

Mr. Fitz, 90, Recalls Nixing Streetcar Job

By Norm Miller

Oceanport, N.J., July 23—"It's a lucky thing I had the horse bug in me," the loveable gaffer chuckled. "There's not another damn thing I could have done."

This was Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons celebrating his 90th birthday at Monmouth Park today, surrounded by horsemen, friends and about 80 members of his family, including 14 grandchildren and, at closest count, 20 great-grandchildren.

HE SAT THERE, bald-headed, bow-tied and beaming, as spritely and good-humored a gent as they sang, "When Irish Eyes Are you'll meet at any age, while Smiling," wheeled out a huge "Mr. Fitz" cake and everyone stood and sang, "Happy Birthday."

Mr. Fitz, his body twisted by arthritis, leaned forward and cut the cake, then sat back while Amory L. Haskell, president of Monmouth, presented him with a tiny transistor television set.

When the presentation was over, he reminisced in his warm friendly manner about the time about 60 years ago when his mother-in-law nearly talked him into forgetting about his racing career.

THIS WAS BACK in the early 1900's when he was making a bare living as a trainer on the leaky-roof circuit around Philadelphia.

"My wife's stepmother tried to get me a job driving a trolley car," recalled the man who became racing's greatest trainer. "She thought I was away from home too much. So she got her nephew to line me up a job as a streetcar conductor. I almost took it, too, until I found out I was sending home more money from the tracks than I could have made on the trolley."

Years later, when things were going good for Mr. Fitz and he had built a beautiful home in Sheepshead Bay, he reminded his mother-in-law that she had tried once to discourage his racing career. Her answer was a gem.

"YOU'D HAVE BEEN president of the trolley company if you had stuck with it," she replied.

Now, the Fitzsimmons progeny is so prolific, Mr. Fitz has trouble keeping track of it. He has 14 grandchildren and 39 great-grandchildren.

"They should make a chart of

Probable Pitchers

AMERICAN

YANKEES, Ford (12-3) and Sheldon (3-1) at Detroit, Aguirre (2-5) and Lolich (9-6), 2, twi-night.
Minnesota, Grant (7-6) at Chicago, Pizarre (13-4), night.
Boston, Heffner (5-3) at Cleveland, Tiant (1'0), night.
Los Angeles, D. Lee (5-1) at Kansas City, O'Donoghue (6-6), night.
Washington, Narum (7-6) and Rudolph (1-2) at Baltimore, Bunker (10-2) and Vineyard (0-1) 2, twi-night.

NATIONAL

St. Louis, Gibson (7-7) at Philadelphia, Short (8-5), night.
San Francisco, Marichal (13-5) at Los Angeles, Moeller (5-8), night.
Milwaukee, Fischer (7-5) at METS, Fischer (6-9), night.
Chicago, Ellsworth (12-10) at Houston, Brown (1-9), night.
Pittsburgh, Friend (8-9) at Cincinnati, O'Toole (10-4), night.

them all," he said. "Everytime I go away I find there are a few more when I come back."

SUNNY JIM, who retired from racing in April of 1963 after saddling horses who won a total of \$13,082,911, including 2,275 winners, still makes it out to the Aqueduct barns two or three times a week. There he checks up with Bill Winfrey, who replaced him as trainer for Wheatley Stable and the Phipps racing interests.

"The only reason I don't go out there more often is that Johnny (his 71-year-old son) has to pick me up and drive me out there," Mr. Fitz explained. "I feel like a damn nuisance."

Once a 5:30 A.M. riser, Mr. Fitz admits he sometimes doesn't get up until 8 these days.

"I get to watching television so late at night that I don't bounce out of bed like I used to."

A friend kidded Mr. Fitz about living until 100.

"If I continue to feel as good as I do now," he replied, "I should make it."

Met Batting

	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	Pct.
Hunt	89	335	45	105	4	28	.313
h'stopher	87	292	38	87	9	43	.298
Ch'topher	87	292	38	87	9	43	.298
Gonder	79	225	22	64	6	23	.284
Kranep'l	57	194	22	52	3	19	.268
Harkness	33	100	8	25	2	12	.250
Elliott	38	119	11	29	4	9	.244
Thomas	50	174	17	42	3	17	.241
Taylor	66	163	11	39	2	14	.239
Altman	64	217	19	51	3	21	.235
Kanehl	62	170	15	40	1	8	.235
Cannizz'ro	29	68	3	16	0	3	.235
Hickman	80	235	23	53	6	27	.226
Smith	75	267	27	60	11	34	.225
McMillan	60	196	16	40	0	13	.204