HERMIS WINS GRAND SUBURBAN VICTORY

Irish Lad, Favorite, Beaten by The Picket for Second Place.

RECORD TIME FOR HANDICAP

Cheers from Thousands of Throats Greet the Winner at Opening of Sheepshead Bay Race Meeting.

One horse made the Suburban race at the Sheepshead Bay racetrack yesterday. Hermis was the one and only competitor that really held the public eye, while nearly 50,000 people watched and hoped and "rooted" for five others. With Hermis in front from the lifting of the barrier to the winning post for the $20,000 race, spectators saw but that single contestant, there never being a stage when Hermis was doing otherwise than winning" in the eyes of the general public. Expert horsemen thought at different periods of the race that other horses had a chance to win, and confidently looked for Hermis to "come back," but never for an instant did the Hermence colt weaken for even a stride, and he passed the judges' stand an easy winner by two lengths.

The race was the culmination of the great Spring handicaps in that it brought together the best horses that have stood training to the present moment and that represent the best in the thoroughbred world. There were notable absentees in Waterboy and McChesney, but both of those horses are on the doubtful list so far as racing qualities go, and the twenty-first Suburban which marked the opening of the Sheepshead Bay meeting yesterday was the more attractive race for the fact that it had in it no horse that really could be considered of doubtful quality.

The public form of all the six runners was thoroughly established. Hermis won because he was the best horse under the conditions and the riding orders. The Picket, winner of the Brooklyn Handicap, finished second, and was decidedly the next best horse under the conditions of the running as Irish Lad was the next best, finishing third. Proper, Major Daingerfield, and Africander finished in the order of their naming, but never really had a chance or looked like contenders in the race. The Picket closed resolutely at the end, and got up in the last few strides and beat Irish Lad a neck for the place. The time, 2:05, was an emphatic illustration of the excellency of the course, for it established a suburban record, and closely approached the track record of 2:04 3-5 made by the Western champion, McChesney, late in the Fall of last year. Hermis was the second choice in the race, while Irish Lad started the hottest favorite that ever ran in a Suburban barring only Domino, which was the beaten favorite in his year.

The weather was of a rather doubtful character, but remained warm, though threatening, up to the time of the big race. Clouds overhung the track from early in the forenoon until just before the big event was started at 4 o'clock, but never a drop of rain fell until the horses were at the post, when a few drops of moisture gave notice of the storm that might be coming.

ONLY SIX STARTERS.

The promise of the big event fell far short of what had been expected, for only seven horses were in to run, and it was a reasonable certainty that one, the Goughacre Stable's Shorthose, would not be a starter. Shorthose was scratched, as was expected, and the field for the seventy-first Suburban was reduced to six runners, thus equaling the record small field of the race, the 1895 Suburban won by Frank Beard's Latheron.

The size of the field made absolutely no difference to the general public, for from noon until just before the race every train and every car stop in the direction of the track was crowded. The seating capacity of the Sheepshead Bay race course has been increased by something like 12,000 since last Fall, but the increase was inadequate to the patronage yesterday, when the record for attendance at the track was broken. Club stands, field stand, and grand stand were filled to the limit, while thousands of visitors who were late-comers paraded the lawn, hopeless of finding any other place from which to see the races. The infield stand in particular was crowded to the danger point, while the three-tier grand stand was packed so closely that policemen stationed on the stairways stopped those of the crowd who sought to find places on the roof deck or third tier before each race. Even in the second tier was filled, while the clubhouse fairly overflowed.

Club members and guests came in every conceivable style, with puffing automobiles, trumpeting coaches, quiet private cars, and special cars. Back of the saddling paddock was an array of coaches that would have been creditable to the best days of the coaching clubs at Morris Park, while a space covering several acres of ground back of the grand stand was filled with automobiles. The general public came in trains and trolley cars, and it was 4 o'clock, the hour set for the Suburban, before the train and trolley car conductors would confess to the least relaxation in the pressure of business and travel.

The crowd was anticipated by the bookmakers, for whom 500 did business in the several inclosures open to the general public. Eighty-five members of the Metropolitan Turf Association were on hand the night before, but the pressure of outside layers and non-members of the association was so great when the eighty-five holders of positions were ready to go to work that the ring arrangements by compulsion were changed. The "Mets," by virtue of their right, still held the better places, but were compelled to take these on the extreme outside of the ring, while about a hundred non-members of the association occupied places in the rear, and about 200 other layers filled in the dead line and the field inclosure.

The bookmakers straight through fared moderately well, as the results placed several non-favorites first, but as every winner of the day was heavily backed, no great profits accrued to the men who bet the odds. The victory of Hermis was probably the best break of the afternoon for the bookmakers, but so many persons who refused to bet odds on the favorite-backed Hermis, following the placing of the stable commission, that the race was declared by several bookmakers to have been the worst day the ring experienced in the course of the day.

The big event, run as the fourth race on the card, was called at 4 o'clock, and run in approximately scheduled time, there being but a short delay at the post, due entirely to the starter's anxiety. Following the race for the Double Event Stakes, the Suburban horses, six in number, galloped through the stretch for their warming up, but no false move was made by any of them. Shorthose, the Goughacre Stable's entry, was posted as a non-starter early in the day, and the Goughacre following evidently hoped for an added starter, no owner had the temerity to put in one of the lighter weights.

SCENES IN THE PADDOCK.

In the saddling paddock the greatest crowd gathered about Irish Lad. In the hands of Trainer J. W. Rogers the horse galloped through the stretch, and then walked about the paddock looking so fit and so ready that the horse race gambler embodied a great part of the stable enthusiasm and backed him so steadily that he went to the post with odds on as favorite. The next horse in public esteem at the opening of the betting was The Picket, of whom Trainer Carroll Reid made no secret as to his condition, declaring the colt ready to run the race of his life. Hermis, however, had the full confidence of the E. R. Thomas stable, following his victory in the Brooklyn Handicap, and, though many shrewd judges expressed doubt as to Hermis's ability to go a mile and a quarter, the partisans of the Thomas stable scoffed and declared that his race in the Brookdale Handicap was good enough to satisfy them that no better horse would run for the Suburban. The heavy support that Hermis received forced the betting against that horse down to 4 to 1 at post time, while The Picket went back from 4 up to 5 to 1. Proper was the next best backed horse in the race, the support he received closing the odds back from 6 to 1 to 5 to 1, while both Major Daingerfield and Africander went back in the betting, closing at 30 to 1 and 50 to 1 respectively.

When the call for the post was sounded it caused vastly more commotion in the scuffle of the grand stand and field stand visitors for places from which to view the race than it did in the betting ring, where, in spite of the fact that betting had been in progress from the moment that the crowd gathered, speculation still went on until the call "they're off." Getting away from the paddock, Irish Lad, who, from the fact that he was the real top weight in the race, was entitled to first position, went to it handily, and a stable attendant had to take hold of him. Hermis then took the lead in the parade past the stand, while Irish Lad dropped back into fourth place, Major Daingerfield and Proper following. As the horses went to the post the watching crowd commented on the fact that of the six runners only two ran unhooded, these being Proper and The Picket. Irish Lad was equipped for the first time that racegoers have been familiar with his qualities, and wonder was expressed. At the post the horses lined up with Irish Lad on the rail, Major Daingerfield second, Proper third, Africander fourth, The Picket fifth, and Hermis on the extreme outside. It was probably the first time the six horses wheeled and turned before they came up head and head to the barrier. At the first effort, however, all were straight, Starter Fitzgerald shouting "Come on! Come on!" spring the starting gate and sent the field away to a fine, level start.

Irish Lad broke on the rail, broke well and with all his old speed, but Hermis from the first stride took command, and before cutting across, outraced his field even while crossing the track, and before the stand was reached for the first time, Hermis in front, leading by a good length, with Irish Lad second, a neck before The Picket, third, with Proper fourth, and Africander fifth, the six made full sight of the watching thousands at the first eighth pole, was the signal for such an outbreak of enthusiasm as probably no Suburban Handicap in the past has ever experienced. As Hermis raced to the front with the speed of a quarter horse, cries of "Hermis!" filled the air, and never for an instant until Hermis had galloped home first did the cries abate. They were nicely balanced for a period by the shouts of partisans of Irish Lad and The Picket, but for the last two minutes and five seconds of the Suburban Handicap journey "Hermis, Hermis!" was the deafening cry upon all sides.

HERMIS KEPT TO THE RAIL.

Passing the stand for the first time Redfern, who rode *Hermis*, had taken the rail and lay so close to it that there was not a possible chance for any of the other runners to take his position except by going around him. Irish Lad was second, fighting for his head, while Shaw, who rode him, leaned back with a steadying pull which failed to succeed in keeping The Picket then being third, going free and strong, while Helgeson even then was handriding his mount's horse to keep the position. Proper was fourth and Africander fifth at this point, but only the first three really ran the race, the others contenting ing so far back in the first eighth of a mile that as the race was run, none but the leaders were in position to affect it. Around the paddock turn, Hermis, skinning the rail led by two lengths, Irish Lad at the pole, passing the point which he was expected to stop, he was going as strong as he was at the head of the stretch. For a few strides at the last eighth Redfern sat down and rode the chestnut horse to make assurance doubly sure, but within the last sixteenth of a mile Hermis had the race so safe with his nearest competitors driving hard after him that the jockey eased up on the reckless pace that was made, while Hermis romped on gaily in front. The Picket then being third, a scant length in front of Irish Lad. When they ran for the home run, Hermis, still with his head in the air and Redfern sitting back on him, was leading by three lengths, Irish Lad second, hips before the Picket, who was coming the stronger of the two, while the other horses were beaten.

Down the straight there was a horse race, but it was only for second place. Hermis with his advantage of three lengths at the head of the stretch never had to be let down for his best effort, and when the last furlong pole was passed