

SYDENHAM REAL CENTRE FOR SPORT

Village Has Always Had a Splendid Record—Many Famous Races

Compared to larger centres, villages are always handicapped owing to the limited number of players to choose from, and Sydenham has been no exception, but in county football, hockey and baseball, Sydenham teams have always taken a leading place and the many trophies they have won are evidences that in sports Sydenham has not taken second place to any village in eastern Ontario.

Several Queen's students who were prominent in football and hockey did their first playing here. Among them were, Dr. Lloyd Buck in football, Dr. Walter Jaquith, who broke Queen's sports record, Johnnie Woodruff in hockey, and a number of others.

While at this season horse racing and other sporting events are being held, the older residents often recall incidents of long ago, such as trotting races on the ice and running races on the old half mile stretch in summer, when everybody who had a running horse tested his speed. The best local running horse in her time was Nell, known as the Amey mare, and she was never defeated. Then the troops trained annually at the old fair grounds in Kingston, races for cavalry horses were always in order and Nell, then owned by John Switzer, won her last race when sixteen years old. Shortly after that time when the troops arrived in Kingston for their annual training, the Sydenham troopers, whose good horses had previously won cavalry races, looked over the horses belonging to other regiments and discovered among the Cobourg lot a race horse brought to camp especially to win the best race. It so happened that the parish priest at Railton had a chestnut mare called Dido, and being fond of horseback riding, he rode her continually. Though this mare had been given trials on the Kingston track, few people knew her speed. During the night before the race, Billy Walsh, one of the Sydenham troopers who had a mare similar in color and appearance to Dido, rode out to Railton, exchanged horses while the good father was sleeping, rode back to his troop before daylight and that day Dido beat the Cobourg ringer and won the race. She was returned to Railton next night none the worse for her experience and the reverend father who was very popular and a good sport probably enjoyed the joke along with his many friends. Since the cars came on the scene, the good driving and saddle horses have been pushed aside, and for pleasure and speed everybody now depends on the cars, using the horse for work only.