

THE BROOKLANDS AUTUMN MEETING

MANY THRILLS AND CLOSE FINISHES

AFTER a week's postponement owing to bad weather, the final Brooklands meeting of the year was run on October 21st, the second Saturday in the Motor Show. The programme of six Mountain races and two long handicaps, the former embracing the championship and also the first ladies' race over this famous circuit, gave every indication of plenty of good sport on the day and, in fact, more than fulfilled its promises. More is the pity that the cool weather, the Motor Show and a postponement should have depleted the spectators until they were about one-fifth of a normal crowd for an important meeting.

The two long handicaps were intended as curtain raisers, but they quickly developed into something far more interesting. The first had sixteen starters, Meeson's Hillman Minx as limit man taking a start of 2 minutes 29 seconds from Kaye Don who was at the scratch point on his 4,900 c.c. Bugatti. Actually Meeson had covered more than a lap in the nine mile race before the latter was flagged away and such a handicap seemed too much and this was certainly the case. There was a fine battle between Aldington on his Frazer Nash and Marker's old Bentley, these two stealing up behind Ashton Rigby's M.G., the three finishing respectively one, two and three, with a bare 100 yards separating them.



TWO OUTSTANDING DRIVERS—Signor Taruffi and Mr. Whitney Straight

In the next race R. L. Duller and a brother of George, who we all know so well, got two wheels over the top of the banking, and shot backwards across the track. During the trip he wrecked the car and a stout telegraph pole, Duller luckily leaving the car before the journey was completed and sustaining nothing worse than a shaking and a few bruises. Of all the lucky escapes that we have seen at Brooklands, this must rank near the head of the list.

The Championship followed with eight real cars and an equal number of famous drivers all starting off from scratch and due to fight things out over ten laps. At the corner, a bare 200 yards from the start, Rose Richards got into a bad skid. Campbell avoided him on the Sunbeam only to develop a heavy spin, the two cars colliding. Immediately there followed a lot of official and some very unofficial signalling to drivers, with the result that Pietro Taruffi, on Earl Howe's Bugatti, was badly slowed and lost his lead. Nevertheless, with a course partly blocked for the rest of

the run, he recovered so far as to get second place only two seconds behind Straight's Maserati (Straight thus becoming champion), and he also approached within one-fifth of the lap record. The bother about the unofficial signals has not yet died down and there will be echoes next year.

In the five other races that followed, there were many more thrills, the score being higher than at any previous Brooklands Meeting. The ladies' race, handsomely won by Miss Don on Dixon's Riley, and with the little man acting as passenger, coach and cox all at once, saw more than one driver attempting to disprove Euclid's theory that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, but nobody hit anyone else.

Straight on his Maserati established a new 1,100 c.c. class record for the Mountain circuit, first at 69.74 m.p.h. and again at 70.67 m.p.h. in a later event, and Raymond Mays on the 1,500 supercharged Riley took a new record for this class at 74.68 m.p.h.

The last race of all had twenty-two starters, all closely matched, with the result that on every circuit there were battalions of cars pouring round the corners, time after time, and a bunch howling down to the finish with the issue in doubt until the very last. Mathieson brought his Bugatti through the mass and won by 2 seconds, with Eccles' Bugatti behind and Horton on his M.G. only twenty yards astern and in third place.

A fitting end indeed to a season mixed with good sport and sadness, for more than one fine man will not be with us again. Now it's four and a half months of winter before we can again fall under the spell of Brooklands.



Whitney Straight chasing Raymond Mays around the bend at Chronograph Villa