

Back Stretch

Pive horses finished in practically a dead heat in the Ontario Harness Horse of the Year poll of Sportman readers, but it was the game Alia Craig battler, Argyle Grattan again that had it at the wire, edging out such other top Ontario campaigners as Jimmie's Chief, Clark Herbert, Mr. Galvin and Ezra Dean. It was the third straight year that he has been high on the poll. For the past two years he has been named Canadian Horse of the Year, this year losing honors to the Quebec Steam Engine Star Volo. Topping the reasons for his selection was his sensational 2.02 1/2 mile at Woodbine, Ontario, track, a Canadian record for a half-mile oval.

From his start in the Spring on Western Ontario tracks he has always been in there, losing only to the best. The champ Argyle Grattan was bred, trained, owned and driven in all his races by owner Dunc Campbell, who also raced his dam, Babe Grattan. He was foaled on March 6, 1945, with his breeding on both sides going back to Grattan Royal 2.06 1/4. He has been four seasons racing. As a 2-year-old he took a mark of 2.14 1/4. The next year he raced 40 times with 21 wins, 9 seconds, 5 thirds, 3 fourths and one fifth and a mark of 2.11. As a 4-year-old he raced entirely on Ontario tracks, winning 30 of 48 starts. Last year he raced the fastest mile in Canada, going in 2.03 1/2 in the Thorncliffe Handicap. He won 21 of 23 heats in Ontario and his season's record included Batavia and Vernon starts. He was 33 times out, 3 times first, 11 times second, nine fifth. He was a very close second to Egan Grattan in 2.01 1/2 at Vernon.

Argyle Grattan had the honor this season of setting up a new Canadian half-mile track pacing record of 2.02 1/2 at Toronto's Woodbine Park. The former record was 2.02 1/2 made by Walter Dale at Fredericton, N.B., Sept. 15, 1937. This is the summary of the race: Walter Dale (H. Clukey) 1-1-1, Signal Senator (H. Sweeney) 2-3-2, Marjorie M. (Jabalee) 3-2-3, Peter Magnus 4-4-4. Time, 2.07 1/2, 2.06 1/2, 2.06 1/2. The winning owners were Sullivan & Mawhinney, Machias, Me. Other winners at the same meeting were, 2.15 Trot and Pace - Federal 2-1-1, Dolly Asoff 1-2-2, three other starters, Time, 2.08, 2.06 1/4, 2.08. Federal was owned by Sullivan & Mawhinney. The 2.23 Trot was won by Millie Kalmuck with the Star Dillon (William) 3-2-2, Peter McKinley 2-4-4, Tara Hanover 4-3-3. Time, 2.12 1/2, 2.12 1/2, 2.13 1/4. The winner was owned and driven by Willard Kelly, Southport, P.E.I.

Walter Dale also won another free for all pace at the same meeting in straight heats, Tracey Hanover 2-2-2, Marjorie M. 4-3-4, Peter Onward 3-4-4, Bud Wenger 5-5-3. Time, 2.05 1/4, 2.06, 2.07, and many will remember that great trotter John Dean, that won the Free For All Trot in straight heats, Bobelwyn 3-4-2, Miss Ulthen Volo 5-2-4, Lusty Frisco 2-4-5, Dude Potemkin 4-5-3. Time, 2.11 1/4, 2.08 1/4, 2.09 1/4. The thought struck us as we read the above summaries of how well trained and

well conditioned the horses were in those days. Just note Walter Dale for instance, and Marjorie M. in that free for all pace, with only two days rest between. Marjorie M. was without question one of the toughest race horses that ever campaigned in the Maritimes.

A very great friend, Townsend MacNeill, Rustico, dropped in to see us the other day and we talked over for quite a long time. Went back to the days of the famous race between Black Pilot and Hernando at Summerside and the rivalry between the various stallion owners and the war carried on in the press by them. Those were good old days and at one time there were fifteen tracks in operation on the Island and horse racing was the people's principal recreation. Horse breeding of course, became an industry and there was such a demand for good roadsters and carriage horses that hundreds were exported to the Maritimes, Maine and New England. Our mention of Physician, a beautiful stallion imported here by the late Hon. George E. Hughes, brought him back in memory to Mr. MacNeill and he also spoke very nicely about the late William Bateman, whom he knew.

Mr. MacNeill's interest in horses continues and he was having registered Molly's Best by Macs Best 2:19, dam Lady Rosebud by Bud Axworthy, second dam Sweet Alice by Caskaway, third dam Morse Rose by Parkdale 2:21 1/4. He spoke about Bud Axworthy and what that terrific fast horse he was but that he failed to be a race horse because of his numerous breaks. We told him how we straightened him out by giving a shorter toe and lighter shoe in front and a longer toe and heavier shoe behind and equipped like that he took a record as a 14-year-old of 2:14 at Charlottetown. Had he been hung out that way when he came to the

Province he would have won a mark better than 2:10. Among the other registrations we have had recently was one for Conto Boy, by Eddie Cole's stallion Ill Conto 2:16 1/4. Ill Conto's sire is Calmest Adam 1:59 1/4 and he has an excellent dam, Kissimes by The King Direct 4-3:53 1/4. This past season he has won five dashes and consistently reduced his record.

We notice in the reports of the Halifax Harness Horse Club's card on Halifax Commons Saturday afternoon, that Class A was won by Bud Henley, owned by Harry Wheelby, Dartmouth, and driven by George Turner, with 1-2-1, Galant Bobby (C. Connors) 2-1-5, Cardinal's Echo (W. Baker) 4-3-2, two other starters, Time, 48 1/2, 48 1/2. Class B. was won by Josedale Clansman, owned and driven by Don Turner, Westphal, with 1-1-1, Dean Swift (M. Salter) 2-2-4, Follow Up Jr. (F. Daniels) 5-3-2, Bobby Hunter (P. Craig) 3-4-6, two other starters, Time, 49, 51, 50. The track is three-eighths of a mile and 46 1/2 is fast stepping for the green pacer that was recently sold to Mr. Wheelby by Harold Cudmore of Brackley.

We were very pleased to have a letter from Massachusetts from a great friend of this column who wishes to remain anonymous, with information that will be interesting to our readers. "You probably never knew, but Josedale Hoosier had a full brother that was timed over a local track and given a record of 2:04 1/2. His name was Josedale Matchless and he was owned by Squires Bros. and later sold to Pat Downey, who was a half owner of Billy Direct 1:53. Josedale Matchless was raced around 1945 or thereabouts. I noticed something in your column about Fern Hal 2:04 1/2 that Fred Cameron raced for Dr. MacAllister of Sussex. You will be sur-

prised to know that Fern Hal had a colt. He was Hal Volo by Nelson Dillon, sire of the famous brood mare Even Song. He was a very consistent pacer owned by the Fitzpatrick stables of Spencer, Mass. and raced around here for years, took a mark of 2:06 1/2 and was still going strong in 1945 when 17 years old.

"Sorry to hear of the death of Gordon Ives. I remember him when he owned Ozen D., brother of Dominion D., and they were both being trained at Jack Irving's, Cape Traverse. I couldn't have been more than seven or eight years old at the time. They were both by Brazilian. I saw in your column where Harold Stead's son Sidney, bought the trotter Harvest Melody's colt by Big Gun by Guy Abbey. I wonder how he came to be a pacer with that breeding. I watch for good progeny from Christie Budlong. Will be looking forward to your annual summary of racing in the Maritimes."

The Maine Harness Racing Commission has released its report for 1945 on the Pine Tree Circuit. The total pari-mutuel handle for the year was \$4,173,992 for the 124 days and nights of racing. Top point in the chain was the meet at Gorham Raceway where the handle went to \$1,055,002 for 21

nights. Lawiston, Cumberland and New Gloucester were next in order. Despatches out of San Francisco the past week brought word that the harness meeting at beautiful Bay Meadows mile track will start in mid-February. Some 500 horses are being winter trained at Del Mar Mile oval.


next two years only in order to forestall what otherwise might have worked a hardship on the owners of these horses in this district. After two years all such horses and any other over 14 will automatically become ineligible to race. The petition was granted. As the Canadian Association has in the past adopted the rules made by the S.T.A. it is likely that they will follow suit.

At this season of the year it is a pleasure for us to wish the readers of this column a very Happy Christmas and all the good things that go with it.

We Greet You At Christmas

We take great pleasure at this happy holiday time to salute all our friends: Thank you for your loyalty.

J. E. H. WORTH
142 Prince Street



TO OUR FRIENDS

A part of this joyous season is our memory of the wonderful customers we have served!

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And, we add our greetings, too — to tell all our many friends — our good wishes for a very pleasant holiday!

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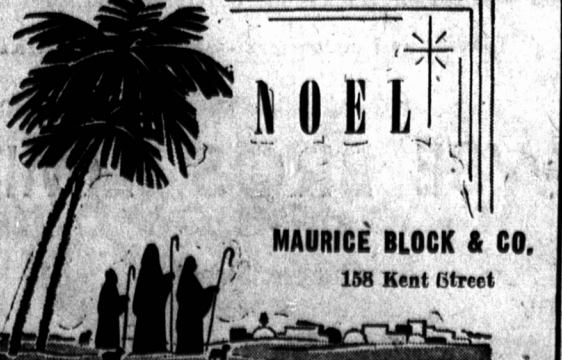
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It was in the moon of winter-time,
When all the birds had fled,
That mighty Gitchi-Manitou
Sent angel-choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim,
And wondering hunters heard the hymn.
*Jesus your King is born * Jesus is born, In Excelsis Gloria*

Within a lodge of broken bark
The tender Babe was found,
A ragged robe of rabbit skin
Enwrapped His beauty 'round;
But as the hunter braves drew nigh,
The angel-song rang loud and high
*Jesus your King is born * Jesus is born, In Excelsis Gloria*

The earliest moon of winter-time
Is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on
The helpless Infant there.
The chiefs from far before Him knelt
With gifts of fox and beaver-pelt.
*Jesus your King is born * Jesus is born, In Excelsis Gloria*

O children of the forest free,
O sons of Manitou,
The Holy Child of earth and heaven
Is born to-day for you.
Come kneel before the radiant Boy,
Who brings you beauty, peace and joy.
*Jesus your King is born * Jesus is born, In Excelsis Gloria*

AMEN

