## 1919

AFTER THE 500 WAS CANCELLED FOR TWO YEARS DURING WORLD WAR I, THE 1919 race was much anticipated by racing fans.

The winner was once again a Hoosier, Crawfordsville native Howard "Howdy" Wilcox, driving one of the Speedway's faux-Peugeots from 1916. Wilcox was the first to average more than 100 mph in qualifications, but so did Rene Thomas, who won the pole with a 104.780 average in a car that demonstrated another major advance by the French. His straight-8 Ballot was the fastest car on the track, but it faltered in the race and he came in 11th.

Crashes claimed the lives of drivers Arthur Thurman and Louis LeCocq and riding mechanic Robert Bandini. LeCocq and Bandini burned to death when the gas tank of their car exploded. Wilcox would die four years later in a race in Pennsylvania.

ABOVE: Howdy Wilcox, winner of the 1919 Indianapolis 500. Stachine Activities

RIGHT: Fans seeking a better view of the action in 1919 stood inside and on top of their cars. Savane Action







ABOVE: Eddle Rickenbacker, who drove in four early Indianapolis 500s and was a World War I flying hero, later bought Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Santieus Archies