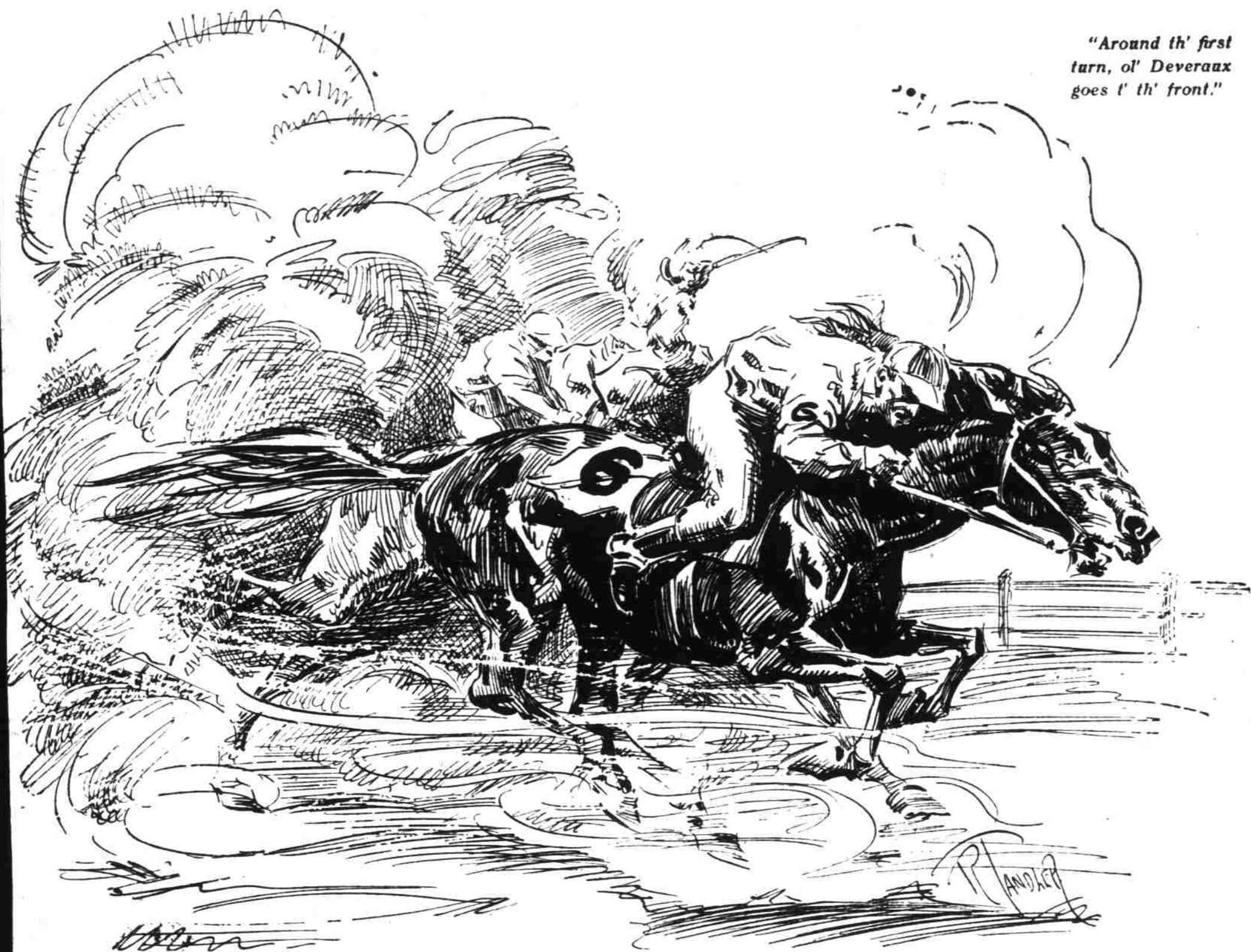


"Around th' first turn, ol' Deveraax goes t' th' front."



ch. He's like Foot in one way: he t keep money in his pocket. It burns legs, an' he's just got t' gamble. But resemblance don't go no further. Sam's there by th' half-mile pole in th' morn- with his little ol' trusty alarm clock in' off th' early workouts, before th' begins poundin' his ear. Them sure- owners don't put nothin' over that ain't wise t'; he knows when a hoss ready as well as th' guy that trains 'im. able is, he can't wait fer th' ones he ws is due; he's bettin' on what he ks has a chance in every race, an' try- make long shots win, at that.

Foot's strictly a favorite player. He spend no time pawin' over a dope, lookin' up past performances, either; takes th' bookies' figgers as gospel.

"These here bookies ain't crazy," he says. "They ain't givin' nothin' away. If the long shots has a chance t' win, they t' be long shots."

Sam argues:

"Th' ain't no one hoss so much better'n others in a big field that they got li- e t' make 'im even money; not with t' luck liable t' break against 'im."

"They're both right, I reckon. Them lies don't make a practice o' bein' itable—not while they're on th' block again, as Sam says, favorites gets about as often as they win. Near as t' figger it, th' books has all th' best, no matter what yuh bet on. I never o' no 'Home fer Indigent Bookmak-

ith which wise side dissertation I tily agreed, but hastened the rumi- Bay Hoss back to his muttons.

"Oh, yes. Well, as I says, Sam's got raux all prepped up fer this race. raux likes a mile an' a fast track. th' weather's been fine fer days. Th' t before, Sam's over here in 'Frisco sixty iron men sewed up safe in his rshirt. He's plannin' t' bet it all on loss next day, 'on th' nose'. He'd do o, fer when Sam thinks he's right, cuts no ice.

ust about 3 o'clock it starts t' rain.

"Merry" goes straight up! He knows Deveraax can't untrack hissef in th' mud, an' if it rains all night th' track'll be a sea by post time. He gets reckless an' sets in a stud poker game with Billy Lyons an' th' Rosebud Kid. It ain't half an hour till Sam's busted wide open, an' when he goes outside—it's quit rainin'!

"Merry" touts his horse t' everybody that'll listen t' 'im, but it ain't a bit o use; he's hollered 'wolf about his string so often that no one pays any attention t' 'im, an' th' next day all he's got t' bet is a measly five-case note. Johnny Humphrey gives 'im 300 t' 1 out o' friendship, an' is willin' t' take a marker fer more, but Sam won't make no finger bets. Deveraax ain't been entered fer a long time, an' his last out he couldn't beat a fat man. Th' chalk handlers soon has 'im around 300 all over th' ring, tryin' t' balance their books. Sam's bitin' chunks out o' th' paddock posts when Foot shows up:

"Hey, Foot!" Sam yells, grabbin' 'im like a gay-cat coppin' a handout. "Have you got any kale at all? This hoss o' mine—"

"Wait a minute!" Foot interrupts 'im. "Do you think he'll win?"

"Think he'll win!" says Sam, all excited. "I know he'll win. Why, Foot, he's th' biggest—"

"S'nuff!" yelps Niggerfoot. "That settles it. An' away he starts fer th' bettin' ring."

"Wait a minute!" Sam hollers, nailin' Foot. "I want in on this. I only got a finif bet, an' if you're goin' t' lay some one—"

"Lay some one!" Foot breaks in. "Say, Sam, I've been tryin' all day t' lay off o' some one." An' he explains th' fix he's in.

"I was just a-goin' t' put 'im on that hoss o' Lucky's, but since you like your beetle—that makes it a cinch fer 'im t' lose. I might as well give ol' Casey a ticket he'll show t' his grandchildren while I'm at it; I write that broad on Deveraax!" An' away he hustles t' get th' prevailin' odd-

"Yuh better not!" Sam yells. "Yuh'll have t' breeze, sure!"

"But Foot's gone. He rubs th' figgers off th' losin' favorite ticket he holds, an' fills it in with Deveraax at 400 t' 1! Some o' th' books has 'im as high as 450. I seen th' ticket, an' believe me, it's th' most imposin' piece o' pasteboard ever was wrote on a race track. All th' books that cut in at th' meetin' couldn't begin t' cash it at half th' face value!"

"The's quite a bunch o' us goes up into th' stand t' see what comes off, an' mebbe keep th' Irish boys from bitin' th' Foot t' pieces. A coupla 'Pinks' is stickin' around, too, t' stop any roughhouse that starts, fer all th' regulars has been tipped off, an' o' Cap Forrest knows the's somethin' doin'." Yuh can't fool that ol' bird—much!

"Just as th' hosses is paradin' past th' judges, Foot comes up. He looks sick. We don't blame 'im none, fer th' best he can look fer is t' be warned away from th' tracks fer a year or two. Ol' Casey has a grin a foot wide when he sees 'im."

"Had ye any throuble gettin' th' coin, lad?" he yips. Niggerfoot slides into th' end seat, next th' aisle!"

"Ssh!" he whispers. "Not so loud. Lissen! I been over t' th' stables. I know what's a-goin' t' win this race!"

"Do ye, so?" says Casey. "Slip me th' money Ol' won on th' last wan, an' Ol'll sind ye down t' make a small bet on yer ch'ice."

"Foot hands 'im th' ducat. Casey's friends, rubberin' over his shoulder, don't say a word; they can't speak. Neither can Casey. After one look at th' pasteboard he just closes one fist on it an' th' other on Foot. Foot takes a slant at Casey's face an' changes his prayer; from then on, he's pullin' fer Deveraax t' win!"

"Ol' Cap Forrest is standin' close, glarin' at th' Kid. That kind o' rough stuff is bad fer th' track, an' it ain't no boost fer th' 'Pinks,' neither. Still, yuh can't blame 'em; they can't go up t' a guy an' tell 'im t' beat it if they ain't got nothin' on 'im. They ain't never got th' goods on Foot—yet. Course, Cap's wise by this time, but

he can't do no good fer th' Jockey Club by tippin' Niggerfoot off t' Casey. He'll be hep soon enough. It won't help none t' get th' Kid all chewed up, neither; Cap's there t' stop riots, not start 'em." Foot automatically rules hissef off fer life, an' that's enough fer 'im.

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"It's a mile dash fer 3-year-ol's an' up- ward that ain't win at th' meetin'; with a big field—thirteen starters. When I finally take a look at th' bunch linin' up in front o' th' stand I see Deveraax millin' around there lookin' like a stake hoss. I says t' m'self: 'That ain't no 400 t' 1 shot; that ol' insee' is sure right, this time,' so I takes th' hunch t' go down an' put a pikin' bet on 'im t' show. When I get down there I finds I ain't th' only one that's got th' nudge. Looks like every sharpshooter on th' track has took a crack at 'im. He's been rubbed t' 40, 10 an' 4, an' I strings a ten-case note across th' board at them odds. Time I get back t' my place again Dwyer's got 'em off t' a swell start."

"Around th' first turn ol' Deveraax goes t' th' front. He's a good hoss that day, an' they don't never head 'im. He just backs in! Talk about noise; they never is a long shot wins that creates so much excitement. He's th' longest priced hoss that ever shows th' way home at Oak- land. All that gang is whoopin' an' laugh- in', an' yuh could 'a' heard Merriwether in 'Frisco. Compared t' th' Foot, though, Sam's a dummy. Believe me, that boy's rootin'! I hate t' think what would 'a' happened if Deveraax lost."

"Casey don't turn loose o' his holt, though. He ain't a-goin' t' take no more chances; he's a-goin' t' cash that ticket hissef, an' he takes Foot with 'im. Down th' stairs t' th' bettin' ring goes th' three tads, haulin' Foot an' near beatin' 'm t' death fer joy. Th' whole crowd follers t' see th' fun; even th' boob's is wise that somethin' unusual's stirrin' an' tags along t' find out what it is."

"This ticket's one o' George Rosen's, an' (Continued on Page 11)