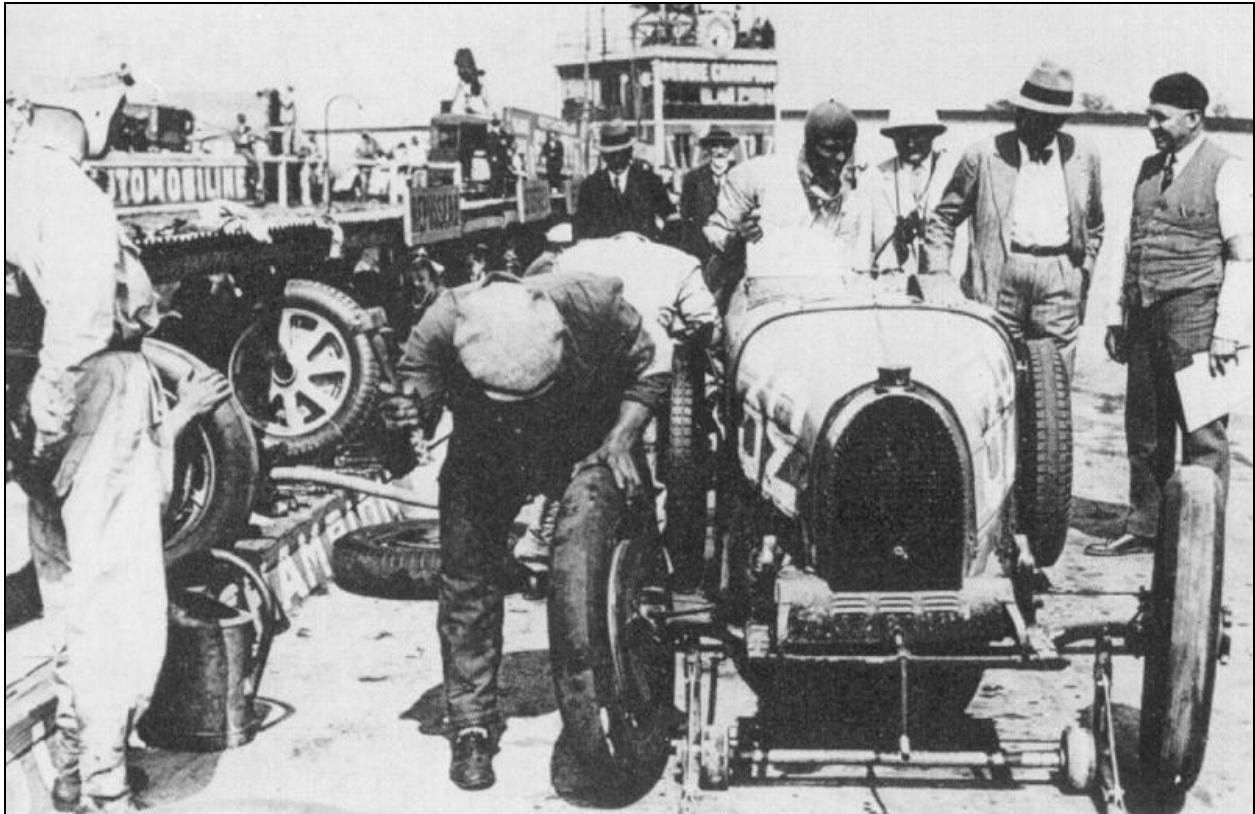




POST RACE HAPPENINGS AT THE GRAND PRIX DE NICE



Rychly's Bugatti T51 undergoes testing, its sleek lines whispering brilliant speed.

Part 4: Vitez Rychly Won't Attend Molsheim

In a dark mood, Vitez Rychly, the Czech driver, has announced that he will not be attending the upcoming party at the Bugatti chateau and factory in Molsheim, France. While he sends his personal regrets, the representatives of Molsheim are certainly displeased that the current leader of La Grande Épreuve, who has twice placed second in two difficult races, will not be attending. The Czech team and his orange Bugatti will be sent ahead to the next race in Sweden instead, while Vitez will charter a flight and arrive two days ahead of the next race.



Those close to the Czech driver reveal that Rychly has retained the services of Yves Robitaille, a private investigator from Paris who was already in Nice, having come down to watch the race. On learning the news of the disappearance of Orlince Strazny, the Czech's chief of security, and Rychly's fiancée, Veronika Vilhelmova, Robitaille had offered his investigative services, which were readily accepted. The goal is to trace the true cause of the fires that started along the pit lane and the strange events that unfolded afterward. Mr. Rychly appears to suspect the competence shown by the race officials and local police on this matter.

While many of the government officials in Nice claim that the fires were merely an unfortunate series of accidents, Mr. Rychly has made clear that he believes that they are covering up the truth in a poorly conceived attempt to preserve Nice's reputation. Mr. Rychly points out that he is nearly certain that these matters were deliberately undertaken. He also makes note of the fact that thousands of spectators can attest that sounds of gunfire were heard amidst the chaos along the pit lane.

Mr. Rychly has spared no expense and already Robitaille has hired two expert assistants to help him in his search for VV and Strazny. The three are conducting interviews, digging for evidence and keeping pressure on the local authorities. They are also working with a solicitor, who is petitioning the courts on Mr. Rychly's behalf to allow for an independent examination of the bodies by a respected coroner.

The investigative team has paid particular attention to the antics and actions of the Italian and German teams, which have been the subject of nearly every interview. They are running down every contact made by the Italians and Germans in the few days leading up to the race, though how much of this is based on evidence and how much is rooted in Mr. Rychly's known hatred and suspicion of the German team and driver and his distrust of the Italian is yet unclear.

With regard to the disappearance of his fiancée, friends of the Czech note that Vitez Rychly is trying to maintain a brave face in public. However, they have also noted that he cannot help but allow his private thoughts to turn dark – the furrow on his brow has deepened and a black mood has overtaken the Czech team. It appears that Mr. Rychly is struggling with depression and he has been seen drinking to excess on several occasions.

Requests for direct interviews by members of the esteemed Press Corps have been refused – he has refused to talk on the record until VV is located. Nonetheless, Rychly has remained gracious with the local authorities despite his overt condemnation of their platitudes regarding the fires. His pressure is underpinned by hopes that he can spur them to action – or at least cooperation with his own professional investigative team -- and he will stop at nothing to get his fiancée back.



The stunning Duesenberg S-8 Racer is unveiled along the Quai des États-Unis, only one day after it was first revealed as Belgium's new car in nearby Antibes.

Part 5: Surprise in Nice

Belgian driver Victor H. Stéphane de Broqueville reveals new car
Antibes, France – Tuesday, May 1st, 1934

Who would have thought that Antibes, the ancient Greek city opposite Nice, would be a place where, in the footsteps of the ancient heroes, today's more modern counterparts would reveal their secrets? Yet just that has come to pass along these ancient streets – only a few hours since Victor H. Stéphane de Broqueville had left the hospital in Nice in a hastily assembled a press conference.

Many will recall that the Belgian driver is the oldest nephew of Comte Charles de Broqueville (the current prime minister of Belgium). He is also one of the most daring drivers in La Grande Épreuve. Thankfully, despite the severity of the recent accident at the Grand Prix de Nice, he appears in good spirits and nearly fully recovered. The accident was his second in as many races – and this time far more serious.

Among the Press Corps, his driving style has fueled a new reputation as one who takes too many risks. Our readers might recall the reporting in full how the Italian race pilot,



Sebi Orsi, rescued M. de Broqueville from the shattered remains of his car, moments before it burst into flames.

Victor's previous race car, a older Bugatti T35B model with its 2.3L, straight 8 engine, had been christened "Tigress" by the Belgian. That car is now a complete wreck, burned and twisted beyond recognition. Many guessed that M. de Broqueville, or "Vic", as he has urged all of our reporters to call him, would choose another Bugatti as a replacement, particularly in light of the news of the upcoming event at Molsheim. Yet all guessed wrong. The young pilot did not choose a Bugatti, nor an Amilcar, Maserati nor Mercedes – he chose an American make more famous for its races on the hazardous wooden plank tracks of New York and the brick circuit of Indianapolis than on the finely made circuits of Europe.

Vic's tailor-built Duesenberg, painted in brilliant yellow, made its debut, having just arrived yesterday by ship from the United States. Coming to the hastily called press conference, Vic first drove through the old town's maze of tiny streets in his newly constructed American racer. Along the way, many Niçoise were drawn out by the roar and thunder of the car's huge engine.

As the car turned onto the Quai des États-Unis, the photographers crowded in closely. Expertly, Vic drove between them and came to rest atop a wooden platform that he had quickly built to show off the new car. He let the engine roar one last time and then turned it off before pulling himself out of the car to address the assembled Press Corps.

Proud, if not a bit shaken, Victor Hugo then leaned against the long and slender hood of the powerful car and smiled. Nearby, watching intently with what must be a deep brotherly love, his mechanic, Jean Womubu, loomed. Seeing the new racer, the huge African laughed with the roar of a lion.

Vic waved the photographers to silence. "Naturally, I would have loved for this car to arrive before the race in Nice, but there was just not enough time," Vic intoned. "The DMC [Duesenberg Motor Company] could deliver motor and chassis, but my friend Jacob, an excellent engineer, needed to fit the body on it. I am burning with eagerness to race with it!"

"The car's worth a small fortune. My father would be outraged if he knew just how much exactly, so please spare him the details!" Laughter rolled through the crowd of journalists, many of whom had met the Belgian prime minister in the past.

"I am not sure just how fast she really is," he continued, "so we will certainly need to make some adjustments and it's only a week until the next race – yet, I can assure you,



the car will perform very well. I would not be surprised if many more drivers will have their focus on the rear of DMC in the near future.”

Many questions were shouted, but Vic waved them off, visibly exhausted from his recovery. Abruptly, he cut short the press conference with an apology, referring to his condition after the horrific accident that nearly took his life as he steadied himself against the front tire.

With visible effort, Vic turned around to go. Even then, some reporters jumped forward, only to stop dead in their tracks as they saw the warning in the eyes of M. Womubu who stepped forth immediately to block their way. That brief opportunity allowed Vic to vanish quickly into a waiting car, a black and yellow Bugatti Royale Coupe De Ville. Leaning from the window, he gave a wave and departed, leaving Womubu to care of the new yellow race car and get it loaded onto a waiting lorry.

Before long, more technicians from his racing team arrived and soon were wrapping the Duesenberg in cloth covers. They then pushed it atop the transport lorry and took the car first to Nice, where more photographers awaited, and then it was loaded onto a rail car for the trip north to Sweden for next race of the season.

Many of the journalists are curious how this car – and this young driver – will meet the high expectations that have naturally resulted from the unveiling. While the Duesenberg Motor Company is a little known marquee in Europe, some will remember how the Scuderia Ferrari last year raced a DMC in the hands of team principal Count Felice Trossi. The terrible, indeed fatal events of that race remain the subject of much heated debate even today. Yet the “Duese” will likely perform well for the Belgian driver, all the more so on the ice in Sweden where the best performing isloppet cars have often been American in recent years.

