggered start, the reports of who was leading at various times were conflicting. The actual race results were based on elapsed time, but many contemporary reports were based on who appeared first, which gave Tom Alley in car #2 a big advantage, PR wise.

That was the big race as it ran, and it is memorable not only for racing history, but to San Diego's long illustrious history as well. It wasn't just the race that brought thrills to San Diegans, however. The practice sessions provided a lot of free entertainment and was the talk of the town. There were some spectacular mishaps and some heavy competition as rival teams took measure of each other's cars and planned their race strategy.

It was estimated that over 50,000 spectators turned out for the race. From pictures, it was apparent that the grandstand was much less than full, but frugal spectators scrambled all over the hills and porches overlooking the course. It was reported that people were starting out as early as 1:00, for whatever reason. The Shriners,

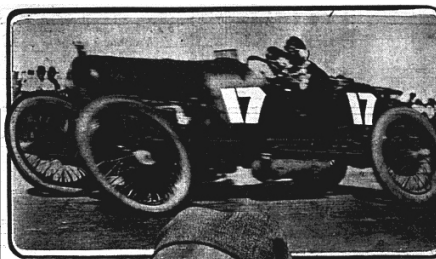


The Nikrent brothers pose before the race with #12 Mercer. This is just before the race, as the King #15, which blew its transmission, is behind them on the starting grid.

detailed with selling tickets, were chasing people through fields and wherever they could catch them, which actually helped keep the official entrance from being too backed up. With so many people in attendance, it was reported that most downtown businesses shut down so employees (and employers) could enjoy the spectacle. There probably weren't many customers around anyway. (My grandmother's diary indicated that she and her mother went by Holzwasser's for a pair of gloves before riding the trolley out to the race, which would indicate that some of the stores were open, hoping for business.)

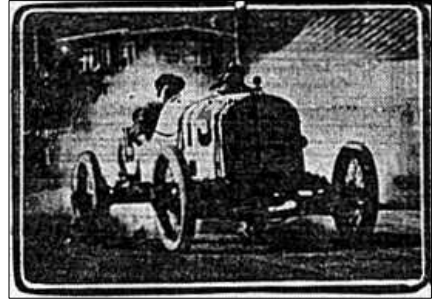
As a benefit to the Exposition, it turned out to be a bust that day, because everyone went to the race and passed over Balboa Park, which only saw 6112 paid admissions. Still, it attracted a big crowd into town, many of whom later visited the Exposition. In the long run, it certainly helped the Exposition and made it the great success it was to become.

Racing was a dangerous busi-



(Left) William Carlson's Maxwell #17 taken from another race and a newspaper photo of him at speed on Point Loma (above).

Note the distortion from the camera shutter that makes the front axle appear aft of the radiator.



Art Klein and #15 in practice on the Point Loma



Art Klein at Indianapolis earlier in his King #15. The car # stayed the same for Pt. Loma, but the radiator shroud was not used here. (Note the front of the car in the photos above.)



Carling Special #16 (Schacht)

This photo is of the 1913 Indy Schacht race car. The Carling special was reported to be the Schacht that Hal Shaine died in at the Playa Del Rey motordrome in 1912. A. T. Dickey is credited with only this one race in published records. However, his mechanic, Al Lambla actually drove the car. The pictured car more likely would have been competitive enough to make the race, but very little info is available on this entry.

ness in those days. The Point Loma race, although marred by a large number of casualties, was unusual in that no serious injuries resulted. Of the participants in this race, however, many did not live to see another year. Jack Callaghan would succumb to injuries from a gruesome crash at Ascot in Los Angeles only a month later.

San Diego native, Billy Carlson would be killed at a race in Tacoma on July 4th, while driving for Mercer. His mechanic, Paul Franzen was also killed. The Mercer team was disbanded after that accident and the cars sold, bring-

ing an end to Mercer's factory racing efforts.

Harry Grant, whose Sunbeam racer #1 was pulled from the race at the last minute, died while practicing for the Ascot cup at Sheephead Bay in October. His mechanic for the Point Loma race, Roxie Pallotti, also died in a later accident there in May of 1916.

"Wild Bob" Burman died in an accident at Corona in April, of 1916.

These were the men that dared to go fast and were enamored of the motor car as it was developing.

In the aftermath of the race, a number of interesting things come to light.

Because of his engine casualty, Bob Burman was instrumental in the development of the Miller and Offenhauser race car engines. Apparently, Burman was running the Peugeot privately, or at least with minimal factory support. Burman couldn't get a replacement engine or parts from France because of the war. One could imagine that the necessary racing engine parts were scarce to begin with. Also, since the AAA contest board was reducing the displacement rule to 300 cu. in., he was in a quandary. He took the car to Harry Miller's shop in Los Angeles. Reportedly, he paid \$4000 (probably more than he paid for the car to begin with) for a rebuild to meet the new displacement rule. A new engine was created from a few parts of the Peugeot engine in collaboration with Miller and Fred Offenhauser, Miller's machinist, both

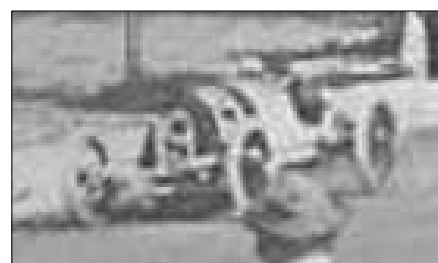


Les Shield's Shields Special #18 was reported as a twin to this 1910 National with Harry Herrick.

well-known names in racing now. This engine was the first to use Miller's "Alloyanum" lightweight pistons. Miller was using the alloy to make carburetor bodies, and coincidentally, most of the Point Loma race cars used Miller's Marvel carburetor. The success of this engine generated a lot of interest and was the start of Miller's and Offenhauser's racing engine reputations. Burman had Miller working on another engine, but unfortunately, Burman was killed before he could see the new engine project completed successfully.

Many mechanics were also drivers, as can be seen by the roster of results from the racing circuits. Many found other pursuits and went on to other endeavors, like Harry Miller, if they survived the racing circuit.

Glover Ruckstell, driver of the #4 Mercer, is another example. He is better known as a mechanical and aeronautical engineer. He went to work in the Mercer factory, segued into racing and then became the Mercer team manager. He entered the Army Air Force as a Captain during the war (WWI) and afterwards joined Hall-Scott as head of



Eddie O'Donnell / Jack Callaghan Duesenberg #19



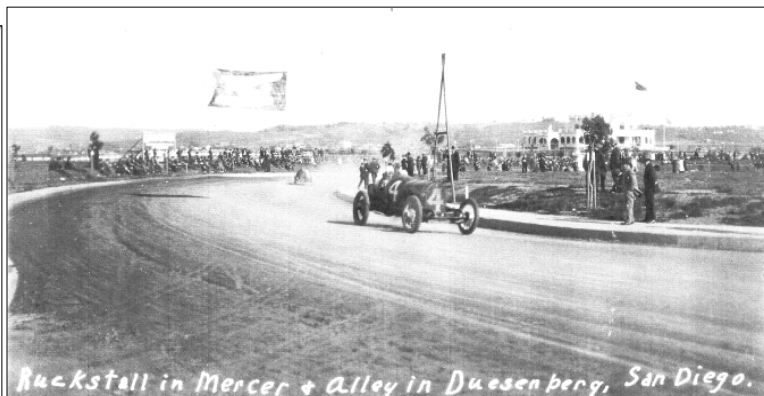
Billy Taylor in an Alco at Tacoma earlier. This is probably the #20 car he drove here.

their aeronautical engine division. He arranged to take over the patents and production of the Perfecto 2-speed rear axle. He is well known among Model T fans as the designer of the Ruckstell 2-speed rear axle conversion, which was actually a development of the Perfecto. His development of the Perfecto resulted in improved performance and reliability at half the price. Even Henry Ford approved, and it was offered through the Ford dealer network.

Eddie Rickenbacher had an interesting history. His early racing career was assisted by the title "baron," which the newspapers seemed to enjoy exploiting. However, he was American born and eventually dropped the hype. In preparation for the 1914 Vanderbilt



Barney Oldfield with his customary cigar. This was probably an earlier practice day, as the stands are empty and a touring car is

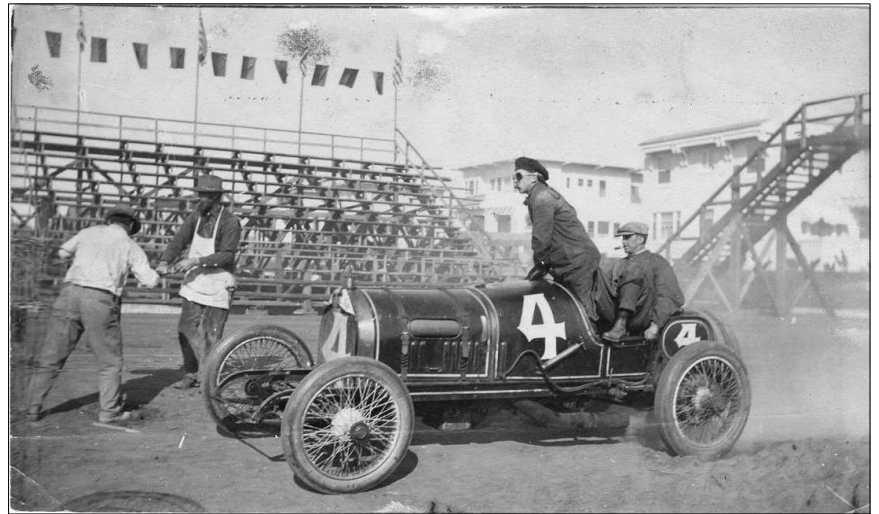


Lytton to Chatsworth turn, golf clubhouse in background. This is #4 Mercer with Guy Ruckstell leading Tom Alley in Duesenberg #2.

cup in Santa Monica, Mack Sennett was campaigning a Fiat which crashed. Sennett replaced the Fiat with a Mason. In true Hollywood fashion, there were some embellished press releases. "A young Prussian nobleman who had fallen victim to the deadly Bacillus Motorus. Crazy by a lust for speed, he had absconded from the Vienna Military Institute in a stolen Mercedes. Expelled from the institute and disinherited by his father, he went to America to enter the AAA tour". Augie Duesenberg was Rick-enbacher's mechanic for that race, and his Duesenberg connection continued.

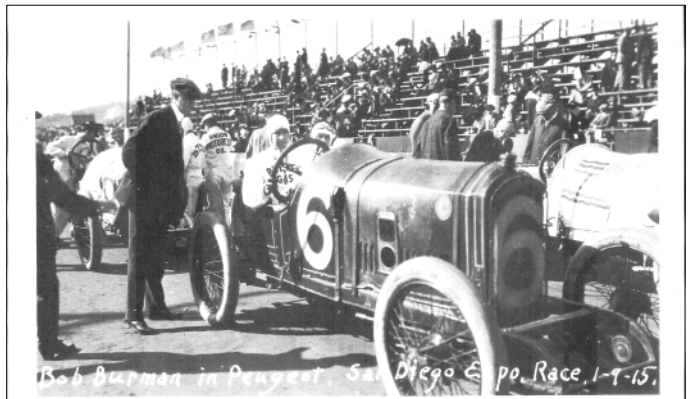
He became even better known when he enlisted in WWI and became an aviator and a national hero. He had to work hard to become a pilot, as his commanding officer thought him to be one of the best aviation mechanics and didn't want to lose his services as such. He doggedly pursued his want to fly, and probably had some help from his racing world connections. He was ultimately awarded the Medal of Honor for his aviation daring and exited the military as a Major, although he preferred to use the rank of Captain as he felt it was an earned rank. After the war, he bought the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and operated it until WWII. He went on to distinguish himself in civilian service during WWII and also organized Eastern Airlines, which he ultimately bought out.

There were hopes that the race would be repeated in following years, but this was not to be. Judging by the advertisements for Point

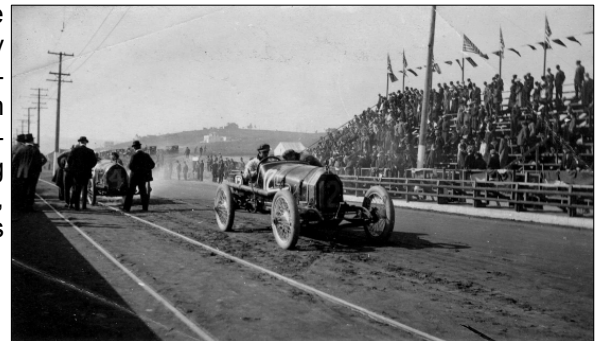


Grover Ruckstell's Mercer with the grandstand and foot bridge in the background. This was taken during practice, as they are heading south. The homes in the background exist today at the corner of Rosecrans and Goldsmith.

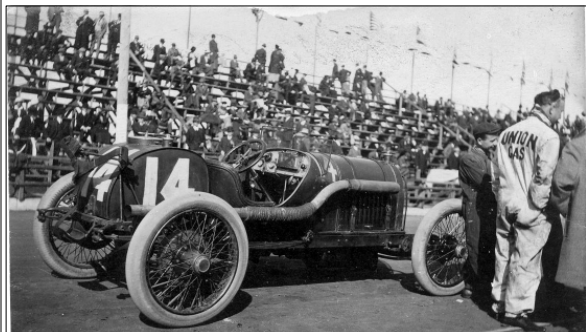
Loma real estate in the local papers, things were beginning to boom and it probably became too populated to be feasible. But it certainly put San Diego on the map in 1915! The Shriners didn't appear to make much profit on the undertaking, but they felt it was worth the effort to promote San Diego and the Exposition. As the first big event of the Exposition, it garnered headlines across the country.



Bob Burman in front of the stands in the #6 Peugeot. This would have been the starting lineup; the #5 Gordon Special on the right and the #8 Stutz behind him.



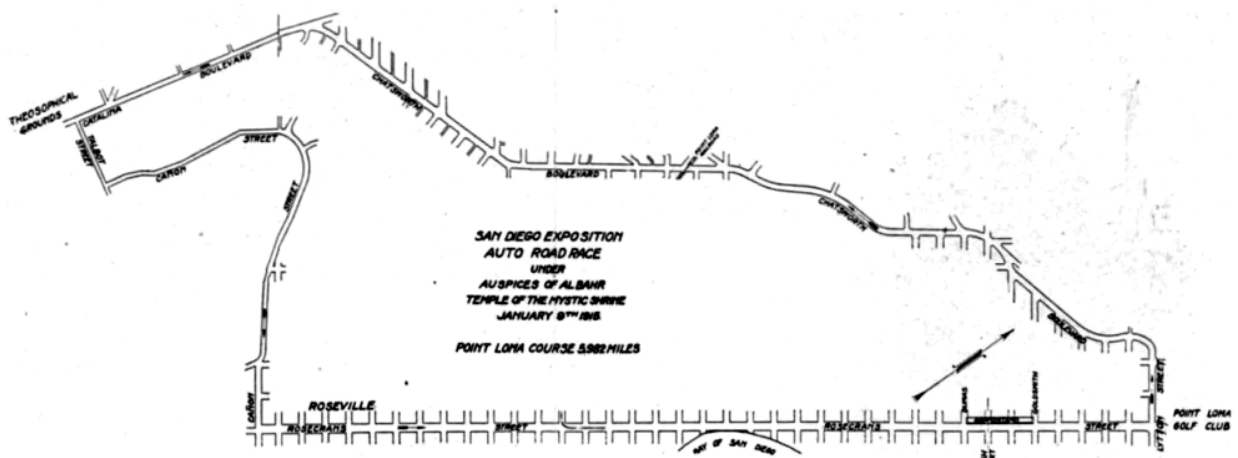
Mercer #12 (Louis Nikrent) at the beginning of the grandstand. Note the almost-empty hills of Point Loma behind; sparse of homes and trees.



Barney Oldfield's #14 Maxwell, at the grandstand about Elliot St.



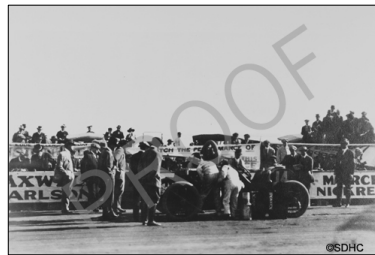
The Ono was a Fiat/Pope hybrid. It was originally entered but could not get replacement drive chains in time to race, so was withdrawn.



COURSE ON WHICH SAN DIEGO ROAD RACE WILL BE HELD



Rosecrans straightaway



Barney Oldfield's #14, which suffered ignition troubles all day.

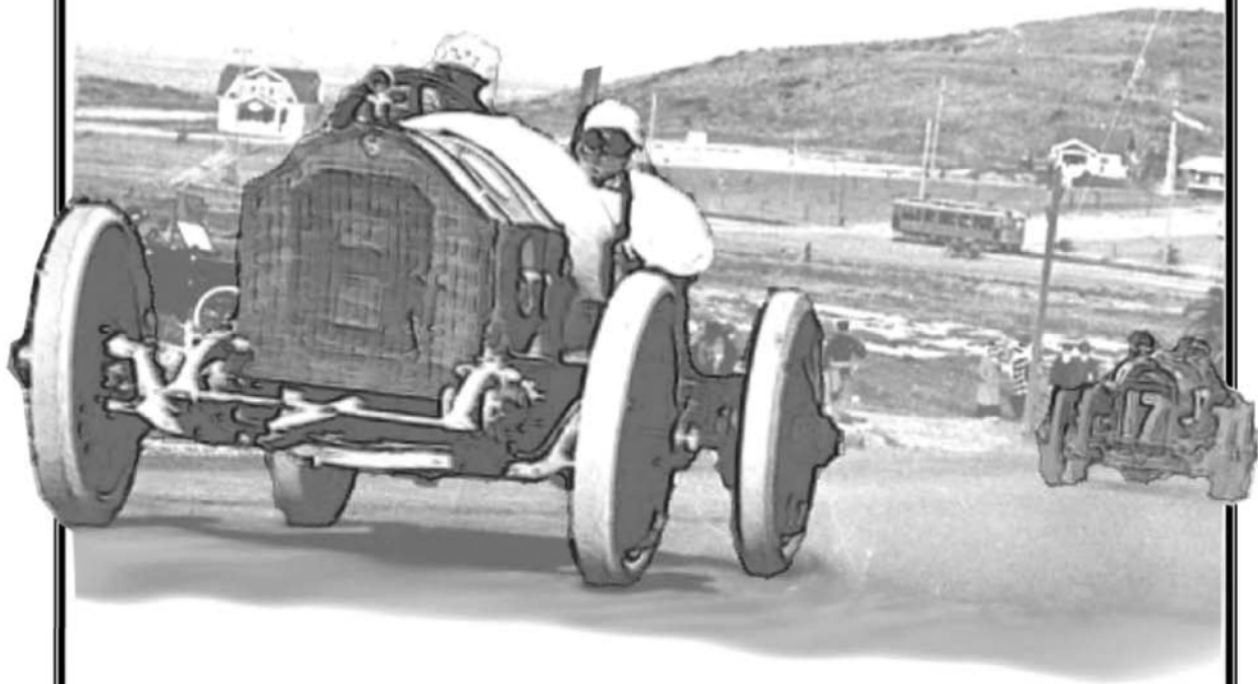


Straightaway up Rosecrans

1915 SAN DIEGO EXPOSITION ROAD RACE CENTENNIAL EVENT



JANUARY 10, 2015



DRIVING INSTRUCTIONS

THE LA JOLLA REGIONAL GROUP OF THE
HORSELESS CARRIAGE CLUB OF AMERICA

1915 EXPOSITION RACE ROUTE

DRIVING INSTRUCTIONS

MILES	INSTRUCTION	FOR	NOTES
0.0	Depart Show site down past the SD Automotive Museum and around the parking lot northward and then out of Balboa Park and across the Cabrillo Bridge	0.9 mi	
0.9	Turn LEFT (South) onto 6th Ave	0.8 mi	
1.7	Turn RIGHT (West) onto Ash St	0.7 mi	
2.4	Turn RIGHT (North) onto Pacific Hwy	1.4 mi	<i>The route to the race from downtown was indicated to go out India St. 2 blocks east of Pacific Hwy.</i>
3.8	Keep on Pacific Highway and <u>safely</u> merge LEFT after bridge because the exit is on the left.	0.9 mi	<i>Pacific Hwy was named Atlantic in 1915.</i>
4.6	Exit LEFT to Barnett Ave.	0.2 mi	<i>Barnett Ave was called Tide St in 1915 and it traversed Dutch Flats at approximately the tide line.</i>
4.8	Keep STRAIGHT onto Barnett Ave	0.7 mi	<i>Tide went from about where Washington St. is today to Lytton where it turned and ran parallel to Rosecrans.</i>
5.6	Turn LEFT into Liberty Station through old NTC Gateway at signal where Barnett veers right into Lytton St	0.2 mi	<i>Tide was the third street down from Rosecrans; Scott was the first, Shafter was second and then Tide, which ended at Alcott, where San Diego Bay got in the way. The extensions of Scott and Shafter still exist over by Shelter Island. More than half of what is now Liberty Station is on fill because the bay ran right up to Rosecrans and the trolley ran on elevated tracks to bridge the low areas.</i>
5.8	Road bears right past the golf course. Regather in parking lot off the road to the right. WAIT to regroup.	0.2 mi	<i>The golf course here is what remains of the Point Loma Golf Club. Parking for the race was along Tide St. below the pit area. The portion of NTC above Tide was drafted with streets, but the golf course occupied it.</i>
6.0	Turn RIGHT on Roosevelt	0.1 mi	

MILES INSTRUCTION

FOR NOTES

- 6.1 Turn **RIGHT** on Rosecrans at the signal. 0.4 mi
Look for the flagman at the original race starting line.



Looking South on Rosecrans from the pedestrian bridge at Goldsmith.



The North end of the grandstand with the pedestrian bridge and homes visible behind the car.

- 6.5 Turn **LEFT** at Lytton St. 0.2 mi



BOB BURMAN IN PEUGEOT No. 6, TRYING TO PASS EDDIE O'DONNELL IN DUESENBERG No. 19, ON FIRST S TURN OF POINT LOMA COURSE.

The golf clubhouse is in the far background. Note the sidewalks and lampposts are installed.

- 6.7 Veer **LEFT** as Lytton becomes Chatsworth Blvd. 1.2 mi

The beginning of the grandstand and pits were at Dumas St. The Start/Finish line was at Elliot St. (It is now spelled Elliott.) The grandstand was on the left and went 3 blocks to Goldsmith where a pedestrian bridge was constructed. The house on the north side of Goldsmith appears to have been existing at the time of the race. The pits and officials' booths were on the right across the trolley tracks. Rosecrans was much narrower then, and the tracks were actually located about where the median is now.



Looking South on Rosecrans from the pedestrian bridge at Goldsmith.

Rosecrans dead-ended here and where it continues today was part of the golf course. This was the clubhouse turn, so-named because the Point Loma Golf Club House was located here one block north on Locust St. It no longer exists.



This was the clubhouse, located north of Lytton on Locust. It later became the officers' club for NTC.

Several houses along the west side of the street existed at the time.

MILES INSTRUCTION

FOR NOTES

- 7.9 Continue on Chatsworth across Nimitz 0.8 mi
and continue up the hill.

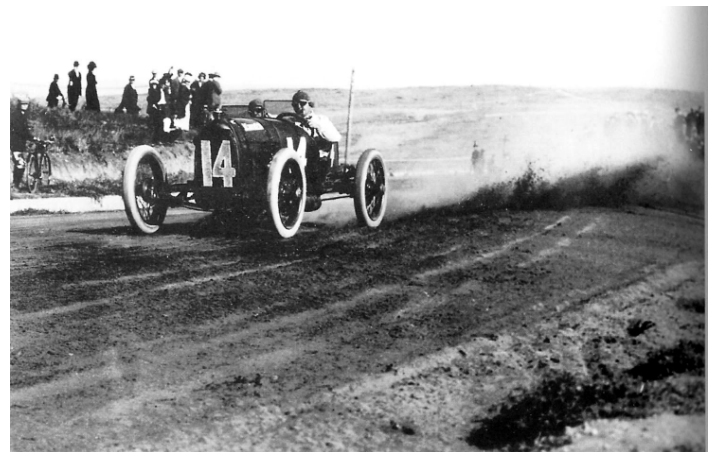


Note the trolley idled at the Chatsworth stop for the duration of the race. Also notice the view of Mission Bay.

This was taken about mid-race, when Carlson (#17) was actually a lap behind Cooper (#8).

Nimitz was known as Wabash until the 60's, and the Point Loma Rail Road line (trolley) was routed to Ocean Beach along Wabash. These were the railroad tracks that caused several incidents when the cars sped over them.

- 8.7 Turn **LEFT** (South) onto Catalina Blvd 0.6 mi



This is Barney Oldfield in Maxwell #14 cresting the hill, roughly across from Dana Jr. High. Mission Bay is seen behind the car and the spectators.

- 9.3 Turn **LEFT** (East) onto Talbot St 0.1 mi



This was the Theosophical Turn, taken from the Theosophical Institute of Madam Tingley located southwest of this intersection. The Point Loma Nazarene College campus is on that site.

This is Barney again at the Theosophical corner where Jack Callaghan crashed his Duesenberg on the first lap.

MILES INSTRUCTION

FOR NOTES

9.4 Turn **LEFT** (North-East) onto Canon St

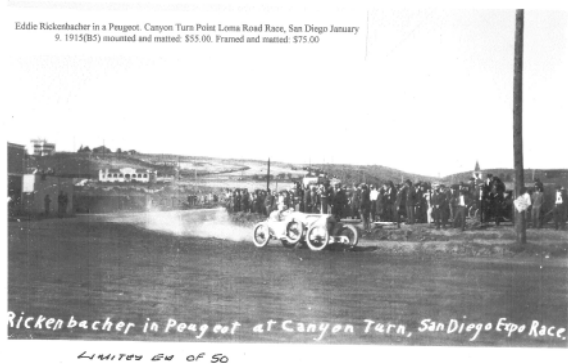
1.1 mi

At high speed, you can see what this double turn could be in those days. Once on Canon St., there was an "S" turn where the road jogged right and left as it wound down into the canyon. The "S" has been straightened out since then.

10.5 Turn **LEFT** onto Rosecrans St

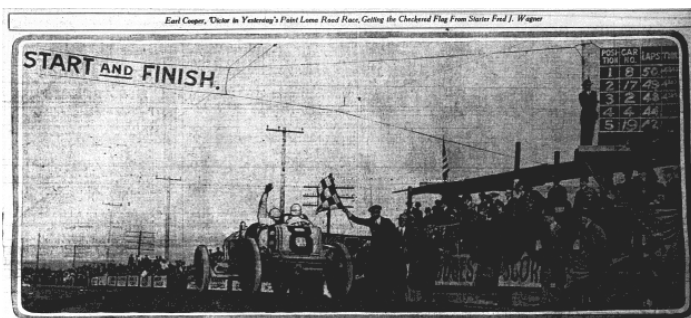
1.6 mi

This was the infamous Roseville Turn where many of the racers fell victim to various mechanical problems. There were no crashes, but several near-misses.



Eddie Rickenbacher negotiates the Roseville turn. The store at the left of the picture is probably the same one that can be seen now behind the gas station on Cañon.

12.1 Continue all the way down Rosecrans to 0.3 mi Elliott where the course will be completed and you will be waved in at the checkered flag.



This is the newspaper photo of a triumphant Earl Cooper taking the checkered flag from Starter Fred Wagner.



This view is up Rosecrans toward the grandstand and pits from about Xenophon or Whittier.

12.4 Continue up Rosecrans and Turn **RIGHT** down Lytton St

0.2 mi

If you'd like, you can make another loop of the course, otherwise, return to Balboa Park. (The race was for 51 laps and at 65 mph, Cooper took 4 hrs, 40 mins & 10.8 seconds to complete the race.)

MILES	INSTRUCTION	FOR	NOTES
12.6	Turn RIGHT back into Liberty Station through the NTC gates	0.4 mi	
13.0	Turn LEFT on Dewey	0.1 mi	
13.1	Turn Right on Decatur	0.9 mi	
14.0	Turn LEFT on Laning Rd.	0.2 mi	
14.2	Turn LEFT on Harbor Drive	0.5 mi	
14.7	Continue over the bridge.	2.1 mi	The USS Neversail is on the left. It was used as a land-based classroom for recruits at NTC, and is one of the iconic navy landmarks in San Diego. The reconstruction of the San Salvador (Cabrillo's flagship when he explored California) is on the right as you come off the bridge.
14.7	Go past the airport and keep to the RIGHT along the Embarcadero	3.0 mi	The Star of India and other vessels of the San Diego Maritime Museum are moored along the waterfront here.
17.7	Turn LEFT at Broadway	1.0 mi	
18.7	Turn LEFT at 11th Ave	0.2 mi	
18.9	Turn RIGHT at A St	1 blk	
18.9	Turn LEFT (North) onto Park Blvd [12th Ave]	0.5 mi	
19.4	Turn LEFT (West) onto Presidents Way	0.5 mi	
19.9	Turn LEFT (South-West) onto Pan American Plaza	0.2 mi	
20.1	Arrive San Diego Automotive Museum		Park your car in its display area and enjoy the rest of the day!

Driving distance: 20.1 miles

THE CARS OF THE 1915 SAN DIEGO EXPOSITION ROAD RACE

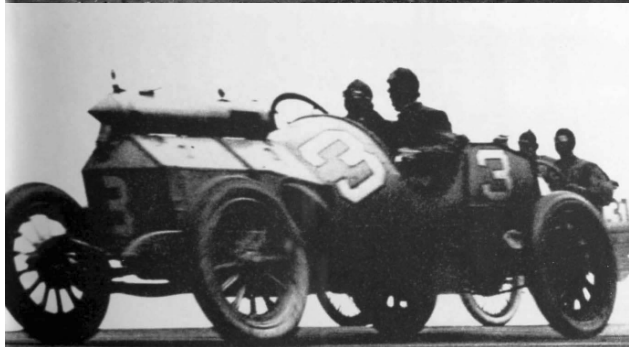
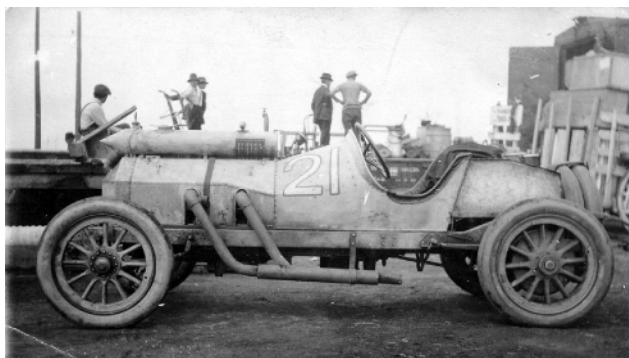
The photos on the following pages are of the cars that participated in the race in order of their hood number, which was also their starting position. Most of the photos are from the Point Loma race, but some have proven elusive and are represented as best as possible. The locally entered cars, #s 16 & 18, have eluded us completely, other than one starting grid photo where there are obscured by engine smoke. This research project is ongoing, and we would be delighted if any new photos can be found.



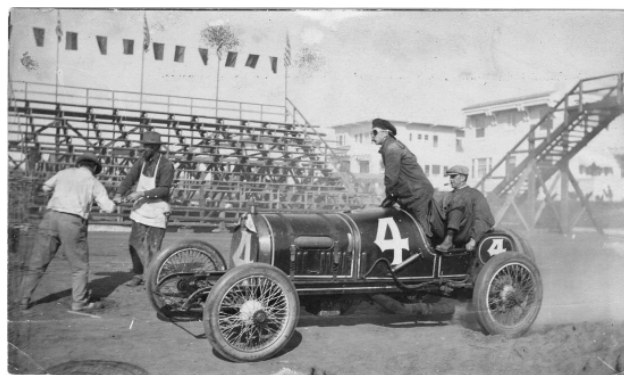
#1 Sunbeam
Grant



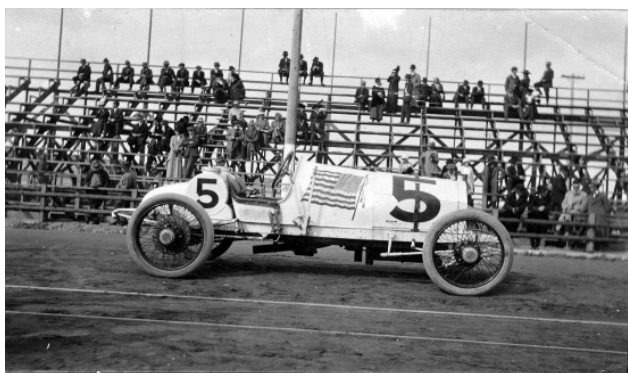
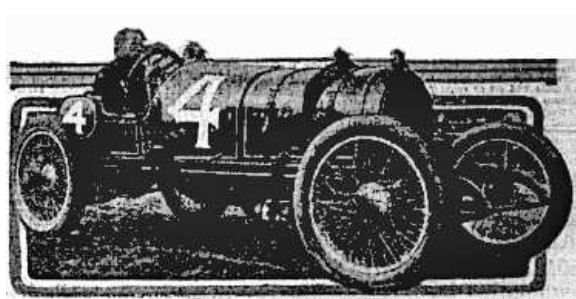
#2 Duesenberg
Tom Alley



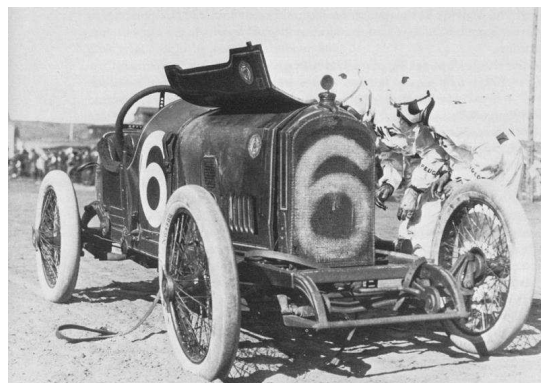
#3 Tahis Special Gable
(#21 from the Elgin road race)



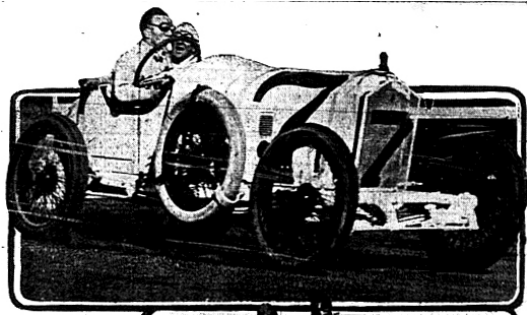
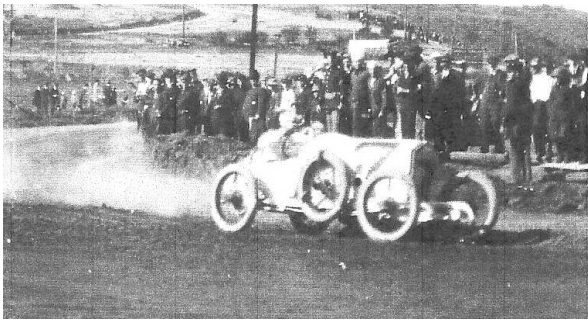
#4 Mercer Ruckstell
(note footbridge at end of
grandstand)



#5 Gordon Special (Mercer)
Huntley Gordon



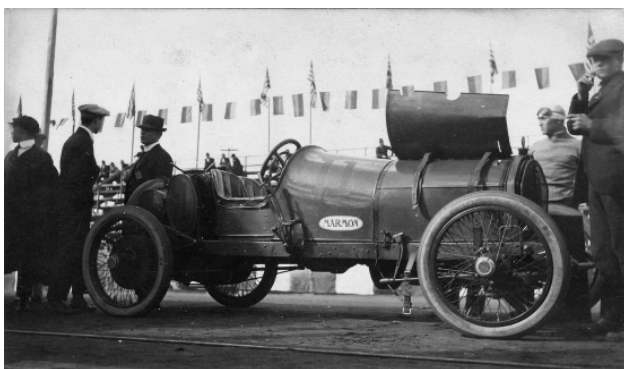
#6 Peugeot
Bob Burman



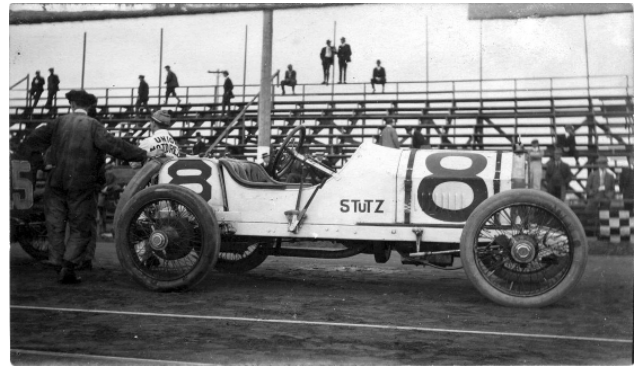
#7 Peugeot
Rickenbacher



#9 Peugeot
McCarthy



#11 Marmon
Cadwell

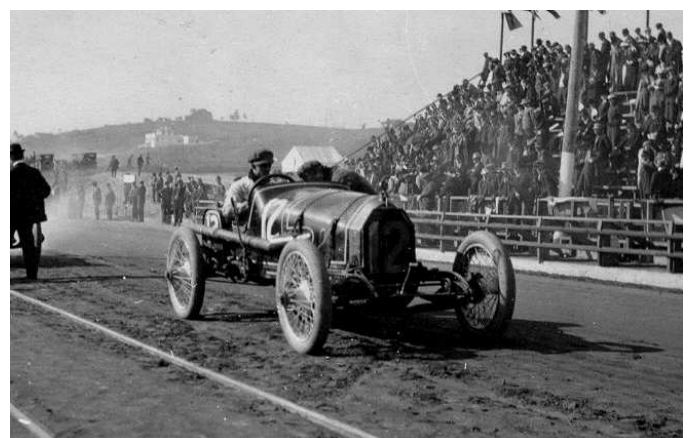


#8 Stutz
Earl Cooper

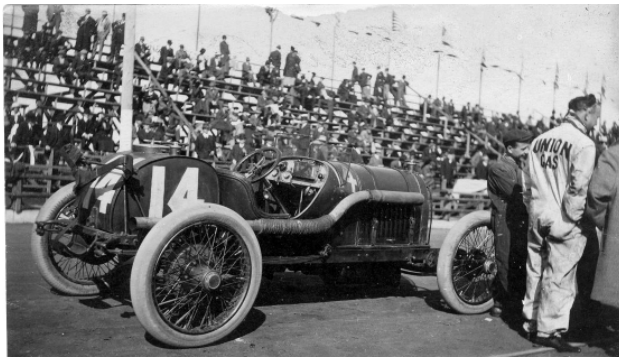


#10 Duesenberg
Callaghan

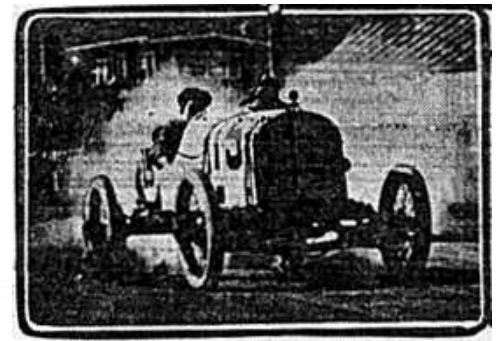
(right; blow up
of starting grid
for #10)



#12 Mercer
Nikrent

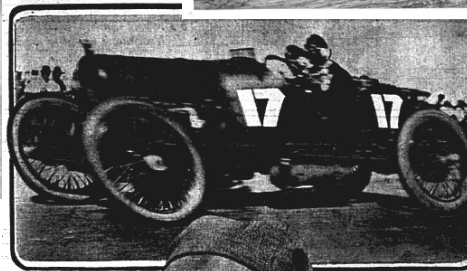
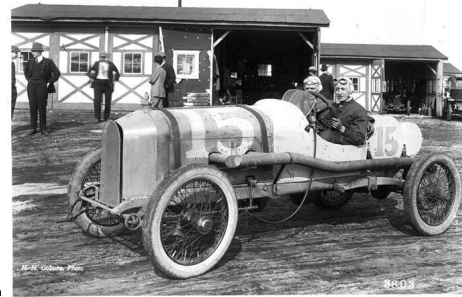


#14 Maxwell
Oldfield



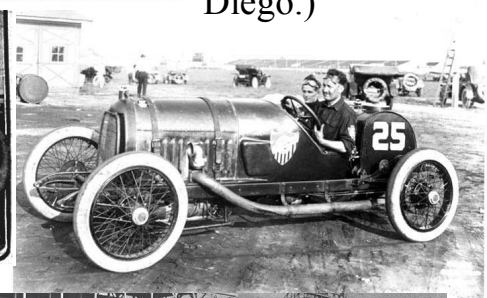
#15 King
Art Klein
(The King at Indianapolis—it
was without the
shroud at San
Diego.)

#16 Carling Spcl (Schacht)
Dickey/Lambla/Frowiss
(Car shown is from 1914 Indy)



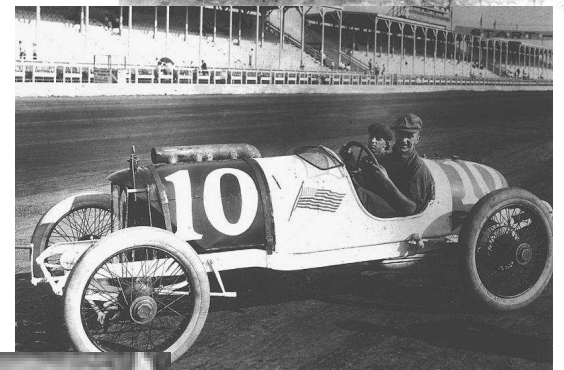
#17 Maxwell
Carlson

(#25 is same car at an-
other venue)



#18 Shields Special
L.B. Shields

(This is Harvey Herrick's National, which was a twin
to Shields' special)



#19 Duesenberg
O'Donnell

(#10 is the car with wire
wheels that O'Donnell
drove at Point Loma.



1915 Ono

Originally entered, but
dropped because chain
size needed was unavail-
able.



#20 Alco Billy Taylor
Left photo from Tacoma 1914)





