

ELKRIDGE, KENT MILLER'S CAMDEN TRAINED HORSE, IS TOP STEEPLECHASER FOR 1948

**"Old Elk" Takes Money
Honors For All Time From
Jolly Roger. Romance In
Story.**

By Ben W. Heath
To many of those who gathered at Delaware Park last Friday for the \$10,000 added Indian River Steeplechase classic, it appeared to be the same old story.

Kent Miller, Camden horseman, was sending old Elkridge out again when it should have been his younger stable mate War Battle. Talk was rife that Miller was foot-holding in repeatedly giving the ten-year-old campaigner the nod over

Battlehip's famous son in the big stakes which brought out the best in the game.

They knew it was being done in each instance just to give the aging warrior one more chance to clip the all-time steeplechase money winning record held by Jolly Roger. Perhaps he was, for undoubtedly War Battle could have won in several cases, but to a few who knew and understand this great combination of man and horse it was hardly that.

When Elkridge romped across the finish line two lengths in front of Tourist List and a field of fine steeplechasers many years his junior, he became the only horse to have won the classic three times, and more important to Elkridge

and his boss, he definitely established himself in turfdom's hall of fame by taking over the coveted spot held by Jolly Roger for so many years. After six years of running against the finest horses that are asked to go over jumps, during which he annexed the mythical title of "Steeplechaser of the Year" two times, once in 1942, and again in 1946, the aged son of Mate, more affectionately referred to as "Old Elk," earned over \$155,000 and his right to the title which his ever faithful owner-trainer had wanted for him most of all.

Elkridge has always been a proud winner and this was no exception. He strutted to the winner's circle for the presentation. Miller, as usual, looked bewildered and frightened. But when he got back to the barn he showed the old man that he really meant it. He put his arms around that handsome champion's head and had a darned good cry—just for old times sake. His ever-faithful stable boy, George, Miller treats him more like a partner, leaning on his pitchfork and dabbed at his eyes a little too.

Very shortly the telephone rang down in Cool Springs plantation, near Camden, where Theodora Miller and four little Millers anxiously awaited the news of the Indian River.

When Kent Miller finished his report to them, they too, sat down, had a good cry, and felt good all over.

The real story of Kent Miller and Elkridge is one about which many may know the ending but not the beginning. Miller and his famous horse began their racing careers almost simultaneously. During a stay in Aiken in 1940, Miller was befriended by the grand old man of Steeplechasing, the late

Thomas Hitchcock, Sr. After watching the old master at his work for several weeks, he decided to learn something about it himself. He progressed fairly well in the more or less secretive, self-taught jumping program deep in the woods around Aiken, but it wasn't until the summer of 1941 when he entered and won a brush race out in Kentucky, riding a friend's horse, by the way—that he gave serious thoughts to the business of training his own jumpers.

He toyed with the idea consistently for several weeks after that race and got as far as deciding that if he did go into it, it would be with a Hitchcock horse. Then came the sad news of old Tommy's death and the announcement of the intended sale of his horses at Pimlico in October. Miller made up his mind in a hurry and on his way east he decided to bid on a horse named Bridlespur, which he had seen, training the previous winter. When he arrived at Pimlico he learned that Bridlespur had been the victim of a bad fall and was no longer the horse he had given promise of being.

So it was that fate brought Miller and Elkridge together and the unbeatable team was in the making. Elkridge had made his first start as a chaser only two months before the auction and in spite of the fact that he had run all over the track in that race, Miller felt that he had the makings of a games

champion and the little bay son of Mate went to work for the Kentuckian.

To those who follow steeplechasing the rest of the story is an open book. His first two starts were in stiff competition, the Jarvis Spencer at Pimlico and the International in New York. Soundly beaten in both, Miller decided the youngster was being brought along too fast, so his next was an allowance race at Belmont. He came through for the pink and lavender in great style in this one and Miller has been a proud owner from that day to this. A quick succession of wins in the big stakes brought him the Racing Form's "Best Steeplechaser" award in his first year of the big time and he has been a consistently great performer ever since.

When asked if he would continue to run the old fellow, Miller is quick to reply that Elkridge can run as long as he tells him he wants to, but ten to one says this great performer, who has never as much as gone to his knees in over six years of jumping, will begin to have a soft life from now on.

In Seventh Place

The Providence team of the New England league which did its spring training in Camden is now in seventh place in the league standing. It has won 31 and lost 55 that he had the makings of a games

Scott Track Is Reworked For 1949 Training

The Marion duPont Scott mile race track, located in the north-west part of this city and ranked as one of the finest tracks in this part of the country is being reworked and given a general reconditioning.

The work is being done by the Gene Moseley Construction company of this city and will require several weeks more before being completed.

Contractor Moseley has motor graders, pneumatic rollers, overhead loaders and a large fleet of trucks in operation at the track. The surface of the track, after being reworked, is to be covered with new soil.

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

All parties indebted to the estate of B. B. Bowen are hereby notified to make payment to the undersigned, and all parties, if any, having claims against the said estate will present them likewise, duly attested, within the time prescribed by law.

THEODORE BOWEN
Administrator
Camden, S. C., July 25, 1948.

President Aleman has issued orders to speed up work on highway.

FINAL DISCHARGE
Notice is hereby given that on month from this date, on August 18, 1948, A. M. Bralston will make to the Probate Court of Kershaw County his final return as Administrator c.t.a. of the estate of Eleanor N. Cantey, deceased, and on the same date he will apply to the said Court for a final discharge as said Administrator c.t.a.

N. C. ARNETT
Judge of Probate
Camden, S. C., July 14, 1948.

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I take this opportunity to extend to the employers of members of Battery B 113 AAA my thanks and the thanks of all my men for their cooperation and courtesy in permitting the men to attend the encampment at Camp Stewart, Ga.

**ROBERT DAVID, Capt.
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