



PART III: Pre-Race Party at the Embassy of Monaco, Algiers
Intrigue at Staouéli: Tavho Myrsky (Finland) , Aristide La Fontaine (France), Esteban Blanco (Spain), Victor Hugo Stéphane de Broqueville (Belgium), and John Milk (Britain)

As always, **Tavho Myrsky**, Finland's famed ice circuit driver, arrived well-dressed and elegant. He was visibly pleased to meet with the Prince and Princess of Monaco and exuded a confidence with them that spelled an extraordinary sense of business savvy and presence. Many noted that his dark, nearly black eyes belied that inside, he will do anything to achieve his goals upon the race circuit. Despite his outward polite nature, in his heart, it was obvious that the Finnish driver harbored no feelings or emotion whatsoever for his opponents in the race.

With that said, Myrsky's bearing also immediately accorded him respect from the other drivers, which he seemed to crave seemingly at any cost. This respect hinged equally on the recognition that he is a natural driver as much as the discovery by all that he seemingly has a dark side to his character. A few observed that his lips sometimes seemed to curl upward almost menacingly with jealousy when others appear to take the upper hand in conversations during the party, yet despite that, he remained cordial and friendly to all.



The first driver to make an effort to greet **Tavho Myrsky** at the party was **Rutger "Hajen" Hägglund** of Sweden. Although meant as a private comment, Sweden's famed "Shark" was overheard to say, "Tavho, shouldn't we be drinking some heavier stuff than this wine and champagne? Shall we open up a bottle of Vodka? I do hope

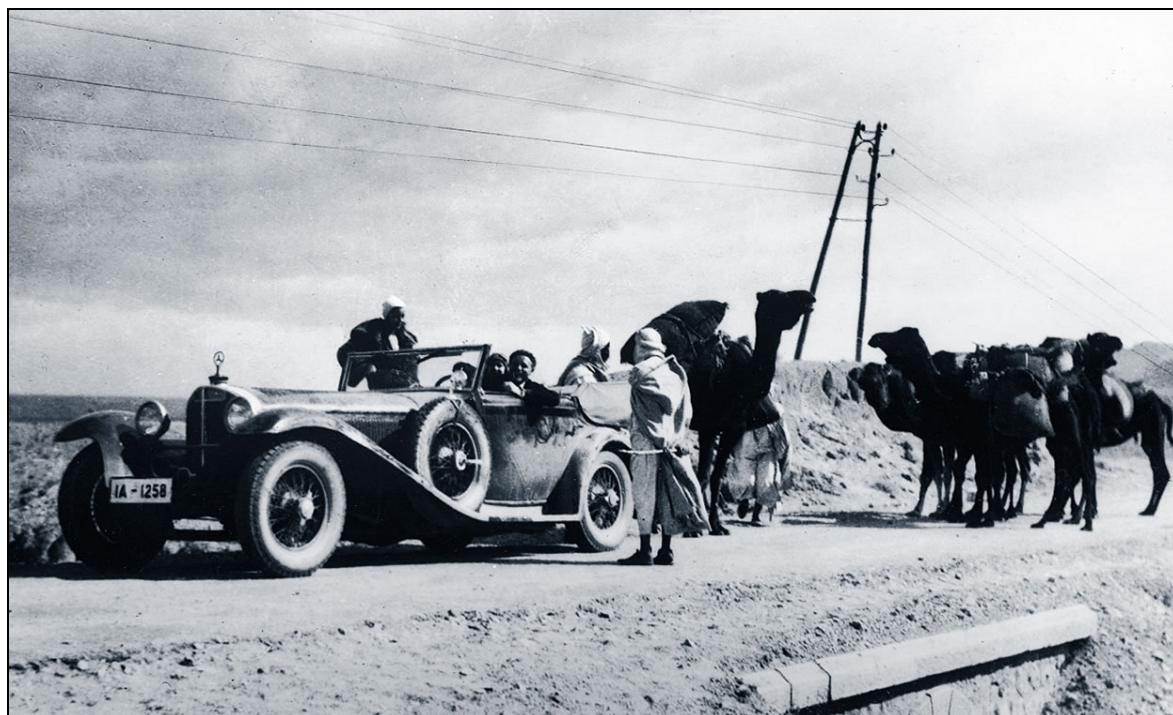


we both finish this race in the top five – did you get the joke? We both finish. Ha ha!! Yes, good luck, my friend!”

Soon afterwards, the Czech driver, **Vitez Rychly** and his fiancée, Veronika, together approached **Tavho Myrsky**. At first, some quiet words were exchanged, but then Rychly was heard to loudly proclaim, “I must say, you and I appear to be the outsiders here. A wealth of experience on tracks far more treacherous than the ones on Le Grande Épreuve, eh? How about you and I work together and take the world by storm? What do you say, Rati?”

Aristide La Fontaine, France’s rising star, was soon speaking quietly with **Tavho Myrsky** as well. Tavho was overhead to commend Aristide and welcome him back to racing after his recovery from the mountain accident. Together, the two then made their way over to **Sven Magnusson**, Sweden’s famous race fuel additives expert.

Aristide La Fontaine also approached **Amb. Watanabe Tomitani**, Japan's Ambassador to Italy. He was overheard issuing an invitation to Amb. Tomitani with the words, “Good evening Ambassador, it is really a great pleasure to meet such a great fan as yourself here. I hope that the race will meet your expectations. As you come from Italy, I am sure that you know very well the track at Genoa – based on your expertise, what do you think the secret of this track may be? Would you like to come and drive it with me in my car?”





The Czech driver, **Vitez Rychly**, before his untimely events of the evening were to later unfold, also took a moment to greet **Aristide La Fontaine**. Rychly and his fiancée, VV, greeted him warmly. “Not many men would have the courage to come back to the track after such an accident,” said a thoughtful Rychly. “And I admire that.”

Aristide responded kindly, “Do you enjoy the party? I have heard that you have won the dangerous race of Mt. Snezka.... Please tell me a little bit about it....”

But Rychly seemed to wish to avoid the topic and instead changed subjects, apparently on behalf of VV, who was already gathering some news photographers together nearby. “Tell me,” Rychly said, “is your lovely wife available to take publicity photos? My fiancée, Veronika, is trying to break into the motion pictures in America and would appreciate the additional exposure. Perhaps we could start with one of all three of us together?”

Aristide would agree and as the photographers finished snapping their photos, another round of champagne was poured by **Louis de Montignac** of Monaco, who also greeted Aristide with the words, « Aristide! Viens à ma table quand tu as 5 minutes, que je te présente Le Prince de Monaco. Tu vas lui faire grande impression pendant la course, j’en suis sûr! »

Shortly thereafter, Aristide made his way to **Claude d’Etoile**, France’s Grand Prix Committee Chairman, who was with his wife, **Genvieve d’Etoile**. There, Aristide spent the much of the remainder of the night speaking about the upcoming circuit and whether France might host the next race in the series at Nice. Their conversation was amiable and pleasant, and only once interrupted by the Czech driver, **Vitez Rychly** and his fiancée, VV, who strolled over to regale them with harrowing stories of racing down the treacherous mountains in Czechoslovakia at speeds entirely too fast, yet once again avoiding the topic of the accident on Mt. Snezka, which in a race against Rychly, had claimed the life of Rychly’s finest competitor.

When Madame d’Etoile asked if he is not afraid of the danger, Vitez replied confidently that the love of VV protected him at all times. He intoned seriously, “She is my guardian angel. I have painted her initials on my car, so that nothing may harm me.”

All nodded their approval, but Vitez was quickly carried away with himself and boasted, “And once I have won Le Grande Épreuve, my lovely fiancée and I will build a home in Hollywood, where she will become a major motion picture star!”

With that, **Rychly** was again off with VV, having achieved their only goal with Aristide – and they were seen next talking with Spain’s top driver, **Esteban Blanco**. Blanco, ever gracious, was shocked by the forceful nature of Rychly’s fiancée and even more so by



Rychly himself, who was overheard to say “I hear you are a collector; perhaps you will find these of value....” And with that, Rychly handed Blanco a deck of cards featuring pictures of women of easy virtue, in all suits, clubs, diamonds, spades and, of course, hearts....

The Czech then approached **John Milk** of Britain. Wryly, Rychly was overheard to say, “This Amilcar you drive, we have not heard of it in Czechoslovakia. Quite fascinating. Perhaps you would be so kind as to show me its virtues some time? In return, I will allow Veronika to show you her virtues, as well.” At this, Veronika gave Rychly a punch on the shoulder, which caused Vitez to break down into a fit of laughter, making more than a few of the assembled guests wonder if Rychly had become intoxicated on the champagne that was now flowing freely.

A few moments later, to everyone’s surprise, Rychly attempted to accost the German driver, **Godeschalk Hegkman von Grebeneck**, much to everyone’s surprise and shock. He was expelled from the party, to nobody’s surprise, and things quickly settled back down.

To break the silence that followed, the British driver, **John Milk**, approached **Louis de Montignac** and commented, “It is a marvelous party, Louis, please send my congratulations to the Prince and the Princess!”

More champagne was ordered out and the party renewed with great enthusiasm.

Soon thereafter, **John Milk** was seen conversing with his countryman, **Wing Commander Baits**, about the Schneider Cup Seaplane Races of 1931 and how Britain had soundly beaten the Italians, setting a new speed record.

In fact, it was the Wing Commander’s Benzine fuel additive that had helped the Supermarine S.6B seaplane set the new record, while Italy’s finest racing seaplane, the Macchi-Castoldi MC.72, suffered an engine failure and could not compete. Two years later, however, in 1933, the MC.72 would set a new world seaplane speed record, of 709 km/hr. Such a record would be hard to beat – ever.

As John Milk engaged the Wing Commander, **Eusebius “Sebi” Orsi** of Italy was seen approaching the **Prince and Princess of Monaco** who Count Orsi complimented on their historic and ongoing success at, as he called it, “of not-being-French”. Although the Prince and Princess took the statement in stride, having observed as so many others in the room had Sebi’s unique style, they were nonetheless, somewhat less than amused to hear him also compliment them on the “cleanliness of their people”.



Remaining gracious, their Royal Highnesses were nonetheless relieved when Sebi moved on to accost several of the ladies he spied along the bar.

Victor Hugo Stéphane de Broqueville of Belgium was then seen with the Norwegian, **Olaf Hammarsfjold**, humbly asking for assistance since, the Belgian team and he are inexperienced. Olaf was taken with the Belgian's frank approach and agreed to help as best he could for the upcoming race.

Finally, as the end of the night approached, **Vitez Rychly's** fiancée, Veronika, made her way over to **Tex Harper**, the American adventurer and former Olympian. VV seemed to find Tex attractive in every way and was soon leaning against him in an almost scandalous manner. Not only is he athletic and ruggedly handsome, but Tex seemed to have no limit to his courage and sense of adventure.

It was immediately apparent to all at the embassy that VV seemed to think that Tex could possibly use his celebrity to further her acting career, and so she flirted with him shamelessly, even grabbing the man's hand at one point.

"Have your travels ever taken you to Czechoslovakia?" she coyly asked the American. "I'm sure there are many breathtaking adventures that await you." Many shook their head, noting how she seemed to overly emphasize the word, "breathtaking"....

Victor Hugo Stéphane de Broqueville of Belgium, had asked his close friend and team member, Jean Womubu, the grim African, to keep an eye on his car. So it was to everyone's surprise when Womubu quietly entered the Embassy, climbing up the patio, to converse quietly with Victor. While the revelry kept everyone's attention inside, he noted, at least two groups of people were prowling about the paddocks out in the night air, up to no good. Word was quickly passed to all of the driver's present to check their cars over before the race with extra care.

The mystery deepened when, even though he had hired a couple of guards watch over his car, the Finnish driver, **Tavho Myrsky**, would find oily handprints on the white bonnet of his Chrysler Special, seemingly left to purposely mar the car's clean white paint job. Though it was unclear who might have ordered such a thing be done, perhaps it was a sign from one of the other drivers that Myrsky should watch himself on the circuit in the upcoming race. Or perhaps, Myrsky's mechanics considered, someone had done more than simply smeared oil on his hood, something deep within the car, hidden and not obvious, but perhaps deadly....



Results

From Claude d'Etoile and his wife, Genvieve d'Etoile, of France's Grand Prix Committee, Aristide La Fontaine would receive a new advanced experimental tire package from Michelin, adding one additional Tire WP to his Salmson 8C racer.

In the days after the event, Finland's team, under Tavho Myrsky, is somehow able to develop several advancements to his car, without any apparent help from any of the embassy party guests or others. Rumors quickly spread among mechanics that some of the advancements seemed to parallel some of the more radical and secret design elements of some of their own cars, though how Myrsky might have come across the information remains the "Myrsky Mystery". The Fin's car is improved with the addition of one Tire WP and one Car Body WP.

Olaf Hammarsfjold, the Norwegian metallurgical engineer, helps out Victor Hugo Stéphane de Broqueville of Belgium. One Car Body WP is added to the Belgian's Bugatti T35B.

Wing Commander Baits, Britain's fuel additives experts, aids John Milk with several car modifications, resulting in an engine power advancement. First of all, John Milk's car will automatically add one movement point to his Start. Further, except on the Start Round, Milk's car may, one time during any race Movement Round, add two movement spaces to his car's speed; thereafter, once more during the race, Milk's car may add one movement space during the Movement Round of his choice. This reflects the formulation of a benzine additive to Milk's fuel supply for the circuit, giving the car an added boost when needed, at Start and twice more during the race.

Incredibly, despite getting kicked out of the party early due to his altercation with Germany's driver, the fortunes of Vitez Rychly are saved by his fiancée, VV, whose poor attempt at seduction of the American former Olympian, Tex Harper, while unsuccessful, somehow secured the American's interest in helping the Czech team to win the race. With Tex's money from oil development in the southern United States, the Czechs are able to procure a more advanced gearbox for their Bugatti T51A, adding one Gearbox WP to the car's overall performance.