

LE MANS 24 HOUR AUTORACE

Dupenegative developed: 79 meters = 265 ft
Positive developed206 meters = 685 ft

The grueling 24-hour Le Mans automobile race, the world's top test of speed and endurance for sports cars, started on Saturday June 12th. in the afternoon, and the forecast was for cool and rainy weather which dampened the attendant festival atmosphere and slow the finely tuned racers.

Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands waved the flag setting the 57 cars off on their long grind. A crowd of about 250,000 followed the race throughout in spite of rain and cold.

The race started at 3 p.m. and continued to the same hour Sunday. Two races are run simultaneously. The one that gets the most attention is the all-out effort to go the farthest distance in the 24-hour period. The second competition is to determine which car gets the most out of its mechanical attributes. This is a complicated competition called a "Performance Index" formula which tries to equillize the big and little cars. A new longer, lower JAGUAR sports car has been installed as a favorite to win the race. The German Mercedes-Benz factory said it could not get its new models in shape in time for this year's race and will not be represented. There is no Italian Lancias either. A Lancia won the Panamerican road race this year and another won the Italian Mille Miglia race.

Three Italian 4.9liter Ferraris are engaged. The United States racing crew of Briggs Cunningham, of Green Farms, Conn. is also considered a big threat for the Jaguars. The wealthy car manufacturing sportsman has three cars entered in the race.

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24-HOURS LE MANS AUTOMOBILE RACE

Jose Froilan Gonzales, of Argentina and Maurice Trintignant of France, drove a FERRARI to victory in the 24-hour Grand Prix endurance sports car race after a dramatic last-minute duel with a Jaguar during a rainstorm.

Tony Rolt and Duncan HAMILTON of Britain, winners of the race last year, drew within a minute and 25th of the Ferrari just one hour and 40 minutes before the end of the race when Gonzales had trouble starting the Ferrari at a pit-stop. Then, with Hamilton driving the new type Jaguar and Gonzales at the wheel of the big 4.9liter Ferrari (N°4), they traded seconds back and forth in the downpour. Gonzales finally won with an advance of just one minute 44 seconds over Hamilton.

Gonzales and Trintignant covered 4061 Kilometers during the 24 hours. The second-place car did 4057 Kilometers. Second was the Jaguar (N°14) driven by Tony Rolt and Duncan Hamilton.

Sherwood Johnston, of Rye New-York and William Spear of Southport Conn. came in third covering a 3,791 kilometers in a Cunningham special sports car (N°2). Roger Laurent and Jacques Swaters of Belgium finished fourth in a 1200 Jaguar. They covered 3,670 Kilometers. Another Cunningham (N°1) driven by Briggs Cunningham of Green Farms, Conn. and John Bennett of Forest Hills N.Y. came in fifth.

Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands gave the start for the sports car classic on Saturday at 3 p.m. over 200,000 people were gathered around the 13, 492 kilometer circuit in spite of rain, wind and bad weather.

The winning Ferrari was well ahead all the way except during the first hour, when it was in second place on two occasions for several minutes. In that first hour Britain's Stirling Moss in a new type Jaguar passed the Gonzales-Trintignant Ferrari but soon fell far back with ignition trouble. The Moss Jaguar withdrew with brake trouble after nine and a half hours of racing.

The winning Ferrari also was passed during the first hour by the Ferrari of Paolo Marzotto and Umberto Maghali of Italy, but the italians soon faded and later dropped out with transmission trouble. Only 19 of the 57 starting cars finished the rain-splashed race.

In the smaller cars contest, crowned by the Endurance prize, the french car DB got the best of all other competitors even the Porsche . The French DB Panhard driven by BONNET and BAYOL got the "Endurance Index" showing steady progress on the French small cars industry.