

A Dream Finish

It would be churlish to fault any of the jockeys whose mounts figured in the most thrilling photo-finish of a Derby held anywhere in India, nay, in the whole world. The Bombay commentator lost his breath when reading the last phase of the Indian Derby at Mahaluxmi. Even before he could say, "it's Track Lightning" came "it's Christoffe", "Furioso has taken over", "Happy Landing is coming on".

If even to listeners at the intervenee betting centres the excitement was too much, how much more would it have been to those who were privileged to witness this out-of-the world finish in a Derby! An Old Bombayite would say, "it's THE DERBY sir, here. The others.....". He is entitled to this opinion.

Naturally, after Track Lightning was nearly pipped by Christoffe some would say that Barclay could have waited still more, because Track Lightning has a tendency to stop once he hits the front. Others would say that Craine should have set on his final run on Christoffe a little earlier. To a lesser degree, criticism might be made of Kinane and Jagdesh, who were astride Happy Landing and Furioso — the least fancied of the four.

This race proved that in a classic where all horses are tuned up to the peak of form he would be a rash prophet who dogmatically asserts the chances of a particular contender. The closeness of the result might tempt the owners of seemingly no-chance horses to leave their wards in.

The latest Indian Derby would have given the biggest boost to the forthcoming Invitation at Guindy next month. All four horses might have to be nominated by Bombay. Add to the list Potential Champion, winner of the Indian Oaks. The other classic champion, Sovereign Crown, from the formidable Byramji's stable who is awaiting the signal at Bangalore,

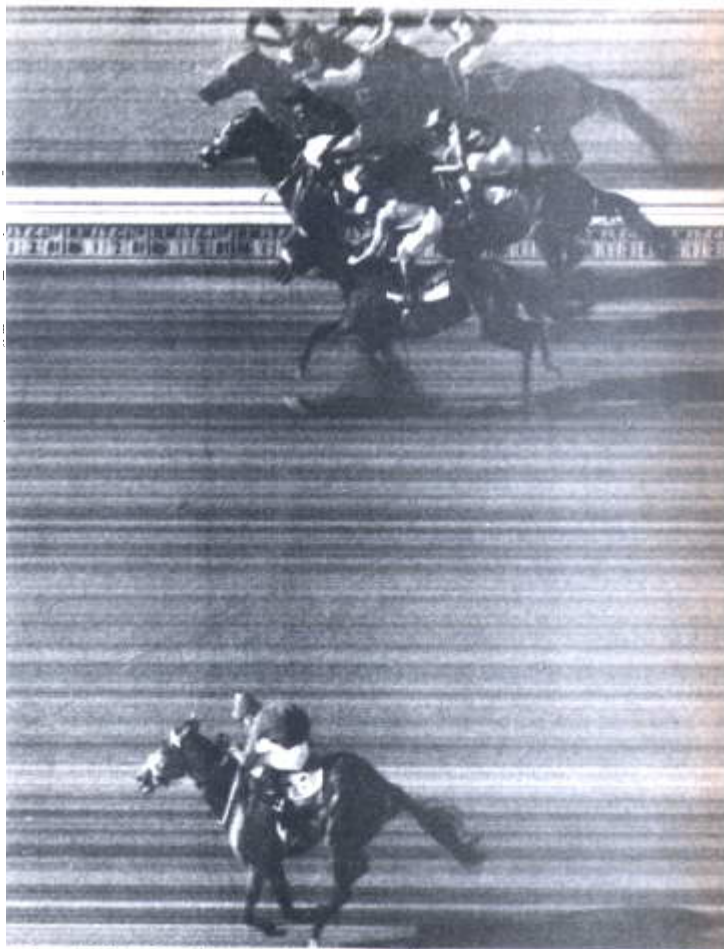
should add interest to the race.

Maybe for the Guindyites there is no horse to root for. But on this account the Invitation (March 8) should not go without a Madras representative. Though their horses' form might have already been exposed there is no knowing why they shouldn't fare differently in a race that might be run differently.

On March 7, the newly-instituted Stayers Cup — the Madras Race Club has pleaded with other sister turf clubs that this new race should become a permanent feature in the Invitation-eve programme — might after all see a Madras horse turning up a decisive winner. Own Opinion won the Queen Elizabeth II Cup over 2,800 m at Calcutta with ridiculous ease. Last year his bracketmate, Red Chieftan, scored in this prestigious race for stayers. With only 200 metres to go Own Opinion will not be hard put to it to get the extended trip and give some consolation to the local patrons (even if this sounds a little parochial) unless that champion schooler Byramji produces another 'un to down the Madras colours again.

Everynsky has beaten the whole lot over longer trips. But whether he has the ability to stay better than Own Opinion over the longest trip of Indian racing remains to be seen. In his last run at Guindy (South India Derby), Commissar gave the impression of a good stayer. But his Mahaluxmi's performance takes it away.

On the day Own Opinion won the Queen Elizabeth II Cup there was further cheerful news for Madras owners whose 3-year-old, Indra (Goldbricker-Anne Boleyn) won her second important race for first season horses at Calcutta. Quite unfancied she claimed the Champagne Stakes. In December she won the Calcutta Racehorse Owners Society Cup, a valuable sweepstakes for 2-y-o. The Madras Race Club



Track Lightning (foreground) wins the Indian Derby from Christoffe (rails) Happy Landing and Furioso (No.7), in one of the most stirring finishes of a classic. Three heads separated the first four horses. Track Lightning, an odds-on favourite, managed to win the prize despite shifting out to the extreme outside during the last phase of the Derby battle.

had arranged to relay commentary of both the Queen Elizabeth Cup II and Champagne Stakes races. This did not disrupt the commentary of either Bangalore or Hyderabad races. The timings were different.

The final result might have justified the expenses the MRC incurred towards relaying these two races. Incidentally the Champagne Stakes outcome might have cheered the hearts of the Madras owners who bought a full brother to Indra at the MRC auction sales last month at Guindy for a price of Rs. 1,40,000.

Ripples' Ripple

It is most unfortunate that after making a winning debut (the following descriptive by a race scribe may also be interesting: Last off and last till 600 to be 2nd last wide into the straight, came up fast from distance wearing down Port of Call won), Ripples should

have been disqualified following his failure in a dope test. His trainer, D. P. Pandole has been suspended. A further enquiry has been ordered into the circumstances under which the colt was doped.

Cases are known of older horses having been doped. But that in his very first race he should have been subjected to this unwholesome manner of winning makes it all the more despicable. What a dope is may be difficult to define. But the authorities having come to the conclusion that the colt was doped. The matter should rest there. There is no denying that those indulging in such acts should be punished ruthlessly. Two years ago at the Mysore season in the 2,000 Guineas, Well Connected was found to have been doped and the prize was later awarded to second placed Nicolette.

Candidus.

Adenwalla Deserves a Medal

MERE words can never describe the thrill and excitement witnessed by the huge crowd in the final moments of the running of the Indian Derby of 1981 at the Mahalaxmi race course last Sunday. The suspense did not end here but actually mounted for the next minutes till the judge gave his verdict which had a fairy tale ending. All one heard was No. 6. The rest was drowned in the roar of approval from the crowd.

Track Lightning, the half-money public favourite, won from Christoffe, Happy Landing and Furioso, all four being separated by a head each in the excellent time of 2.35-3/5s.

Track Lightning owned by the Khataus, saddled by Tassi and ridden — should I say, rather in a hurry — by Sandy Barclay was bred by Mrs. Mehra at the Usha Stud and gave the owner, trainer and jockey their first ever Indian Derby victory.

As the gates opened Mayapan led the Derby field, followed by Christoffe, Furioso, Happy Landing, Commissar, Moment To Moment, Track Lightning (who tripped soon after the start) with Valorosky last. The same order remained as the field negotiated the Hornby Vellard turn approaching the 2,000m mark. The pace then quickened and Mayapan held a two lengths lead over Christoffe on the outside and Furioso on the rails. Six lengths further behind came Happy Landing followed by Commissar, Track Lightning and Moment To Moment as the field passed the 1,600m post.

At the 1,200m, Craine made a forward move on Christoffe who was on the girths of the leader Mayapan. Furioso was in the third place with Jagdesh working hard on him. Kinane still sitting tight on Happy Landing in the fourth place, with Shinde on Commissar and Barclay on Track Lightning driving their mounts and not wanting to give Christoffe too much of a lead. As the field negotiated the home turn Christoffe was in front followed by Mayapan, Furioso, Track Lightning who had im-

proved rapidly, Commissar, Happy Landing and Moment To Moment.

At the 400m post Barclay rode Track Lightning flat out under whip to go into a two lengths lead over Christoffe followed by Furioso, Mayapan, Commissar, Moment To Moment and Happy Landing.

Just as the supporters of Track Lightning were getting ready to count the number of lengths their champion would win by, the complexion of the race changed completely within a few seconds. Track Lightning whose burst of speed was utilised too soon by Barclay began to shorten his strides and veer out under pressure, with Christoffe on the rails creeping up on the favourite. Furioso closing in on the front pair and Happy Landing moving fastest of them all and gaining ground on the trio in front.

A 100m from the post it was any one's race with Barclay riding Track Lightning flat out very close to the sand track, with Christoffe driven and whipped relentlessly by Craine inches behind; Furioso, with Jagdesh riding at his best, hardly a neck behind Christoffe and Happy Landing two lengths behind Furioso but moving very fast and gaining ground with every stride. Fifty metres from the post it was difficult to judge whether Track Lightning or Christoffe was ahead with Happy Landing about to overtake Furioso and Kinane straining every nerve to get there first.

Track Lightning lasted out to win by a head from Christoffe, with Happy Landing who was moving the fastest at the finish another head away third and Furioso a similar distance away fourth. Moment To Moment was 5th, Mayapan 6th, Commissar 7th and Valorosky last.

The thrill and excitement that took place over the last 200 metres has never before been witnessed in any classic at Mahalaxmi.

To Byramji goes the signal honour of training yet another Indian Derby winner. He kept Track Lightning in

top fettle after winning the South India Derby on 14th January, to claim the Blue Ribband of the Indian Turf. Barclay for once timed his effort a bit too early. Seeing Christoffe way in front of him at the 800m post, Barclay put the Lightning in top gear with the result that he began to shorten his strides midway up the straight. However Barclay showed his class by allowing Track Lightning to drift out instead of fighting with him, which may have cost him the race.

Bal Lagad who is a man of few words, trained Christoffe to the minute and had him looking a picture of fitness in the paddock. He ran a great race to just knuckle under by a whisker. Many turfites faulted Craine for chasing Mayapan from the 1,200m post. I do not subscribe to that view. Christoffe is a solid stayer who lacks the speed of Track Lightning inside the distance. So it was wise of Craine to have taken a long lead over Track Lightning. Craine rode a copy book race on the Western India horse.

However, if honour had to be bestowed on one individual for the Indian Derby 1981 I would unhesitatingly place it on the shoulder of Dady Adenwalla who trains Happy Landing. After winning the Peggy Banatwala Cup from Furioso and Christoffe last year Happy Landing went dry. He came right again in Bangalore, but on the eve of the Bangalore Derby he developed a high temperature leading to his last minute withdrawal from that event. This virus fever that Happy Landing developed in Bangalore kept recurring time and again, keeping him out of work for nearly three months with the result that Happy Landing was on the verge of death in mid-September. After the infection was gone, Adenwalla brought him up very gradually with but one aim — the Indian Derby.

He ran his first race on the last day at Pune in late November; won subsequently in Bombay, ran a disappointing Guineas, a good third in the Rula and showed a lot of improvement when cantering away with the Aga Khan's Cup. To Adenwalla goes the credit of bringing Happy Landing to his peak on Derby Day in spite of his grave illness some months back. Kinane rode a great race on him and nearly made Adenwalla's dream come true.

The honours for the Indian Derby of 1981 can best be summed up by the fitting tribute paid to Adenwalla by Dr. Farrakh Wadia who bred Happy Landing at his Yeravada stud — in the unsaddling enclosure immediately after the Indian Derby "if I had a medal I would surely pin it on you".

Young Sundeep Mangalorkar who had been cooling his heels on the sidelines after his licence was suspended till Feb. 1, came back with a vengeance to score a grand treble with three well-backed horses. Trainer S. S. Shah also distinguished himself with a double whereas Shinde was the only jockey to score a brace.

Dilemma was too good for Subetti in the opening event of the day, when winning much easier than the official verdict of 1-1/4 lengths. Dilemma who was looking extremely well in the parade is certain to score again on promotion.

Mah Noor who had run an improveable second to Deepall earlier in the

Khartoum Plate from a mediocre lot of V-A horses.

Vigoroso who was taken on a start-to-finish mission by Aslam Kader, appeared beat at the 400 metres post when both Minsky in the middle and Divine Gift on the outside overtook him. Under full whip Vigoroso made the most of his light impost to come back with a second wind to score by 1-1/4 lengths from Divine Gift with Minsky a close third. Sporting Tradition ran an improveable fourth.

With The Wind scored her second consecutive win when annexing the Canny Scot Plate at the expense of Rebel Lass who finished 3/4 length behind the winner. Bruce Lee lost his chance at the gate and appears to have gone sour and Mrinalini disappointed by finishing a poor fourth.

Bee Heaven looked a winner a long way from home to claim the rich D'Avoine Trophy from Amir-Ul-Mulk, who had a rough passage up the straight. The runner-up, Amir-Ul-Mulk, needs to be followed from now on, as he is on the upward trend. Trinity College ran well below expectations and should be given one more chance.

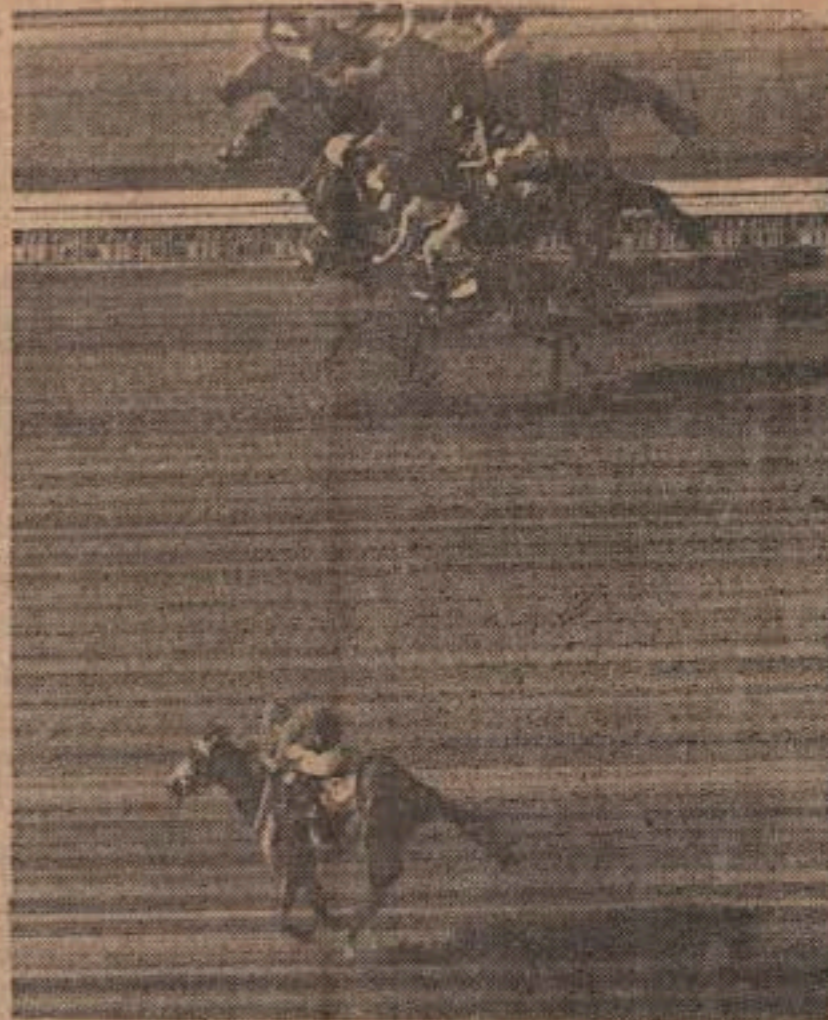
Royal Strides carried his feather weight to victory in the Royal Domain Plate for V-A horses over 1,200 metres. Black Fury who finished third after his jockey Bhimrao sat still on him all the way up the straight would have certainly won if his jockey had only loosened his strangle hold on him. Bhimrao has rightly incurred the displeasure of the Stewards.

A small and uneventful card was down for decision on Friday, 30th January.

Gold Goddess won the opening event of the day, thanks to Craine's lethargy on the second-placed Knight Commander. When the odds-on favourite, Gold Goddess, took over the running, Craine seemed reluctant to do his best as he rode a feeble and half-hearted finish on Knight Commander in order to let his better fanced stable companion win the race. It would have been quite in order if the Stewards had given Craine a severe talking-to.

If Fighting Fit had not been ridden to the ground by S. Kapur he would most probably have gained the day in the Simla Plate for horses in the lowest class. Gay Hanover who was desperately ridden by Kunalil landed a big gamble for his connections. Wild Wish ran an encouraging race and he should be scoring soon in a similar set as he is at a rosy mark in the handicap.

Gimmick won the Time Queen Trophy, in spite of his rider Shah Rukh's antics in the saddle. Fitting the front from the beginning Gimmick had his race won a long way from home. Instead of sitting still in the saddle Shah Rukh was bobbing up and down, using his legs in the most awkward manner over the last 100 metres. I feel the stipes should tell Shah Rukh not to use his legs if he does not know how to as he nearly fell over the last 30 metres, let alone unsettle his mount. Manorama ran a fluent second and needs a slightly longer trip. Abhay Singh did not exert much on Prince Surendra. If Mahesh on Natural Dancer had not shifted from the rails midway up the straight he would have turned the tables on his conqueror Manki, on whom D'Silva



The photo-finish of the Indian Derby, when the first four horses were separated by three heads. The winner Track Lightning (No. 6) (nearest to camera) is on the extreme outside, close to the sand-track. Christoffe (second), Happy Landing (third) and Furioso (fourth) are bunched near the rails. Never before has such a finish been seen in any classic in Bombay. When No. 6 went up on the winning frame, there was a roar from the huge crowd for the odds-on favourite.

rode an understanding race to get home by a head. Thunderbass was tardily away after which Aslam Kadar did not show much interest in the proceedings. Happy Alliance came back a bit sore and seems to have gone off form. Fortissimo who was given a stable penalty for his fluent win last time out was unequal to the task of defying it. Although he won over 1,000 metres last time out he seems to be better suited for longer trips.

Ibidis, who had left her chances at the start to finish way behind when she made her debut earlier in the season, was at her best behaviour when slamming her five rivals to walk away with the Virar Plate. This well-bred filly will make her presence felt on promotion to class III.

Do not be deceived by Stride Away's awkward conformation. He has a long stride which will be put into use when least expected. Rambah performed miserably for one so heavily fancied. She is mediocre and not too genuine either.

There was a thrilling finish to the Jusdan Trophy when four horses were in with a chance over the last 100 metres. Golden Deer had a slight advantage over Sunstorm, who in turn was a shade ahead of Alex Venus on whom Reuben was working hard with Stravin-

sky moving with raking strides on the wide, outside about 150 metres from the post. Yusuf Khan rode a capital finish on Sunstorm to scramble home. Stravinsky however was unlucky to lose as he was interfered with at the top of the straight after which he was brought on the wide outside. Alex Venus is mediocre and has not lived up to her big reputation. Ever True was not ridden out by Vishwas all through the race and it would be wise to forget this run of hers completely as she is capable of better things.

Palm Beach won the concluding event of the day from Akashi Noor. His task was made easy when Lucky Guy who was the medium of a big gamble suffered a mishap at the start and was left about 15 lengths after cutting himself badly near his stile. He was bleeding profusely in spite of which he performed gallantly. I feel he would have won but for this mishap. Akashi Noor was ridden atrociously by Solomon who fails to improve his riding although given abundant opportunities by M. K. Jadhav.

Notable runners over the week-end are Stravinsky, Stormy Flight, Amir-Ul-Mulk and Black Fury.

Spotlight
from Bombay



Track Lightning (Barclay) who achieved a Derby double this season.

season won the Topmost Plate for three year-old maidens in grand style from another good youngster, Stormy Flight, who appeared to be in need of a strong race gallon. He will strip a lot fitter

Track Lightning triumphs in most exciting Derby

By PEGASUS

BOMBAY, February 1.

DESPITE running erratically most of the 2,400 metres trip and shifting out alarmingly over the last 150 metres, Track Lightning, brilliantly ridden by Sandy Barclay, triumphed in a fantastic finish to the most exciting Indian Derby ever run here today to credit Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Khatau and Messrs. C. M. Khatau and K. C. Khatau, who have raced quality horses through the years, with their first-ever Classic at this centre.

Track Lightning, the odds-on favourite in the eight-horse field who was trained by Tassi and bred by Mrs. Veena Mehra at the Usha Stud, won from Christoffe, with Happy Landing third and Furioso fourth. The first four were separated by identical distances of a head in a race

Nilgiris Plate for Rich Reins

HYDERABAD, February 1 (UPI): Rich Reins, trained by R. S. Reddy and ably ridden by McKeown, claimed the Nilgiris Plate, the main event of the 16th day of Hyderabad Winter Races here today.

Trainer Mangalorkar saddled a brace, while jockeys McKeown and Karam Singh steered home two winners each.

Khairatnabad Plate: 1400 metres Dream Princess 46.5 (Aslam Khan) 1; Multi Rock 2; Khan Bahadur J. Helen Hill 4; Rs. 8; Rs. 8; Rs. 6. (Hyder Ali Khan).

which was run in two minutes, 35 3/5 seconds, which is the same as that returned by Mahawk last year for the 2,400 metres trip.

It is a measure of the greatness of the Grey Galloway-Traxona colt, who won the Bangalore Summer Colts Trial and Derby, the Bangalore Winter 2,000 Guineas and the South India Derby in Madras, that he surmounted the difficulties that plagued him from the start of the race when he ducked soon after getting off, and it is a tribute to the excellence of the judgment of Barclay, who did not waste time in trying to gather him up but rode him out regardless of his not keeping a straight course, that he could carry the public purse to victory. Had he not been erratic the judge would not have had recourse to the photo-finish camera prier and Track Lightning would have been the winner by several lengths.

It was a good day for followers of the macees as five first favourites scored in the eight-race card and it was an excellent afternoon for trainer S. Mangalorkar, who was saddling horses after a long period of suspension. He gained a treble with the Shinde-ridden With The Wind and Bee Heaven and Mah Noor. S. S. Shah sent out two winners in Dilemma and Royal Srides.

MAYAPAN LEADS

Mayapan settled down to lead the Derby field and was followed by Furioso, Christoffe, Commissar, Happy Landing, Moment To Moment, Track Lightning, who ducked soon on starting, and Valorozy, who was slow out. At the 1,600, Mayapan was the one and a half lengths clear of Christoffe and Furioso. Eight lengths behind came Happy Landing with Commissar, Track Lightning, Mo-

ment To Moment and Valorozy following in that order.

At the halfway mark, Mayapan was one length in front of Christoffe, who was two lengths clear of Furioso. Four lengths behind came Happy Landing with Commissar three lengths away, Track Lightning and Moment To Moment followed at intervals of two lengths with Valorozy four lengths further away. Track Lightning improved rapidly from the 800, at which stage he was about 12 lengths behind the leader, and when they entered the straight the order was Christoffe, Mayapan, Track Lightning, Furioso, Commissar, Happy Landing, Moment To Moment and Valorozy.

ROAR OF APPROVAL

Track Lightning strode out resolutely and was clear at the 400 at which stage Christoffe, Mayapan, Furioso, Commissar, Moment To Moment and Happy Landing followed. As the front runners started to piod, as Track Lightning shifted out and continued to drift and as Happy Landing travelled very fast, four horses were concerned in the photo-finish and as because of the big gap along the width of the track between Track Lightning and the others there was a great deal of speculation about the ultimate outcome. The judge's announcement of Track Lightning's victory was greeted by a tremendous roar of approval from the vast, colourful crowd which is a regular feature of Derby Day. Moment To Moment was fifth, Mayapan sixth, Commissar seventh and Valorozy a bad last.

Vigorous, Mr. A. J. Fernandes's Rapraee-Taking Ways five-year-old, made a winning debut in the highest class when he made a successful start-in-finish effort in the 1,200 metres P.D. Bolton Trophy. Opposite the stards it looked as if topweight Minsky and Divine Gift would both go clear of trainer Raghunath's ward, but Aslam Kader inspired a second effort out of him and he went clear for a one-and-a-quarter-lengths' win over Divine Gift, who was a neck in front of Minsky.

Mangalorkar's fine return

Track Lightning Claims Derby in Photo Finish

BOMBAY, Feb. 1.

Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Khatau and M/s. C. M. Khatau's four-year-old colt Track Lightning who was the public choice, won the Indian Derby here today.

Ridden by Barclay and trained by Tassi he claimed the prestigious event by a head in a smart time of 2m 35 3/5s.

It was Mayapan who broke the line followed by Christoffe, Furioso, Happy Landing, Commissar, Track Lightning, Moment to Moment and Valerosny. Passing the 1,000 M. Mayapan and Christoffe were racing almost together while Furioso and Track Lightning were racing in a close order. Near the 800m marker, Barclay put Track Lightning on top gear and began to challenge Christoffe.

Passing the 400m marker Track Lightning drew away from his rivals. Christoffe, Happy Landing and Furioso closed in on Track Lightning opposite the Members' stand as the colt shifted out and crossed the winning post in a blanket finish.

For a long time the supporters of Track Lightning were kept on the tenter books as it was difficult to judge the winner. When it was announced that Track Lightning won the race in the photo finish a big roar of cheers rent the air.

Trainers S.S. Shah and Mangalorkar sent out two winners while jockey V. Shinde rode two winners.

Trainer suspended: The Stewards of the RWITC held an enquiry into the dope test of Ripples who won on January 18 and decided to suspend trainer D. P. Pandole pending further enquiry.

The Results:
BRIGHT HANOVAR PLATE (1,000m) —
 Cl. III: Oilemma 58 kgs. S. Marshall 1. Sobeti 52.50, Barclay 2. Rollinsky 60. Kinane 3. Hanakiri 52.50, (cd 50). Chowgule 4. Not run: Starbella. 1-1/4, 5-1/2 and dist. 1m 3s. Rs. 10 (w), 5.50 and five (p) S. S. Shah. F.P.: Rs. 14.50.

TOPMOST PLATE (1,200m) — maiden
 3-y-o only: Mah Noor 52.50 kgs. Swinburn 1. Stormy Flight 54. S. Marshall 2. Miyako 52.50. Craine 3. All My Love 52.50. Lowe 4. Not run: Port Of Call. 3, 5, 2, 1m 17-2/5s. Rs. 8 (w), 6 and 9 (p). Mangalorkar. F.P.: Rs. 21.

PRINCE KHARTOUM PLATE (1,600m) —
 Cl. V-A: Marlboro 57.50 kgs. Kinane 1. Sporting Gift 50.50 (cd 52). Young 2. Hindon 59. Wigham 3. Nocturne 52. V. Shinde 4. All run 1-3/4 3-1/4 and 2-1/4. 1m 46-4/5s. Rs. 9.50 (w), 7 and 18 (p). Benan Cheny. F.P.: Rs. 87.50.

P.D. BOLTON TROPHY (1,200m) — Cl. I: Vigoroso 45.50 (cd. 45) (Aslam Kader) 1. Divine Girl 46 (cd. 47.50) (V. Shinde) 2. Minsky 60 (S. Marshall) 3. Sporting Tradition 57 (Young) 4. Not run: Vimalgati. 11/4, nk and 31/4; 1m 141/5s; Rs. 10 (w), 6.50 and 8 (p); Raghunath; FP: Rs. 22.50.

CANNY SCOT PLATE (1,400m) — Cl. III: With The Wind 49.50 (V. Shinde) 1. Rebel Lass 52 (Yusuf Khan) 2. Fair Friend 55 (Laxman) 3. Miralini 59 (N. Reuben) 4. All run: 31/4, 11/2 and 41/2; 1m 283/5s; Rs. 7.50 (w), 5.6 and 10.50 (p); Mangalorkar; F.P.: Rs. 18.

INDIAN DERBY (2,400m) — Ind. 4-y-o only:
TRACK LIGHTNING (Grey Gaston — Traxana) (Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Khatau and M/s. C. M. Khatau and K. C. Khatau) 57 (A. Barclay) — 1.

Christoffe (Landigou — Christmas Eve) 57 (Craine) — 2.
 Happy Landing (Valerosny — Hydroplane) 57 (Kinane) — 3.
 Furioso (Al Marouak — Free Fairy) 57 (Jagdish) — 4.

All run: hd, hd and hd; 2m 35 3/5s; Rs. 7 (w), 5.50, 6.50 and 15 (p); Tassi; FP: Rs. 10.50.

P. A. D'AVAGNE TROPHY (1,400m) —
 Cl. IV: Bee Heaven 46 (cd. 47) (V. Shinde) 1. Amir-El-Mulk 55.50 (Jagdish) 2. Injun 56.50 (Kinane) 3. North Star 51.50 (cd. 52) (Young) 4. All run. 21/4, 21/4 and hd.; 1m 283/5s; Rs. 29.50 (w), 9.50, 10 and 9 (p); Mangalorkar; FP: Rs. 149.

REGAL DOMAIN PLATE (1,200m) — Cl. V-A: Royal Strides 48.50 (cd. 45) (Ghatge) 1. Shaliba 49 (cd. 47.50) (Barathe) 2. Black Fury 58.50 (cd. 47) (Bhamrao) 3. Mital 57.50 (cd. 56) (Aslam Kader) 4. All run 11/2, 43/4 and 21/4; 1m 162/5s; Rs. 18 (w), 6, 7.50 and 18.50 (p); S. S. Shah; FP: Rs. 80.

Jackpot (70 per cent): Rs. 703 (824 tkts.) (30 per cent): Rs. 45 (5,493 tkts.)
 Treble: Rs. 89.50 (1,284 tkts.)
 Tanala (Fifth race) (70 per cent): Rs. 123 (529 tkts.) (30 per cent): Rs. 75 (372 tkts.)
 Tanala (seventh race) (70 per cent): Rs. 950.50 (85 tkts.) (30 per cent): Rs. 444 (78 tkts.)

At Madras:

The following dividends were paid at the inter-venue betting on Bombay races at Madras today:
 Treble: Rs. 162 (262 tkts.)
 Jackpot: Rs. 1,359 (76 tkts.)



TURFITE

No. 18

February 1, 1981

Rs. 3

THE INDIAN DERBY 1981

Track Lightning Has The Edge

— Anil Mukhi —

The Derby Stakes, traditionally referred to as simply 'The Derby' was first run in England in 1780. Apart from becoming a permanent feature of that country's sporting calendar, it also became the *tons et origo* of similar races run all over the world, one of these being our own Indian Derby, the 39th running of which is scheduled for Sunday, February 1st.

In the past five years, the race has frequently been devoid of competitive interest with often only one contender being fancied, particularly in 1977 (Squanderer at 4/1 on) and 1979 (Royal Tern — no bets).

Fortunately, 1981 promises to be a better year with

at least 4 of the 8 or so likely contenders running with more than just their owners' confidence riding on their backs.

Foremost of these is Track Lightning, the magnificent bay son of Grey Gaston — Traxana, by Sound Track. Certain to be the favourite, this colt comes off a sparkling win in the South India Derby over 2400 metres, where he proved his ability to stay the distance. His sire has already produced one Indian Derby winner in Manitou, while his dam is responsible for the outstanding Track Star (10 wins from 11 starts), Track Flame (successful in Class I), Grey Flash (now in Class I), Lord Henry and Vogue.

Easy to settle anywhere in the field, Track Lightning is the epitome of a professional racehorse. He has the competitive spirit, class and turn of foot required to win and will not be lacking in assistance from the saddle.

Perhaps the only factor against Track Lightning will be the fact that he has undergone a long journey from Madras. Yet he went so well in his final gallop on the 27th morning that it is evident that he has adjusted to his new surroundings. If all goes well, he will surely give his owners their first ever opportunity of leading in a Classic Winner on the Mahalakshmi track.

Bombay's principal hope is Christoffe (Landigou — Chr-

istmas Eve, by Toomai), a half-brother to Indian St. Leger winner Richelieu. The only horse in the field to have beaten Track Lightning, Christoffe represents a formidable challenge, particularly as he is completely at home on the track which Track Lightning has never raced on.

Christoffe's last run in the R. R. Riva Cup was most impressive, his win being spotted a long way from home and his victim on that day, Carnival, franked the form with a sparkling victory in the Rajpipla Gold Trophy. Christoffe, whose condition is excellent, will certainly appreciate a cracking pace but may be lucky to get one unless a recognised pacemaker obliges.

The other local hope is Indian 2000 Guineas winner Furioso (Al Marzouk — Free Fairy, by Never Never). An extremely courageous and tough customer, Furioso repelled all the challenges thrown at him in the Indian 2000 Guineas and there is no reason to believe that he will not attempt to do so again. Yet it will be a monstrous task for him to cope with the likes of Track Lightning and a renewed Christoffe.

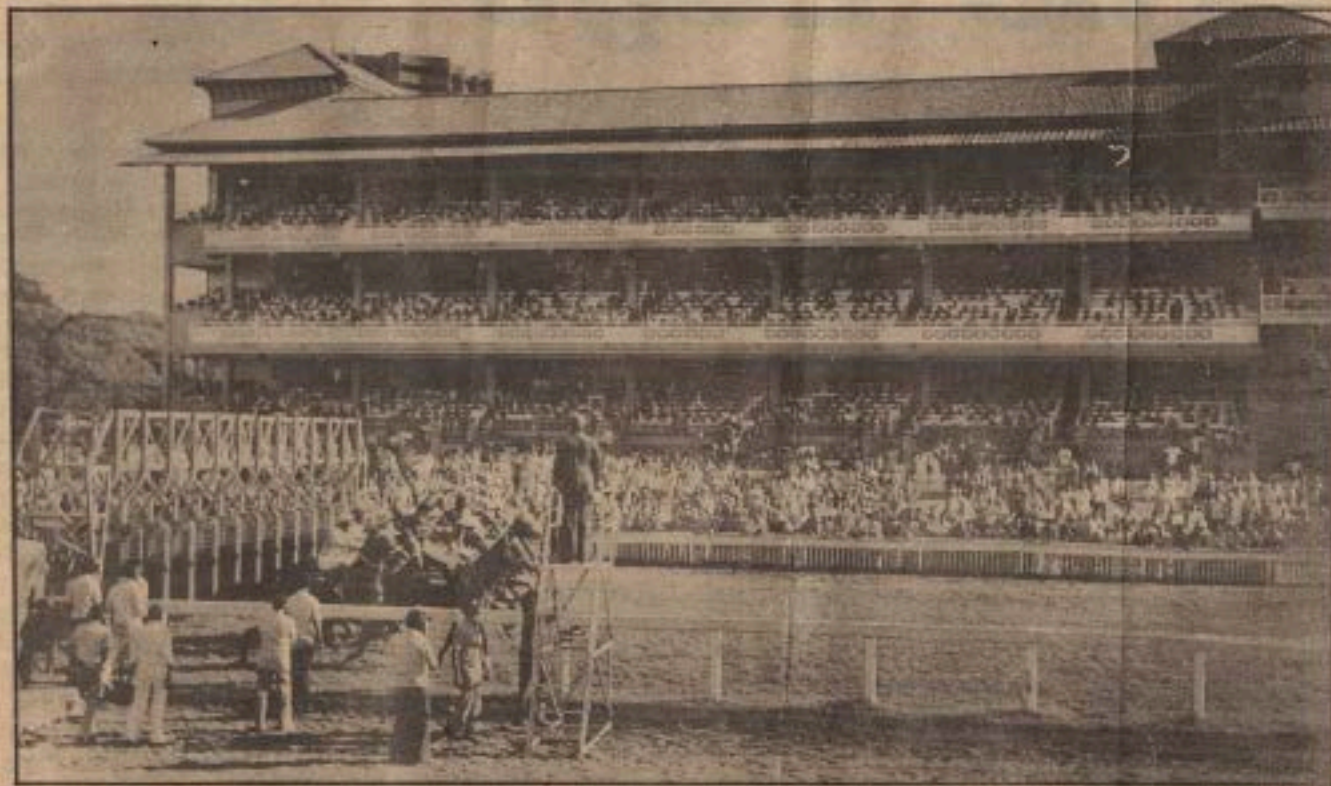
What is more, Furioso has not raced since December 21, a long gap of 6 weeks, though he did have a mock race on January 18th. If he can overcome these factors,

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VILLIES PARADING IN THE PADDOCK BEFORE THE OAKS



AND THE START OF THE OAKS—1981



Track Lightning Has The Edge

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he will have proved himself to be an even better racehorse than we already know him to be.

Another member of the multi-pronged Southern challenge is Commissar (Valoroso — Golden Harp by Hervine). An enigmatic customer, Commissar has plenty of ability and was seen to be finishing on fastest of all in the South India Derby in which he caded 1-3/4 lengths in arrears. Many feel the longer straight at Mahalakshmi will suit him better.

Commissar has the advantage of running in the colours of Ranjit V. Bhat who has been exceptionally lucky in this race, with 4 wins from 5 runners! However, the handsome colt had to be urged to keep up with Track Lightning and Mayapan in his final gallop, which is not the sort of performance a potential Derby winner should put up.

Happy Landing (Valoroso — Hydroplane, by Golestan) was an excellent juvenile and has to his credit victories over Furioso and Christoffe. Unfortunately he contracted a debilitating illness which lasted for several months and set him back severely. Now coming back to his best form, Happy Landing should certainly run a game race.

The big chestnut Mayapan (Sinead — Purita by Cornish Flame), full brother to Own Opinion, has been a grave disappointment so far and is still a maiden. Though maidens have won the Indian Derby before — Pyare Miya scored his only race-course success in this race in 1975 — one cannot really fancy Mayapan, though he looks fit and well.

In the final analysis, the race sets itself up as a straight fight between Track Lightning and Christoffe, with the former clearly having an edge. Furioso, Commissar and Happy Landing are likely to vie for the minor places. May the best