

THE ULSTER TOURIST TROPHY.

LEA FRANCIS, DRIVEN BY KAYE DON, SCORES ITS FIRST BIG WIN IN RACE PACKED WITH EXCITEMENT.



DRIVERS AND MECHANICS SPRINTING TO THEIR CARS AT THE START OF THE R.A.C. T.T.

AUGUST 18th, 1928, is a date that should rank high in the history of Motor Car Racing for, as everyone knows, it marked the revival of that one and only British Road Race, the Tourist Trophy.

The entries were, considering the circumstances, large, but the withdrawal of the Bentley team was a disappointment to many, especially when one considers the very good chance they had of winning the race, despite the handicap. The withdrawal of the Salmson team caused a certain amount of sorrow to other manufacturers of cars of this size; the Riley people, in particular, were very interested to see how their cars would compare with the French 1,100 c.c. products. For this reason the absence of Scott's Amilcar was regretted. However, from an entry list of 57, 44 starters cannot be considered bad.

At 10 o'clock the road was closed to traffic, and, amid the gentle noise of warming of engines, K. Lee-Guinness started off, with a "Road Closed" notice back and front, to lap the course. A full five minutes before 11 a.m. drivers and mechanics had started to line up on the other side of the road opposite their cars. "One minute!" "30 seconds!" "Go!" Drivers and mechanics rushed for their cars and, amid the clicking of hood catches, an engine broke out with a roar; then another and another, till the whole air was filled. Off streaked the Bentleys and with them Campbell, in his 2261 c.c. supercharged Bugatti; close behind were the Austro-Daimlers and Alvises; Thistlethwayte (Mercedès) was also in the fore. When the crowd had disappeared, the dust cleared and revealed Aldington still endeavouring to start his Frazer Nash saloon. He worked quickly but calmly; at last, after losing nearly five minutes, the engine sprang into life and the car got

away. Shortly after this we heard that Cook (Bentley) led at Newtonards, and that the Mercedès had stopped at Bradshaw's Brae. Plunket Green also had trouble on the Newtonards straight, causing him some seven minutes' delay.

By this time the excitement in the pits was increasing, and one realised that it was now a good 12 minutes since the start. Who would be round first? This question was soon answered by Birkin, who roared past the pits 12 min. 35 secs. after a standing start, an average of over 65 m.p.h. Close behind was Curzon (Bugatti), followed by Cook (Bentley). A first F.W.D. Alvis followed, driven by Purdy. Then came Campbell (Bugatti); close behind him were Kaye Don (Lea Francis) and Harvey (Alvis). Cars were still flashing past the stands when Thistlethwayte shot into his pit; he had outlapped many of the smaller cars in spite of his stop. Great excitement was caused by Aldington, who, despite his very bad stop, overtook Barnes' Austin Seven just past the pits. In under 25 minutes Birkin came round on his second lap, let his hood down in one movement, and was off again in a flash; after him came Curzon, Cook and Purdy. Then came a Bugatti (49), followed by a large sheet of flame. It was Campbell! Out jumped Villa, his mechanic, and started to detach the hood fastener, apparently regardless of the danger; large fire extinguishers were brought in numbers, but from the first the task of saving the vehicle looked hopeless. Gallons of liquid were pumped over the tail of the Bugatti. Dense tetrachloride fumes drove the near-by spectators back. Soon the air was black. By this time Birkin was round again, scattering Campbell's helpers as he roared through the dense black cloud. Car after car followed, and many a driver

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must have had an exciting moment passing the blaze. The car was later dragged away to the competitors' enclosure, where it burnt itself out. During this excitement most of the drivers had slid into the pits unnoticed, taken down their hoods and shot off on their third lap. W. N. G. Phillips, with the Riley Monaco Saloon, had the misfortune to burst a cylinder head gasket, but with grim determination got down to the job of fitting another. After a delay of a little more than an hour, however, he continued. Maclure (Riley) skidded into a bank, broke his back axle casing, and was forced to retire.

Early Troubles.

Baron d'Erlanger came into the pits with a broken rocker. The Tracta, the French front wheel drive hope, retired with engine trouble, having run two laps. J. Martin was also another early retirement with his Salmson; this was due to damage sustained as a result of a skid in Comber. At the end of the fourth lap everyone was surprised to see Birkin slow down and stop at his pit—a broken oil pipe was his trouble; certainly bad luck. With great skill he quickly fitted a piece of "flex" tubing and roared off once more. Barnes' Austin was reported to be boiling at Dundonald; shortly after this he turned over, and, in spite of slight injuries, continued; this action gained him a cheer as he passed the grand stands. The Stutz, driven by Watney, which had been going well, caused a certain amount of excitement at Ballystockart by climbing a hedge. At this point Hayward, on the F.N., returned to the pits with a broken valve spring and cotter and was forced to retire. Wilday, on an Alvis, burst a tyre, changed his wheel on the course, and returned to the pits at the end of the lap to collect another spare. Next to draw into the pits was Cook, with his Bentley; he had suffered the same trouble as Birkin, his oil pipe having broken. Luckily he had a spare, so that the delay caused was small. The repair was effected and replenishment of oil made in four minutes.

No sooner had this Bentley left than Birkin slid in again with the other one, his second stop; this time to tie up a front lamp which was dropping off. Thistlethwayte now stopped at Dundonald to adjust a shock absorber. In one way and another the big cars seemed to be having trouble. Harvey, who was now running fourth, came into the pits to replenish with oil, petrol and water; this cost him two places, but that did not matter when hardly a third of the race had been run. Staniland was the next to fall out; he was leading, and had completed nine laps on his Riley when his oil filler cap sprung open and a stream of oil gushed out; his engine ran dry and seized before he reached the pits. V. Balls (Amilcar) then slipped up to first place until he was overtaken by Gallop. Another retirement was registered by G. C. Strachan, whose Gwynne returned to the pits with engine trouble. Wilday made another journey to the pits to change his plugs, as did Plunket Green with his Frazer Nash, complaining at the same time of an absence of third gear chain. At ten laps

Gallop was maintaining the lead from V. Balls (Amilcar) by only 12 seconds. The positions were:—

1. Gallop (Riley).
2. V. Balls (Amilcar).
3. Davis (Riley).
4. Noble (Riley).
5. Peacock (Riley).
6. Harvey (Alvis).

The race was certainly looking well for Rileys, although the bigger cars were gradually working their way up through the handicapping. It was interesting to note that Thistlethwayte was making up for lost time by lapping consistently in about 11¼ minutes, nearly 73 m.p.h., and incidentally setting up the fastest lap at over 74 m.p.h. Paul (Austro Daimler) hit the barrier at Comber, burst a tyre, changed a wheel and carried on, his reserve driver taking over.

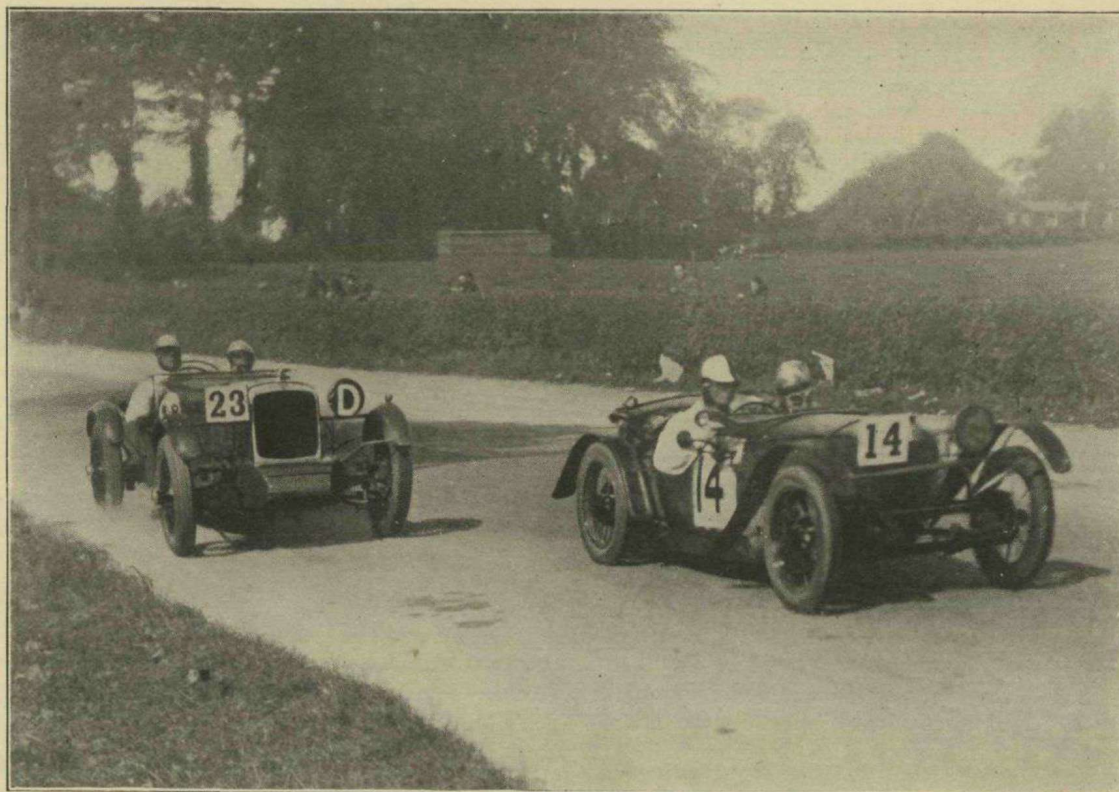
The O.M. came into the pits to refill, while Erlanger's Lagonda was giving more rocker trouble. Oil had made the road slippery on the second turn in Comber, and Gallop skidded wildly on his Riley. Mason (Austro Daimler) did the same. Gallop still held the lead, but Davis had wrested second place from Balls, and Harvey was now running fourth again. The positions at 15 laps were:—

1. Gallop (Riley).
2. Davis (Riley).
3. Balls (Amilcar).
4. Harvey (Alvis).
5. Noble (Riley).
6. Dykes (Alvis).

General Post.

Such were the leaders at 15 laps; yet, before the twentieth lap, the whole aspect of the race had changed; only one of these "first six" were still running. The first victim of this run of fate was Gallop. While at speed on the Comber-Dundonald section he hit a gully; the car swerved, and skidded, crashed into a telegraph pole and was thrown backwards over a 5 ft. bank. Gallop's mechanic was flung some 25 feet. Both occupants of the car may be considered to have had a miraculous escape. Balls, who had, in the meantime, overtaken Davis, now took the lead. Harvey was a close third. Davis then came into the pits and Harvey took second place, the Riley getting away again just after the Alvis had passed. Near Ballystockart there was a local sharp shower. Harvey came into the wet patch fast, skidded and crashed. Newsome (Lea Francis) made an endeavour to avoid the Alvis, but skidded broadside across the road and crashed into a ditch. Both cars were damaged beyond repair. Davis then came on the scene. With a bit of superb driving he managed to get through the two gyrating cars, but he then found himself going too fast, and in the wrong position to negotiate the next bend, and he fell into the ditch. He and his mechanic worked feverishly and managed to get the car back on the road again, but a piece of rock in the pit of the ditch had bent his steering arm and he found himself with no lock. Slowly he made his way to the pits, where he had to retire. Noble

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AN ANXIOUS MOMENT—DYKES (ALVIS) PULLS OUT TO OVERTAKE WILKINSON (RILEY) SHORTLY BEFORE HE CRASHED.

was the next unfortunate; after attaining second place he crashed his Riley at Newtonards, breaking its back axle. Balls still led, but Dykes (Alvis) and Kaye Don were rapidly overhauling him, while Purdy was close on their heels with another Alvis. Dykes took the lead when Balls stopped to refill, but he did not keep it for long. Travelling fast at Bradshaw's Brae he hit the bank and overturned. A certain amount of anxiety was felt at first at the pits as he was reported to be badly injured, but his injuries were not so serious as was first believed. Kaye Don then took the lead, which he held till the end. The Mercédès caused the next excitement by skidding backwards into the ditch at Mill Corner and partly overturning. Thistlethwayte and Kindell got it back on to the road, however, and continued, but they were well behind the Bentleys, which, after their minor troubles, were now going splendidly. The positions after 20 laps were:—

1. Kaye Don (Lea Francis).
2. Purdy (Alvis).
3. Balls (Amilcar).
4. Hall (Lagonda).
5. Cushman (Alvis).
6. Hayes (Lagonda).

Certainly a great change had taken place in five laps.

Even now the leaders were dropping out. Purdy's Alvis broke a piston and he was forced to retire. While coming down into Newtonards, Balls skidded at full speed and hit the barricade, wrecking his Amilcar.

Hall's Lagonda developed trouble and caused his retirement, thus putting Cushman's Alvis second, with Haye's Lagonda third. Dutilleux (Bugatti) was now seventh, but Curzon had retired since his Bugatti tank had started leaking, and he wisely did not risk sharing Campbell's fate. Mason and Paul were now fourth and fifth with their Austro-Daimlers. Peacock, who had made a good steady run, was now leading the 1,100 c.c. cars on his Riley, and was seventh in the race. Haye's Lagonda was now out, and Dutilleux had worked his Bugatti up to third place. At 25 laps the positions were:—

	H.	M.	S.
1. Kaye Don (Lea Francis)	4	56	17
2. Cushman (Alvis)	4	56	57
3. Dutilleux (Bugatti)	5	0	21
4. Mason (Austro-Daimler)	5	5	30
5. Paul (Austro-Daimler)	5	8	22
6. Eyston (Lea Francis)	5	13	17

Birkin and Cook were ninth and tenth, respectively, with their Bentleys, Birkin being as much as nineteen minutes behind the leaders. And so it developed into a match between Don and Cushman, a few mere seconds keeping them separated for some seventy miles of corners, bends and grades. With little fuel and oil Cushman hounded after his rival, but for ever with him was the thought of his shortage of supplies. By the end of 20 laps he had reduced Kaye Don's lead to 26²/₅ seconds. Don received the "all out" signal from

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KAYE DON, ON THE WINNING LEA FRANCIS, SWINGING ROUND THE DUNDONALD HAIRPIN.

his pit. Dutilleux was dropping back as fast as the Bentleys were pushing forward. The Austro-Daimlers were holding third and fourth places, Callingham, with the remaining car of the team, being now tenth.

The last lap! Could Cushman catch Don? It seemed unlikely considering how long Don had held the lead. As the minutes passed the excitement in the pits grew tenser. At last—Don was leading at Dundonald. Directly after this was announced the Lea Francis rounded the bend, streaked up the grade towards the pits, and over the finishing line. Scarcely had the cheering started than Cushman flashed past, a loser by only 13 seconds. A mile up the road after the finish he ran out of petrol. The excitement was so great that the crowd hardly noticed Mason bring his Austro-Daimler into third place some ten minutes later. Paul was fourth with the second "Austro." Birkin had snatched fifth place from Eyston (Lea Francis), doing the total

distance of 410 miles (from scratch) in 6 hours 13 minutes 5 seconds, an average speed of 65.76, the highest for the race. Cook, with the other Bentley, was seventh. The final order was:—

	No. of Laps Credit.	Time. h. m. s.	Average Speed. m.p.h.
1. Kaye Don (Lea Francis) ...	2 ...	5 58 13 ...	64.06
2. L. Cushman (Alvis) ...	2 ...	5 58 26 ...	64.02
3. H. Mason (Austro-Daimler) ...	1 ...	6 7 38 ...	64.65
4. C. Paul (Austro-Daimler) ...	1 ...	6 10 10 ...	64.21
5. H. R. S. Birkin (Bentley) ...	0 ...	6 13 5 ...	65.76
6. G. E. T. Eyston (Lea Francis) ...	2 ...	6 15 4 ...	61.14
7. H. W. Cook (Bentley) ...	0 ...	6 19 35 ...	64.77
8. R. F. Oats (O.-M.) ...	2 ...	6 23 23 ...	59.83
9. L. Dutilleux (Bugatti) ...	1 ...	6 25 1 ...	61.73
10. I. G. Callingham (Austro-Daimler) ...	1 ...	6 26 36 ...	61.48
11. K. S. Peacock (Riley) ...	3 ...	6 28 22 ...	56.98
12. R. Watney (Stutz) ...	0 ...	6 34 6 ...	62.39

THE LEVIS FOUR-STROKE.

Considerable interest is being focussed at the present time on the four-stroke Levis, on which P. Hunt led the Junior Amateur T.T. until only three miles from home, and I hear that the manufacturers are making arrangements to produce it in larger quantities than in the past. This machine is comparatively little known, except in the Midlands, owing to the fact that its output has been hindered by production of the popular Six Port Levis two-stroke.

The four-stroke Levis, however, has been used extensively in competitions, and for the last two years has won gold medals in the International Six Days Trial.

MOTOR CYCLES ON THE STAGE.

Horses have been seen on the stage in many dramatic productions, but an Ariel "horse" (as the modern medium-weight Ariel motor cycle has been nick-named) is a rarity in such a setting. Bobby Howes, the well-known comedian, however, is riding one on the stage in the new musical comedy "Mr. Cinders," now running in the provinces prior to its London production.

This is probably the first time that a motor cycle has actually been ridden in a theatre, other than in certain variety turns. Fluid petrol is, of course, barred on the stage, but the difficulty is overcome by the use of cotton-wool saturated with "juice."