

Trucking Industry Alert Cuts Losses to Hijackers

By REYNOLDS KNIGHT

The competition is fierce in the trucking industry, but recently rival truckers have been standing together in their battle against a common enemy — the hijacker.

Hijacking is a multi-million-dollar racket. Last year, in New York alone, there were 1,300 truck thefts and hijackings. The cost to business was \$15 million; only \$1½ million was recovered.

To combat these losses truckers have established a radio-controlled system called Operation Alert. So far, results of the system have been excellent. Chicago trucking firms lost \$4 million to hijackers in 1963, but since Operation Alert has been in effect this figure has dropped 60 per cent.

HERE IS HOW Operation Alert works: A driver who's been hijacked calls the Federal Bureau of Investigation, local police, and a member trucking company. The trucking company calls two or three other companies and they in turn alert other companies until all members are notified.

Since most of the companies own radio-equipped vehicles drivers are alerted about the stolen truck and told to be on the lookout. In a matter of 15 minutes of the original alarm, almost 5,000 truckers in the Chicago area and about 6,000 around New York are watching for the stolen truck, ready to alert police.

Operation Alert is only in effect in certain states. But because of its tremendous success it won't be long be-

fore the entire trucking industry is operating under the system.

INDUSTRY sales of radial passenger tires are expected to rise from less than 1 million units last year to more than 42 million by the end of 1971.

That's the prediction of William H. Campbell, vice president—replacement sales for B. F. Goodrich Tire Co., which introduced the first American-made radials for American cars about 18 months ago.

He estimated that within five years the new tire, which differs both in design and performance from conventional tires, will account for more than 20 per cent of all passenger tires sold in the United States.

The company is extending distribution of its radial tire as rapidly as new manufacturing facilities come into operation and is shooting for nationwide distribution by the end of this year. He said B. F. Goodrich is increasing its radial tire production to more than six times its current level.

REASONS FOR the radial tire's acceptance, Campbell said, are superior handling characteristics and up to 60 per cent more mileage than can be obtained from conventional passenger tires.

Sporting goods stores say customers are not bothered by higher price tags. Recently a youngster bought a \$55 fiberglass vaulting pole for sandlot use. Summer vacation business this year will

boom, according to travel agents and airlines. Canada's Expo 67 and lower air excursion fares are prime factors in the travel boost. An Australian processor announced that it will export frozen Chinese foods to Hong Kong. Mazda, YLN, Dindard, Hongki and Tatra are the names of 1967 model cars in the new "World Car Catalogue."

THE ADVENT of big-time sports car racing in North America brought an invasion by the top European drivers, a special racing jargon, and special financing needs for transporting the "big bangers" — the flashy, unlimited horsepower, group seven sports racing cars.

The attraction is the second running of the rich Canadian-

American Challenge Cup series of six international road races, which will be worth more than \$500,000 in 1967, a 40 per cent increase in the total purse over its inaugural year.

John Surtees of England, five times world's motorcycle champion, earned more than \$70,000 in official prize money as the first Can-Am champion last year. But considering that it takes between \$25,000 and \$50,000 to cart a couple of the "big bangers," mechanical crew, spare parts, and perhaps a wife, to the six races, these racers need to drag down some big purses just to break even.

AVERAGE prize money at each of the six races amounts to about \$35,000, or a total of \$210,000, auto accessory

manufacturers contribute another \$200,000 as performance prize money in the series.

Capping this is a \$90,000 championship fund sponsored by the Johnson Wax Co. and the six race sponsors. Drivers divide this fund according to their finish in the series and are scored on a 9-6-4-3-2-1 basis in the six races.

Johnson Wax also contributes a unique sculpture-trophy, a "floatie," which remains permanent possession of the Can-Am champion.

If John Surtees or another top driver were to duplicate last year's winning performance — Surtees chalked up three first-place finishes — the 1967 Can-Am champion could reasonably expect to earn in excess of \$100,000 for the series.

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