

Twenty Yearlings Die

Tragic Walnut Hall Farm Fire

Loss Includes Six By Florlis, Two By Adios, Two Star's Prides, Two Coffee Breaks, A Tar Heel

DONERAIL, Ky., June 21—A devastating fire destroyed 19 of Walnut Hall Farm's prime yearlings when lightning apparently struck a yearling barn during a flash storm at about 6 o'clock tonight at the world famous Standardbred breeding farm. One outside-owned yearling and a broodmare in a nearby paddock also were lost.

The relatively new yearling barn became a flaming inferno according to one witness, who said, "the barn exploded immediately after lightning struck." There were no survivors in the barn as caretakers on the farm had no possible chance to get to the horses.

Fayette County firemen, who had no hope of saving the structure, did contain the blaze from spreading to another yearling barn about 40 yards away. Ironically, there were no horses in this barn.

To add to the tragic turn of events the group of 20 ill-fated yearlings were placed in the barn only today, preparatory to being led to pony in coming weeks.

Col. and Mrs. H. W. Nichols, Jr., owners of the famed nursery which has been in one family for 75 years, estimated the yearlings were worth about \$300,000 based on prices from last year's sale. The barn was valued at \$50,000. The Walnut Hall Farm 1966 yearling crop averaged \$9,598 for 68 head.

Col. Nichols said the yearlings represented "the heart of Walnut Hall Farm's 84 yearlings" scheduled to be sold at this fall's Tattersalls Sale. He added, "the loss is not only significant to Walnut Hall but also to the sport."

Some of the "prime" yearlings who were expected to give Walnut Hall Farm another tremendous fall sale included a Florlis half-brother to the 1966 Hambletonian winner Kerry Way; a Florlis-Impish three-quarter brother to the top stakes colt trotter Pay Dirt; a Florlis-Ilo Hanover half-sister to Impish, 2, 1:58.3, the sport's all-time fastest juvenile trotter; a full-sister to Adios H., p, 1:57.4 and Mighty Ad, p, 2, 2:00; a half-brother to Frisco Rebel, p, 2:00 and Reba Frisco, p, 1:59.3—she the dam of Reba Byrd, p, 1:58.3; and a half-sister to Georgack's Victor, p, 1:59.1.

Stallions represented in the loss of 14 colts and six fillies were the Farm's only two from the last crop by Adios; six of Walnut Hall's 11 Florlis yearlings; the only two sired by Star's Pride; one of two by Tar Heel; two from the first crop by Walnut Hall Farm's young pacing stallion Coffee Break; two by Newport Admiral; two by Saboteur; and one each by The Intruder, Uncle Sam and Adios Paul.

Perhaps the biggest blow of all was the loss of the six Florlis yearlings. The young trotting stallion, whose first crop is racing this season, was represented by 20 foals in the 1966 Tattersalls Sale and this large group averaged a strong \$7,585—tops last year among all first-time sires at Tattersalls. The Farm has but five Florlis yearlings left to sell.

Loss to the entire Standardbred sport, both racing and breeding, is particularly severe in the case of three of the Florlis yearlings. Believed, by Florlis-Beloved, was the first colt foal out of the dam of Hambletonian winner Kerry Way. Florilo, the filly by Florlis out of Ilo Hanover, is a tremendous loss not only to racing, but to the broodmare ranks. Her dam Ilo Hanover is now 21 years of age and will not have many more. Florish, the colt by Florlis out of Impish, is the first colt foal out of the World Champion since Pay Dirt—who won the Elbridge Gerry Trot Stake last Saturday at Monticello Raceway.

Following is a complete list of the yearlings who died in the fire:

By Florlis-Believed, bc, dam Beloved, by Rodney; Peace Treaty, brc, dam Darn Tilly, by Darnley; Florin, chc, dam Demonalee, by Demon Hanover; Florilo, chf, dam Ilo Hanover, by Nibble Hanover; Florish, bc, dam Impish, by The Intruder; Jingle Jim, bc, dam Jingle Hanover, by Hickory Smoke.

By Newport Admiral-Gallopade, bf, dam Gallop Home, by Oscar Rotan; Navigator, bc, dam Reba Hanover, by Billy Direct.

By Saboteur-Shabunder, bc, dam Cornish Hen, by Scotland; Star Raider, chc, dam Scotch Valley Star, by Scotch Valley.

By Coffee Break-Kavanaugh, bc, dam Lola Byrd, by Poplar Byrd.

By Star's Pride-Among The Stars, brc, dam Leading Lassie, by Scotland; Misty Pride, bf, dam, Miss Flora, by Florican.

By Tar Heel-Carolina Judy, blf, dam Little Miss Judy, by King's Counsel.

By Adios-Tai Pan, bc, dam Meadow Gloria, by Tar Heel; Adios Nila, bf, dam Nila Mite, by Nibble Hanover.

By The Intruder-The Immortal, bc, dam Salome Hanover, by Nibble Hanover.

By Uncle Sam-Anchor, bc, dam Miss Greer, by Nibble Hanover.

By Adios Paul-Padre, bc, dam Jo Nunn, by Scottish Pence.

Owned by the C&M Stable of Archbold, Ohio, the yearling by Coffee Break-Ante Bellum, by Jimmy Creed.

The broodmare, Sedge Hanover, owned by William McCarty, Lillard Curry, Dr. J. Fred Arnold, and John McHutchison.

Five of the yearlings lost in the fire were being kept on Walnut Hall Farm in a partnership capacity. They were Gallopade, owned in partnership with Mrs. Russell Van Blaricum, North Vernon, Ind.; Padre, in partnership with Bob Jewell, Wilmore, Ky.; Anchor, with Evans Cincinnati and Harkness Edwards, Lexington; Star Raider, owned in partnership with Paul L. Nelson, Murphreesboro, Tenn.