

ANNOUNCER FRANK ACORN GIVES RACE STORY

# Famous horses, great drivers of yesteryear are recalled

**BY OBSERVER**  
Thousands will thrill to the hooves and the thrilling dash of the magnificent Standard Bred horses that will be racing here this week, but many minds will flash back to famous horses, great drivers and thrilling races that have been contested through the years.

Present-day fans are pulling for Jim Byrd or H. Jay, both locally owned speedsters, to smash the mark of 2:03.4 set by Miltow Lee in 1929 before Queen Elizabeth, a mark that will take a lot of breaking, although it could be shaved this year with the hottest concentration of speedy free-form-rollers the Maritime has known in many a year.

Doc's Boy has shown phenomenal speed at Sackville Downs with what must be the greatest two heats in Maritime track history, and Bob Brock was nearly as good when he raced to the front at Fredericton in magnificent time for a four-year-old. This horse should have a wonderful future, if his handlers can keep him sound, and do not burn him out with too much heavy competition.

To go along with these, we look for unexcelled miles here in the great Gold Cup and Saucer race here Friday, but my mind keeps harking back to some of the great performances of the past.

**LONG WAY RACK**  
My mind goes back all the way to a late September afternoon in 1910 when the big bay trotter Colorado L was driven on a new track trotting record of 2:12 by owner-driver Hammond Kelly of Southport. Mr. Kelly did not go on to win the race, but he pocketed a special prize of \$100 donated by the management for the new mark.

Also recalled are some of the great battles staged between the Colorado L horse and a tiny chestnut mare, Queen Catherine that was owned by Gavin Harding, and had a tremendous burst of speed, but was frustrated by the big, rangy trotter.

Another trotting mark of yesteryear was the 2:10 1/2 mile in August, 1923, by Harvest Melody, a Newfoundland mare driven by Lt.-Col. D.A. MacKinnon that equalled the performance by the stallion Able Worby back in 1931.

Col. MacKinnon was involved in a collision in the scoring, had been thrown and landed on his back and the back of his neck and was apparently dead for a minute or two, but the same sportsman came back to the next trip to equal the record after getting a new sulky.

And it's the same man, came back at Montague that same year, if memory serves correctly, to drive the veteran trotter Heatherbell to a new track trotting mark of 2:08 1/2 which was a new provincial mark as well.

Adding to the drama of the performance was the fact that Col. MacKinnon had retired from racing some time previously, but sold his stable and was through with the game. But he put a bid on the Heatherbell horse at an auction sale, and if he dropped on him, and then proceeded to drive him to some remarkable miles, a difficult horse to handle—he was a nervous puller—the big gelding and his new driver hit things off just right that afternoon and the Montague race fans saw a performance they remembered for a long time.

win here again in the 1935 Free For All in slower time, but he was last the following year as Bud Wenger set a new mark of 2:05 1/2.

There's an interesting story on Toll Gate whose discovery was a fortunate accident. Used as a milk horse, he ran away one day and showed such a burst of speed that he was trained for the track. He had taken record of 2:00 1/2 in 1920 on an American track before Bridgetown's H.M. Sweeney brought him here for his record-shattering performance four years later.

The big stallion Calumet Budlong was 2-2 that day with miles that pushed Wenger to the limit, and he went on to become one of the greatest sires of racing blood this province ever knew, in the stable of Frank MacKay, East Royalty. That was the Budlong horse's last race, and he was racing with the handicap of soreness, but he made a grand exit from the competitive field in spite of his four-year-old.

Mr. MacKay has owned some good ones, but he fondly recalls Budlong as the greatest horse of them all.

Veteran fans recall the dark chestnut mare Jane Anst' owned by the late C. E. Horton, Murray River and driven here by the late Willard Kelly, winning a feature exhibition race here in 1975, but a great little horse, Happy L, stole some of the show as he trumped, one heat of a class event a full second faster the same afternoon.

Miss Kalmuck and Marjorie M are recalled as two of the best liked horses ever to appear on an island track. Millie was the favorite because she was owned here by Willard Kelly, but Miss Jabah's mare from North Sydney was not far behind in crowd appeal.

Marjorie M beat Big Bud Wenger in straight heats the same afternoon with best time of 2:04, and the two great racing mares were to win many

heats as they raced some brilliant miles in the years immediately following.

Millie was almost human as she stretched her neck to get a nose in front as she neared the finish line, and she never failed to look at the crowd as they applauded her when Mr. Kelly took her back as the heat winner.

Old timers often speak of the grueling races of the past as they compare them with the one-hot dashes of the present, with horses usually calling it a day, or a night, after two miles.

The horses in the 2:17 trot and 2:30 pace on September 26, 1917—the Provincial Exhibition—was always held in late September in those years—took six heats before Dr. J.T. Jenkins' Devilish Dorothy took the third heat, and the race, Dunlop with Hammond Kelly up, Dr. Sharper with Lt.-Col. D.A. MacKinnon on the ribbons and A.R. Sola driven by L.A. Simpson, Amherst were other heat winners in the long grueling afternoon of competition.

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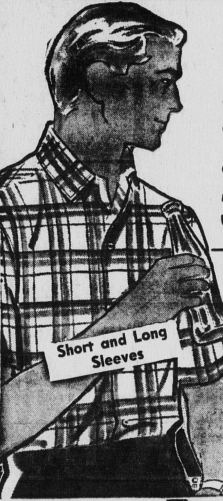
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