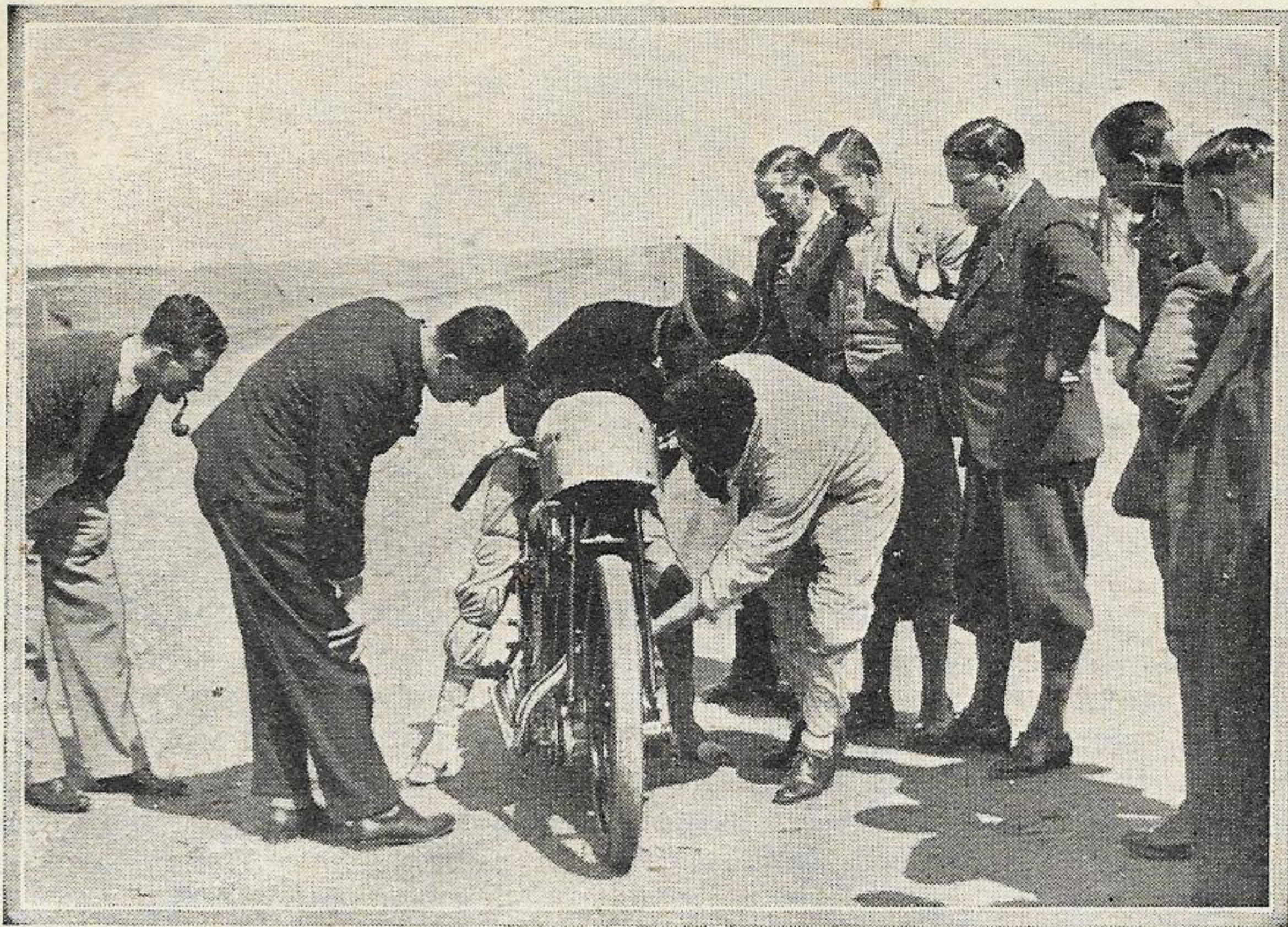


The World Record Attempt



An intent group watching one of J. S. Wright's helpers busy on his A.J.S. Note how Wright's trousers are gathered close in to his legs

J. S. Wright has Repeated Hard Luck with the Big A.J.S. on Southport Sands

TO the general public, who patiently waited in large numbers throughout Saturday and Sunday last on the Southport sand dunes, the attempt to regain the world's motor cycle speed record must have seemed an amazingly inexplicable business.

A most wonderful course had been prepared—a straight strip of sand, as wide as a main road, and almost three miles long. It had been hand-picked for the removal of every fragment of flotsam and jetsam; it had been raked, smoothed, rolled, and drained.

There were marshals every ten yards, supplied by the clubs of Lancashire and Cheshire. The weather was perfect, the wind, although moderately strong, blowing neither up nor down, but across the course.

Organisation of the attempt itself appeared to be in many hands, however, and at first there was no timing apparatus; a German timekeeper and a technician, with a wonderful apparatus, were lost somewhere between Harwich and Southport. The Customs had cleared them out of money in duty on the apparatus, and eventually the stationmaster at Crewe reported two Germans, "broke," on the train to Wigan (it would be Wigan!), and would the A.C.U. please guarantee their fares?

At twelve o'clock on Saturday, when the record was to be attempted, the apparatus was still between Crewe and Wigan.

About an hour late, after starting and

retiring for adjustments, Wright made a practice run on his supercharged A.J.S. at the modest speed of only about 102½ m.p.h. Crowds estimated variously from ten to twenty-five thousand patiently waited.

At four o'clock the timing apparatus was installed. And during this process the weather changed, and steady rain set in!

Soon the hard-rolled sand was water-logged, and the crowd straggled home as newsboys, with rain-soaked placards, sold papers about "the great record thrill" that told of an unofficial record of 155 m.p.h.!

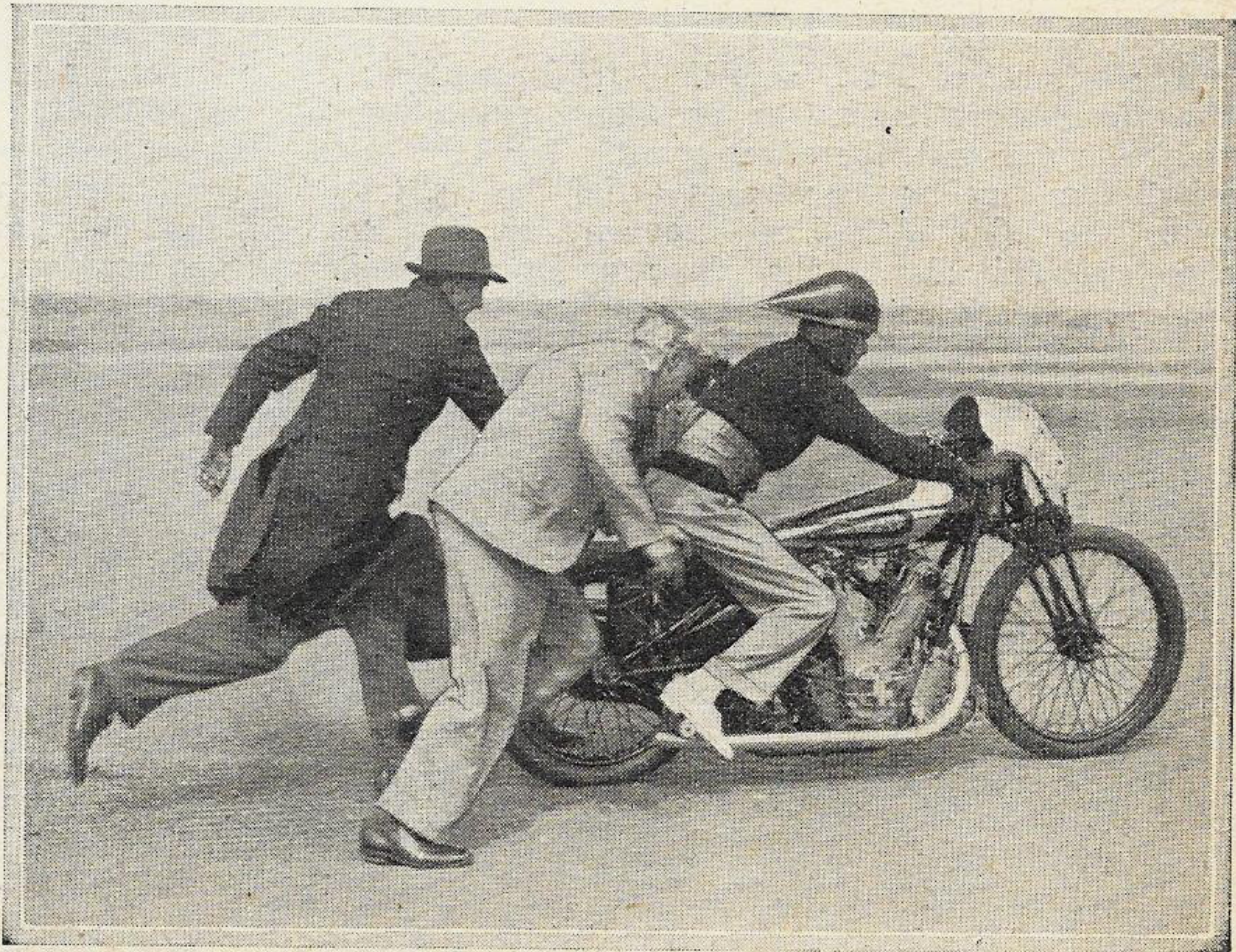
But this was only in keeping with the extraordinary newspaper stories associated with this record—£5,000 machine; when streamlined 200 m.p.h. is confidently expected, etc., etc.

By special permission an attempt was to be allowed on the Sunday. It was to be done early, i.e., 9 to 9.30 a.m., before spectators arrived, as the organisation for controlling crowds was now dispersed beyond recall. But many were on the spot at 8 a.m. The day was even more glorious than the one before, though some wet patches had to be dried by brushing.

It was midday before Wright could go. He did the kilometre at 133.15 m.p.h., which is less than 3 m.p.h. faster than the machine's speed in its original un-supercharged form, and later toured back. Other attempts followed. There were checkings of ignition timing and carburetter adjustments. But an extra 20 m.p.h. at 133 is hard to find. The other attempts were still less effective.

Shortly before four o'clock the A.C.U. official in charge said, "One more try, and then finish."

Wright elected to run this time from the Southport end, and improved only to approximately 136 m.p.h. It was useless, and finally on Monday the attempt was abandoned.



Pushing-off Wright for a practice run. His streamlined crash helmet will be seen