

PROFICIENT YEARS AT SPORTS

namely, age 24. It is of course possible that, if the professional football managers recruited players indiscriminately from all age groups, the modal year might fall at a younger age level.

CORN HUSKERS

In Figure 7 the solid line presents the chronological ages at which 87 state corn-husking championships were won. This solid line makes no allowance for population differences at the various age levels. In this figure the broken line makes allowance for the population differences at the various age levels. Figure 7 reveals that, when allowance is made for the differences in total male population at the various age levels, the shape of the age curve is changed only very slightly. This latter statement is applicable also to most of the other age curves that are presented herein.

It should perhaps be explained that all of the data regarding the corn-husking championships were supplied by the editors of the farm papers which sponsor the state husking contests.* At the present time (1938) these state contests are being held in no less than nine different states. Although the peak of the age curve in Figure 7 occurs at ages 25 to 29 inclusive, the one year of most frequent success at husking is age 30, and the five-year interval of greatest success is that from ages 26 to 30 inclusive.†

AUTOMOBILE RACERS

On each Memorial Day the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Corporation sponsors a 500-mile auto race. The contestants are drawn from over the entire United States and even from Europe. The size of the cash awards guarantees that the participants are highly motivated.‡ What are the chronological ages at which men are most likely to win either first, second, or third place in this classic auto race? Figure 8 sets forth data for 54 winners§ of the Indianapolis auto race, due allowance being made for the population differences at the various age levels. Figure 8 reveals that, although the ages of the 54 winners range from

*The following editors supplied the birth dates of the corn-husking champions: (1) Indiana and Illinois, Mr. M. C. Gregory, Ass't. Editor of the *Prairie Farmer*; (2) Kansas, Mr. Tudor Charles, Asso. Editor of the *Kansas Farmer*; (3) Nebraska, Mr. Henry W. Biedermann, Asso. Editor of *The Nebraska Farmer*; (4) Ohio and Iowa, Mr. E. W. McMunn, Ass't. Editor of *The Ohio Farmer*. (5) The names and addresses of the Minnesota and the South Dakota champions were supplied by Mr. Berry Akers, Editor of *The Farmer* (St. Paul). The birth dates of these latter husking champions were obtained by personal correspondence.

† To date 13 national championships have been won—not enough for the construction of an age curve. However, it is of interest that 10 of the 13 national husking championships were won at ages 26 to 32 inclusive.

‡ According to daily press reports, first place in the Indianapolis race was worth approximately \$35,000.00 to the winner of the 1937 contest. The second prize amounted to \$10,000.00; third prize was \$5,000.00; fourth prize was \$3,500.00; and fifth prize was \$3,000.00.

§ For the birth dates of the automobile racers the writer is indebted to:—(1) Mr. T. E. Allen, Sec. of the Contest Board of the American Automobile Association, (2) Mr. T. E. Myers, of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Corporation, and (3) Mr. S. C. H. Davis, Sports Editor of *The Autocar*.