

RG4592.MI.15 - The Racing Fool

Featuring Speed Bradford WOW

Photo of Bradford smoking a cigar: "Speed Bradford, 'Ace of the road' in Spectacular 4059 mile Mid-winter race in 109 ½ hrs. lapsed time of continuous driving without sleep or rest."

"Figuring time out for stops at various control stations and for broadcasting twice daily totals 81 hours actual driving time or an average of 50 miles per hour."

"Route of travel covered 451 miles thru northeast Nebraska stopping at 22 control stations in as many different towns. This trip was made twice each 24 hours."

Map of northeast Nebraska with the route of travel indicated: "Official Control Station No.1: Follow 'Speed' Bradford and his New Whippet '6' Continuously Day and Night by This Map."

"Crowds gathered to watch the official start of the 4000 mile race which at the end proved to be a record of national fame for light cars – a record which will, no doubt, stand for some time to come, untouched by other drivers."

View of the crowd surrounding the car: "Start of the 4000 mile grind from 20 and Dodge Streets, Omaha, Dec. 26, 1928, 9:00 A.M."

View of the car making a turn in open country: "If he doesn't make this turn – well, look out in front!"

View of the car crossing a bridge.

"After the first 451 mile jaunt, we find Speed back at the W-O-W checking station on time."

"Just one of the 6800 letters received by 'Speed' during his race from radio fans from all over the country."

"Eugene Konecky of W.O.W. introduces Speed to his radio audience."

"Some second day's road experiences."

"The cameraman takes a ride with 'Speed'."

Views from the front seat as the car makes a turn and then speeds ahead on the open road.

"Speed makes a detour."

"Time out! Speed craves food." Speed talks to a crowd as he eats from a plate of food offered to him.

"W-O-W on the job." More interviews with Speed.

“Does ‘Speed’ like buttered toast? Well – that’s his weakness now!”

“Big crowd at Blair. One hour late.”

“Running nearly an hour behind schedule the curves, bridges, crossroads and traffic rush toward the speeding car.”

“Look out Speed there’s a hayrack ahead!”

“A new bridge Speed! Better be late than never!”

“Spurting speeders lay in wait at many crossroads to race with Speed - - - but only for short distances as motors overheat and drivers wear out.”

“‘Speed’ makes a square left turn at 61 miles per hour, barely missing a ditch.”

“Children scrambled for candy second day at Tekamah. Speed now 55 minutes late.”

“Crowds gathered on all dangerous corners to watch ‘Speed’ makes them wide-open - - - none were disappointed - - - he did, and how?”

“Curves – bumps – punctures – more curves and as Speed says these are He curves not she curves.” Speed does some back exercises as mechanics work on his car.

“Craig kiddies like Speed’s candy.”

Scenes along the open road.

“West Point, one of the main points for gasoline.”

“‘HANDS UP’ The ‘Kiddies’ make a raid on ‘Speed’s’ Kari-keen, which was always loaded to the brim with ‘Candy Kisses’ during the race.”

“Hour after hour --- mile after mile --- he raced at top speed trying to keep to his rigid schedule of 50 mi. per hour average.”

“HOLD EVERYTHING.”

“The last bridge bump taken at fifty-two miles per hour bent the shock absorber rods but the car sped on uninjured.”

“Peterson, the fried chicken specialist of Wisner, checks up on Speed’s feathered biped propensities.”

“Into Osmond only ½ hour behind time.” View of the crowd surrounding the car.

“‘SPEED’ wouldn’t be ‘SPEED’ without his cigar. He smokes 25 every day and enjoys them all.”

“Some of the greatest crowds of race met the Ace of the Endurance Racers at Plainview.”

“Hey, Speed! Let us take your picture!”

“A great crowd at Neligh on the second day of the race - - - Speed now but 15 minutes late.”

“Tilden - - - friendly cops - - - pretty co-eds - - - more chicken.”

“Madison - - - Speed - - - candy - - - pretty girls - - - and traffic cops.”

“A SPEED COP - - - then a 10 mile chase at 70 miles per hour followed - - - “

Policeman on a motorcycle follows the car.

“‘Speed’ makes a sharp turn at 64 miles an hour with the ‘cop’ slowly gaining - - - but it won’t be long now!”

The motorcycle catches up with Speed and forces him to stop; the policemen writes up a ticket.

“Arrival in Columbus but ten minutes late.”

“And into Schuyler On Time.”

“Second night - - - Omaha - - - on time - - - the evening meal.”

“On through the night ‘Speed’ raced, mile after mile, at 65 and 70 miles per hour, hoping to gain time lost - - - “

“‘Speed’ and the mechanics who took turns riding and keeping him awake.”

“The third night finds Speed’s pulse and respiration normal.” A doctor examines Speed.

“Council Bluffs - - - fourth morning one hour late - - - a puncture - - - then to - - - “

Street scene as mechanics work on the car.

“For safety’s sake, mechanics checked the car each time it arrived in Omaha.”

“Saluted by a toy cannon on each trip thru Blair.”

“An incident as common to road racing as a flat tire, a blown-out cylinder head gasket near Craig, Nebr.”

“Farmers soon gather to witness the installation of the new gasket.”

“Speed finds the farmer’s dog likes his candy too.”

“On his way again - - - The following 4 hours Speed averaged over 59 miles per hour.”

“Fourth night - - - after 84 hours of driving mostly over gravel roads the eyes go bad - - - an oculist treats them.”

On the open road again.

“In at the finish.”

Speed steps out of his car and is greeted by a crowd of well-wishers.

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“The longest and fastest race in my career of speed and endurance driving.”

Speed is interviewed on the radio. “Graham McNamee couldn’t assist at the ‘Mike’ so ‘Bill’ Graham of the World-Herald made a worthy substitute.”

“The man - - - the route - - - the car.”

Speed Bradford in street dress, smoking a cigar. Map of the route of the race in northeast Nebraska. View of the car. “The Whippet.”

THE END.

Photographed by Chenoweth Omaha