



Selwyn F. Edge, of London, in his Six Cylinder Napier Car on the Brooklands Track, Weybridge, England. On this track, Mr. Edge on June 28th and 29th. broke all records for sustained speed, by covering the phenomenal distance of 1581 miles 1310 yards in 24 hours, an average of 66 miles an hour.

A Great Automobile Performance

THE history of automobile racing contains no record to be compared to that of Selwyn F. Edge of London, England, who, on June 28-29 accomplished the marvellous performance of covering 1581 miles, 1310 yards in 24 hours. The ride was made in a six cylinder Napier car on the new Brooklands track at Weybridge, England. A better idea of his performance will be gained when it is known that he averaged no less than 66 miles an hour for the entire distance! Think of it! Better than a mile a minute for 24 hours! Just how stupendous was the accomplishment may also be gathered from the fact that no machine driven on earth, in air or water has ever maintained a speed like this for 24 hours. Edge himself figured on covering 1440 miles or a mile a minute, but beat his own figures by over 141 miles—and all the auto world marvels.

The track at Brooklands had a good deal to do with this performance—indeed, it is conceded that the record would have been impossible on any ordinary track. The notable features of this track are that it is banked at the turns to accommodate cars at speeds up to 90 miles an hour, and presents a surface with the solidity of steel—an important factor when one considers the quantity of dirt that is dislodged by the flying auto on an ordinary track, obliging a racing machine to gradually reduce its speed as the race progresses. As it was in Edge's performance, a flying particle of cement smashed the lens in one of his goggles, but strange to say none of the fragments of glass entered his eye.

The idea for the Brooklands track was conceived only last August by Lock King, on whose property the course is laid. It was a bold scheme for it was a departure from all previous methods of track construction, and it was as stupendous from an engineering point as it was bold, for it meant the reclamation of a virgin tract of 270 acres—nevertheless the enterprise was courageously entered upon at once. The scheme included the diverting of the tortuous river Wey, the laying out of the track, which is oval in shape and $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles in circumference, the construction of four tunnels beneath the track and one bridge over it, not to mention the erection of a huge grandstand, club-house, garage, pavilion and restaurant within the oval.

The track is of a uniform width of 100 feet allowing room for ten cars to race abreast if necessary. The average slope of the track at the shorter bend is no less than one in two, and a car of 4 feet 6 inches tread coursing the upper side, has its outer wheels raised 2 feet 3 inches above the inner ones.

Although as many as 2,000 men have been employed upon the work at one time, still, after ten months continuous labor, certain finishing touches remain to be given. The track itself, however, is completed, and was officially opened on June 17th. Edge's remarkable performance has demonstrated the safety and scientific construction of this track and it is likely that for some years to come all world's motor records will be made on the Brooklands course.

Until Edge made his run at Brooklands, the performance of Frank Kulick at Detroit, one week previous, was the world's 24-hour record. Kulick accomplished 1135 miles, 446 yards on a one-mile unbanked dirt track, which was not a bad performance considering the conditions under which it was made.

What is considered almost, if not quite, as wonderful as the speed with which Edge travelled, is the fact that he drove the car the entire distance himself, although accompanied by a mechanic named Burnside. Until Edge accomplished this almost superhuman feat, it was thought that physical endurance would not have been equal to such a strain—no matter what the car might have been capable of. But Edge's endurance is well known. Previous to taking up automobilism, he held several long-distance British bicycle records. He first made his mark as an automobilist by winning the Bennett Cup race in 1902, and is now easily one of the world's best drivers.

While making his record, Edge took nourishment in the form of tablets fed to him by Burnside. The stops were taken advantage of to drink black coffee to ward off drowsiness. Not the least interesting part of the performance to the spectators was said to be the remarkable agility displayed by Burnside in climbing about the car while it was travelling at the rate of 70 miles an hour.