

A Thousand Words

Photos offer glimpses of the year gone by

The past year saw our sport stay exciting and fresh, with new ventures and great performances galore.

History was made when Western Dreamer won the Pacing Triple Crown and Mal Burroughs became the first amateur driver in half a century to win the Hambletonian, guiding Malabar Man to a joyous triumph. The sport's stars could be enjoyed by more people than ever before with the televising of the 18-week American Championship Harness Series. The creation of the

Classic Series brought aged horses long-needed new opportunities to compete, with odd-distance races adding suspense. And all-time greats Niatross and Cam Fella thrilled fans as they toured North America.

Outside the spotlight, the racing and camaraderie that make up our sport were just as meaningful to those participating at every level. It's all the world of harness racing, and some glimpses follow of the year that was.

—Ardith Carlton



Ed Keys



♦ **JULY 5** was Youth Day at Goshen Historic Track, and more than 300 youngsters toured the backstretch, learning about the various aspects of harness racing. Here, trainers Dale Wood, right, and Jim McCormack (red and gray colors) explain racing equipment to an attentive group.

▶ **WHILE WINTERING** in Florida at Spring Garden Ranch, good-feeling Meadowbranch Lou, winner of 11 races in a row at 2, grabs one of his favorite playthings—his bath bucket. The Super Bowl colt was sidelined much of last season by suspensory problems, but he returned to grab another bucket, the \$103,560 Old Oaken Bucket, in a lifetime-best 1:56.3.



Ed Keys



Hazel Park Raceway

♦ **ON AUG. 29**, Hazel Park Raceway honored George Rattenbury, second from left, on his 99th birthday. Presenting him with a cake in the winner's circle were, from left, Ken Marshall, Jim Scarmeas, George Lewis, Carol Malcolm, Denny Walton and Nickie Berson. Rattenbury drove his first horse in 1915, and the last time he went to post was in 1989 at Jackson Harness Raceway.

♦ **SWEPT ON** by the deafening wave of cheers that circled the track with him, 18-year-old Cam Fella electrified the Jug Day crowd at Delaware by pacing a half-mile at full speed. Guided by driver/trainer Pat Crowe, just as he was in his 1982 and 1983 Horse of the Year seasons, Cam Fella reached the wire in 57 seconds flat. He headed to the Kentucky Horse Park in December to join Staying Together as a champion ambassador of the breed.

♦ **SPECTACULAR DEAL** was a big deal in 1997. Shown starting to draw away from the field in the Boots & Saddles final at Delaware, Ohio, the Topnotcher 5-year-old took his 1:50.3 mark in harness in June. He then raced twice in Boots & Saddles competition, winning his division at Freehold in 2:02.2—fastest mile ever by a pacer under saddle on a twice-around—and taking the \$15,000 series final for pilot Samantha Hirst in 2:02.4.



Ed Keys

▶ **BANGOR RACEWAY** in Maine was the first stop on Niatross' 10-track tour last year, and newspaper columnist Ken Ward, 70, found himself in the champion's bike. "We headed into the second turn together, and this 20-year-old champion (that's 60 in human years) began to quickly and smoothly pick up speed," wrote Ward, also a Standardbred owner, in the *Bangor Daily News*. "Up the backstretch, we were really moving along. I have jogged my own horses over the years, and some of them would pull your arms out if you would let them, but not Niatross. I began to understand what quality he really is."

▶ **USTA PRESIDENT** Corwin Nixon was on hand for the gala May 31 opening of the eight-mile-long Confederation Bridge—largest construction project ever in Maritime Canada—spanning the Northumberland Strait to join Prince Edward Island to the mainland. Both the bridge and Nixon were warmly welcomed by Maritime horsemen, and Nixon presented a cooler in his name at Charlottetown Driving Park later that day.



Tom Smith, Bangor Daily News



Doug Hankness

▶ **BRUCE GARLAND**, vice president of The Meadowslands, congratulates Bob Glazer (right) of Peter Pan Stables, Inc., for his horses' winnings at the New Jersey oval. Horses like Catch A Flight, The Wrath Of Pan, One If By Pan, Turbo Fired, Brod and Slick Pavement helped the stable rack up 77 wins and more than \$1.2 million in earnings during the '97 meet.



Steve Dowell

▶ **ALBATROSS**, sire of more than 2,500 registered foals, celebrated Father's Day at Hanover Shoe Farms with a cake presented by farm Publicity Director Murray Brown (left) and Vice President Russell Williams. The \$128 million in earnings by Albatross' progeny make the now-30-year-old stallion history's most successful equine sire of any breed.



Ed Keys

▶ **AN EXUBERANT** David Miller holds the winner's trophy high after capturing this year's Challenge Of Champions at Freehold Raceway. Representing Ladbroke at The Meadows and Scioto Downs, Miller set a new record with four victories in the six-race driving tournament and won the competition by more than 100 points over his nearest competitor, Tony Morgan.



Freehold Raceway



❖ **FOXBORO HARNESS** played host to its annual Father-Son Tournament on June 23. In the front row, left to right, are Eddie Morgan Jr., Syl DeCample Jr., Jim Doherty, Jack Parker Sr., Bob Stevenson, Mike Lachance, Buddy Gilmour and Don Pierce. Behind them are Tony Morgan, Syl DeCample III, Mike Doherty, Jack Parker Jr., Mike Stevenson, Pat Lachance, Mark Gilmour and Ron Pierce.

❖ **THE LADIES** in the souvenir shop at Summerside Raceway on Prince Edward Island do a great service for the track and for Maritime racing fans. This lucky customer is greeted by (from left) Marlene Doucette, Brenda MacInnis, Lynn Whitlock and Gail MacLeod.



Dean A. Hoffman



❖ **NIATROSS** and John Campbell shone among the stars on Broadway on May 6. After parading down New York City's 45th Street, the pair of Hall of Famers visited the Official All Star Cafe on Broadway to present memorabilia from their careers for the restaurant to display. The event was part of a press conference to launch the American Championship Harness Series.



Don Fasman/The Hambletonian Society

❖ **NEW JERSEY** Governor Christine Todd Whitman enjoyed one of the sport's most glorious days, coming to The Meadowlands to see the event guided by Hambletonian Society President Andy Grant (left), the Hambletonian. Two heroes born and bred in New Jersey, Mal Burroughs and Malabar Man, teamed to win the race.

➤ **FREEHOLD RACEWAY** was a winter wonderland last Jan. 9. Lonely Fighter (1) and Jean's Baby came dashing through the snow to the finish of a conditioned trot, with Lonely Fighter prevailing by a frosty nostril for Jacqueline Ingrassia in 2:05.1.

➤ **LONGTIME FAN** Mike Sweeney has many responsibilities at Scarborough Downs, including production of its TV show ["Racing is Cable's Maine Event," September 1996]. Hard work has its rewards, such as this shining moment when Sweeney got to meet the legendary Cam Fella. "He was walking on clouds in the presence of such a great horse!" said photographer LeeAnne Pooler.



LeeAnne Pooler



Freehold Raceway



Dean A. Hoffman

➤ **THE ELITLOPP**, Sweden's greatest trotting event, lost much of its drama last year when the heavy pre-race favorite, Zoogin (3), lost his left front shoe early in the race and broke stride. Zoogin failed to qualify for the Elitlopp final, as did Norwegian hero Gentle Star. The Elitlopp final was won by American-bred Gum Ball.



Carol Cramer

JOHN CAMPBELL does many good deeds throughout the year, and here are just two of them. Above, at the USTA booth during Delaware's Grand Circuit meet, Campbell autographed photos and met throngs of fans, including this youngster who became buddies with his racing idol. At right, Jeff Gregg, 11, of Milmine, Ill., was all smiles on World Trotting Derby Day at the Du Quoin State Fair after John Campbell posed for a picture with him, then handed the boy his driving whip.



Dean A. Hoffman



Dean A. Hoffman

➤ **EARLY IN 1997**, Joe Holloway was honored for his training achievements by the Columbus (Ohio) Touchdown Club, and Holloway got a chance to compare trophies with the "Golden Jet," hockey legend Bobby Hull.



Mark Hall

◆ **GEE GEE DIGGER** received a loving welcome to the winner's circle from caretaker Nadine Bell after the Magical Mike Invitational on Jug Day. The rangy Dignitarian gelding skipped offstride before the start, recovered to fly to the front just past the quarter, and held off Village Connection and Riyadh to win in a 1:50.4 world record, tied as history's third-fastest mile on a twice-around.

◆ **BOB LEMS** was honored by Minnesota Harness Racing, Inc. in February at its annual meeting at Canterbury Downs as the leading driver for the previous season. Ironically, Lems hails from Canton, S.D., but raced in Minnesota often enough and successfully enough to beat the native Minnesota drivers. His overall UDR for 1996 was a respectable .382.



Dean A. Hoffmann



Mark Hall

◆ **BEING COVERED UP** in the Delaware stretch was a good thing for Monica Thors. The award-winning photographer is recovering from Lyme disease, and a side effect of the medication is extreme sensitivity to light.



Mark Hall

◆ **THIS YEAR** saw the unveiling of the Little Brown Jug Barn, a state-of-the-art structure to house the classic race's entrants. Located across from the paddock, it has 30 stalls surrounding an interior landscaped courtyard and is topped by cupolas over each of the four entrances and each corner. Funding came in large part from Thomas Walsh Jr., co-owner of Jug winners Magical Mike and Armbo Operative.



Mark Hall

◆ **CHARLES AND RAYMOND** Greene take time out from their synchronized track-raking at Delaware's finish line to horse around with legendary harness photographer George Smallsreed. Cousins from Xenia, Ohio, the Greenes have long been part of the Grand Circuit week festivities. "I've been director of racing going on 28 years now," noted Tom Thomson, "and they were here before I was director of racing!" **HB**