

Thundering Hooves, Flying Manes, Colorful Silks

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brush. Timber fences are natural wooden fences made of boards. During the day, purses ranged from \$3,000 to \$12,500, with the first-place winner taking home approximately 60 percent. Tradition-

ally, shares of the rest of the purse are paid to second through sixth place.

Lengths of the races varied from a 6.5 furlong sprint over turf (a furlong is an eighth of a mile or 220 yards) to a 3.25 mile race over timber.

Besides tents with catered lunches, tailgating was on the

menu for many families who lined the fence to watch the races.

The tents, perched atop a rise which overlooked the course, offered a chance for spectators to watch the races unfold below.

The horses begin training months in advance. They start with a workout of about a mile and a quarter at a gallop every day — an exercise pattern that gets progressively faster as race day approaches.

Before the race, the required vet check ensures that all the horses are examined for abnormalities in the legs, which may include thickening or swelling.

Veterinarians will also check the animal's tattoo and teeth to make sure the animal is the age that it is listed for the race.

The vets will also watch the horse trot to catch any lameness problems.

The check prevents injuries by perhaps catching what trainers have missed, such as a problem that may have hap-



"Red Relic," readying for a flat race, goes through the required vet check. Pictured is Kosei Yamagiwa, Florida, who is examining the horse for abnormalities in the legs, which may include thickening or swelling.

pened in transport, according to Dr. Harold McKenzie, Marion DuPont Scott Equine Medical Center.

Not only horses but also jockeys are a major part of the excitement of the races.

A half-hour break between races gives jockeys a chance to change their silks, since many jockeys ride in several races

during the day.

Jockeys can weigh in a at higher weights (approximately 140-150 pounds each) for steeplechase races than flat, track races (around 110-115 pounds). Many of the jockeys school the horses they ride over jumps.

One such jockey is George

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A steward watches over race preparations.



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George Wood, North Carolina, surveys the paddock as he prepares to mount for his first race of the day. A half hour between races allows the

jockeys, who may ride in several races throughout the day, to change their silks. Protective padding is worn under their silks.



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