

4,000,000 DOLLARS FILM STORY—"HELL'S ANGELS"!

The RANGER

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EVERY SATURDAY.

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**Hell's
Angels!**

THE
STORY OF THE
FILM



The OUTLAW KID!

OUR WHIRLWIND
WESTERN YARN
WITH A THRILL
IN EVERY LINE!

A Surprise for Black Alec!

ALEX BLACK, foreman of the Bar-T ranch, gave his broncho quirt and spur. He dashed at a gallop towards the group of riders that had emerged into the prairie from the trail in the Mesquite sierra. The foreman's hard, black-bearded face was flushed and there was a deep glitter in his eyes. His hand, as if unconsciously, went to his gun; but he withdrew it and lashed at his broncho with the quirt, as if he would wreak on the panting animal the bitter rage that was running riot in his breast. Yet it would have puzzled any rider on the Bar-T ranges to guess what it was that had got the foreman's goat so sorely.

Three riders had come out of the hill-trail into the plains. One of them was Judge Pindex, boss of the Bar-T. Another was a handsome boy puncher known as Santa Fe Smith to the Bar-T men, and whom no man in Red Dog country suspected to be the Rio Kid. The third man was Slick Sampson, of the Bar-T outfit, and he rode bound to his horse, the Kid holding the reins. The sight of Slick as a prisoner might have surprised the foreman of the ranch, but it hardly accounted for the rage that burned in his eyes and displayed itself in the savage lashing of his horse.

Judge Pindex allowed his horse to a halt as the foreman came thundering up. His bronzed face wore a puzzled look.

"Say, Alex Black sure looks like he has his mad up," said the rancher. "I guess something is biting him, and biting him bad!"

The Kid smiled.

"It sure does look that-a-way, sir!" he remarked.

With a crash of hoofs the foreman drew in the foaming horse. He gave the Kid one black and bitter look and touched his Stetson to the ranch boss. He was controlling his rage, but it gleamed out of his deep-set eyes in spite of him.

"Say, Black, what's got you?" asked the rancher. "You sure do look all het up!"

The foreman gestured with his quirt towards the Rio Kid.

"I guess I ain't none too pleased to see that ornery cuss on this ranch, sir," he answered. "I've turned him off the Bar-T once, and he sure wants a lot of telling to quit. What's he doing with a Bar-T man roped up that-a-way, I want to know?" Black Alec gritted his teeth. "I'm all beat to see him riding with you, boss, and a Bar-T man roped up in his hands! I guess I got a gun here that will tell him to go, if he don't light out pronto."

"Forget it," said the rancher curtly. "I'm telling you, Black, that I was held up on the trail back from Sharpville by two ornery guys that got hold of the roll I was bringing from the bank to pay the bunch. That puncher horned in and stopped them."

The Kid fancied that the foreman had already guessed that!

"And them two guys," went on Judge Pindex, "was Slick Sampson and Injun Pete, of my own outfit—them two pesky scallywags that you've always thought such a lot of, Black. I've told you more'n once they was the only two bad apples in the barrel, but you allowed you could make use of them on the ranch, and I left it to you."

The foreman breathed hard.

"Where's Injun Pete?" he asked.

"He was shot up in the rookus. And Slick's going to be handed over to the marshal of Red Dog," answered the rancher. "You was sure fooled by them two pesky guys, Black."

Black Alec sat his panting horse, his eyes on the Kid. The Kid gave him a cheery smile. He could figure what the Bar-T foreman was thinking; but the foreman's thoughts were not such as he could utter in the presence of the Bar-T boss—if the Kid was right. The Kid would have laid a hundred Texas dollars to a Mexican centavo that Alex Black knew how his two favourites in the bunch had been occupied in the Mesquite sierra that afternoon. But such a suspicion did not cross the rancher's mind, and the Kid kept his own counsel, only



faintly amused by what he guessed Alex Black had to suppress.

"I sure had to shoot up Injun Pete, Mister Black," said the Kid. "He got a gun on me, and it was him for Jordan or else this baby. But you'll sure be glad to hear that the judge never lost his roll to them two bulldozers. They had him fixed when I horned in—"

"They sure did!" said the rancher.

"I—I guess I'm surprised," said Black Alec. "I never figured that they was that kind of cusses, sir. It's got me beat!" His eyes for a second met Slick's.

Slick Sampson, gunman, wasn't slick enough when he hit upon the Rio Kid for a target.

"Santa Fe Smith is looking for a ranch to bed down in," said Judge Pindex. "I've offered him a place in the outfit, Black! You sure will get a good man in that puncher. He allows that you've seen him already and don't like him a whole lot; but, after he's saved me from them bushwhackers, I guess you'll be glad to see him in the outfit."

Alex Black did not reply for a moment. But the rancher's words were a command in polite form, and he knew it. He had to sign on Santa Fe Smith in the Bar-T bunch.

"I reckoned that puncher was too fresh for this outfit, boss," he said at last. "But what you say goes, of course. If

you figures on him joining the bunch, I'll sure be glad to see him there."

"You'll find me a good man, sir," said the Kid meekly. "I'll sure be proud to ride in your bunch, Mister Black."

"As for that pesky scallywag," said the foreman, with a look at Slick, "he's fooled me a whole heap, and I'll see that he gets what's coming to him. I guess I got to get into Red Dog to see the marshal, and I'll tote that all-fired bushwhacker along with me. Hand him over to me, you, Santa Fe."

"That goes," said the rancher.

The Kid paused a moment or two.

If what the Kid figured was well-founded he could guess what would happen to Slick Sampson when he was handed over to the Bar-T foreman to be ridden into the cow town. The Kid guessed that the bushwhacker would never reach the marshal's office.

"Say, I guess I'll ride this guy into town, if you ain't any objection, Mister Black," said the Kid.

Alex Black turned on him savagely.

"You disputing orders already now the boss says you're in the bunch?" he demanded. "You figure that you can talk back to your foreman because you've helped the boss a piece? I tell you, Santa Fe, if you're going to ride with the Bar-T boys, you're going to jump to orders. Get that?"

"Sure!" said the Kid.

There was no help for it. He rode closer and handed over Slick's reins to the ranch foreman. He did not fail to note the sly grin that dawned for a moment on the stubbly face of Slick.

"You ride on to the ranch with the boss," grunted Alex Black. "Take that

other cayuse to the corral. I guess I'll see you agin, sir, after I've landed this bushwhacker in the calaboose at Red Dog."

The rancher nodded and rode on, the Rio Kid following him with the led horse that had belonged to Injun Pete. The Kid glanced back once and saw the Bar-T foreman riding in the direction of the distant cow town at a gallop, leading Slick's horse by the reins. A fold of the prairie hid them from sight, and the Kid figured that once they were out of sight they would head for anywhere but Red Dog. He was not sure yet, but he was going to be sure—if Alex Black horned in later at the Bar-T with a story that Slick had got away. And the Kid figured that he would.

One of the Bunch!

GINGER, the horse-wrangler, came in at the doorway of the Bar-T bunkhouse and nodded to the punchers there. Night had fallen on the plains. Baldy, the cook, had handed supper out of the chuckhouse, and most of the outfit had gathered to it. Seated at the trestle table was the Kid, and the face of the Kid was bright and cheery. He had ridden in with the boss, and though Alex Black had not yet returned from Red Dog to sign him on formally, he was now a member of the bunch. And there was not a man in the Bar-T crowd that was not glad to see him there.

There had been only two members of the bunch who had not liked the Kid, and they were the foreman's favourites, Injun Pete and Slick Sampson. And they were out of the bunch now; the half-breed shot up in the Mesquite hills, and Slick gone to the marshal of Red Dog on a charge of bush-whacking. And that news, which the Kid had told in the bunkhouse, was more than welcome to the outfit. Slick and his side-partner had been, as the rancher himself said, the two bad apples in the barrel, and the whole outfit were glad to have seen the last of them.

Ginger gave the Kid a cheery grin as he tramped in with a clatter of spurs and dropped on the bench at the table.

"Say, I hear you belong to the bunch now, Santa Fe?" he said.

"You've said it," agreed the Kid.

"I guess I'm sure pleased," said the horse-wrangler. "I'll say the boss knows a good man when he sees one."

The Kid grinned.

"Feller, you're talking hoss-sense," he remarked. "For sheer solid hoss-sense, hombre, I pass it up to you."

There was a chuckle from the punchers.

"But Alex Black won't be none too pleased," remarked Ginger. "He sure has got a grouch agin you, and I'll say I don't see why, arter you helped to wipe out the Mexican rustlers and save a herd for the boss. You want to keep one eye peeled for Black Alec."

"I guess I'll keep both peeled," said the Kid. "But I figure on making Mister Black see he's got a good man."

"Mebbe!" said Ginger doubtfully. "Mebbe! I guess he won't be pleased at his pesky favourites turning out to be a pair of scallywags and holdin' up the boss on the trail. They sure did pull the wool over Alex Black's eyes a whole lot."

The Kid was not so sure of that, but he did not utter his thoughts. He had already learned that the foreman was not popular with the bunch, but that he was not a straight guy did not cross the simple minds of the men of the range and the bunkhouse.

"And I sure been thinking since I heard about that hold-up," went on the horse-wrangler, "and I kinder guess that Slick could tell us suthin' about the cows that's missin' from the ranges, if he liked."

"Cows missin'?" said the Kid.

"There ain't nary a day without cows missin'," said Ginger. "I'm telling you there's rustlers in this section, and they don't let the Bar-T ranges alone. Nope!"

"I figured that the rustlers was wiped out when we cleaned up Joaquin Fernandez and his gang," said the Kid.

"Not by a jugful!" said Ginger. "There's a heap o' rustlers, as well as that bunch of greasers. I'll say Alex Black put paid to that bunch; they was wiped out to the last dago in the gang. I guess there won't be any more Mexican cattle-lifters come across the Rio Grande for a spell. But there's rustlers in the Mesquite sierra, and I guess they run off beef to sell at the railroad camps along to Sharpville. And now Slick's turned out to be a bushwhacker I figure he knowed where some of that beef went."

"You said it, Ginger," chimed in Texas Dave. "I'll say the rustlers was special busy in Slick's range, anyhow. He lost more cows than any other hombre in the outfit."

"I'd sure have 'spicioned him afore if I'd known the all-fired scallywag he was," said the horse-wrangler. "But I guess Slick won't do any more double-crossing; he will sure get his now he's handed over to the marshal at Red Dog."

"Mister Black ain't back yet?" asked the Kid.

"Nope; he's sure late."

Supper over, the Kid strolled out of the bunkhouse. Stars were gleaming in a dark, velvety sky, and a soft breeze rustled the tall grass of the prairie. The Kid, leaning on the bunkhouse wall, looked across the plains in the direction of the cow town of Red Dog. Black Alec had not yet returned to the ranch, and the Kid was curious to see him when he came in. He had a hunch that Black Alec would come in with a tale that Slick Sampson had escaped, and the Kid wanted to know.

There was a clatter of hoofs on the prairie trail at last. A horseman loomed up in the starlight, riding for the ranch.

At a distance the Kid recognised the foreman. He watched Mister Black curiously as he rode in.

Black Alec rode direct to the ranch-house, jumped down and hitched his horse, and went into the building. There was a light in the window of the living-room of the ranch-house, and the Kid saw the tall shadow of the foreman cross the light within. Judge Pindex was there, and the Kid wondered what the foreman had to tell him.

Ten minutes later Black Alec came out and led his horse away from the ranch. Ginger went to take the broncho from him and turn it into the corral.

"They got that bulldozer safe in the calaboose, sir?" asked the horse-wrangler. "I guess we'd have strung him up if he'd been brought back here. The boys are sure wild at him holding up the boss."

"I guess he gave me the slip on the prairie," answered Black Alec shortly.

Ginger uttered an exclamation. The Kid smiled faintly. He had expected it, and what he had expected had come to pass.

"You let that bushwhacker get away, sir?" exclaimed Ginger.

The foreman rapped out an oath.

"Let nothing! I reckoned he was safely tied on that hoss when that dog-goned gink Santa Fe handed him over to me. How'd I know the feller was a geek that couldn't tie a knot like a cowboy? Slick worked the rope loose, and he jumped for it when I was takin' him through the scrubs and cleared before I could get a bead on him. I'll say I emptied a Colt after him, but he got away."

He swung round towards the Kid with a scowling brow.

"You, Santa Fe! You figure that you're the man to ride in a ranch outfit, and you don't know how to tie a rope!" he snarled.

The Kid met his eyes coolly. Well the Kid knew that he had bound Slick Samp-



The Rio Kid raced past the bunch of scrubs, and a volley of shots rang out. But the Kid was wide awake. In a second he had flung himself over the side of his horse!

son to his horse in a way that the bushwhacker could not have got out of without help. But the foreman had to give an explanation, and it was his game to put it on the Kid.

"I figured that I tied him safe, Mister Black," said the Kid mildly. "He sure never got away while I was with him riding him out of the hills."

"He got away half-way to Red Dog," snarled Black. "He got loose from that rope you put on him."

"Say, you want to learn to tie a rope, Santa Fe," said Ginger.

"I guess I ain't got a whole heap to learn about tying a rope," said the Kid. "If Mister Black will let me tie him on a horse, I'll undertake to eat the rope if he gets loose in a month of Sundays."

"Aw, can it!" snapped Alex Black. "That bushwhacker got loose. He beat it in the mesquite and got clear. I hunted for him two hours and more, but he got to cover and kept doggo. Just because you couldn't tie a rope, you got-darned gink! Don't give me any back-chat, but I'm telling you, got-darned ginks ain't any use in this hyer outfit!"

And the foreman swung angrily away and went into his shack.

Ginger grinned at the Kid.

"Say, you got Mister Black's mad up!" he remarked. "I guess I like you, Santa Fe, but I'll say you was a gink to tie a rope so's a man got loose."

"Feller," said the Kid quietly, "you've allowed that that hoss of mine is a good cayuse?"

"Best chunk of hossflesh I've seen in Texas!" said Ginger. "What about it, Santa Fe?"

"This," said the Kid. "You let me rope you on that cayuse o' mine like I roped Slick on his cayuse, and if you get loose without help I'll give you the hoss."

Ginger looked at the Kid long and hard. "I get you!" he said slowly. "I sure get you, Santa Fe!" The horse-wrangler whistled. "I guess Alex Black didn't want to hand that bulldozer over, having been a friend of his'n. I sure get you! But"

Ginger lowered his voice—"you don't want to stand on your hind legs and shout it over the ranch, Santa Fe! Alex Black is boss of the outfit so long as he's foreman. Keep it back of your teeth, feller."

The Kid nodded. He knew that Alex Black had set the bushwhacker free, but he was not going to shout it out over the ranch. Ginger led the foreman's horse away, leaving the Kid with a thoughtful cloud on his brow. He was going to have trouble with Alex Black. He could not doubt that. But the Kid thrived on trouble, and he did not figure that he was going to come out at the little end of the horn.

Shot for Shot!

"BURNING daylight!" shouted Texas Dave in the doorway of the bunkhouse.

The Kid rolled out of his bunk. The rising sun gleamed on the wide grasslands of the Bar-T ranch. The Rio Kid turned out bright and early.

The Kid breakfasted with the outfit and went to the corral to see to his horse. He expected to be riding the range that day, and he looked forward to a puncher's day's work cheerfully. Ginger gave him an approving grin as he cared for his mustang at the corral gate. A guy who took so much trouble over his cayuse as the Kid did was sure of the horse-wrangler's esteem. The Kid was adjusting a cinch when the foreman came up.

"You for the Cactus Creek range, Santa Fe," he said.

The Kid straightened up. Alex Black seemed to have forgotten his grouch against the new man in the bunch. He spoke to the Kid as he might have spoken to any other cowman. The Kid was rather relieved. Black Alec did not want him riding the Bar-T ranges, but he seemed to have made up his mind to it now that it could not be helped, and if he meant to treat the Kid like the rest of the bunch it was so much to the good.

"Yes, sir!" said the Kid cheerfully.

"You'll ride to Cactus Creek and relieve the two men on duty there," said the foreman. "It's time Pecos and Yuma Bill hit the ranch. You want to take grub for a week. I guess Pecos will put you wise about the range when you get there. You don't want to lose time."

"You won't see my cayuse's heels for dust, sir," said the Kid. "But I guess I'm new here, and I don't savvy Cactus Creek."

"Ask Ginger; he'll put you wise."

"Sure!"

The foreman stalked away. The new cowman had his instructions and Alex Black was done with him. The Kid turned to the horse-wrangler. Ginger was staring after the foreman with a rather peculiar expression on his bronze face. He grinned as he looked at the Kid.

"Mister Black sure has a grouch agin you, Santa Fe," he remarked.

"How come?" asked the Kid.

"Waal, I guess nobody in the outfit hones to ride to Cactus Creek," said Ginger. "And there's always two men posted there. It's jest on the edge of the hills, and twenty miles from everywhere else in Texas. There's always been two men on that range. Say, you'll be powerful lonely for a week!"

The Kid smiled. If Alex Black was making things hard for him, that cut no ice with the Kid. The Rio Kid was used to lonely trails.

"I guess it's all in the day's work, Ginger," he said. "You put me wise how to hit Cactus Creek and I'll sure vamoose the ranch pronto."

He listened to the horse-wrangler's directions, nodded, and mounted Side-Kicker. In a cheery mood, though he was heading for the most solitary and least attractive post on all the ranges of the extensive Bar-T, the Kid gave Side-Kicker a light flick of the quirt and galloped away.

The ranch dropped out of sight behind him.

A few miles out, he passed a couple of Bar-T punchers and waved to them. After that the Kid had the prairie to himself.

After a mile glided under the galloping hoofs of the grey mustang. The Kid enjoyed that gallop in the fresh, morning air.

Ten miles from the ranch he slacked his pace.

Ahead of him a wide belt of pecan, post-oak and straggling juniper stretched down from the foot of the Mesquite hills across the plain. There were many openings in it to the open plain beyond. No marked trail ran from the ranch to Cactus Creek, but the Kid knew where to aim for, and he had to ride through that belt of scrub.

Caution was second nature to the Kid. He had too many enemies to be ever off his guard. So when a blue jay fluttered out of the thicket ahead of him the Rio Kid figured that it did not do so without a reason. He had not forgotten that Slick Sampson was loose, neither did he figure that Slick had forgotten how the Kid had beaten him to it at the hold-up.

The blue jay had settled down again at a distance. The belt of thicket lay dusky in the sunshine, lifeless, silent. The Kid's way lay through it by a wide opening beyond which he could see the farther plain. The Kid, suddenly wheeling his horse, dashed back the way he had come, with Side-Kicker's streaming tail tossing towards the thicket.

He felt the wind of something that whizzed by a foot from him, and the report of a rifle followed the shot.

The Kid grinned.

There was an ambush in the pecans, and he had drawn the fire of the hidden enemy. As well as if he had seen the man, the Kid knew that the bushwhacker had watched him from the thicket, waited to see what opening he would strike for, and crept along through the scrubs to lie in wait for him there. And when the Kid wheeled and rode back the bushwhacker figured that he had taken the alarm and tried a pot-shot. Which was exactly what the Kid wanted, for the shot told him that there was an ambush in the pecans, and from the fact that only one shot was fired

he figured that he had only one man to deal with.

Bang, bang!

It was a Winchester rifle, and it pumped lead after the Kid. But the Kid was galloping and leaning from one side of his horse to the other. The marksman in the pecans had little chance of hitting him. And in a minute the Kid rode down into a sunken coulee of the prairie and was safe below the level of the surrounding plain. He threw himself out of the saddle.

There was a grin on his face, but a steely glitter in his eyes. The Kid was not the guy to be pot-shotted like this with impunity.

"I sure wonder if that's Slick after my pesky scalp?" murmured the Kid. "If it's Slick, I want to know how he savvyed that I'd be riding the trail to Cactus Creek this mornin'?"

The Kid's face grew grim. If it was Slick Sampson lying in ambush in the pecans there was only one way Slick could have known that the Kid would ride that way. Only one man could have put him wise to it, and that man was Alex Black, foreman of the Bar-T.

"By the great horned toad!" muttered the Kid. "I guess it sure looks as if that doggoned seallywag sent me on this trail to be shot up. It surely does look like it."

The Kid intended to know. He had ridden away from the ambush because a horseman on the open plain had not a dog's chance against a rifleman in cover in the thicket. But he was not done with the bushwhacker yet.

Leaving the grey mustang in the coulee, the Kid crept to the upper plain.

He did not rise to his feet there. The grass was high and thick, but was not high enough to cover a standing man. The Kid remained on his knees. In deep cover, creeping like a Red Indian, the Kid hit for the pecans.

He figured that the rifleman would be hugging cover, watching the coulee, ready to take another pot-shot if the horseman emerged from it. Silently and swiftly the Kid crept through the high grass, aiming to strike the belt of pecans at a distance from the spot whence the shots had come.

Minute followed minute.

No sound reached the Kid save the buzz of insects in the thick grass. There was no more shooting from the ambush.

The Kid struck the pecans at last.

He crept into the thicket from the grass, his eyes on the alert, and drew himself to his feet among the small, closely-packed trees.

Silent as a creeping Apache he threaded his way among post-oak and pecan and clinging juniper and Spanish moss. Without hesitation and without a fault he headed for the opening through the scrubs, where he figured that the rifleman was still watching.

The Kid looked out from the thicket. Through the belt of scrubs, behind a fallen log, a burly figure was kneeling, looking along a rifle that rested on the log. And it was the figure of Slick Sampson!

The Kid grinned.

Softly and silently he edged nearer the gunman. He was only a few feet from the ruffian when he halted behind a tree.

The Rio Kid could get no nearer to Slick Sampson without revealing himself to the gunman. Of course, he could have shot the ruffian where he lay, but that was not the Kid's way—to shoot a man unawares.

As the Kid was pondering the question an idea came to him. From the tree behind which he was hiding a bough jutted out almost over the place where Slick Sampson was lying. No sooner did the brainwave occur to the Kid than he acted.

Silent as any Apache or Comanche the Kid climbed the tree and crawled along the bough, gun in hand, until he was almost over the gunman. Hidden by foliage, he hesitated a moment, on the alert, eyeing Slick Sampson beneath him. But the gunman was still ignorant of the Rio Kid's nearness, and the Kid rose slowly and then launched himself down on top of the ruffian.

(Continued on page 335)

wondering whether the strain of the race had confused him. Barney sat up in his seat and yelled out that something was amiss, and the captain took his foot uncertainly off the accelerator.

Then he moved as though a set of springs had been let loose inside him, for round a further curve, a level-crossing appeared in sight. The car was travelling at over eighty miles an hour and there was not a hope of pulling it up in time. Both the captain and Barney realised it and ducked instinctively. With a crash the speeding car went through the light gates like a knife through butter.

Barney's heart missed a beat in that brief instant, for whilst he was bumped and nearly flung out of his seat as the car bucketed over the lines, he caught sight of a shining black monster that seemed to be right on top of them. Then they were through the farther gates, there was a mighty crash and a rumbling from behind them, and Barney looked back as the captain skidded the car to a standstill.

A train was thundering past the crossing, its wheels clattering over the battered remains of the gate, and its Westinghouse brakes screaming as the driver clapped them on. Speed had brought them within a hair's-breadth of death, but speed had saved them at the last instant—the train had missed them by inches only!

The captain, however, was not wasting time. His handsome face was set grimly, and he was already reversing the car.

"This is a little of our fat foreign friend's work, I think," he said. "But I'm not letting him get away with it. Will you sit tight, Barney, and chance what damage has been done to the car, so that we can get back and finish the race?"

"I ain't getting out o' this car until we've won, capt'n, sir!" answered Barney quietly. "We 'ad a full lap lead before we was sent off down this turnin', so we got plenty of chance yet if only all four wheels'll stick on."

"Good boy!" said the captain, and raced the car back over the crossing which the train had passed. Back at the fork roads, they had to stop and drop down one of the barrier poles which the foreigner and his friend had replaced directly after they had passed, so that the rest of the field would not follow. Directly they got through and put the pole back, however, the captain "put his foot down," and the car screamed forward, to pass the grandstands three minutes later, a whole lap behind the Slovak car, which was now leading.

The rest of that race has gone into motor-racing history—still more, into the special history of the rise of the Lockheed Motor Company to its present position of most prosperous concern in the trade.

At the end of the fifth lap, Captain Malcom was one lap behind the Slovak—and only five to go. A handicap of ten miles in fifty; a position that

any expert would have described as hopeless. At the end of the eighth, the Lockheed was a little over half a lap in arrears, and at the end of the ninth—well, as the cars thundered past the grandstands, the crowds rose in their places and appeared to go crazy.

For the Lockheed and the Slovak were running level.

Down in the pits a fat man walked nonchalantly towards the exit-barriers, but he found himself surrounded by a quite affectionate group of his brethren who stood close and intimated that they simply couldn't think of letting him walk about unprotected—what with the danger of pickpockets in this strange country, and all that.

Three minutes later, when Captain Malcom screamed over the finishing line fifty yards ahead of the Slovak, someone playfully knocked off the fat man's hat. Someone else, carried away by the spirit of fun, ripped up the back of his coat, whilst yet another wrenched his neck-tie off.

It took six policemen and a red-faced inspector nearly half an hour to get the fat man away from his compatriots—who had the volatile temperament of their race—and when they did so, they had to surround him until someone had fetched a sack with which he might cover his trembling form.

Then they led him away, but as he passed the repair-pits where the cars were lined up, he caught sight of Barney grinning at him.

"Allo, my young friend," shouted Barney. "Goin' in for the sack-race? Ain't it surprisin' 'ow much better a car runs for sand in the cylinders? Never 'ave thought it, would you?"

"You double-crossed me!" howled the fat man, struggling in a firm police grip. "You changed that engine somehow."

"Oh, no we didn't," grinned the youngster gleefully. "We didn't 'ave no need to, my young friend. Y'see, that car what you filled up with grit was our practice-car, an' it didn't matter a little bit. We shouldn't do re-arsals on the actual car we was goin' to race, for fear of losin' its tune. So laugh that off!"

The fat man gasped as he was hauled away, and spent the rest of the day in a small and draughty cell, meditating on the unfairness of life. Next morning, when Captain Malcom and Barney appeared in court, armed with certain photographs, the fat foreigner almost swooned.

He decided that life was not only unfair, but hard.

And for the eighteen months that followed, "hard" was the word!

THE END.

(Barney in the strangest 400 miles road-race of his speed-mad career. See next week's Smashing Complete Tale of the Speedway.)

THE OUTLAW KID!

(Continued from page 318.)

"Great gophers—"

The cry that rose to Sampson's lips died in the instant that the Kid landed on top of him, flattening him out and winding him.

The Kid leaped to his feet, his Colt menacing the gunman sprawling at his feet.

"Kind o' sudden meeting!" said the Kid. "Get on your pins and put 'em up, feller! I guess I've got you now, Slick—and leave that rifle where it is!"

"Dog-gone you!" panted Sampson, and slowly, savagely, the gunman rose to his feet, his hands in the air.

"You sure got away from Alex Black last night, Slick," said the Kid, "but you ain't getting away this time! I'm sure going to ride you into Red Dog afore I strike Cactus Creek, you dog-goned lobo-wolf! Say, who put you wise to it that I was hitting this trail this mornin'?"

Slick Sampson did not answer. He stood panting for a while, eyeing the Kid with a desperate gleam in his eyes.

"Dog-gone you!" he muttered at last. "You figure that you're riding me into Red Dog, puncher?"

"You've said it!" agreed the Kid. "And this time you won't be with Alex Black, and I guess you'll get to the calaboose safe, you bushwhacking coyote! I guess I know how to tie a rope that won't come loose, when you ain't with Black Alec, feller!"

He advanced nearer the gunman, his Colt at a level. His foot caught a trailing liana and for a fraction of a second the Kid stumbled. Instantly the gunman's hand swept down to the revolver in his belt.

"Let up, you gink!" roared the Kid in warning.

But Slick Sampson was already jerking up the Colt to fire.

Bang!

The Kid's Colt roared and Slick Sampson staggered back. His own gun roared the next second, but his arm was sagging and the bullet crashed past the Kid's riding-boots into a tree. With a gasping cry, the gunman slumped down into the grass.

"I guess you would have it, feller!" said the Rio Kid soberly. "And I guess I burned powder only just in time. It was you or me, feller, and you sure was the guy that asked for it!"

When the Rio Kid called Side-Kicker, mounted the grey mustang and rode out of the pecans, heading for Cactus Creek, he rode alone.

(The Outlaw Kid comes up against more perilous adventures in next week's Gripping Western Tale.)

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