

RACEGOERS AWAIT JAMAICA'S OPENING

Plant in Splendid Shape for Start of Local Season on Thursday.

New York racegoers have been restive for the last month or so while the sport has been flourishing in Maryland, but the period of probation is nearly over, and on next Thursday the Metropolitan Jockey Club will set the local season in motion at Jamaica. The meeting will last for nine days and will be followed by six more days of racing after Belmont Park has had its innings with a Spring meeting that will last for nineteen racing days.

There have been moments of doubt during the strenuous Winter as to whether the coming season would come up to the standard of its immediate predecessors. Transportation difficulties were hinted at, and many owners have been so wrapped up in war service that a reduction of interest might reasonably be looked for. These gloomy forebodings all disappeared with the coming of Spring.

Horses found little difficulty in reaching Maryland and Kentucky, while arrangements have been made to have the leading thoroughbreds shipped to Jamaica in time for the principal events. Owners now have their war duties under control, and though many of the younger men will be at the front, it is fairly well assured that there will be a large turnout of the turf leaders at Jamaica, and that these will be increased in a great measure when Pimlico ends on Friday.

There are indications that the season may be even more successful than that of 1917. Several Canadian owners have entered the list since racing in the Dominion has been abandoned. They have taken to the sport in no half-hearted way, and with no opposition across the border it is a certainty that the fields will be larger. The liability of two-year-olds to buck their shins may keep the juvenile events down a little just now, but the Maryland campaign has put the all-aged horses in trim and a continuance of the large fields that have been the vogue at Pimlico may be expected.

Contrary to general opinion, the trainers insist that the severe Winter was of great benefit to the horses in their charge. The cold served to stamp out the diseases that frequently attack thoroughbreds early in the season, while the fine open Spring has given plenty of opportunity to prepare the cracks for their stake and handicap engagements.

Jamaica Plant Ready.

W. C. Edwards, Racing Secretary for the Metropolitan Jockey Club, talked enthusiastically yesterday over the prospects for Jamaica. The plant is in excellent shape, as work was started a month earlier than usual to offset labor

trouble. The track itself is lightning fast, as proved by the fact that one of the candidates for the Paumonok, the opening feature, worked six furlongs one day last week in 1:13. There was little in the way of improvements to the stands, as these were furbished up last season.

For months past the management has been busy refusing application for stable room, and Secretary Edwards said that not only were all the stalls engaged, but that twice the number at the track could have been disposed of. There will be no trouble on this account, however, as all the owners will be accommodated either at Belmont Park or at Aqueduct.

Many who have been racing in Maryland will desert Pimlico in order to be in at the opening of Jamaica. A trainload, carrying about 100 horses, left Baltimore yesterday, and these will all arrive in time to have gallops before next Thursday.

One of the largest stables at the track is that of John Sanford, who has engaged accommodation for thirty-two thoroughbreds. The care of these will be shared by W. J. Young and Preston Burch. The horses of James Butler are also in evidence, and the cherry and white is almost sure to be seen on the opening day. Willis Sharp Kilmer already has twenty-two at Jamaica and sixteen more are coming from Kentucky, which will have to find stable room at Aqueduct.

Ross to Ship Stable.

Fifteen horses owned by the late H. C. Hallenbeck are at Jamaica, and these will be raced by his son, John Hallenbeck. The large stable of the Canadian owner, J. K. L. Ross, will be shipped from Pimlico, and one of these is the great Cudgel, which is named with Omar Khayyam for the Kings County Handicap next Saturday. Walter J. Salmon, a young owner who has recently secured Eugene Wayland as trainer, has engaged eight stalls. His two-year-olds are doing well, and among them is a colt by the French sire Sardanapale, of which great things are expected.

Phil Chinn, the Kentucky sportsman, is expected tomorrow with a good-sized string, some of which are believed to be owned by John A. Drake, who years ago raced a pretentious stable with Charles G. Gates. There is a newcomer from the West in C. E. Mickelwaite, who has been accommodated with five stalls. James Fitzsimmons has a large public stable, including the horses of H. L. Pratt, and some of the others who will have stable room at the track with the number of stalls allotted are:

Beverwyck Stable, 12; A. A. Reilly, 6; Andy Blakely, 12; Sandy McNaughton, 6; W. C. Clancy, 5; E. Soule, 8; Potomac Stable, 15; Cleveland Stable, 6; J. W. McClelland, 9; W. L. Oliver, 11; Herbert P. Gardner, 11; Henry Waterson, 11; Dave Gideon, 9, and A. Clopton, 3.

It was impossible yesterday to get any idea of the probable starters for the Paumonok Handicap at six furlongs, which will be the opening day feature, but it was whispered that two old favorites would be among the starters—Andrew Miller's Roamer and James Butler's High Noon. On Saturday the best handicap horses will be asked to go a mile and a sixteenth in the Kings County Handicap. This may provide a real treat, as Omar Khayyam and his Western conqueror are among those entered.

Expect a Record Crowd.

Arrangements have been made to handle a record crowd on the opening day. These have been complicated by the necessity of collecting the war tax on admissions, but all is now smoothed out, and only fine weather is necessary to insure a banner opening of the sport. The daylight saving scheme will not affect the time of starting the races, which will be 2:30 o'clock, allowing plenty of time for automobile parties to get home to dinner in daylight.

Owners who have horses quartered at the old Gravesend track have been worried by rumors that the plant may be taken over by the Government for war purposes in the near future. The property was examined not long ago by a military delegation, and it is believed that the proximity of the track to the Bush stores may render it decidedly useful to the Government. Even if turned over to the military authorities the owners and trainers hope to continue using the track for training purposes by stabling their horses at Parkway and in private stables in the neighborhood.

A fine lot of two-year-olds have been rendered ineligible for stake races because of the death of H. C. Hallenbeck, who failed to file a partnership clause with the Jockey Club. His son, John Hallenbeck, will race these youngsters in the overnight events at Jamaica. One of the two-year-olds is Golden King, a son of Star Shoot and King's Daughter, and John E. Madden is a half owner of this promising colt.

Herbert P. Gardner will be a new name in racing this season. He is a young broom manufacturer of Amsterdam, N. Y., who last year raced one

horse under the name of the Crown Stable. This season he has about a dozen horses, including some promising two-year-olds, and will race them under his own name with Jack O'Brien as trainer.

Frank Davitt's Fanny Meehan, one of the juvenile sensations in Maryland, is already at the Jamaica track and is being trained for the Colorado and other two-year-old stakes. The best of the Whitney, Kilmer, and Belmont youngsters are entered for these stakes, and Fanny will receive a real test.

A. McL. Earlocker, Secretary of the Saratoga Association, has announced that entries for the four principle steeplechase stakes, which closed early in the week, showed that this branch of the sport would be fully up to the high standard of the past. All the prominent owners have named their best jumpers.

Weldship, which was the leading fencer in 1916 and 1917, has again been named by Edward M. Weld, who also will be represented by St. Charlcote, one of the best of last season. An old champion, Blankenburg, will attempt to come back. He has recovered from his lameness and has been nominated by Archibald Barklie.

Mrs. Grant Hugh Browne has named two good imported ones of quality in Fair Mac and Moonlight II., while William A. Prime's entry contains horses brought from abroad, with Silver Dart perhaps the best.

Ral Parr will be well represented with Robert Oliver, Captain Parr, and Shannon River, and there will be considerable interest in the appearance of the Whitney castoff, Hwfa, through the field, as this son of Hamburg narrowly missed being a good horse on the flat.

The United Hunts Racing Association, which will stage its annual Spring meeting at Belmont Park Terminal Saturday, May 25, announces that entries for the Great United Hunts Steeplechase will close next Wednesday. This five-thousand-dollar event is one of the sportiest of the steeplechase type in America, and most of the prominent owners will show their colors in this test. Another of the special features at the Terminal meet will be the Double Event, a five-thousand-dollar race, which usually results in one of the stiffest contests of the timber-topping type.