

Coalfields Pit Horse Derby Won by Contented.

**GRAND MILITARY MARCH
PRECEDES EVENT.**

**THOUSANDS FLOCK TO
ASSIST CESSNOCK AND
KURRI HOSPITALS.**

Cessnock was en fetè last night, when thousands of citizens turned out to cheer the troops engaged in the procession prior to the running of the Pit Horse Derby.

Long before the arrival of the troops, Vincent Street was crowded with eager sight-seers, and at the intersection in Cooper Street and North Avenue a dense crowd congregated. The military parade marched off, led by a battery of field artillery. Then, reminiscent of a Highland brigade, the skirl of the pipes and the glittering bayonets heralded the approach of the infantry. These were mostly young soldiers, but Brigadier Burrows must have felt proud at their splendid appearance and

splendid appearance and superb march discipline. The applause of the people apparently stirred the young soldiers, and induced them to put forward their best effort. Many old soldiers on the sidewalk, who had been through intensive training, both in the Imperial Army and in the A.I.F., complimented, and applauded, the marching. The men were able to keep step from the head of the column to the rear with ease, owing to the fact that the Cessnock Town Band joined in the centre of the column.

THERE was some hilarity when the two steamrollers were seen stately gliding at the rear of the procession, bedecked with bunting, and ready to create a new record in the first steamroller race.

After the march, officers and men expressed their deep appreciation for the hospitality which had been accorded them during their brief visit to Cessnock.

They had been entertained at the Empire Theatre by the Superintendent of Cessnock and Kurri Theatres (Mr. J. C. Smith), and were highly appreciative of his thoughtfulness.

The Baths were open to the men, and they practically had the freedom of the town.

One outstanding fact is that although they were young soldiers, there was no abuse of the freedom offered. It spoke well for the training they have received from their officers and instructors.

These parades are of inestimable value to this neighbourhood. It brings home to the people—far away from the

home to the people—far away from the fighting front—the fact that Australia is still at war, and the war effort must be maintained to keep these young soldiers supplied with munitions and equipment to bring the war to as speed a conclusion as possible. When one looked at the youngsters and realised that these lads, in the bloom of their youth, were prepared to risk their lives and endure hardships to preserve the freedom of Australia, the workers on the home front should be impressed with the necessity of doing their share in the war effort.



JACK THOMPSON, who rode Contented, the winner of the Pit Horse Derby at Cessnock last night.

During the afternoon, four prominent Sydney jockeys arrived to ride in the final of the Pit Horse Derby. They were Jack O'Sullivan, George Moore, Jack Thompson and Harold Darke. They were accompanied by old-time jockey Alby Callinan and the Member for Randwick (Mr. W. Gollan, M.L.A.).

Mr. Gollan had been in close touch with officials of the Rotary Club, who were organising the Pit Horse Derby, for some time, and, with Mr. Callinan, was responsible for the presence of the well-known jockeys.

J. Thompson, G. Moore and H. Darke are of a rather retiring disposition, but made many friends.

Jack O'Sullivan has a bright career

made many friends.

Jack O'Sullivan has a bright personality, and was inundated with congratulations by one or two Cessnockites who backed Panchio on Saturday. Among these was Harry Oldfield, who was seen giving O'Sullivan a very hearty handshake.

These lads from Sydney thoroughly enjoyed their trip to Cessnock, and the novelty of riding in the final of the Pitt Horse Derby.

Before he left Cessnock this morning, Mr. Callinan was heartily thanked by Rotarians for the help he had given to their charitable and patriotic ventures.

The following committee of the Cessnock Rotary Club capably handled the arrangements: Messrs. R. E. Smith, H. Lett, Bill Brown, with J. C. Smith Sec.

Looking over some of the horses engaged in the Cessnock classic, one could not help wondering if some of them had ever pulled a skip of coal. They were in perfect condition, and their coats shone with the care and attention that had been given them by their grooms.

The winner, "Contented," ridden by J. Thompson, had a head suggestive of a strain of bloodstock. Whether a wheeler at Stockrington No. 2 has ever driven him through a brattice door might be questioned.

When "On the Nose" lined up at the barrier, he began to play up like an outlaw, and some of his supporters were of the opinion that a little too much "sting" had been applied. O'Sullivan had a torrid time with him, and although there was only a small field, the starter had difficulty in getting them away to an even break. As the race is only about 350 yards, the expert jockeys from Sydney realised that first out of the barrier was likely to be first home. When "On the Nose" was eventually persuaded to face up, the field was dispatched, and he was badly left.

Superintendent of J. and A. Brown's Abermain-Seaham Collieries, Mr. James Johnstone, was all smiles when Contented sailed past the post the winner of the 1944 Coalfields Derby. It is understood that he punished the books by backing the horse outright before

by backing the horse outright before any heats were run, and got the nice price of 12's for his investment. **Ja**

and A. Brown Collieries certainly had the final "sewn-up," as they had three representatives among the four starters and filled the places.

"Contented" hails from Stockrington No. 2 colliery, of which J. Johnstone Jnr. is manager; Happy Days from Richmond Main (Athol Lightfoot manager) and Bad Language from Stanford Main No. 2 (I. Evans manager).

There was a huge, enthusiastic crowd at the Showground to watch the fine evening's sport, and the Pit Horse Derby is certain to become an annual fixture.

During the evening, there was a fine rhythmic display by the National Fitness girls of Cessnock, who were coached by Miss N. Pope.

An added attraction to the programme this year was the steamroller championship. Cessnock Council's "Leaping Lena," driven by J. Duff, narrowly beat Kearsley Shire Council's Flying Scotsman, driven by G. Craft.

National Fitness girls gave an interesting display.

Results:—

First heat, about 350 yards: Contented, entered by Stockrington No. 2 colliery (J. Corke) 1; Scraper Loader, Millfield (J. Smith) 2; Shortweight, Neath (A. Gracie) 3. Length; two lengths. 20secs.

Second heat: On the Nose, Bellbird (Andy Colvin) 1; Moore Beer, Aberdare (P. Watson) 2; Model, Abermain No. 2 (A. Gregg) 3. Five lengths, length; 22secs.

Third heat: Happy Days, Richmond Main (A. Latta) 1; Big Noise, Kalingo (F. Jones) 2; Good Road, Stockrington No. 1 (J. Corke) 3. Six lengths; length. 20secs.

Fourth heat: Bad Language, Stanford Main No. 2 (M. Beckett); Garnishee, Maitland Main (B. Dow) 2; Re-open, Aberdare Central (F. Pont) 3. Two lengths: head. 21secs.

Aberdare Central (P. Font) 2. Two lengths; head, 21secs.

Final: Contented (J. Thompson) 1, Happy Days (G. Moore) 2; Bad Language (H. Darke) 3. Length; same. On the Nose was slow away, 20secs.

Exhibition Trots.—No. 1: K. Smiles' Phoenix Lady, scr. (driven by D. Craft) 1; S. Aggett's Real Ribbon, 84 bhd. (Aggett) 2; W. Williams' Red Dixie, 36 bhd. (J. Jackson) 3. $1\frac{1}{2}$ lengths; length, 2.26secs. No. 2: Real Ribbon (Aggett) and Phoenix Lady (Craft), equal, 1; Golden Joe (A. Brown) 3. Dead-heat, a length. Time, 2.24secs.

Children's awards.—Billy cart: Bruce Slade and Kevin Henderson. Scooter: Bruce Lockwood. Bicycle: Ken Smith and Bill Chalmers. Ram: Joyce O'Connell and Jean Crowe.