

# HOODOOS ON BEAU VITE

## Can The Favourite Win The Melbourne Cup?

"I don't think Beau Vite will win," says the author of this article on Melbourne Cup chances. He has been checking over the records of the classic race, and has found so many "hoodoos" he's become pessimistic. However, the first New Zealand bred-and-owned horse to start favourite in the Melbourne Cup is probably not worried by the same superstitions as his followers. In any case, a really close study of the records proves that no horse can win, which proves nothing. All we can be sure of is that Beau Vite will win if a million and a-half New Zealanders can wish him home first:

ON November 5—the historical "first Tuesday"—at 3.30 p.m., the tapes will be released for the start of the richest and most fascinating turf event in the Southern Hemisphere. About three and a-half minutes later another page will be written into the history of the big two-mile race for the Melbourne Cup.

There IS such a thing as a racecourse certainty—the public is always on the favourite. For the first time in the history of the Melbourne Cup it seems certain that a New Zealand bred and owned horse will start favourite. By virtue of his record-breaking Metropolitan win and his thrilling victory in the Craven Plate, Beau Vite takes pride of place in the betting market. A re-handicap of 6lb. also makes him the top weight with 9st. 7lb.

It is interesting to delve into the past and find what "hoodoos" may hamper our champion's triumph.

### The Double Win

By winning the Metropolitan, Beau Vite, the superstitious will say, saddled himself with a hoodoo; only once since 1866 has a horse won the Metropolitan and Melbourne Cup in the same year. Tim Whiffler did it in 1867. Since then the Metropolitan winner has finished second three times and third four times in the Cup. The nearest in recent years was Nightmarch (in 1929) who ran second in Sydney and went on to Melbourne to win the Cup by three lengths from Paquito and Phar Lap.

Not quite so big a hurdle is being sent out favourite, but in the 79 Melbourne Cups the public's first choice has let them down on no fewer than 62 occasions. Of the 17 who did win five broke the steel in the last ten years.

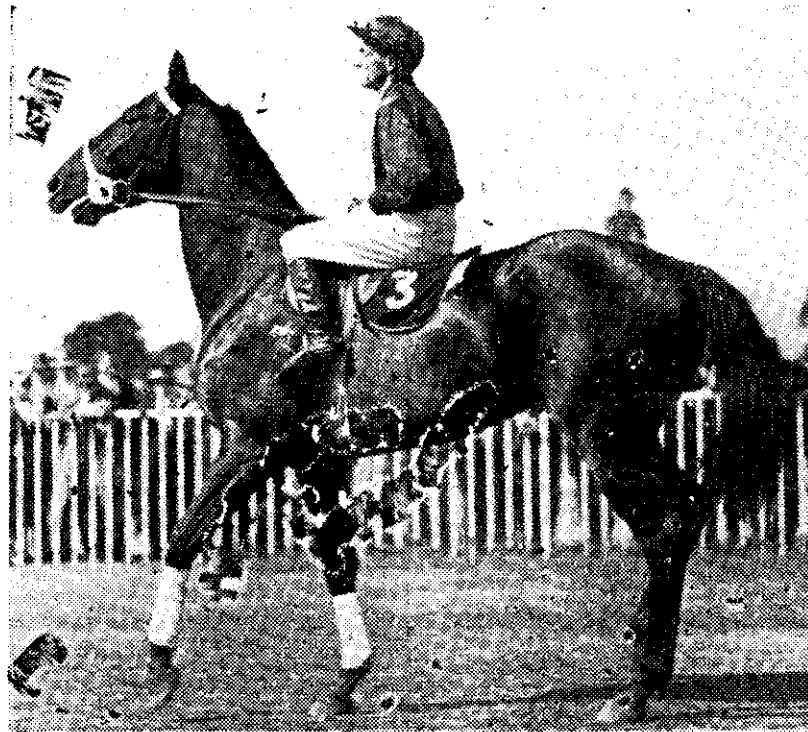
Phar Lap in 1930 (the only odds-on winner);

Peter Pan (1932);

Marabou (1935);

and, ridden by the late Keith Voitre, The Trump (1937) and Rivette (1939).

Phar Lap holds an unusual record. In his first two appearances in 1929 and 1930 he was sent out at "even money" and "11 to 8 on" respectively. The nearest approach to these figures was the "6 to 4" against Duke Foote in 1912. (This means that a bettor had to place £11 to win £8.)



BEAU VITE

Green & Hahn photograph

### Heavy Weights

Carrying a big weight for two miles must slow down all but a super horse—and 9st. 7lbs. is a big weight. In fact it is so heavy that only on six occasions has a larger handicap been carried to victory:

Carbine holds pride of place with his tremendous 10.5 in 1890.

Archer in his second Cup in 1862 carried 10.2.

Poitrel in 1920 managed to win by half a length with an even 10 stone on his back.

Then come Phar Lap with 9.12 in 1930, Peter Pan 9.10 on a very heavy track in 1934, and Malua 9.9 in 1884.

So much for carrying a big weight; but Beau Vite has added to his burden of hoodoos by now claiming top weight. A glance at the figures shows that only seven top-weights have passed the post first. Worse still—on at least 60 times the horse at the top of the table has run unplaced!

### The Weights and Chances

Since Hall Mark won by a head from the unlucky Shadow King in 1933 no rider of a three-year-old has saluted the judge.

On 22 occasions the Cup has been won by horses of three years. Pandect and Lucrative and Tidal Wave are the tops of their age this season.

Four-year-olds have won 19 times. Since 1925 winners of this age have been Windbag, Statesman, Nightmarch, Phar Lap, Marabou, and Wotan. When Wotan won as a hundred-to-one shot in 1936 he established a New Zealand and Australian record of 3.21¼ for two miles. This record still stands.

It will be a sterling performance indeed if Beau Vite carries his 9.7 to victory. The only four-year-olds to win carrying nine stone or more have been Windbag with 9.2 in 1925, Nightmarch with 9.2 in 1929, Phar Lap with 9.12 in 1930, and two others before the beginning of the century.

Taking all things into consideration, Beau Vite has the public with him; but the history of the greatest two-mile handicap in the world is against him. Can he do it? I don't think he can; but your guess is as good as mine—What do you think?

—MONITOR



Did you MACLEAN your teeth to-day?



Of course we did

Make Macleans a daily habit and keep your teeth dazzling white. Macleans quickly removes stains and keeps the gums strong and healthy.

