

*Let us him and space
turn, a long while. Grace*

Graham's Corner

By Frank Graham

*Visit With Mr. Fitz
At the Barn.*

*And Nashua Winning
A Betless Race.*

MORNING AND AFTERNOON

MIAMI, Feb. 22.—This was early morning at Hialeah, the sky gray with a hint of rain and, in the stable yard, a set of the Belair horses saddled and mounted and ready to go out to the track. Mr. Fitz



JIM FITZSIMMONS

watched them as they circled slowly and now and then spoke to one of the exercise boys, telling him how he wanted his horse worked. In his old hat, tan raincoat, woolen shirt and rough gray suit, the pants caught at the ankles with bicycle clips, his high laced shoes and with his stout stick, he was a picture out of an old racing book.

As the set, having passed his inspection, filed out of the yard, he got into his car, his companions with him and, with his son John at the wheel, rode to a spot on the rail near the clubhouse turn. There is no training track here and the main track was lively with horses, galloping or breezing, and Mr. Fitz said:

"You have to keep them moving here. If you don't, you might get into trouble."

Trainers and exercise boys coming by on their horses waved to him and smiled and spoke to him.

"Good luck with the big horse this afternoon, Mr. Fitz," one of them said.

"Do you watch the races from here?" one of his companions asked.

"No," he said. "They have a box for me up in the stand and, when I come to the races, I sit up there and watch them. But I listen to Freddy Caposella calling the races on the public address system and I learn more from him than I do from looking at them."

The Big Horse Is Very Playful:

When his set was finished, they rode back to the barn and John and the others went into the track kitchen for coffee, but Mr. Fitz remained in the yard to pass on another set. When they rejoined him, he said:

"I guess you want to see Nashua. I'll have Robbie bring him out."

Alfred Robertson slipped a halter on the big horse and led him out and Mr. Fitz said:

"It takes a big man like Robbie to hold him because he is very playful."

Nashua was trying to nip Robbie's fingers and Mr. Fitz said:

"He don't mean any harm. He's just playing. Sometimes he rears up if you're not careful and if there is a boy on his back, he is liable to slide him off."

But Robbie held him steady and, after they had had a good look at him, led him back to his stall. He has put on weight since last year and is solid and glowing with his health, the powerful muscles in his shoulders rippling as he walked around the yard on the way to his stall. Mr. Fitz looked after him, a smile in his eyes.

"When did you first realize that he was going to be something special, Mr. Fitz?" one of them asked.

"About this time last year," he said. "I told Mr. Woodward I thought he might be a good colt. But, then, I've said that about other two-year-olds but they never got to be anymore than ordinary."

"The Sucker Don't Like to Be by Himself":

In the afternoon there was a special race, with no betting, for Nashua. It was his first outing as a three-year-old, a mile and a sixteenth against three platers, Munchausen, Happy Memories and Uncle Gus. Eddie Arcaro, who will ride him in all his races this year, had flown in from Santa Anita to work him in this preparation for the Flamingo on Saturday.

The event was run between the second and third races, the horses coming on the track with no fanfare and getting under way without delay. In the stands, a record weekday crowd of 26,425 stood up to watch the big horse. Munchausen ran with him all the way and, although Nashua pulled away to win by a length and a half, it was not, by ordinary standards, an impressive showing.

"He won just like he did last year," Arcaro said, in the jocks' room later. "When he got in front in the stretch, I thought he was going to leave that other horse, but the sucker don't like to be by himself and began to pull up and I had to hit him. It's funny, the difference between the way he works in the morning and the way he runs in the afternoon."

"Did he run like a green horse?" somebody asked Eddie.

"He runs like a horse that had never been in a gate before," Eddie said. "Soon as he got out on the track, there he was gawking around at everybody. Then he gets in the race and he wants to run it his way and make it close. I'll say this for him, though. He has the will to win and, when you ask him for it, he gives it to you.

"As long as he wins," Eddie said, laughing, "it's all right, but I like those horses that when they get in front stay there. It gives me a lot of confidence in myself."