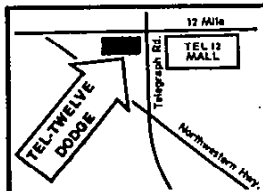




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**WHEN ONLY THE FINEST
IS GOOD ENOUGH**

Wolverine's Growth Credited To Policies Set Up By Van Lennep

The tremendous growth of harness racing in Michigan can be attributed in a large measure to the promotions and the far-sighted operations of Wolverine Raceway under the direction of President Frederick Van Lennep during the past 22 years.

Van Lennep has always operated on the theory of thinking more about the breeding of a horse than the win ticket payoff and that is one of the biggest reasons for his success both in standardbred breeding and racing.

Born a Philadelphia Mainliner, son of a prominent surgeon, educated in Princeton, Van Lennep found horses seemingly before they found him. Saddle horses were a first love replaced by standardbreds as he became deeply involved through operating famed Castleton Farm in Lexington, Ky., the nation's foremost standardbred breeding operation.

At Castleton, Van Lennep has seen to it that a long succession of champion stallions from Worthy Boy to Bret Hanover have been at stud. Speedy Scot, Spectator, Dartmouth, Good Time and Race Time annually produce some of the finest youngsters in the land.

While breeding is paramount in Van Lennep's eye, racing has assumed a proportionate share of the glory as the maroon and gray colors of the Castleton Stable have been seen in the winner's circle receiving trophies for practically every major stake in the nation at one time or another.

The name Castleton has found its way into the stock exchange as Castleton Industries, a shelter group which embraces both the entertainment field and industry. Van Lennep heads the corporation.

'ONE VAN LENNEP GOAL has long been a top stakes program at Wolverine paying large purses to the nation's best horses. With the acquisition of the entire set of Matron stakes, he achieved the necessary prestige of having the third oldest in the business.

Then two years ago Van Lennep made a decision to utilize the full potential of the championship mile track and the results have been amazing.

Wolverine has had more sub-two minute miles in the past two seasons than any operation east of the Mississippi River with perhaps the exception of the Big Red Mile oval in Lexington. There'll be more coming this season since the list of stall applications included most of the major stables in North America.

When making the decision to convert from the half-mile to the mile track, Van Lennep, Vice President and General Manager Richard S. Wilson and Racing Secretary Bill Connors predicted it would bring better and faster pa-

cers and trotters to Metropolitan Detroit. Their reasoning was that most of the major Grand Circuit events are held on mile tracks and Wolverine has one of the fastest and best surfaces in operation.

Operation of Wolverine continues with the same forward look that has distinguished it. Since 1952 the deft touch of Van Lennep and his official family has pushed the track ahead.

SINCE 1952 Wolverine has recorded more harness racing firsts in Michigan than any of the other parimutuel plants.

It was the first to pass the \$400,000 mutuel handle hurdle in 1952. It became the first to pass the \$500,000 mark in 1964 with a high of \$572,709 on April 10.

On May 15, 1965, Wolverine climbed past the \$600,000 hurdle, a goal many close to the harness racing picture in Michigan thought impossible. But doing the impossible seemed to be a habit with the track . . . wagering soared to \$609,360 on that date.

Then the experts wondered if any area track would go past \$700,000 and Wolverine achieved that goal on April 13, 1968 with what seemed like an astronomical \$714,058.

Another all-time high came on Sept. 18, 1970 when the mutuel machines fairly sizzled and when the final race was over Wolverine had set another record . . . this time boosting the wagering to \$850,982.

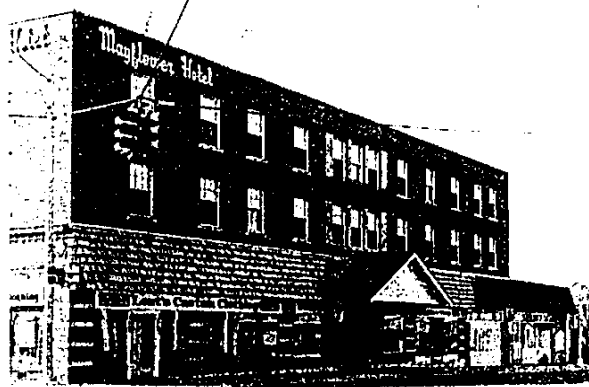
BY THIS TIME, Michigan was being acclaimed as a place where harness racing had finally caught on. It took a bit longer than in Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles and New York but the interest that had been dormant for so many years had finally been brought out, principally by the efforts and promotions of Wolverine Raceway.

True enough, the impetus generated at Wolverine spread to the other operations in Metropolitan Detroit but none has done as much to promote the sport.

But the peak hadn't been reached yet and Wolverine became the first to pass \$900,000 last fall when it brought in the fabled Albatross, perhaps the greatest standardbred of all time for a three-year-old Matron pace.

"The Bird" attracted 12,417 persons and they came out to watch him perform and to wager on the races. Thus, when the final dollar was counted Wolverine had another all-time high handle of \$924,444.

Now the big question in the minds of all is whether the track will pass the million dollar hurdle. It could well be on June 16 when the great Albatross is slated to pace in the \$40,000 Matron for four year olds.



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