How How-Lish Wampo Won His Race

East Oregonian Round-Up Souvenir Edition

A Real Story of How a Local Pinto Pony Vanquished a Thoroughbred

There have been many races in war, he concluded to know for him- saddles, pistols, knives and all kinds jected looking Indians, at the sight are both historic and romantic, for would compare, racing center, but it is doubtful if white men have, that it would be no two judges are elected—one a white staked so much, did not promise any there has ever been such a thrilling larm to cheat an "injun," no matter man and one Indian. But two are hope; while his competitor was stripand such a wonderful race as was by what means. run away back in the frontier epoch between a spirited and groomed thor- dians sleep when their eyes are open, starting point. The first horse to ed bridle, his whole bearing indicatoughbred from the east and a gentle specially just before daylight.

Meacham tells of the race in his in his place, he led his own out on better in this part of the race. ed limbs, that touched the ground book "Wigwam and Warpath" pub- the prairie and made a few trials of Indians are enthusiastic gamblers, with burnished steel, disdaining to called Lee's Encampment and now was able to distance the other. known as Meacham. Later he was the Cayuses, and Joe Crabbe, the ception was complete.

Umatilla is known to be a great bled, groomed, shod or grain fed.

The prevailing idea that they are ered, without saddle or bridle, or country for horses. I doubt if any.

Their system of training differs from always cool and stoical is not coranything save a small hair rope on where on the continent there can be a white man's very much. After a found horses of greater speed or pow- race is agreed upon, the animal is ed at horse races, but not generally looking.

horses. He is a stout built man, has good condition, they lead him out to lows and with great dignity come up ances unconscious that anything undark complexion, wears his hair just grass, an hour or so, each day and with the money to bet. "Capable of usual was expected. clear of his shoulders, and is now at night fall they run him over the dissembling," I should think they past middle age (about 1871). He course. sporting man in the country.

the express purpose. He made known his speed. Sure enough, he fell into in his eye, or other sign that he knew his desire, and he, too, soon found the trap that How-lish-wam-po set race to be run over the Indian race- The fame of this wonderful winner course, which was located on the had spread far and wide, as did the bottom lands of the Umatilla river news of the approaching contest. and one-half miles in length.

was planted, round which the racers and surrounding country had taken were to turn, and come back to the in the important affair. starting point, making a distance of . The race course which I have de-

this story) the owner of the imported of from fifty to one hundred feet. horse, had been present at a race Long before the time for the race, months previous, when How-lish- carriages, buggles, wagons and horses wam-po had permitted his horse to might be seen standing on the hills be beaten; and as he had measured or driving over the green sward. the distance, marked the time, and while a great motley crowd, on foot subsequently tested the speed of his and on horseback. horse with the winner on that occasion, he, of course, had a "dead dress-paints, feathers, long hair, thing."

erything is fair in gambling as in care of Indian boys. Coats, blankets,

and ugle little pinto Indian pony.

Sending a careful trusty man to is made of the start, each possible pending on his shrewdness to get the arched neck, sleep coat, and polish-better in this part of the race.

The Indian horses are never sta- against them, from pride. tled to a stake or tree and if he is until the race begins. While the pre-How-lish-wampo, chief of the Cay- fat, they starve him down, giving him liminaries are being arranged, they boy, with head close shaved, a blanuses, is the owner of several thousand only water. If, however, he is in are serious, even solemn looking fel-

is the owner of a horse with which In this instance, the half brother he has challenged any and every was tied up and put in training and left unguarded, with the hope that handfuls of twenties. One could not One party imported a horse for Crabb would steal him out, and try have detected the slightest twinkle opportunity for an investment. The for him. The real race horse was and run him secretly. Cool, calm, preliminaries were arranged, and the miles away, under proper training, earnest as if he were saying mass,

(just south of the present site of the When the morning agreed upon aragency), smooth level turf, over two rived, the grounds leading to the valley of Umatilla gave full proof of the At one end of the course a post interest of the people of Pendleton

a little over five miles and a quar- scribed was parallel with a low range of grassy hills, that rose by gentle Joe Crab (mentioned elsewhere in slopes from the valley to an altitude

The Indians were in their gala-day red blankets; in fact it was a dress The white men came with groom parade for white and red men, too.

and riders, baking a camp near the The manner of betting at an Indian Indian villege, standing guard over race differs somewhat from affairs his own horse to prevent accident. of the kind among white men. One The Indians were not so careful of man is selected as a stake holder for their own horse; at least Joe Crab all moneys. Horses that are waged thought they were not and since ev- are tied together and put under the

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and around Pendleton, races which self how the speed of the two horses of personal effects, are thrown into of their faces, now full of anxiety; a common heap and tied together. and, certainly, the pinto, who stood in the early days this was a great He thought, as thousands of other As the starting hour approaches, so unconcerned, on which they had

required, since the horses run out, ped of his blanket, disclosing a nice There is a general belief that In- turn the stake, and come back to the little jockey saddle, and silver mountget home is the winner. No account ing his superiority

lished in 1875. Mr. Meacham settled speed with the two. The result was and have a certain kind of pride, and stand still, while his gayly dressed in this county in 1863 at a place satisfactory. He found hat his horse to do them justice, honor, as well, in rider, with white pants tucked into conducting their races. No disputes embellished boots with silver-plated How-lish-wam-po, was the owner ever arise among themselves, and spurs; on his head a blue cap, and appointed superitnendent of Indian of two horses very nearly alike, one seldom with white men, growing out with crimson jacket, was being affairs for Oregon. Here is his story the racer, the other half brother to of misunderstandings, either about mounted, requiring two or three exof the famous race between the him but not so fleet. They were starting or the outcome. They take perts to assist, so restless was the horses of How-lish-wam-po, chief of "pinto"-spotted horses, so the de- sides with their own people always. fine thoroughbred to throw dirt into and bet when the chances are the eyes of the sleepy-looking Indian

> The prevailing idea that they are ered, without saddle or bridle, or were, from the cool face of How-lishwam-po, when the money is being counted out by the hundreds in twenty dollar gold pieces, not a few, but that Joe Crabb had stolen his horse the chieftain came up and handed his money to the stake-holder, while numeous bets were being arranged between the other Indians and white men. Horses were wagered and tied together, and led away. Many a fellow had brought extras with him, for the express purpose of gambling, expecting of course to take home twice the number in the evening.

> Crabb had confided his secret about his stolen run to a few friends, in his right a small bundle of dried and advised them to go in, and win all the horses they wanted. There was no danger; he knew what he was talking about. He had the Indian's tiful animated racer. His eyes horse's speed by time, and also by

> This thing teaked out and was communicated from one to another. Some pretty good men who were not his feet, slowly at first, but faster and accustomed to betting, became anx- more impatient the moment it was lous to win a pony or two and laid intimated he might go. And the othwagers with the Indians.

> The trick that Crabb had played cape, his masters maneuvoring for the was finally made known to How- advantage, lish-wam-po. He and his people were cooled down, and seemed anx- horse alone as the chief gave him lous to have the race come off be- quiet signs. Three times had they fore more betting was done.

> This made the white men more start. Crabb seemed now very soanxious and they urged, boosted and licitous about the race. I think, ridiculed, until, in manifest despera- probably, he had by this time found tion, the Indians began to bet again, the "hornet in his hat;" at all events and the noble white man generously he was pale, and his rider exhibited took advantage of the Indian's hot signs of uneasine blood, and forced him to make many At length thinking to take what

> bets that he appeared to shun. The horses were brought out to said, "Ready"—"Go," said the little start, and while the imported horse Indian boy; and away went twenty of Carbb's looked every inch a racer, thousand dollars in the heels of the the other stood with head down, a Indian horse, twenty feet ahead berough, hard looking, uncouth brute, fore the other crossed the mark, makthat appeared then to be a cross between ox and horse.

The presence and appearance of the horses were the signal for another charge on the Indians, and a few white friends they had, who, having learned from the chief the truth of Crabb's trick, came in sympathy for the Indian, to his rescue. Money, coats, hats, saddles, pistols, pocket knives, cattle, horses and all kinds of property, were staked on

The Indians in their apparent desperation, drove up another band of ponies, and in madness wagered them

Those of my readers who are accustomed to exhibitions around "fair grounds" on days of "trials of speed," may have some idea of the scene 1 am trying to describe, except that few of them have ever seen so many horses tled together, and so large a pile of coats, blankets and saddles, as were

staked upon this occasion, When the final starting time came, a pure minded, innocent man would have felt great pity for the poor, de-

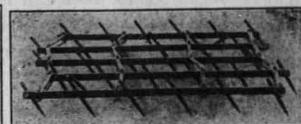
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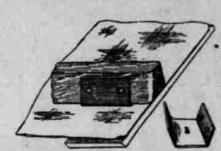


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(Continued on page 15.)

His thin nostrils, pointed ears, and

horse, which stood unmoved, uncov-

On his right stood the little Indian

The other rider's horse was mak-

ing furious plunges to get away.

really. Indeed things were going very

much to the satisfaction of that dis-

He was willing to see the other

man's horse chafe and fret-the more

the better; and he cared nothing for

the sponge that was used to moisten

Look away down the long line of

white men and Indians; and on the

low hills above, see the crowd eager

The chief gives a quiet signal to

the Indian boy. The blanket drop-

ped from the boy's shoulders, and a

yellow skinned, gaunt, looking sprite

bestrode the Indian horse, holding

in his left hand the hair rope, that

was to serve him for a bridle, and

Presto! The stupid looking brute

is instantly transformed into a beau-

seemed almost human. His ears did

not droop now, but by their quick

alternate motion gave signs of readi-

ness, together with the stamping if

er was making repeated efforts to es-

The little Indian boy managed his

come up to the scratch without a

western sportsmen call a "buige," he

the mouth of the great racer.

to witness the first jump.

willows.

tinguished individual.

How-lish-wam-po was in no hurry,

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