

100TH ANNIVERSARY INDIANAPOLIS 500

This is it. This is the moment, the defining moment which will change the world of motor sports forever. It is almost 10 o'clock on the morning of May 30, 1911, the location being the main straight of the now two-year-old Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Seated in the Stoddard-Dayton passenger car to the right is the extraordinary self-made millionaire Carl Graham Fisher. With him is his close friend, confidant and business partner, industrialist James A. Allison. They are about to depart on a lap of the 2½-mile rectangularly-shaped oval of bricks and mortar, accompanied by the four vehicles to their right, plus an additional 36 behind them. At the conclusion of the lap, Fisher will pull the vehicle over to the left and the rolling field will continue on down to the flagman for what it is believed will be the first-ever massed rolling start for any automobile racing event anywhere in the world.

The 40 contesting vehicles, most of them stripped down passenger cars and entered by the very companies which have produced them, will be embarking upon an epic, treacherous, bone-jarring journey of 500 miles. It will take the leaders almost seven hours to get there. Indeed, this is to be the very first Indianapolis 500. Who can possibly know the impact this event will have upon the automobile industry in general, the sport of automobile racing in particular and the lives of millions upon millions of people who will eventually be consumed by this iconic slice of Americana, either as a participant or as a devoted enthusiast. And who, on this day, can possibly predict that the "500" will still be running on an annual basis (other than for when the country will be involved in a pair of world wars) at this very same venue 100 years—an entire century—from now.





2011 OFFICIAL PROGRAM CONTENTS

Welcome/Tribute to the Hulmans.....	6
A Legend Remembered (Tom Carnegie).....	8
Back Home Again in Indiana.....	15
Map of Grounds.....	16
Month of May Schedules.....	20
Awards and Sponsors.....	22
Lap Prize Sponsors.....	28
Thank You Indy "Veterans".....	30
On the Cover.....	36
Track Talk.....	40
Emerging Tech and Balloon Festival.....	46
Celebration of Automobiles.....	48
2011 Indianapolis 500 Drivers.....	54
Paved with Gold (Mazda Road to Indy).....	76
Driving History (Dario Franchitti).....	84
American Revolution.....	90
From Concept to Creation (2012 Car).....	96
Keepsakes of the Legends.....	106
Once in a Lifetime: The 33-Car Photo Shoot.....	110
The Golden Anniversary (1961 "500").....	116
A Fight to the Finish (1991 "500").....	122
Indy's First Pole Sitter (Lewis Strang).....	130
The Black Beast.....	136
Powering the Next 100 Years.....	146
Facts & Figures.....	150

100 Years of the Indianapolis 500 161

A race-by-race recap of the first century of the Greatest Spectacle in Racing

ON THE COVER:



To celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Indianapolis 500, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway commissioned artists to create three different covers, two of which are available at the Speedway and one on newsstands nationwide. For more information on the covers and the artists, please see pages 36-37.





the **BLACK BEAST**

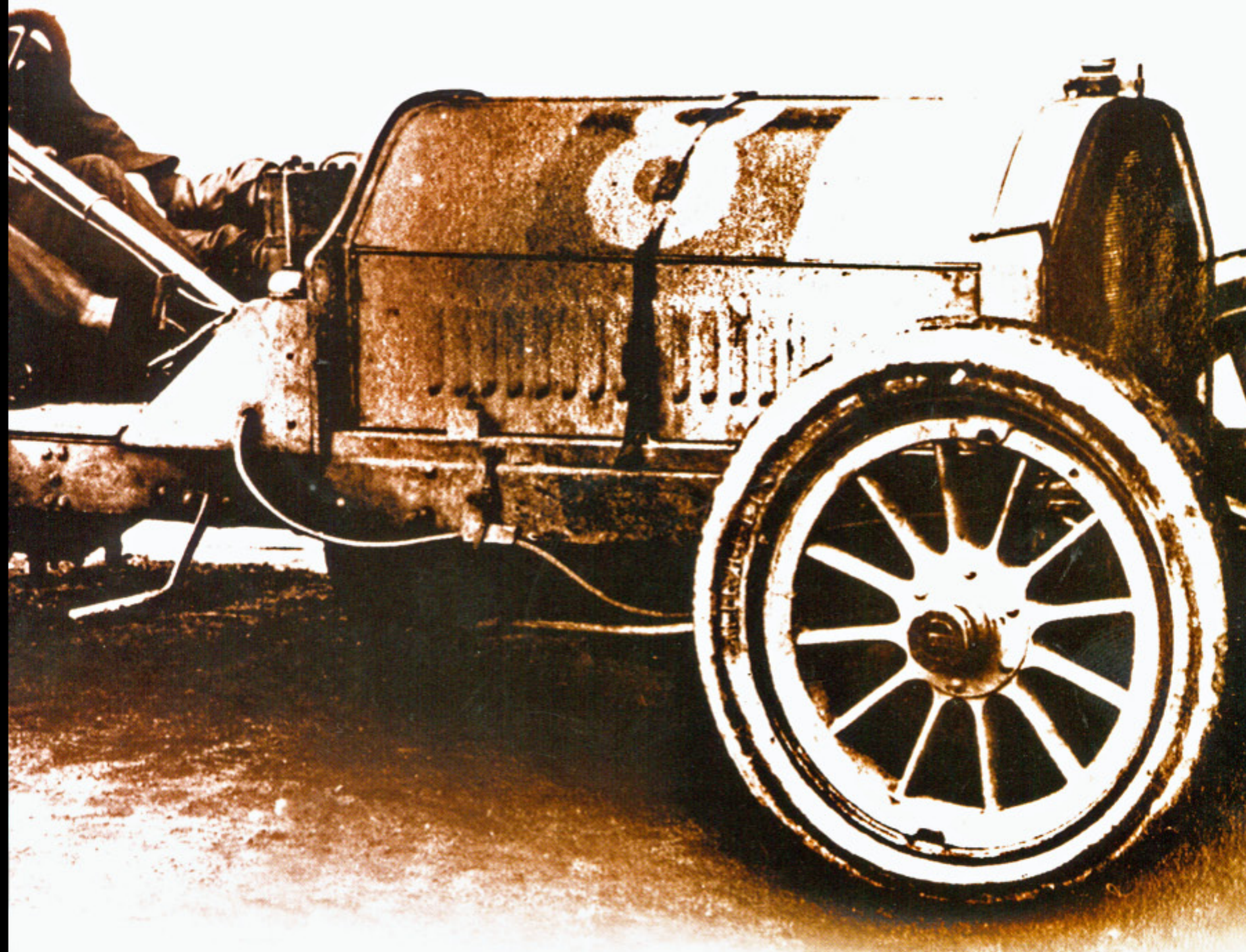
WORDS: Mark Dill

ONE OF THE

favorites to win the first Indianapolis 500 Mile Race in 1911 was a unique entry by the American Locomotive Company, or Alco. Dubbed “Bête Noire,” or “Black Beast” by its driver, Harry Grant, the combination had won America’s greatest road race, the Vanderbilt Cup, two successive years in 1909 and 1910. While a broken connecting rod on the 52nd lap made for a lackluster result in the first Indianapolis 500, the marvelous machine scored a victory of survival over the subsequent ten decades to continue its winning ways in Concours d’Elegance competition today.

Unlike the iconic Marmon Wasp, winner of the first “500” (which has always been owned by either the Marmon Company or the Speedway), the Alco Black Beast, another competitor in that inaugural race, took a more perilous passage through history. Besides the original owner—Alco Company—the car passed through no less than seven hands, including a stint as part of the Harrah’s Automobile Collection beginning in April 1975. It was sold in an auction in 1988.

There was a long stretch where the machine was largely forgotten, with only an old barn offering dubious protection from the elements. Recovered by Ohio collector Joe Loecy Jr. in 1946, the Alco began the first of several restorations. The machine not only bounced from owner to owner, but moved great distances as well, spending time in England and France.



Today it is owned by Howard Kroplick, a Long Island, N.Y., business executive and leading expert of Vanderbilt Cup racing history. He has owned the famous racer since 2009.

One of the first six-cylinder race cars, the Black Beast was a modified stock configuration. Among the alterations were an elongated frame, a modified transmission for top-end speed and taller wheels in the rear. The Alco makes 100 brake horsepower (the stock model made 60), transmitted through a four-speed transmission

and double chain drive. The 3,306-lb. car, which tops out at 1400 rpm with a top speed of 121 mph, sits on a 134-inch wheelbase.

While the Black Beast's performance in the first Indianapolis 500 was disappointing, it did have a small measure of success at IMS. In the Speedway's July 4, 1910 weekend race meet it scored a pair of sprint race victories, one at 10 miles and the other at 20.

Despite running in several other events, the Alco racer is most her-

alded for its victories in the Vanderbilt Cup Races on Long Island, New York in 1909 and 1910. Harry Grant, the only man ever to race the Black Beast, applied his trademark "wait-and-see" driving strategy in both events.

The 1909 Vanderbilt Cup Race was a tale of brutal attrition and Grant's steady drive was the exact tempo required to prevail. In 1910 mechanical failures were again a big part of the story, but the final laps proved to be a duel between Grant and the Marmon of Joe Dawson, who would go on

to win the "500" in 1912. A late-race brush with a spectator and a resulting delay in the pits proved too much for the 21-year-old Dawson to overcome. The Black Beast was the only car to win two Vanderbilt Cup Races held on Long Island, New York.

The Alco racer competed in only one additional race after the 1911 Indianapolis 500: the 1911 Elgin Cup road race, where it finished second. After that the car not only retired from auto racing, but so did the Alco Company. Grant sat out a year as well, but returned to the sport and took part in three more Indianapolis 500s from 1913 through 1915.

Grant did not start racing until he was 30 years old, in 1907. After some success on short dirt tracks, he became the recognized master of hill climb competition, winning all 20 contests he entered in 1908 and 1909. His Vanderbilt Cup victories in 1909 and 1910 cemented his reputation as one of the top drivers of his day. His best finish in the Indianapolis 500 came in 1914 when he drove a British Sunbeam to seventh place.

Grant's life came to an unfortunate end in October 1915 when his Maxwell racer burst into flames during practice for the Astor Cup at the Sheephead Bay high banked wood

plank oval. His burns were so severe that while he survived the accident he succumbed to his injuries several days later in the Coney Island Hospital.

The Alco Company, the maker of the Black Beast, participated only briefly in the automobile industry from 1906 to 1913. Founded in 1901, the company's primary business was the manufacture of locomotive engines for trains. Like many manufacturers of the early days of the automobile, Alco saw opportunity to enter an exploding market for cars.

The Providence, R.I.-based company purchased a license for automobile

**" THERE WAS A LONG STRETCH WHERE THE MACHINE WAS
LARGELY FORGOTTEN, WITH ONLY AN OLD BARN OFFERING
DUBIOUS PROTECTION FROM THE ELEMENTS. "**



◀ Harry Grant, the only man to ever drive the Alco "Black Beast" in competition, sits behind the wheel. Grant would earn an impressive record in the car, winning the Vanderbilt Cup in 1909 and 1910 before driving in the inaugural "500" in 1911.



◀ Current owner Howard Kroplick takes Janet Guthrie, the first woman to drive in the "500," for a ride in the restored Alcoa in 2010.

▼ Alcoa's history as a manufacturer of locomotives is evident in the design of this sign, located atop the company's former facility in Providence, R.I., where the Black Beast was built.



technology from the French Berliet Company and launched into the market. While the cars were of high quality as evidenced by success in competition, sales never attained sufficient levels to sustain a business.

After exiting the automobile market in 1913, Alcoa continued with good success in the railroad manufacturing business for over 50 years.

Eventually, the firm did lose its

market position and closed its doors as an independent company in 1969.

Today, only 12 Alcoa automobiles are known to be in existence. The Black Beast is the brand's only surviving race car—the only Alcoa to ever compete in the Indianapolis 500. Restored to immaculate condition, the Black Beast is once again a winner albeit in a different type of automobile contest—car shows and Concours d'Elegance. ■

Under the ownership of Howard Kroplick and a small team of experts he has assembled, the Black Beast has won nine awards of distinction in the past two years. Among them are: **Most Outstanding Vintage Car Pre-1910** (2009 Greenwich Concours); **2009 First Place-Vintage Race Cars Pre-1960** (Sunday at the Park, Lime Rock Park); **2009 Outstanding Car** (Peconic Bay Region Antique Automobile Club of America car show); **Platinum Award** (2010 Vanderbilt Auto Show), and the **Joe Kissick Memorial Award** (44th Annual Spring Meet at Old Westbury Gardens – Greater New York Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America, 2010.)

ALCO #19 *Black Beast*
1911 Indianapolis 500 Mile Race

