Tricks That Add to a Car’s Speed

Gus Bets on a Sure Thing Because He Knows Automobiles and Human Nature—Then He Explains

By MARTIN BUNN

"They haven't anything of the kind," put in Gus emphatically. "Jack, you think your car is faster. I'll bet you twenty bucks Hank can beat you on a hill or on the level."

"You're on!" Jack snapped angrily. "Just give me a chance and I'll find good use for that twenty."

"All right," said Gus, "Joe and I'll meet you fellows at the foot of Shonk's Mountain at six tomorrow morning when there won't be any traffic. You can race up the mountain and then try out again on that level piece this side of it. How about it Hank?"

"I'm willing," Hank agreed.

"Don't forget to bring the twenty with you," Jack called as he left the Garage.

"What makes you so sure Hank will win?" Joe asked after the two had gone.

"Well, I know Hank and I know Jack," smiled Gus mysteriously.

"I'm glad it's your twenty you're risking," Joe grunted.

It so happens that the road beyond the stiff grade up Shonk's Mountain curves away at a gentle slope so that a person standing at the top can see the road for nearly two miles. Also the top of the hill is visible from the bottom. Consequently Gus, by waving, could signal the contestants when the road was clear.

The two cars had drawn up side by side at the foot of the hill and as Gus waved, they started with a roar. For about a quarter of a mile they stuck together like a team of horses, and then Hank began to pull ahead so that as they whizzed over the top of the hill, and swept past Gus, he was several car lengths ahead.

The result was the same on the level road race.

"Here's your twenty," said Jack as he fished out a twenty-dollar bill and looked at it dolefully as he offered it to Gus. "He beat me fair enough," he added, "but I'm blamed if I see how he did it. I can drive just as well as he does."

Gus pocketed the money. "Come back to the garage with us," he said, "and I'll tell you how he beat you."

"Now," said Gus, when they were all in Joe's little office. (Continued on page 130)
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A definite program for getting ahead financially will be found on page four of this issue.

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(Continued from page 71)

"in the first place here's your money. You're a good sport, kid; you didn't try to pull any ails. That Hank would beat you was a sure thing and I wouldn't bet on a sure thing. You were licked before you started. The two cars were the same make and you're a good driver, but that had nothing to do with it. What did mean something is that Hank has been playing with auto motors long enough to know some of the tricks of getting the most out of them. For instance, what did you do to your carburetor before the race?"

"Nothing," Jack replied. "Why should I? It was all right."

"Not for racing or hill-climbing tests," Gus explained. "Hank set his for a good rich mixture that would give him plenty of kick on the hill and the last mile of speed on the level. What did you do to the ignition?"

"I checked that, all right," said Jack. "Looked over the spark plugs to make sure that there weren't any fouled ones and I looked at the breaker points to make sure they weren't getting pitted."

A LL right for ordinary use," admitted Gus, but Hank came here last night and got himself a whole new set of spark plugs and also a new set of spark plug cables. You have had the spark plugs and ignition cable are plenty good enough for any ordinary service, if you want to get the last ounce of pep out of the motor, new plugs and new cables will help a trifle— and it only takes a couple of trifles to make a difference between two cars of the same make."

"Gosh," young Landrith exclaimed. "Anything else?"

"Sure," Gus smiled. "Hank spent nearly an hour here last night just making sure his brakes didn't drag the tiniest bit. You know how fast he is about draining the crank-case every little while and grinding the valves every few thousand miles. He even went over the wheel bearings and made sure they were set just loose enough."

"I'll bet he put one over on me by taking my muffler off, too," Jack suggested.

"I know he didn't do that," Gus asserted. "he knows his cars well and he can have the third brush set all he wants to. He also moved the third brush over as far as he could to get the charging rate way down so the generator didn't drag on the motor so much."

"There's another point you forgot to mention out," Gus continued. "I never could get you to believe that it paid to use real good gas. Hank knows better. He buys the best he can get. And that same goes for oil. Any kind of oil. You jam your transmission case and rear end full of cheap grease. It doesn't lubricate as well and makes a lot more friction than good transmission oil."

"Well, anyhow, I had sense enough to pump up my tires," Jack maintained.

"Yes, and how did you do it?" inspired Gus. "You probably put just as much air in as the makers recommend. That's right for regular use, but if you want to cut down the rolling friction on good roads, shoot in an extra five pounds or so."

"Good night!" said young Landrith disgustedly. "The next time I'll try to know a little more before I start shooting off my mouth!"

"That's a real good idea, too," Gus agreed.

Did you ever wonder whether your dreams last for an hour, or only a split second? What makes you dream you are falling? Can dreams be made to order? A noted psychologist tells in a coming issue of Popular Science Monthly, how for the first time—through an unexpected discovery—he has solved these and other fascinating mysteries of dreams.