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HORSE SENSE

Thoroughbred racing more complex than it appears

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Ten horses explode from the coo-coo clock gates at Lincoln's State Fair Park.

Announcer Charles Pinnell is barking the early, momentary developments in his South African accent and auctioneer banter.

Infectious hope spreads across the scatter-populated grandstand.

Truck drivers, school teachers, businessmen and even a Poet Laureate are gripping their race tickets like \$100 bills and lucky charms.

Senior-citizen couples stand up in back to get a clear view as the thoroughbreds make the turn. Two men trade yells in an off-time, jagged rap chorus: "Whip that horse! Go 8! Whip that horse! Go 8!"

A toddler with white, static-cling hair anticipates the stampede's arrival just outside the track fence. The leaders draw near and the youngster starts chasing the horses to the wire.

The blonde perched on the walking ladder snaps the photo finish. In that flash, ambition turns to disappointment for most.

The jockeys halt their horses, along with the prospects of many. The once-sprinting youngster angrily throws a fist at the long-gone horses as if he had just blown his rent.

Almost all the fervor disintegrates. Normal talk sounds mute compared to moments just before.

A small number of winners celebrate amidst the new silence and wait for Pinnell to liquidate their luck with the official results.

The scene of less fortunate stare at their betting forms. Before long the winners and the losers are up from their seats again. They form several single-file lines to cashiers as if they had just missed a bus.

And here we go again.



THOROUGHBRED RACING is a consistent annual draw at the Nebraska State Fair, attracting everyone from equine enthusiasts to casual gamblers.

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INSIDE:



We're caught in a trap ...

"Deathtrap," a comedy-thriller directed by Ina Marlowe, is currently being presented by the Nebraska Repertory Theater. And Daily Nebraskan writer Patrick Kelly is giving it a look. **PAGE 8**