

The Midway

Ray Stewart

IT WAS a welcome rest to sink onto the low, white stools of the large concession stand at the triple intersection of Georgetown Road, 16th Street, and Crawfordsville Road. This was the first stand on the midway, and a soft drink quickly drove away the thirst that we had acquired by going both ways along the line of stands on the south side of 16th Street. The night was hot and humid, but we could not be particular about the weather or the night, for the midway lives only one night—the eve of the 500 Mile Race Classic. And the thrill and excitement of the eventful period is well worth the sleep that is lost during this brief period.

I swung around on the stool. I could see the length of the midway, its lights blazing and floating against the deep blue, midnight summer sky. The loud-speakers of the various booths bawled out their endless, profiteering messages, and those without human voices emitted music—good and bad. The spacious open front of the Speedway Drive-Inn was pared to two narrow openings for automobiles by a boisterous revival truck, four small souvenir booths, and a concession stand. Out of these two openings trickled a two-way line of hungry drivers and passengers, and of “full” drivers and passengers. The front of the American Art Clay factory was likewise hidden from view by the “win-a-prize” stands—basketball throwing, ring tossing, baseball throwing, dart throwing, penny tossing. In front of the whitewashed, cement-block 16th Street Midget Speedway were located the “free-display” trucks. Each of these displays has a strategically placed “contribution” box at its exit. Beyond this point were to be seen only an orderly group of parked cars and a likewise orderly and endless column of cars lined up to enter the enclosure of the 500 Mile Race Track at the sound of the cannon at five o'clock in the morning.

There was a strangeness in the bobbing, dancing, swaying sea of people. Their heads seemed to float apart from their bodies, and seemed to be far, far away. They were talking, but were making no understandable comments, while their bodies were walking nowhere.

We rose and started back again along the street, absorbing the excitement in our small city, spending the money saved for this habitual occurrence, and passing the slowly waning time until the start of the unique, annual 500 Mile Race—and the finish of the midway.

THE SILENT SAILS

Louis J. Foerderer

Calm mistress, ravishing by night,
 With heaving breast in emerald gown,
 With iridescent ringlets crowned,
 And silver spangles gathered round ;
 With mists that hypnotise to dreams
 You carry on in silent gales
 To harbors past the depths of night ;
 Where She in jealousy breathes deep
 To break the spell—Diana's passed.
 Calm mistress, ravaged by the night,
 Awake, the dawning bares that breast,
 The masted gooney takes his flight,
 Gaunt ribs their turn take on the crest,
 And empty, restless, rent sails slap,
 The day is come. The gale is spent.