

HORSE SENSE



by GEORGE

PROBABLY the most widely used guide to finding a winner is the speed rating. If you have two or more horses that have raced together at some previous meeting entered in a race at the same track, carrying the same weights over the same distance, then in theory they should finish in exactly the same order.

This does not always happen of course, mainly because these exact conditions very rarely, if ever, apply. To compensate for this we have to make suitable allowances for the new conditions. For example: In a previous race horse A beat horse B by two lengths, giving horse B three pounds. Now they meet again with horse A giving horse B twelve pounds..

If we use a scale of weight allowance where three pounds equals one length, then horse B should beat horse A by one length. (Horse B needed a six-pound allowance to make up the two lengths he was originally defeated by, and three pounds to win by one length this time).

DISTANCE

Of course conditions other than weight could apply, which might alter these figures. For instance, they may be racing over a different distance — and then one would have to judge the particular horses on their performances over this new distance which they may never have raced together. Under such circumstances we have to judge them individually speed-wise and try and discover if they are better or worse animals over this new distance.

If, for example, horse A races over 5 furlongs at Epsom carrying nine stone and records a time of under one minute, then we would have to be careful assessing him over 6 furlongs at Ascot, for while Epsom is an extremely fast track, Ascot would be a deal slower, and with the extra furlong one might be doubtful of him staying the distance.

If on the other hand horse B had recorded a slightly better than average speed over 6 furlongs at Ascot, and he met horse A for the first time there, then it should be more reliable to back horse B providing there was no drastic change in the weights and other conditions.

● In the next issue I shall give a list of average allowances for weight, distance and speed if you want to use this system.

OLLY'S BRILLIANT BARGAIN for BOUTIQUE
AT
PADDY'S Lace, velvet long dresses, shawls etc of the twenties and thirties bric-a-brac
Paddy's market, Great Homer Street

All tied up in the docks

Shipowners shuffle the profits around

Since the container dispute began on Merseyside in March all the limelight has been carefully focused on the dockers and the small-time container outfits such as Heatons.

Not a mention of the companies that control the container business.

Heaton's and Craddock's haulage firms are the small fry. They aren't just middle-men doing a bit of container work on the side, and on the cheap — they are front men.

Behind Heaton's shelter the ship owners. Besides ships, the shipowners own the stevedoring companies, the container bases and the giant container consortiums as well as enjoying their own representation on port authorities and government bodies connected with transport and the docks.

In Liverpool four of the major stevedoring companies — employing nearly 6,000 dockers — are owned by the big shipping lines Furness Withy, Ocean Steamship and Cunard.

Inland ports

The shipowners also control major shareholdings in the container consortiums. Through these container empires the shipowners own the many containerbases throughout the country, all except one refusing to employ registered dock workers.

In their advertising the container companies love to describe their bases as 'inland ports' but they won't tolerate the idea of 'inland dockers' because organised dockers would tie their wage demands to the colossal increase in productivity and profits that comes with containers.

Overseas Containers Ltd (OCL) have a 47% interest in the Liverpool containerbase at Aintree, where as a result of strike action 200 registered dock workers will eventually be employed.

OCL hold substantial shareholdings in the other containerbases: Birmingham (50%); Manchester (50%); London East — Europe's largest container depot — (49.4%); Scotland (47%); Leeds (44%); and OCL also hold a 47.5% interest in the Containerbase Federation.

The Containerbase Federation controls all the bases, and looking at the other partners in the federation it's easy to see why the government were only too delighted to use the

WHO OWNS WHAT

THE STEVEDORING COMPANIES

West Coast is owned jointly by Cunard and Canadian Pacific; Liverpool Maritime Terminals is owned by Ocean Steamship and Unilever; Ocean Port Services is owned by Furness Withy and Ocean Steamship; and Port of Liverpool Stevedoring is owned by Furness Withy.

Furness Withy own stevedoring companies in Glasgow, London, Southampton and Hull, and have developed a neat way of putting dockers on the unattached register. They close down a stevedoring company in London, transferring the work to Southampton without increasing the number of dockers employed there. In that way the dock employers play off one port against another.

THE CONTAINER COMPANIES

Overseas Containers Ltd (OCL) — which runs six container ship lines — is owned jointly by Furness Withy, Ocean Steamship, P & O and Cayzer Irvine Investments. Atlantic Container Line (ACL) is owned by Cunard. Associated Container Transportation is owned jointly by Cunard companies, Ellerman Lines and Ben Line Steamers.

Industrial Relations Court against the dockers.

Alongside ACT, OCT P&O, and Coast Lines are the shareholdings of the British Rail Board, National Freight Corporation, Clyde Port Authority and the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

So Richard Marsh, who never missed an opportunity to castigate the dockers, is lined up against the dockers as well as the railwaymen.

The interests of the shipowners and government dovetail nicely together all along the line, and this interlocking interest is perfectly demonstrated by the directorships of Sir Andrew Crichton.

Shining example

Crichton is not only a director of P&O and OCL — he is also a director of the National Freight Corporation (a 'public' body) and vice chairman of the Port of London Authority and vice chairman of the British Transport Docks Board.

Only recently Merseyside had its own shining example of this intricate involvement of the shipowners and public authorities.

The mythmakers

The Daily Post and Echo bear the main responsibility for building up the myth locally that the docker is to blame for the port's troubles.

They do this by hanging on every word spoken, and every statement issued by the port employers association, the shipowners and the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

Their eagerness to put the employers' side and overlook the dockers might have something to do with their connections with the shipping and stevedoring companies.

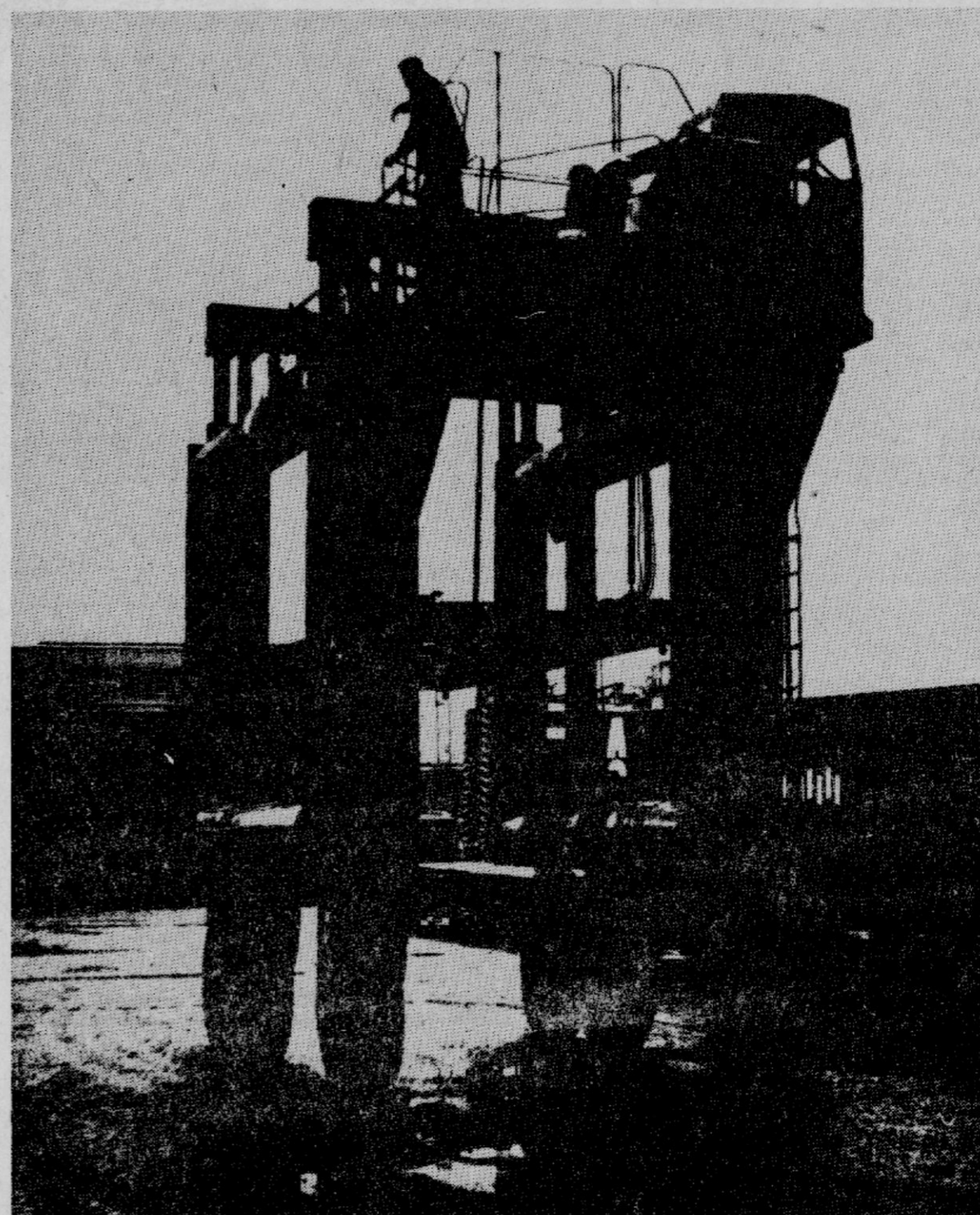
One of the Echo's former directors who died in April 1971 was Mr J C Taylor. Taylor was also a director of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, Cunard Steamship, West Coast Stevedoring and Threl

falls brewery.

The newly-appointed deputy chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company is Mr Eric Guthrie. Before joining the company he was a director of Royal Insurance — who just happen to be the major shareholders in the Post and Echo.

And a present director of the Echo is Mr H B Chrimes, who is also a director of Ocean Steamship (which part-owns West Coast Stevedoring, and Ocean Port Services) and Overseas Containers (Pensions) Limited.

So the Liverpool Echo is part of the big happy family comprising shipowners, stevedoring companies and the container consortiums



A straddle-carrier lumbers around Gladstone container terminal — all part of the threat to dockers' jobs.

The ill-fated Mersey Docks and Harbour Board crashed because the shipowners and local industrialists who sat on it kept the port charges ridiculously low to favour their own commercial interests.

When one MP commented that the dividing line between 'criminality and culpability' was thin, the government was forced to act and put the boot behind most of the Board's members.

Now port charges have shot up, and Liverpool has become one of the country's most prosperous ports.

But the lament of the port employers is still the same. Times are bad. And bad because of the troublesome docker.

Their complaints cover up another story. Just as the old Dock Board did, the shipowners keep cargo-handling rates at rock-bottom, putting the stevedoring companies in a 'shaky' position financially.

Their business logic is that it would be insane to show a profit in the one section of the industry where there is a militant group of workers capable of using profits as ammunition for higher wages, a shorter working week and longer holidays.

So the profits are made by the ultimate holding companies for the entire cargo-moving operations — the shipowners.

In his annual report for 1970 the

chairman of Ocean Steamship talked sadly about the last decade being a poor one for shipping.

Ocean Steamship profits for 1969 were a mere £10 million; in 1970 a paltry £6½ million; in 1971 a disappointing £7,200,000; and for 1972 the forecast is a dismal £8 million. Set against those figures the dockers' target of £60 for a 20-hour week is a modest one.

Swallowed up

Cunard Profits in 1969 and 1970 were £3,210,000 and £2,000,000, and Furness Withy collected £6,233,000 in 1969 and nearly £4 million in 1970. The small losses of the stevedoring companies and the container firms are swallowed up in the hefty overall profits.

The shipowners' tactics are obvious. First move the profits away from the dockers — recording losses for the companies that directly employ them, and secondly, move the container-handling out of reach of the dockers so that eventually the militant dockers are reduced to a handful of men.

That is what the dockers are fighting.

by BOB DANIELS

The moneymakers

Mr Ford Geddes is group chairman of the P & O shipping line. IN April the Strick Line — a subsidiary of P & O — announced 79 redundancies, and a company spokesman said more were on the way.

Mr Geddes commented quite cheerfully: "Regrettably, developments such as this are inevitable if the group is to improve its financial position. They come as a necessary and

continuing part of our re-organisation which is aimed at our increased efficiency."

On the same day Mr Kerry St. Johnstone, director of Overseas Containers Ltd, and of Ocean Steamship, was talking to the Journal of Commerce about the effect of containers on conventional methods of handling cargo "In the end, of course, the real question is who makes the most money out of it."