-The Big Bribe: £10,000 to lose this Derby

Rae **Johnstone**

CONTINUING THE FIRST-TIME-TOLD STORY OF HIS RACING LIFE AND THE HOT SECRETS BEHIND IT



JOHNSTONE (left), judged on his Classic wins one of the greatest jockeys, is writing the frankest story ever to come out of racing. He says: "I set down

the truth as I recall concerns me. But if in doing so I leave you with the impression that racing is a sport fit for knaves rather than queens I will have failed miser-ably. And it were better I had written nothing."

---PART THREE

ANY believe jockey in the records could scarcely decline. to be the most sensational Derby of the century-the one that saw me defeated on the favourite

Colombo.

Lord Glanely — "Guts and gaiters" as the Cardiff shipowner was irreverently nicknamed—came up with an offer which, provided all went well, represented a situation that the least prosperous champion

jockey in the records could scarcely decline.

Here was the chance to be associated with the horse Colombo, who had all the appearance of being the racing machine of the era.

"This is it, cherie," I told my wite Mary, "I'll come back a militionaire." A statement which was received with the gently sardonic air of a girl already resigned to accepting, and even nourishing harmless day dreams.

The horse



NO-I DIDN'T TAKE IT...BUT I STILL LOST (and that's me)

1934 DERBY-HOW THEY WENT PAST THE POST: 1, WINDSOR LAD: 2. EASTON: 3. COLOMBO.

they? Colombo, unbeaten in all his seven two-year-old races (worth a total of £17,130 155.) was going well at home. He had not been asked to do anything serious but he gave me a great impression of capability.

His first race of the season was to be the Craven Stakes at Newmarket on April 19 when he would have to concede up to 20lb, to opponents of his age.

A light-actioned bay with a splash of white on his forehead and a long white sock up his near fore. Colombo looked all horse. Of course if he'd got beaten, it would have been noted that he either looked "pig fat" or had "run up light" since last season. But he won, smoothly-effortlessly, and there was no criticism. The best horse I had ever ridden? I had no doubt. Then came Gutneas week. This was the time when I should have had that 10 grand, I reflected—thinking back two years. But I hadn't Or nanything like it. So it was not any of my money that helped to make Colombo the hotlest 2000 Gutneas favourite since \$1, Frusquin beat six in 1886. It was just that. On paper. primarily to give their money away. In fact, 7—2 on looked very generous odds. They always do—once they've won.

'Watch'

T the start several of the jocks were chipping Gordon Richards because he had just been beaten on a 5-2 on chance, Loosestrife, in a two-horse race for the one-and-aquarter-mile Chippenham Stakes, Harry Wragg on Typhonic had won by a short head. "Watch out. Rac, he doesn't 'do' you now," called Michael Beary, Dontting at Harry.

Watch? I didn't expect to

Watch? I didn't expect to see any of them once we got anywhere back near the race-crowd again.

I make this point because it would be a gross and absurd distortion to leave the impression that bribery between bookmakers (since both those inducements were bookmaker inspired) and jockeys was commonplace. It is not. And.

Difficult

racing. And it is no simple task to stop g horse that is thoroughly capable of winning so that the act passes unobserved. It is impossible for a jockey to do so in such a way that the deed escapes the attention of at least one of his fellow riders in a race. And once one person knows, that is that—the start of the finish of a reputation. What somebody has done once, they may well do again. Wherefore, since I stepped out of line once myself, you may think I did so again when I was offered £10,000 to see that Colombo did not win the 1934 Derby.

Colombo did not win the 1334
Derby.
You may, of course, think
what you like. "If you want to
be thought a liar tell the
truth." somebody has written. I
hope they were wrong.
The fact is that, moral consideration apart, the proposal
represented no temptation whatsoever. For to win the Derby
was my greatest ambition.
Before any other race except
the Derby I find that, once
mounted, one is more or less
oblivious to everything but the
pho on hand. But Epsom on
this one day of the year is
different.

Ordeal

THE sea of upturned faces gast unlated in pack the rails on the right as the parade begins and the packed stands on the left (with the royal party usually standing on the grass in front of the weighing-room enclosure) make this the most nerve-racking pre-race ordeal. And many are momentarily "set alight" in the canter back past the stands as the crowds roar encouragement to the popular fancies. My fellow was not the soberest of characters, but he took it pretity well.

Captain Allison was a good starter. "Come in steady," he called, I glanced swiftly to the right as the tapes whipped np. saw that Steve Donoghue on Medieval Knight had broken well, and moved straight into his walks.

Steve was quickly on the fence with the contraction of the care of the party of the pa

Medieval Knight had broken well, and moved straight into his wake.

Steve was quickly on the fence in the initial hill climb, going the shortest way and breaking the wind resistance for me.

All was going smoothly as we began the left-hand sweep and initially gradual descent to Tattennan Corner.

"Tickey" Nicoll moved up on my outside on Tiberius, whose one outstanding characteristic was the ability to \$149. So his effort to hit the front and go at this point was easy to appreciate. Then Smirkie, 'Charlie Smirke, no Windsor Lad' pulled out and swept by in pursuit. As he did so, Medieval Knight began to weaken. So that, with Gordon Rechards, on Easton, following Windsor Lad. I was hemmed in behind the fading Knight.

Finale

WAITED until I could pull out, balanced Colombo, and then went. Windsor Lad had by now pegget back Tiberius ant Easton was second to him-Gordon's whip swinging in his right hand.

Gordon's whip swinging in his right hand.
There were no crowds now Just Windsor Land Easton and, gathering momentum closing the gar Colombo.
There hundred yards from the time as Easton got almost to Windsor Lad as colombo got to Easton. Fy said of so the issue hung desperately in the balance. Then as the bravely sustained fire fizzled out of Colombo, so Windsor Lad produced his final trick—further

ORD GLANELY did not take too kindly to losing at any time-certainty not in the Derby-though he was very lair in his public pronouncements, which were confined to the opinon that I was doubtless a good rider but msufficiently experienced at Epsom.

There was no immediate reference by thim to my future as first jockey for the Glanely horses.

when I returned to Sandown to ride Foxmasque for "my" stable Lord Glanely made it clear—in his direct, uncompromising way, which I appreciated—that there was no question of breaking the contract. But, he said "I shall get Gordon to ride for me whenever I can."

That, to me, was a clear invitation to call it a day. Which I did.

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TOMORROW |

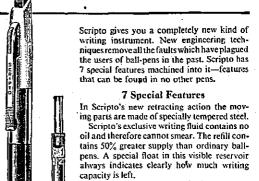
Aly Khan says

'What'll win?'

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