

The Sport Page Everybody Reads

POP GEERS THE HERO OF 1,500 RACES

Although The Grand Old Man Of The Turf Has Won More Than a Million And a Half Dollars in Purses During The Half Century, His Winnings From Wagers Would Not Total More Than Eighty Cents!—His Life Story.

By S. L. KAHN

"Whoa-up boy—steady, steady here, g'long!"

"Pop" Geers, veteran of fifty-one years of harness racing, seventy-three years old, soon will drive his fifteen hundredth race. Perhaps more, for no one has kept track of how often the "Silent Reinsman," the quiet, almost wordless, gentle old man, has mounted the sulky to drive the horses he has raised, trained, and raced to victory.

Whatever the number of races, there have been more than five thousand heats, each of which is, in reality, a race, besides many exhibitions. "Pop," christened Edward Lawrence, when born down in the "Big Bend Country" in Tennessee, has driven more races, more heats, and won more money in purses than any other man in the world, and has talked less.

The most an interviewer can get out of the silent veteran is, "Dog-gone, I ain't never thought of quit'in'. What'd I do if I quit drivin' hosses?"

At seventy-three, engaging in his fifty-second campaign around the Grand Circuit, and bringing to the races two of the greatest horses the world ever has known, "Pop" arrives in a filly, bringing his old pack of cards to play "high five" with the boys in the barns, ready to train his horses and race them. The scars of a score of falls, the strain of many races, have left their marks all over him. He limps a bit, his weathered, wrinkled face is scarred, but his eyes are young, and his hands are steady and strong.

"Dog-gone, I ain't quit'in'." "As good as I was fifteen years ago? Dog-gone."

That is about all any one ever gets out of "Pop" Geers. He considers talk a waste of time and effort, and he never expounds any theories of breeding, or training, or racing horses, so the secret of his great success, which is the greatest any man ever achieved, will pass with him.

He will answer questions point blank. If you ask him which is the best "hoss" he ever drove, he'll say, "Dog-gone, I ain't tellin'." If you mention Hal Pointer his bright eyes will flash a little and he'll say, "Dog-gone, that was a hoss."

If you ask him about his triumphs, how he sent horses through narrow gaps, and lifted them across the line winner, he'll say, "Dog-gone—ask Nell; he keeps track of them things." Nell is "Pop's" son-in-law and secretary.

But if you ask his associates, men who have raced against him, who have watched him at work, and lived with him, they will tell you that his power to pick a horse, to train it, and to drive it in a race seems uncanny. One of his rivals training near his quarters at Mem-

L. OF C. WIN FROM NAVAL TEAM 18-8

The League of the Cross baseball team had an easy time annexing an 18 to 8 win from the sailors of the H. M. C. S. Patriot last night at the Alhewit rounds.

If the "Jacks" lost in runs they gained the favor of the fans by showing themselves not only real live sports but good losers as well; notwithstanding the one-sided score which was being piled up against them, they worked all the harder and true to the traditions of the navy, "they stuck to their guns until the last."

It might be said that the naval team hasn't had a chance for some time to practice and are now only getting their "hand legs," but the fact that the "Tars" would make things more interesting for the local ball toasters.

The following were the batting orders:
"Patriot"—McNutt, Spear, Craig, Wilmot, Emont, Bearnhart, Hayden Perry, Gregor.
L. of C.—Bradley, Ellswoth, Moneth Burns, Dauberly, Corrigan, McCabe, Doyle, McQuaid.

Game by inning:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9—11
"Patriot" 0 0 1 0 1 0 3 3—8
L. of C. 2 5 2 5 3 0 1 0—18
Umpire—J. McAleer.

Geers has two "vices"—cigars and ice cream. He smokes twenty cigars of any brand each day, and whenever he is missing from the stables he can be found parked behind a dish of ice cream, of which he eats half a dozen a day. During the winter months, when Memphis palls upon him, he hies himself back to his home in the Knobs of central Tennessee and goes to hunting. He likes to play polo, which he calls "high five."

He will play with the boys around the barn all day in bad weather, seldom talking, chuckling a little when he wins, and if any one suggests a stake on the game, he says:
"Deal me out, boys, if you're goin' to play for money."

He never gambles, and he never bets on the races. How much money he has won had he wagered no one can tell. The stakes he has captured amount to a million and in moderate circumstances. His friends say he is a poor business man and that his kindness and susceptibility to appeals for aid from the unfortunate—or impostors—have prevented him from accumulating a fortune. He dislikes to give a bargain, seldom asks any one to repay a loan, and never has been known to refuse to lend a "hossman."

"Dog-gone," he says, "I'd rather lose the money than take a chance of turning down a fellow who deserves help."

That is the greatest trait of this grand old man of the turf is his simple, rugged honesty. In his more than half century of driving harness horses there never has been a hint that he was not "on the square," and this in a game which at some periods has been noted for sharp practice. He doesn't get angry or disturbed or insulted when delicately approached with hints about fixing a "race" or "laying out a heat." He simply says, "Dog-gone, boys, deal me out."

It was in this manner that Geers selected The Harvester, one of the most famous horses he ever handled. Geers was attending the Old Glory sale in 1907 in New York and he had a commission from Mr. Uhllein to buy a colt. The Harvester was then a two year old. He was practically unnoticed by most of the bidders, but Geers and one other saw in him the makings of a great horse. His rival approached Geers with a suggestion that he lay off and let him bid in the colt and he would return the favor later.

"Dog-gone, I like that colt," said Geers.
"Then the high dollar takes him," replied the other.
The bidding started, and Geers bought the colt for \$9,500, a price which was considered high in those days.

Mr. Uhllein inquired whether he had purchased a colt for him.
"Uh-huh, bought a likely one," replied Geers.
"What did you pay for him?"
"Ninety-five hundred dollars."
"Who! whistled Mr. Uhllein.
"Pretty still, isn't it?"
"If you don't like him, I'll take him off your hands," answered Geers.

Sporting Comment

RACING AT SYDNEY AUG 5TH. AND 6TH.
Local horsemen will no doubt be interested to learn that the Sydney Trotting Association are putting on a two day's racing meet to open there on Tuesday August 5th. Good fat purses are in the offing and altogether two excellent days' racing is anticipated. The following are the classes for both days:

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5th, 1924

2.15 Trot and Pace	Purse \$400.00
2.21 Class Trot and Pace	Purse \$400.00
2.30 Class Trot and Pace	Purse \$400.00

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6th.

Free For All Trot and Pace	Purse \$500.00
2.18 Class Trot and Pace	Purse \$400.00
2.24 Class Trot and Pace	Purse \$400.00

NOTE.—Horsemen who are interested may have full particulars by writing J. F. Connolly, Sec'y, Box 385, Sydney, N. S.

P. E. ISLAND BASEBALL LEAGUE

Baseball fans both in Summerside and Charlottetown will be glad to know that an Island League is in the making and if negotiations with Summerside are satisfactory the first two games of said League will be played Monday evening next, when a local nine will play in the Western capital and a team from there will play in Charlottetown. In all probability the League will be composed of four teams, The L. of C. All Stars, Abegweits, and Torontos with four games a week being played on Monday and Wednesday evenings. To add to the interest box scores of every game will be published also batting averages of the ten leading sluggers of the league. With over a month and a half of good baseball weather before us, one of the best baseball seasons in the history of the island is assured.

WHAT SCORE-BOARD

What about the up-to-date score board that George L. Prowse donated to local baseball? Time to get it out, before the storm windows are up and the leaves begin to fall!

NURMI

Nurmi, the great Finnish athlete, is a paper-hanger. He is said to be able to lift with ease the huge bunches of blue grapes some old fashioned ed people still like to have plastered on the walls of their dining rooms.

AQUATIC SPORTS

The aquatic sports held by the C. Y. C. last Friday were enjoyed by almost a thousand spectators. Could we have one or two more after-noon's like this before the gulf stream tells us 'swimming 'sail over.'

That settled it. Mr. Uhllein quickly decided to keep The Harvester, although there were doubts whether he must have doubted the wisdom of the purchase. After Geers took The Harvester to the North Meunphis track to train him five men followed the horse for a quarter of an hour before they could get him out of the stable. It was four days before he could be hooked to a sulky.

All the while Geers was patient, quiet, soothing, and firm, never losing his temper. He did not want to break the fiery spirit of the colt, to frighten or scare him. He desired to teach him what he will not forget, the application of the whip, plenty of patience, persistent work, and The Harvester was tractable. In a few months the great racer was as docile as a kitten, devoted to Geers following him around and pleased to receive a lump of sugar or a bit of apple from his hands.

This same method Geers has followed with all horses he trained or raced. If a horse behaves in a manner he cannot understand, Geers seeks the cause, and frequently finds it. Time and again, other drivers, discouraged, unable to learn why a horse will not trot or pace, have appealed to Geers. The "Silent Reinsman," after examining buckles and straps, would climb into the sulky and jock the horse a mile or two. He would return, and say, "Dog-gone! You got the wrong kind of shoe on the left hind hoof" or "Let that check-rein out two holes." And the trouble would be corrected. More than once after a heat in which he was beaten by a rival to whom he had given advice, Geers would return, and say:

"Dog-gone! I beat myself tellin' him that."
"Pop" is out—"gone to the races" again, with Fred Edman, Sandy Taylor and Neal Edman as the other drivers who will handle the horses under Geers' direction.
"Do you expect to win as much this year as in others?" some one asks.
"Dog-gone! kaint tell. I've got the greatest string of trotters and pacers that ever came out of training."

With the pride of a mother and the silence accompanying admiral's "ton," "Pop" told Dewey, and some great colts he is training.
"Dog-gone!" he said snapping shut the case of the old silver watch which he carries. "Gettin' late."

For regardless of anything else, five o'clock is quitting time for "Pop" during the training season.
He's a great exponent of the game, and there is no more striking sight than the firm figure and like-like face, behind goggles, lifting a winner across the line.

GEORGES MUST WIN OR QUIT

When He Fights Tunney Thursday Night At The New York Polo Grounds

NEW YORK, July 21.—Thursday on a glaring patch of canvas, bright white in the centre of a yawning cavern of black stands, Georges Carpentier, who for all his risk of a gallant soldier of France during the World War, will find the Verdun of his boxing career. He must stop Gene Tunney—perhaps something of the war cry: "Ils ne passeront pas," will sound in his battered ears, or go home and retire as an undefeated and undefeated champion of England.

Georges himself has promised to quit if he is knocked out. He should, for the good of the game, or else he definitely admit his limitations and take on men second raters—for whom he is a match, at purses of a reasonable size. Just a few—bouts too long has Georges capitalized the dazzling smile, the orchid dressing gown, and the gracious manner that draws society to his training camp.

There seems to be little reason to suppose that Gene Tunney cannot beat the Frenchman, and yet the suspicion lingers that this time Carpentier may loop-over one of those famous rights to good affect and sock his way to an American title he once took away from old Pat Levinisky.

The Frenchman has a flare for the unusual. In defeat, he figures on some way to lose without admitting openly that he is beaten. With a chance for victory, he dares to try anything once.

He tried it, once, on Dempsey, and none of those who breathed resin at the ringside that scorching July day in Jersey City will ever forget how near our own champ was to the limit and how the decision, if his right goes over, he should win the title.

Either way, a Carpentier fight is always a colorful affair. With little Francois Desamps, the Frenchman's peppery manager, busy with complaints and exclamations. We don't hear as much as we used to about Desamps' hypnotic eye, but at any moment Francois may be expected to introduce some new gag of this sort.

Georges has been doing his training amid scenes of Long Island luxury, with plenty of society, police dogs, charity bazaars and other appurtenances of any modern training camp to keep his fertile Gallic brain engaged, when it is not figuring out ways and means to have his brains working thick for think with the challenger Carpentier has slowed down

OUTSTANDING OLYMPIC FIGURES OF 1924

Paavo Nurmi

(United Press)
NEW YORK, July 21.—Through the welter of dazzling performances, crashing records, intense heat and bitter rivalries that characterized the Olympic Games of 1924, one dominant figure stood out above all the others—cool, unassuming, winner of four first places, a victor in every race in which he started.

Paavo Nurmi, diminutive distance runner from the northland, is the greatest track athlete of which we have any record, when endurance, adaptability and overwhelming superiority in his many events are taken into consideration.

Nurmi ran everything from a mile to six and a half miles, and was never beaten, never seriously threatened. He finished first in the 1,500 metres, the 3,000 metres modern Olympiads. He won the 1,500 metres and the 5,000 metres runs within an hour and a half on hot afternoon.

The little Finn trains on a diet of bread and dried fish. He drinks little water—not over two quarts in all during the week when he was breaking records and running away with most of the first places. How much better Nurmi is than his fellow country man, Willie Ritola, is demonstrated by the fact that he took on the American trained Finn at all distances and beat him every time.

Strangely enough, when there was glory and plenty to go around, there was bad blood between the two Finnish stars. Ritola won the since his best days, and is more likely to give Tunney a chance to get set. The fight should be a business of that famous left jab of Gene's standing Carpentier off and wearing him down until the American gets the decision, with probably a lot of very crude infighting thrown in. No one with any enthusiasm for the art ever had much use for Georges' infighting.

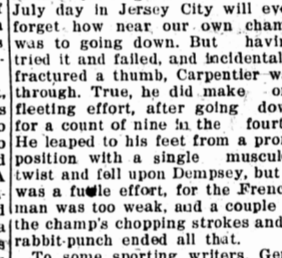
If his ankle holds up, Carpentier should go the limit and lose the decision. If his right goes over, he should win the title.

There was a something ludicrous in Ray Watson's gallant attempt to "run the Finn off his legs" and let the other Americans score. Nurmi didn't pay any attention to Watson, but before the race was half over the plucky Illinois A. C. runner was exhausted and had to fall back, while Nurmi went on to win as he pleased.

"I want to show you, lad's and gentlemen, the famous flexible ivory comb, an absolutely unbreakable comb, ladies and gentlemen, as will stand anything. You can bend it—so, or twist it—so, or you can—"
"Can you comb your hair with it?" interrupted a practical member of the audience.



Georges Carpentier



Gene Tunney

Long Tom

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