

WHERE FRACTIONS OF SECONDS COUNT

Difficult Exploit to Break Real Records

SOME SPORTING HISTORY

Annals of Horse Racing Show That It Took a Century to Cut Fifteen Seconds Off Mile Record

Readers of the sporting page will have noted that several times in the course of the racing season which still has several weeks to run, track records and even American records have been equalled or broken. Last year the American mile record that had stood for nearly thirty years, was broken on two occasions. Once while the test against time was made in the presence of competent judges it was disallowed because not officially under the auspices of the Jackey Club. This was when Sun Briar ran the mile in 1:34. A day or two previously the gelding Roamer had run on the same track in 1:34.4-5, which now stands as the official American record, and there can be no doubt that it was the performance of Roamer that induced the owner of Sun Briar to make a similar attempt. It ought to be borne in mind both by those concerned in racing and those only casually concerned, but whose attention may be attracted by a record-breaking performance of any kind whatever, that to reduce a record by only a fraction of a second is always a remarkable exploit.

Slow Work.

To cut a few minutes from the record of the Nome dog race is not so important, since there are only a few races in a generation, and to reduce the American three-mile record by a few seconds would not attract widespread attention because nowadays there are few of these races; but to cut a fraction of a second from distances up to a mile and a half, in view of the fact that there are thousands of such races every year with thousands of horses competing is an evidence of

THE PRINCE PREPARING TO FISH AT NIPIGON



amazing speed. How slowly the time for the mile has been reduced is indicated by an article in the New York Herald. It shows that it has required nearly a century to reduce the time by fifteen seconds. In this time one would suppose that the trotting record had been reduced by almost a full minute, and the reason for the difference is that the running horse, the only animal in the world properly entitled to be called thoroughbred had been brought to a high state of development centuries before anyone had ever heard of a standard bred, though, of course, one might say that horses had been trotting before they had been galloping, on the principle that one must learn to walk before he can run. The trotting record has been reduced ten seconds in the past thirty years. It has taken more than half a century for the running mark to be cut as much.

Not Speed Alone.

Timing race horses is peculiarly an American method of rating ability. In England more attention is paid to what horses another can beat than to his attack upon times although when English time is taken it is found almost invariably to be better than American time. Such leading horsemen as John Madden, perhaps the most successful of American horsemen, when both trotters and thoroughbreds are considered, disregards the time test altogether when judging a run-

ner. Mere speed, he insists, does not constitute class. A horse might be as fast as Eclipse, which, according to tradition, could run a mile in a minute, but which probably would take forty seconds more, and yet not be a race horse. To be a race horse a moral quality is needed. This is called courage or gameness, and means that the horse desires to beat the other horses and understands what he is in a race for. Such a thoroughbred will try all the harder, the faster the other horses run. There are others, possessed of amazing speed, that refuse a contest, and will quit when resolutely challenged.

The First American Record.

But when Americans began to develop the trotter, one of the three or four animals that they may be said to have produced, the others being the Boston terrier, the wyandottes, and the plymouthe rocks, the only way in which they could gauge their progress was by the watch, and it may be that this habit extended to the thoroughbred men. Or it may be that removed 3,000 miles from England where the fastest horses were admittedly produced, and being thus unable to race the American breeds against the English, they resorted to the watch to give them an idea of the progress in the two countries. It was in 1823 that the first stop watches were shown in the United States, so up to that time any time records may be re-

ceived with caution. Frank Forester, the noted American authority, would accept no time records as authentic up to the time of American Eclipse. The first accepted American mile record, that of Ariel, was made in 1828, and the time was 1:40 Ariel being then a three-year-old filly, sired by American Eclipse. It stood for five years and then was cut a full second by a horse called Pilot, by the famous Sir Archy and out of the still more famous Maria West.

The Real Builders.

One notes that Ariel was ridden by "Black Harry," but looking over the records one finds that the other riders of record breakers for nearly half a century, with a couple of exceptions, are listed as "unknown," which shows that in the old days the relative proportion of the feat of the horse and the feat of the rider was better understood than later. Bearing out Mr. Madden's belief that mere speed is not of the first importance, it is noted that of the twenty horses that have held the American record for a mile, not half a dozen have played any considerable part in the development of the American thoroughbred. Who ever heard of Heros or Kad? Yet they were record holders, each of them for two years. Indeed, Salvo, for so long the holder of the record, until dethroned by Roamer, has left considerable mark upon subsequent turf history. While all these horses, with the single exception of Alarm, which held the record for a year, having reduced it to 1:42.3-4, were astonishing race goers, other horses that they could easily beat were laying the foundations of turf history, and their names are never to be forgotten while the speed marvels with few exceptions left nothing but a few obsolete figures by which they are remembered.

SOLACE IN SOLITAIRE.

Discovery By a Man Who Couldn't Arrange a Good Whist Game.

(Hartford Times.)

A summer tourist just home after his holiday declared upon his return that he had become in a few weeks an enthusiast over card solitaire. Chiefly it was because he found so few people who played cards to his satisfaction. He happens to be a good whist player of the old school—which he hints diplomatically that he found a lack in most of the other people who shared the remote, if beautiful, spot in which fortune rather than deliberate choice had established him for the few weeks he had to spend.

He was ready to fish all day, but he wanted his game of whist not auction, in the evening, and he found for a few people who showed any inclination for the game to be amateurs of such an order as to cause him more irritation than pleasure. In his own words: "There wasn't a man or woman in the place who knew the rudiments of a sound game. I watched them, and I even tried to play with them, but it was a good deal worse than nothing, nor did the play of a partner, nor of the other side, make any impression on them as a clue to the possibilities or the dangers of any play they made. But they were perfectly content. Most of them thought they were playing whist."

It was all too dreary and aimless for the man who was accustomed at home to real whist played by real players. Just as he was seriously considering removal to some other place where matters might be better, he happened to see a lady playing solitaire, and stood a moment watching the game. She played deliberately and carefully, and seemed to have a peculiar insight—or astonishingly good luck in her ventures. Again and again she made a play that surprised him, and almost always he was a little later how it had improved the situation as more cards were played. It began to dawn on him that it is possible to foresee some things as probable, or possible, and others as almost certainly too dangerous to be considered. It began to look as if that game might deserve consideration where whist "as is" whist was undistainable, and the result was that he went into it as a last

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of the best skill and caution of his associate in the game.

PRINZ FRIDERICH WILHELM ALLOTTED TO WHITE STAR LINE

New York, Sept. 18.—The former North German Lloyd liner Prinz Friderich Wilhelm, one of the fleet of German merchantmen blockaded during the war and recently used as a naval transport to bring American troops home from France, has been allotted to the White Star Line for service on its New York, Cherbourg and Southampton route, it was announced here tonight.

The reparation committee of the Inter-Allied Council, at Paris, assigned the vessel to the British government, and the British ministry of shipping today advised the White Star Line to take charge of her.

\$200,000 Still Under Arms.

Paris, Sept. 18.—Addressing the chamber of deputies today in the debate on the German peace treaty, Jean Longuet, leader of the minority socialists, said he and his friends would not vote for the ratification of "this peace of force, and violence, like those terminating conflicts in the past."

M. Longuet declared that Gustav Noske, German minister of defence, still has under arms 1,200,000 men.

There is a shortage of about 4,000 teachers in Missouri, and almost as many in Kansas. Low salaries is given as the cause.

The Canada Goose (Honkers)

No bird among all Canadian game appeals so much to the general public as the Canada Goose. Mystery seems to surround this bird. It is a wonderful sight in the spring to see flock after flock, in regular formation, breasting its way to the breeding grounds in the far north—to return in the fall to the South.

Methods of hunting the Canada Goose vary greatly in different localities. In the Western Provinces the most common way is to dig pits in the stubble fields and use decoys to attract the birds as they leave the sloughs to look for food. Some rely on the sheet metal decoys and a goose call.

In some places blinds are built on sand bars where the geese come at morning and evening for sand and water.

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