

Placid Mr. Fitz Takes Nashua's Defeat in Stride

Trainer, TV Viewer
of Derby, Offers
No Excuses

By FRANK M. BLUNK

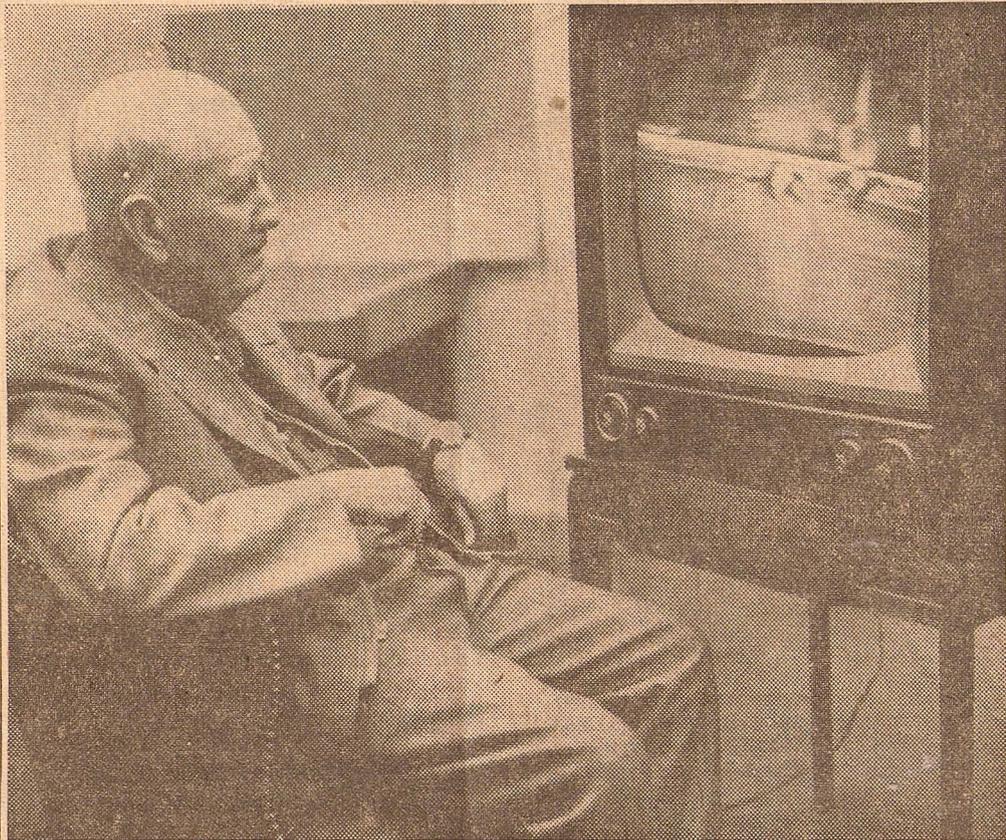
Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons, 80-year-old trainer, has won more big stake races than he can recall. And he has lost some big ones, too. So he had no complaints yesterday afternoon when his outstanding performer, Nashua, was beaten in the eighty-first running of the Kentucky Derby at Louisville.

Mr. Fitz watched the race on a television set in the administration building at Belmont Park. He's too old a hand at this business to get excited. He had had high hopes that Nashua would be the fourth Derby winner of his long career. He had triumphed with Johnstown, Omaha, and Gallant Fox. Nashua, he thought, and still thinks, is one of his finest racers.

But Swaps, he admitted after the mile-and-a-quarter run at Louisville, was a better horse, at least for the day.

"Swaps won that race all the way," Fitzsimmons said. "When Nashua challenged in the stretch Swaps had more than enough left to beat him. I thought (Eddie) Arcaro rated Nashua just right. Eddie undoubtedly felt that Nashua could take Swaps at the end. But he couldn't and that's that."

Fitzsimmons sat through the race without batting an eye. When it was over he lifted his right hand a bit and smiled. Then he submitted to a barrage of questions from a battery of reporters and cameramen. They tried to get him to say that Nashua probably hadn't run his



The New York Times (by Carl T. Gossett Jr.)

Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons sees his horse beaten on TV screen

best race, but he would have none of that.

"Don't try to make me a bad loser," he said. "Nashua is a fine horse. He was beaten by a great horse in a good race. There are more good races coming up and we'll be in them, I'm sure." He referred to the Preakness Stakes at Pimlico and the Belmont Stakes, second and third gems in turfdom's triple crown.

Yesterday morning Mr. Fitz had a telephone conversation with William Woodward Jr., Nashua's owner, at Louisville.

"We agreed," he said, "that Swaps probably was the horse to beat in the race. We weren't discounting Summer Tan. But I was surprised to see Swaps take the lead so early. And I was surprised, too, that Summer

Tan elected to follow Nashua. I had expected Summer Tan to be the pace-setter.

"But these big races seldom are run just the way you think they will be. This was one of the best. I hope we will have another chance at Swaps.

Then Mr. Fitz picked up his hat and his golf-course folding cane-seat and departed.