

DETROIT RACE COURSE

9 8 7 6 5 4 3



A Race Horse's Day Begins At Crack Of Dawn



AWAITING THE START of the 90-day meeting at the Detroit Race Course Monday is this thoroughbred who has just finished a morning workout

Barn Area No Place For Idlers

There's a great deal more to the opening of a thoroughbred race meeting than meets the eye.

Those who follow the bangtails are perfectly aware of the beautiful Detroit Race Course plant, the colorful grandstand, the plush, ultra-modern clubhouse, the mile racing strip which is one of the widest in the land and the manner in which the management makes every effort to maintain a high quality of comfort for all of its patrons.

But the other side of the picture, the one that few, except those close to racing, know of is the work of the trainers, owners, grooms and jockeys in the early hours after dawn.

That's when the arduous work of training, breaking and conditioning the horses takes place.

It starts almost with the crack of dawn and continues until mid-morning with almost as much activity as there is in the late afternoon when the thousands of spectators pour in to watch the races.

GROOMS, EXERCISE BOYS, trainers and owners begin moving out on the racing strip as soon as it is light, often workouts are in the mist of the early morning—and believe it or not, just as often there are a number of railbirds looking on.

One would be amazed at the beehive of activity at such an early time in the

morning and Track Photographer Tibor Abahacy joined the early morning workers to get his layout for The Observer Newspapers Inc. It shows just a few of the things that go on in the wee hours of the day to make the racing programs possible in the afternoon.

Those who follow the thoroughbreds take it for granted when the field leaves the starting gate and all horses are in top stride within a few yards.

But it takes hours of work to get a green horse accustomed to facing the starter. The colt must be backed in, have the barrier close in front of him and then get adjusted to the sound of the starter's mechanism that releases all barriers at the same moment.

AN ASSISTANT STARTER works with an exercise boy—in most cases this is a jockey picking up a few extra dollars for the morning chores—although sometimes a contract rider will handle all such assignments for his stable.

It's a rough task for the rider and assistant starter as the picture shows. The horses rear, weave to the side, refuse to move at all—in plain words they are scared and show it.

Then gradually they become accustomed to the gate and finally join

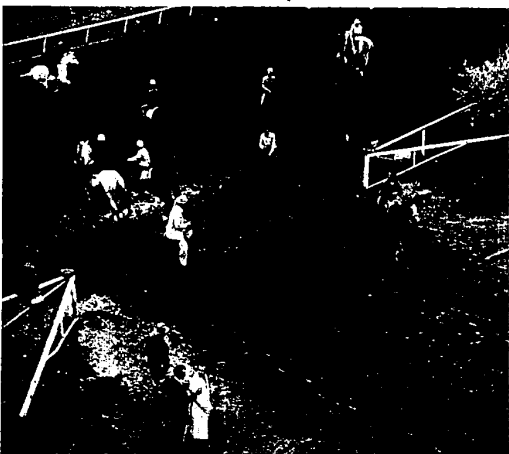
the parade to the post and a starting field.

Meanwhile, the track is filled with horses having morning workouts which determine their fitness for the afternoon events. It is the performances in the workouts that tell trainers, owners and riders whether the horse is fit, whether it may have developed lameness and whether it is sick and ailing.

From the very moment a thoroughbred is born, he is destined to go through this type of training. He has to go through a period of work on the track, he has to get accustomed to racing with others. This training starts at an early age and in most cases the trainer and owner can determine early whether they have a good horse, a mediocre one or one that should be dropped entirely from training.



DANGEROUS? You better believe it. An exercise boy and an assistant trainer have their hands full trying to get this young horse accustomed to going into the starting gate. It's one of the many chores handled in the wee hours of the morning—a part of the major task of getting thoroughbreds ready for the racing programs that come up in the afternoon. (Photos by Tibor Abahacy)



THE DRC was a beehive of action this week as preparations were made for the opener Monday. (Above) Trainers and riders sent horses through early morning drills as owners astride pet horses watch the progress of their thoroughbreds. (Right) Railbirds watch a 6:30 a.m. session on the racing strip, looking for their favorite horse. DRC has a record 60 nominations for the Curtain's Tip handicaps which headlines the opening program.



Additional Sports On 8-B



July 25-30

HISTORY OF MICHIGAN IN PAINTINGS

sponsored by **MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY** in Mall all week

See this famous collection at no charge in the Livonia Mall.

July 31 - August 2

Livonia Parks and Recreation **ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOW**

Meet You At The Mall



There's always something going on at ...

LIVONIA MALL 1 MILE AT MIDDLEBURY