

Palm Springs



Official Starter Al Torres gives checkered flag to Jack McAfee.



Tom Bamford's Cad-Allard retired after a tire blew on hairpin turn.



Bill Murphy driving the Kurtis-Buick in which he set the day's fastest lap record.

BY JIM MOURNING

TWENTY thousand perspiring spectators thronged the Palm Springs airport to watch Jack McAfee wheel a 4.5 Ferrari to victory in the eighth running of the classic. This made it four in a row on this circuit for the flashing red Italian cars and the second trip to the winners circle for McAfee.

The win climaxed a string of bad luck that began when McAfee's car flipped in the Mexican Road Race, killing the mechanic, and ended when his car burst into flames at the International 12-hour race at Sebring.

Bill Pollack, who was unable to maintain the lead he grabbed in the early laps, chased McAfee across the finish line in the Mercury-powered Baldwin Special after driving an impressive race from wire to wire. Finishing in third spot was Dick Morgansen of Phoenix, Arizona.

From the drop of the flag, the race developed into a sizzling duel, with Pollack roaring into the lead and desperately fighting off challengers throughout the early laps. But at the halfway mark, burly Tom Bamford of Hollywood boomed his Cad-Allard into first spot and slowly began increasing his lead. McAfee, meantime, had slipped past Pollard and was giving chase to the flying white car.

With only ten laps left to go, a rear tire on Bamford's car blew, retiring him from the race. The second and third place cars automatically moved up a notch and finished in that order, despite Pollack's sensational attempt to catch McAfee.

Bill Murphy, tooling a Buick Kurtis, received the checkered flag in fourth spot, but was disqualified after spectators and a truck helped put him back on the track. Murphy had gone off into the sand after misjudging a corner while briefly grabbing the lead in the second lap. Not realizing his disqualification, he set a blistering pace, often lapping at an average of nearly 70 miles per hour, in a wild attempt to catch the leaders. In so doing, Murphy hung up the fastest lap of the day in addition to establishing a new course record.



A tired Jack McAfee being interviewed after winning the Palm Springs Road Race.



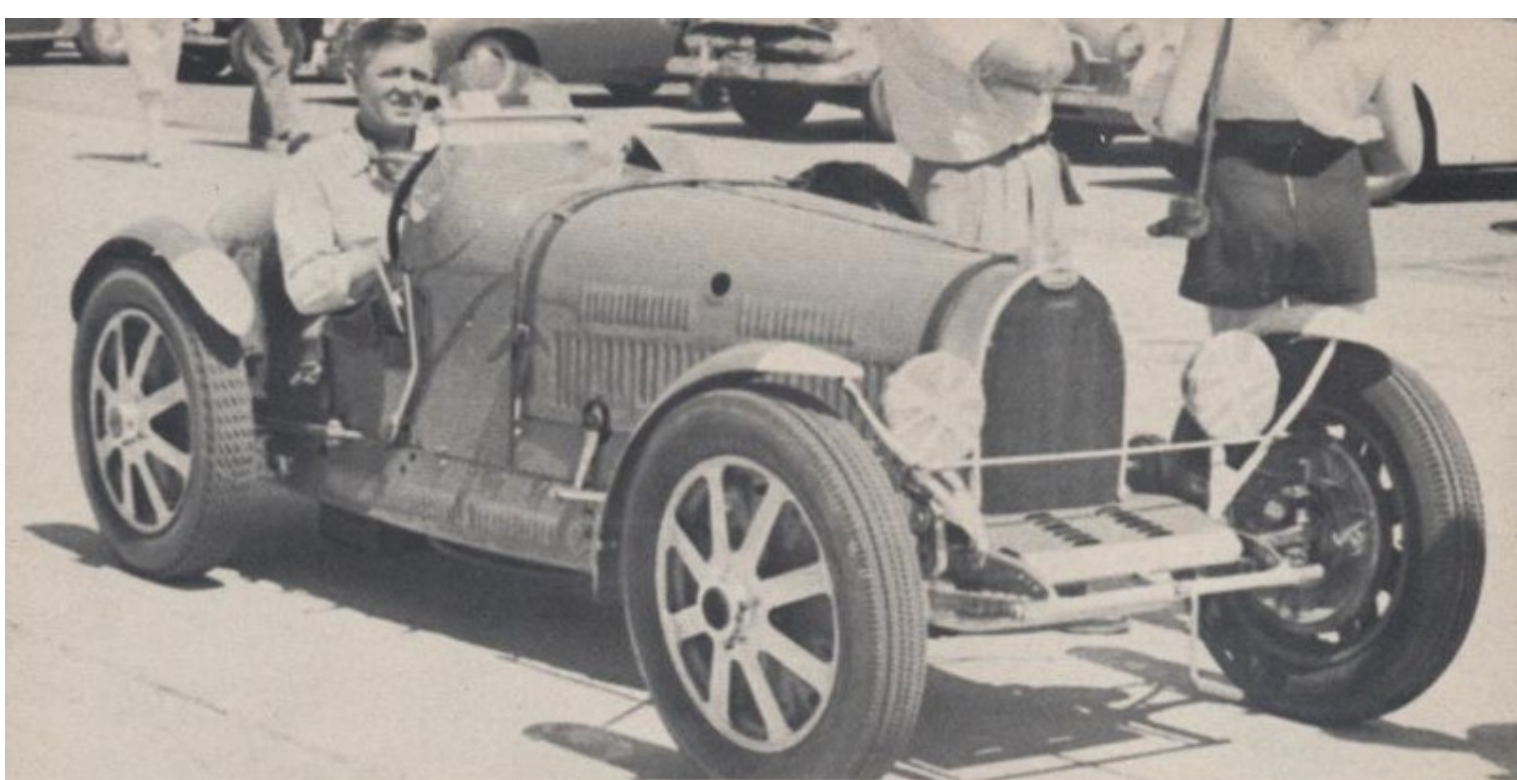
Acceleration of Dick Van Laanen's Singer Special aroused comment. Ignition trouble retired him.

In the main event for cars under 1500 cc's, the "Flying Shingle" of Ken Miles nabbed top honors after a sizzling battle with Cy Yedor, who was driving the "Black Bomb," Miles' older car. The lean Britisher, who will drive at Le Mans for the MG factory team this year, won despite pit stops to change both rear tires after he discovered he was running on the canvas. Jimmy Dean, in a Porsche roadster, finished third.

Some of the most exciting action of the day was during the consolation race for the small cars, in which the top three spots qualified for the main go. A three way battle developed for first between Miles, Harry Hanford in a Lotus MG and Dick Van Laanen in a Singer Special. All had developed mechanical trouble the previous day and therefore had to qualify in the consolation dash.

The Singer Special, an entirely unknown quantity in local racing circles, brought the crowd to its feet by grabbing a half mile lead in the first two laps over a field that included some of the hottest iron on the coast. By the sixth lap, however, the ignition trouble that was to retire it from the race became apparent and both Miles and Hanford moved ahead.

The Morgansen Special roars past the Alpha Romeo BAT on corner. Dick Morgansen came on to finish third.



Bob Estes' 1929 Bugatti was easily the sentimental favorite of the crowd. Car performed well but failed to finish.



Miles managed to keep his MG Special in the lead for the rest of the distance, with Hanford only inches behind at times.

Because of the tightness of the circuit, with its three hairpin and two ninety degree turns on the end of the long back straight, many of the smaller cars consistently clocked times as fast or faster than the over 1500 cc bombs.

Jimmy Dean, highly publicized star of "East of Eden," made his debut into road racing by roaring to a win in Saturday's qualifying races. He came back Sunday to knock off a first in class and third over all in the face of extremely stiff opposition.

High point in Saturday's activity was the ladies' race, which brought a field of 29 cars to the starting grid. Winner was Pat Sawyer, who slammed a modified TR-2 around the circuit as though it were a grand prix racer.

Stiffest competition was touted as coming from Maxine Elmer in a modified Derrin and Janet Anderson in a Porsche. But the Derrin made one of the wildest runs up an escape road in local history when the brakes failed, and Janet Anderson's car developed mechanical difficulties early in the race.

Only two accidents marred the week-end dicing. Ray Sinatra, at the wheel of a modified Derrin, suffered a shoulder separation when his car turned turtle. Antone Madeiros received multiple bruises when he flipped his modified MG. Both accidents were caused by the cars hitting deep sand after leaving the course on a fast corner.

The race marked the fifth anniversary of modern road racing on the West Coast. The first event was held at this desert spa in 1950.



The Alfa Romeo BAT leads Austin-Healey through fast turn in track debut.





Marion Lowe pushes the Frazer-Nash Targa Florio. Hero Driver Al Coppel relieved, finished second in class.

Ken Miles "Flying Shingle" flashes through first turn with MG engine roaring.

