

IN THIS CORNER

George Beaton

One of the funniest stories in the world of fun and games never saw the light of day locally. It has to do with a jockey named Sandino Hernandez, and a battery.

First meet Hernandez, a Panamanian who began riding around the Big Apple in 1962. Hernandez has been singularly unsuccessful. It is a matter of record that in 127 races at Belmont and Aqueduct this year, he got himself and his mounts beaten 117 times. An Eddie Arcaro he was not.

A battery is a bad word around a race track. It is not something used for automobiles or radios or flashlights. It is a gadget not unlike the buzzers practical-jokers attach to their palms via the middle finger to surprise shock you with a handshake, or a tap on the shoulder.

A racetrack battery does carry a tiny real battery. It is used to shock a horse and inspire him to extra effort at some given point when extra speed is required to pass a horse or hold the lead and win a race. And a big bet.

It may not really be much more immoral than the spitball in baseball, depending on how you judge these things. But it is very illegal.

Hernandez had the mount on a 3-year-old named Calcification, out of a respectable Jack Van Berg stable, in a cheap race at Belmont.

As Hernandez left the jock room for the paddock and walking ring, he was apprehended by the track fuzz, known formally as the Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau. Hernandez tried to flip the instrument out of sight, but he was bagged. Cold.

Hernandez was taken to visit the stewards, who set him down for life plus. It was the first case in 35 years involving a rider charged, pardon the verb, with using an electrical device to stimulate a horse.

It should be noted here that batteries do not always get the job done. Some horses do not respond, or worse yet, may sulk or bolt. Usually, however, there are practice sessions in the morning workouts to make certain.

Also, it should be noted, batteries are used more off-track than on-track. Larcenous jockeys use batteries to tout big players into making large wagers for them, for free, on the assumption the player will cash a big bet. Batteries usually are shown surreptitiously to clients in the men's rooms of saloons. For touting purposes.

Okay, Hernandez was busted. The horse was 5-1 morning line, and there was no unusual betting. He drifted up to 8-1, before the announcement was made, with no explanation, that Laffit Pincay, one of the better riders in the world, was replacing Hernandez on Calcification.

He dropped down to 9-2, only a fraction off his 5-1 morning odds. Pincay changed silks, and without any electronic help, won the race and hung out a mutuel of \$11.80.

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this a sad ending to the attempted coup. Because the people behind the swindle canceled their bets when the jock was busted. That the horse ran an honest race and won should be proof positive crooked racetrackers are the biggest suckers of them all.

SCHOLASTIC NOTEBOOK

John Doser

Tom Roach, a 1973 Cardinal Mooney High graduate, bet his life on a miracle, but time - the lack of it, was his biggest adversary.

Tom, 19, was a promising pitcher in Mooney baseball coach Ed Nietopski's pitching stable two years ago when it was discovered he had cancer.

He recently returned to the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Md., for more treatment, but Mooney officials confided that it was unlikely he will ever come home again.

(Ed. Note: Tom passed away Saturday, Oct. 5, 1974.)

"He's already been anointed," one Mooney brother said.

Last weekend (Sept. 28) Mooney students, faculty and alumni conducted a 24-hour prayer-vigil at the Maiden Lane school which began with an 8 a.m. Mass celebrated by Father Donald Haycock, CSC, school chaplain, and ended with an 8 a.m. Sunday liturgy attended by more than 200 of Tom's friends and fellow students.

Tom's family and many friends had hoped to see him off on a pilgrimage to Lourdes, France, in the near future, but close friends said it was not believed that Tom would live to take the trip.

Mooney faculty members were moved by the solid, unostentatious piety of the students, one teacher said.

"In a time when youth is allegedly alienated by religion, the depth of faith and sacrifice exhibited by the participants was very edifying," the teacher added.

Madison High, coached by Don Lander, made the No. 9 spot last week in the weekly New York State Sports Writers Association football poll.

Aquinas, which was No. 11 the previous week, fell to honorable mention after its loss to McQuaid.

Auburn — Leo A. Pinckney, sports editor for the Citizen Advertiser, has been selected by the Christopher Columbus Commemorative Committee (CCCC) as its "Man of the Year".

Pinckney is being honored for his contribution to sports, civic and political affairs in Cayuga County at a dinner dance at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 13 at Springside Inn. Proceeds will be used for scholarships. Pinckney has been with the Citizen Ad-

vertiser for 30 years. He has been active in the March of Dimes campaign since 1948 and chairman for the past 10 years. He was instrumental in bringing pro-baseball to Auburn in 1958 and has been honored for his contributions to young people and sports.

Pinckney and his wife have four children and live at 168 E. Genesee St.

Thomas J. Sardino, Syracuse police chief and vice-president of the NYS Association of Police Chiefs will be the main speaker at the CCCC dinner.



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