

## SENSATIONAL HILL CLIMBING at SHELSLEY WALSH.

### B. H. DAVENPORT ON HIS FRAZER NASH BEATS ALL RECORDS.

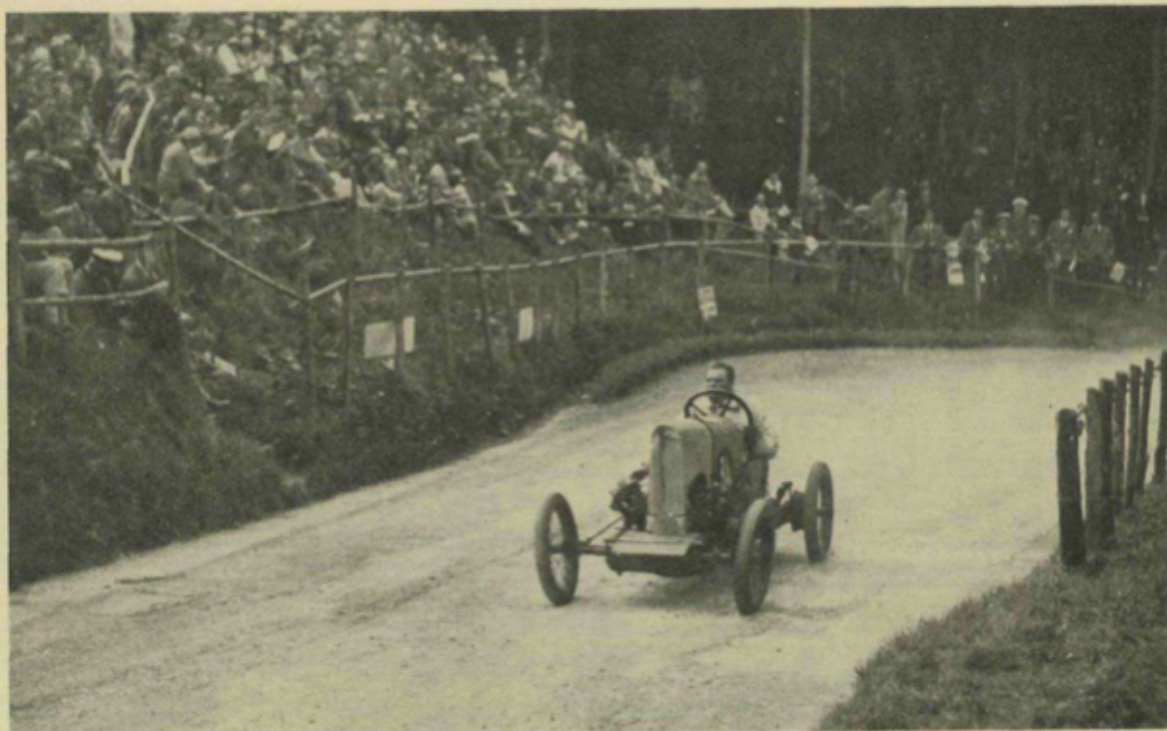
JUDGING by the enormous public interest and the faultless organisation of the Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb, which took place last month, one would imagine that there should be hopes of the S.M.M.T. adopting a less rigid attitude with regard to such events in the future, for the Midland Automobile Club has certainly demonstrated that it knows how to handle big events in a manner that is beyond all criticism.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the whole meeting, however, was the wonderful performance of B. H. Davenport, who on his Frazer Nash, with which he has participated in countless contests, not only put up new figures for the course, but succeeded in beating the cream of the motor competition world with the greatest ease.

made by drivers who did not indulge in such practices.

Thousands of spectators from all parts of the country gathered to witness this classic hill-climb, and from early in the morning some sixty competitors had been busy performing the final touches to their cars. Just before the starting time of 1.30 p.m. the officials marshalled the crowd to their various points of vantage, and shortly afterwards the fun commenced.

The first car to start was the red Frazer Nash driven by E. L. F. Mucklow, who handled his car with great zest and made the climb in 55 seconds. B. H. Davenport was next on the line, and although his climb was far less spectacular than that of those who followed him, it was evident that he was travelling very fast indeed; and when later his time, 48  $\frac{4}{5}$ th seconds, was an-



DAVENPORT'S CLEAN CORNERING ENABLED HIM TO SET UP A NEW RECORD FOR THE COURSE.

Before the meeting actually commenced, there was much discussion as to whether it would be possible to reduce the existing record, not because the contesting cars lacked speed, but on account of the difficulties presented in travelling up the famous hill at great speed. As a matter of fact, it was this which accounted for many of the sensational ascents that were witnessed, and if any unfavourable criticism could be offered, this would concern the number of unnecessary risks that were taken by some competitors in their efforts to be spectacular. Shelsley Walsh has again demonstrated that wild cornering, frantic skidding and like performances do not help very much in attaining the maximum speed over any course, and the cleverest climbs were

nounced, no little consternation was observed among the other competitors.

Nothing daunted, however, Raymond Mays set off on his T. T. Vauxhall, but though his engine roared lustily as the car ascended the lower slopes, he failed to achieve the figure set up by Davenport, taking 49  $\frac{2}{5}$ th seconds for the course, which turned out to be the second fastest time.

#### Good Climbing by Standard Touring Cars.

Twenty starters lined up for the next event, which was for Standard Touring Cars, which competed on formula, i.e. :—

$\frac{\text{Total Weight in lbs.}}{\text{Time in seconds} \times \text{c.c.}}$

## SENSATIONAL HILL CLIMBING—continued.

The standard of driving in this event was consistently good, Harvey's four seater Alvis with a full load making one of the neatest ascents, whilst two other Alvis Coupés, handled respectively by Johnson and Miss Watson, called for much favourable comment. All sorts and sizes of cars competed, from Jeavon's Austin Seven with three aboard, to such imposing vehicles as Ellison's big Renault saloon and the 24-100 Mercédès, which was skilfully handled by Lady Mainwaring. Two Aston-Martins competed, one of which a two-seater driven by R. F. Somers, took the corners well, but Miss Pink (Aston Martin) seemed to be experiencing clutch trouble, as her gear changing was by no means up to her usual standard.

### Waite Experiences Bad Luck.

In the next event, which was divided into two classes, a good speed was expected from Waite's Super Charged Austin Seven, but unfortunately he was delayed for some time on the starting line with his engine running, and as a result his plugs were badly oiled when he was released, so that his time was rather disappointing.

In the Sports Car Class the Salmson driven by Barnes travelled well up to the first corner, where he indulged in a badly judged skid, from which he did not recover in time to make up for the lost ground. In the racing section, Mucklow, on his Frazer Nash, reduced the time of his previous climb by two seconds. A further demonstration of skidding was seen when the Simmins Special made its first climb, his style contrasting greatly with that of Davenport's, who took the corners at speed with almost mathematical precision.

An intense amount of interest was centred in Harvey's Straight-Eight Front Wheel driven Alvis, which is entered for the 200 Mile Race. The car gave an excellent impression of speed, and judging by the sound of the engine, the tuning operations had been carried out to perfection, but though a very good climb was made, the performance could have been improved if more suitable gear ratios had been fitted for the climb.

In this class F. B. Taylor, driving the Brescia Bugatti, formerly owned by Raymond Mays, treated the crowd to a hair-raising display of skidding. His car appeared to be travelling sideways for the greater part of its journey, and charged madly about, bouncing from bank to bank. Taylor appears to enjoy a reputation for dangerous driving of this kind, which cannot be described as exactly suitable for the occasion, as it is the sort of thing which tends to alarm the public, and does no kind of good to the sport.

In the 2,000 c.c. class, Lord Cottenham made a fast run on his 2-litre Super Charged Sunbeam racing car, but although there was plenty of power available, excessive wheel-spinning of the lower reaches did much to spoil his performance. It was very evident that the driver realised how the wheel-spin was affecting his climb, but in spite of his efforts nothing appeared to improve the grip. Cyril Paul, who made the ascent on a similar car, did far better, and probably from his knowledge of the hill avoided some of the mistakes made by Lord Cottenham, whose speed he greatly exceeded, but even so the Sunbeam did not hold the course in any too steady a fashion.

From a driving point of view, the best climbs were undoubtedly those of Davenport and Raymond Mays, both these drivers judging their corners with the greatest accuracy and keeping their cars well on the road. Oats, driving the O.M., appeared to be suffering with plug trouble, as his engine coughed and spat viciously throughout the climb, and Mayner (Mercédès) was even more unfortunate, as shortly after the start he had to abandon the attempt, as his engine practically cut out.

### More Thrills.

But for the merest stroke of sheer luck the meeting might have been marred by a fatality, and Taylor, who was driving a Straight-Eight Bugatti, may be considered fortunate in not having lost his life. Half way up the course this driver charged round the S bend at an excessively high speed, developed a terrific skid, and then failing to steady his car took the next curve at an extremely ill-judged pace. A moment later the car hit the right-hand bank, up which the right wheels mounted, and still plunging forward the car turned over on its side, throwing the driver almost on to the road. The horrified spectators then saw the car slide rapidly down the bank, but by some miraculous reason it regained its four wheels, and Taylor, evidently very much dazed, managed to pull back to the wheel and continue to climb.

## RESULTS.

### AMATEURS UNLIMITED RACING CARS.

B. H. Davenport (Frazer Nash) ... ..	48½ secs.
Raymond Mays (T.T. Vauxhall) ... ..	49½ "
E. L. F. Mucklow (Frazer Nash) ... ..	55 "
Miss H. Cunliffe (Bentley) ... ..	59½ "

### CLASS 1.—UP TO 750 c.c.

Sports Cars. H. T. Guest (7 Austin) ... ..	70 secs.
J. D. Barnes (7 Austin) ... ..	98½ "
Racing Cars. A. Waite (7 Austin) ... ..	76 "

### CLASS 2.—FROM 751 TO 1,100 c.c.

Sports Cars. F. S. Barnes (10 Salmson) ... ..	72½ secs.
H. V. Cooke (8.9 Senechal) ... ..	82½ "
Racing Cars. E. L. F. Mucklow (8.7 Frazer Nash) ... ..	53½ "
N. G. Asprey (8.9 G.N.) ... ..	57 "
A. R. Simmins (9.9 Simmins Special) ... ..	60½ "

### CLASS 3.—FROM 1,101 TO 1,500 c.c.

Sports Cars. E. Hellary (11.9 Frazer Nash) ... ..	60½ secs.
S. H. Newsome (11.9 Frazer Nash) ... ..	61½ "
T. H. Shorthouse (11.9 Bugatti) ... ..	63½ "
A. N. McLaren (12.50 Alvis) ... ..	66½ "
Racing Cars. L. H. Lee (10.8 Clyno) ... ..	79½ "
B. H. Davenport (11.9 Frazer Nash) ... ..	49 secs.
A. Frazer Nash (11.9 Frazer Nash) ... ..	52½ "
C. M. Harvey (1½-litre Alvis) ... ..	53½ "
F. B. Taylor (11.9 Bugatti) ... ..	55½ "
E. R. Hall (11.9 Frazer Nash) ... ..	58 "
D. K. M. Marendaz (11.55 Marendaz Special) ... ..	59½ "

### CLASS 4.—FROM 1,501 TO 2,000 c.c.

Sports Cars. R. F. Oats (15-45 O.M.) ... ..	65½ secs.
G. Summers (16 A.C.) ... ..	67½ "
Racing Cars. C. Paul (two-litre Sunbeam) ... ..	50½ "
The Earl of Cottenham (two-litre Sunbeam) ... ..	55½ "
R. F. Oats (15-45 O.M.) ... ..	63 "
F. B. Taylor (two-litre Bugatti) ... ..	63½ "

### CLASS 5.—FROM 2,001 TO 3,000 c.c.

Sports Cars. T. F. Nelson (15.9 Bentley) ... ..	68½ secs.
H. F. Clay (three-litre Sunbeam) ... ..	68½ "
V. Rosa (three-litre Alfa-Romeo) ... ..	68½ "
F. P. Williams (15.9 Bentley) ... ..	68½ "
J. Pollitzer (22-90 Alfa-Romeo) ... ..	69½ "
T. Heaton (15.9 Bentley) ... ..	70½ "
Racing Cars. Raymond Mays (T.T. Vauxhall) ... ..	49½ "
Miss M. Cunliffe (three-litre Bentley) ... ..	58½ "

### CLASS 6.—UNLIMITED.

Sports Cars. E. R. Hall (30-98 Vauxhall) ... ..	57½ secs.
E. L. Meeson (30-98 Vauxhall) ... ..	58½ "
H. W. Cook (30-98 Vauxhall) ... ..	60½ "
H. F. Garman (33-180 Mercédès) ... ..	61½ "
R. F. Summers (30-98 Vauxhall) ... ..	62½ "
A. Ellison (45 Renault) ... ..	69 "
Racing Cars. V. Rosa (3½-litre Alfa-Romeo) ... ..	57½ "
E. R. Hall (30-98 Vauxhall) ... ..	57½ "
J. Taylor (two-litre Beardmore) ... ..	66½ "