

ELMER E. SMATHERS

Owner of Major Delmar Talks of Horse Racing.

LOVES THE ANIMALS

Something of His and His Horses' Successes.

'Why have I invested so much money in race horses? Because I love a good horse. There is something about a great horse that appeals to me. There is a charm in his every movement and I love to be near him. To me there is no joy more to me than to see a well-contested race between two fine horses.'

When Elmer E. Smathers, owner of Major Delmar, and Major Delmar, entered these words at the Morris Park race track recently a light came into his eyes and an expression on his face that told as plainly as words how near a great horse is to his heart. Mr. Smathers' voice is soft and mild and there was even more tenderness when he spoke of his horses. Standing on the green sward of the clubhouse lawn Mr. Smathers looked the well-known horseman and breeder, as well as the horseman, amateur rehusman and plunger.

During the past two years he has forced to the front an era of American representative sportsmen. There is scarcely a sport that he is not more or less interested in. But horses and horse-racing stand first with him. He likes dogs and automobiles, but he loves horses.

As at horseman he ranks with W. C. Whitney, August Belmont, T. W. Lawson and James R. Keene. What Foxhall P. Keene is to the running turf—the crack gentleman jockey—Mr. Smathers is to light-harness racing. He is one of the best amateur reinmen in the United States. Many road drivers call him the boss of the Speedway. He is like Ed Geary, the famous trotting driver, much as he has the same delicate touch on the reins, cool judgment, and method and style of handling his horse. He usually allows his opponent to cut out the pace, and then in the final furlong of the contest utilizes his horse's speed to secure the decision. There is method in his actions in allowing his rival to go to the front. He line this advantage to see what the other fellow is doing, while the front man can only guess at what his opponent is up to in the rear. Then, too, he is aware of the fact that the pace-maker acts as a wind-break for him, and in the act created by the leader he is willing to remain until such time as the pace-maker is exhausted and the winning finish can be made.

It is through his horses and heavy wagers on the turf that Smathers has come prominently to the front. But he is not only a horseman and plunger—he is a thorough business man as well. As a matter of fact horse racing is merely a side issue with him and his work for his race track. That he makes the turf his part of his business makes the fact that he has been in the oil business all his life, and is today one of the largest individual oil producers in the world. He is interested in the production of oil from Kansas, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and the Ohio basins.

Mr. Smathers' success in business and on the turf is due to one thing—hard work. Whatever he enters into, whether it be business or pleasure, he gives it his attention and heart. He has his hand on the pulse of the oil business, and does not look to be more than thirty-five years old. He is about 5 feet 8 inches in height, with slender physique. His face is white and bloodless and has that ashy hue peculiar to the student who sits up many hours burning the midnight oil. A small black mustache covers his upper lip and his raven black brows his hair. His face sets away sharply to the chin, which is pointed. It is the face of a forceful man—strong, powerful, masterful. His hands are strong, and the wrists denote hidden strength and the ability to curb any disposition on the part of a fractious horse for a wild flight of speed.

Mr. Smathers' voice is like chest-churn. It is as soft and soothing as that of a young girl of sixteen. The inflection of his sentences are well modulated. He was never known to raise his voice to a high pitch. His temperament, friends say, is much like his voice. Come speed track or lead back, he is always the same—cool, collected and pleasant. His courteous manner and pleasant address to all, whether they be personal friends or strangers, have won him many admirers. These are the personal characteristics of E. E. Smathers.

la Stokes. Thomas W. Lawson, the Boston millionaire, had his great trotter Boralma entered for that event and the horse was favorite. While some of the heavy speculators were purchasing 2000 shares, announced in the ring that he would be 2000 on the field at even money. This declaration caused a commotion. The backers of Boralma met and consulted, and finally decided to accept the bet. Several of them contributed the amount won, and the wager was made. Boralma won, but Smathers was apparently concerned by the loss, and talked and chattered with his friends as if the incident was not worth remembering. A year later he had his revenge by defeating Boralma with his horse Lord Derby and winning \$50,000 in stakes and bets.

When this sportsman believes a horse can win there is practically no limit to his confidence. On any horse that he owns and which he believes can defeat his opponent he will bet a fortune. He is without question the greatest plunger of the era—a turf speculator without comparison. Such noted betters as 'Pittsburgh Phil', John Ryan, John A. Drake, M. F. Dwyer and 'Plunger' Walton are of a minor class. When M. F. Dwyer bet \$50,000 to win \$7,000 on Joe Cotton at Sheepshead Bay the wager was heralded broadcast throughout the continent and Mr. Dwyer's marvellous control of his countenance and feelings when the horse won by a short head was duly commented upon. But this wager was a piker's bet when compared to the \$38,000 that Smathers bet on his Lord Derby last summer against Boralma. He bet this enormous sum to win \$45,000, as Lord Derby was a hot favorite at the average odds of 3 to 10.

Before the match was started Smathers called the auctioneer of the pools aside and told him that he would take Lord Derby in every pool made on the match. There were many backers of Boralma, and as fast as they made an offer the bid was accepted and the Lord Derby end of the water covered in Smathers' name. The auctioneer, however, appeared to swing on a swivel, so fast were the bets called off, and the fingers of the clerks became numb from recording the bets. At the close of the transaction when the total was footed up it was found that Smathers had bet \$38,000 against \$39,000. It is a common sight to see him walk calmly into the betting ring of a race track and bet from \$5,000 to \$10,000 on a race. On his own horses he frequently places wagers of \$2,500 and \$3,000.

It is a common sight to see him walk calmly into the betting ring of a race track and bet from \$5,000 to \$10,000 on a race. On his own horses he frequently places wagers of \$2,500 and \$3,000. Much depends on the odds offered. He does not confine himself to bets on his favorites, but accepts readily all kinds of prices offered from 1 to 12 and 15 to 1. His largest winnings this year were made on his thoroughbred McChesney, when the great son of MacDuff won the Harlem Handicap early this spring. McChesney's victory netted him \$30,000. 'Kiki' Weller, the Chicago bookmaker, handed over to him after the race a check which called for \$22,500—the largest check ever paid to an individual in settlement of a bet made on a race. The remainder of the \$30,000 was split up among several other bookmakers. After the judges had declared McChesney the winner of this event he celebrated the result by prodigal generosity to the trainer, jockey and each of the horses. To Sam Hilliard he gave \$2,500 and to Charlie Gray, the jockey, \$2,000. To the stable foreman he gave \$500. To David, the man who 'rubs' McChesney, 500, and to the exercise lad who rode the horse in the gallop, \$100.

Mr. Smathers owns nearly fifty horses of all descriptions, including thoroughbred trotters, pacers, hackneys, colts, draft and carriage horses. He was associated with the light harness horses long before his advent among the thoroughbreds. From the very first, one idea prevailed in his mind about horses—to secure the best and fastest that money could buy. He has adhered to this view from the beginning to the end of his purchases. No horse is too good for him, and no price too high. He recently paid \$40,000 for Major Delmar, the champion trotter, who recently turned a mile in two minutes. During the early months of last winter he started the thoroughbred world in purchasing McChesney while he was racing at New Orleans for \$30,000. The next day he added Dick Bernard, a two-year-old, to his string on payment of \$20,000. These two horses formed the nucleus of his thoroughbred racing stable.

It was with Dick Bernard that he made his first attempt for fame on the turf. In his last season the colt started at New Orleans and won the Premier Stakes. Mr. Smathers did not witness his horse's success, but he sent a large commission to the ring and more than won the colt out first time. Although he has many good horses, there is one dear to his memory. It was Sammie, the first good horse that he ever owned.

Simmie had a record of 2:16 and in Mr. Smathers' words drove him on to the leads around Pittsburgh. He was a wonder. This horse's memory will live long in Mr. Smathers' heart.

In a short space of two months, Billy Buck has captured \$30,000 in stakes. His best record in contests is 2:32, but viceroy horsemen predict for him that he will break the two minute mark in two years. Smathers purchased Major Delmar in order to compete with C. K. G. Hillings, the owner and trainer of the champion mare, on the Speedway. He and Hillings are old rivals for the Speedway honors. When Lou Dillon smashed all records by negotiating a mile in two minutes Smathers made up his mind that Major Delmar was the only horse that could compete with her and he purchased that horse for \$40,000. He had scarcely bought her when Major Delmar equaled Lou Dillon's mark.

The next appearance of Major Delmar in public will be for the sold cup at Memphis. This is a trophy for amateur reinmen and Smathers has set his heart on winning it. Speaking about his driving experiences Smathers said: 'I think the most exciting brush I ever had on the Speedway was three years ago when I drove Alice Barrow against The Monk. The brush you will remember, was never satisfactorily decided. I have always believed that I was entitled to the victory, while the other side still maintains that The Monk won. However, it was for me the most interesting and exciting brush in which I ever took part.'

Railroad Time Table

Table with columns for destination (Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Ry., Kansas City & Chicago, etc.), departure times, and arrival times.

Table for Frisco System, East-Bound, listing destinations like Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe with departure and arrival times.

Table for Wichita and Western, listing destinations like Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe with departure and arrival times.

Table for Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, listing destinations like Chicago, St. Louis, and Kansas City with departure and arrival times.

Table for Missouri Pacific Railway, listing destinations like Kansas City, St. Louis, and Springfield with departure and arrival times.

Table for The Chectow Route, listing destinations like Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe with departure and arrival times.

Table for The Denver, Elgin and Gules R. R., listing destinations like Denver, Elgin, and Gules with departure and arrival times.

Table for Steamship Tickets to All Points on the Globe, listing destinations like London, New York, and San Francisco.

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