

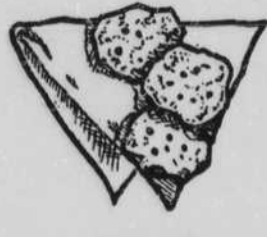
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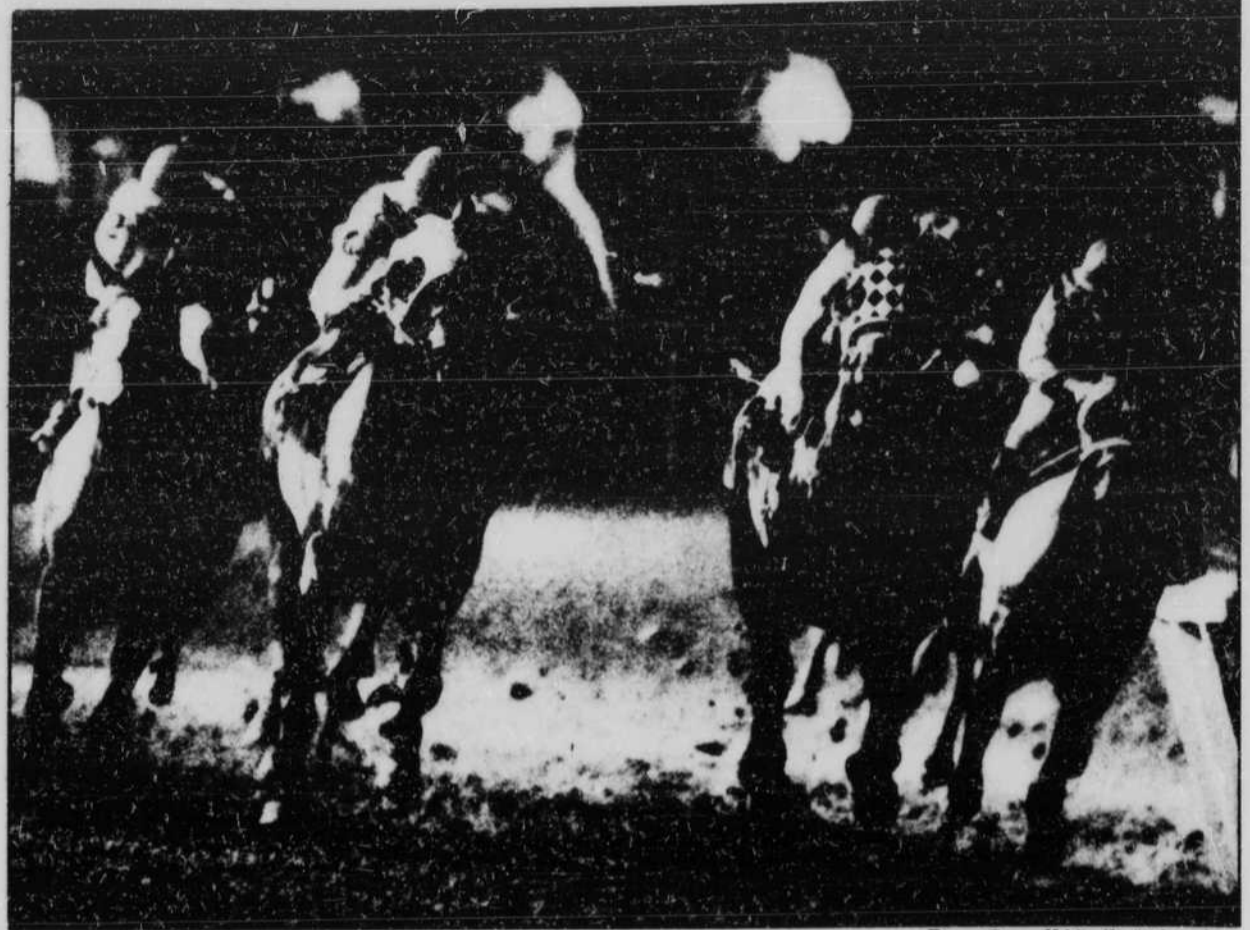
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Doug Carroll/ Daily Nebraskan

Wednesday night horse racing at the State Fair Park.

And they're off

## Horse races return to State Fair

By Jim Hanna  
Staff Reporter

Nebraska is not a gambling state. There is no state lottery, we have no casinos and even betting on a sports event is illegal.

For those who yearn to gamble,

there are really only two options in the state: play Bingo or operate a family farm.

Every autumn, however, gambling Lincolniters are provided with one additional outlet for their free-wheeling desires: Horse racing.

Last Friday, the horses came to State Fair Park. They will race there five days a week until Nov. 13. Post time is 7 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, 5 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. This is the first season of night racing in Lincoln.

Until last Friday, I had never been to the horse races, at least not as a bettor. I had been to the races with my parents a few times as a child but I didn't 'play the horses' as the veterans say.

My dad did encourage me to pick up discarded betting tickets and check to see if someone had accidentally thrown away a winner. I think it was part of a plot by my parents to keep me occupied while they had fun. I sifted through hundreds of dropped tickets and never found a winner — darn my tricky

Dad.

But that was years ago, when I was merely a boy. Friday night, I became a man.

It cost me \$28.

That breaks down into \$1 for parking and \$27 in futile bets. I proved myself quite the amateur.

I'll admit, I didn't really know what I was doing. I did not take the time to trace each horse's lineage, or research his training or even learn it's racing record. I did not care which horse ran well in what conditions or at what lengths. I did not invest in a racing form nor did I go down to the stables and quiz the jockeys as to their readiness.

Usually, I'd bet on the horse with the worst odds (I'm a sucker for the underdog) or the jockey with the bright orange silks (the orange was easy to follow through the race).

My ignorance cost me dearly. I bought a \$2 ticket in the first race. My horse came in dead last. I should have learned my lesson right then and stopped. But, like a

See **HORSES** on 13

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