# Talk about horse sense!

By PAUL DORSEY

If recollections of the Old West appeal to you, or if you just plain like horses, then cutting horse competition is something not to be missed.

Getting in a little practice Sunday for a meet coming up at his Ospringe area farm Aug. 11, Acton chiropractor Tom Thompson looks for all the world like he just moseyed in off the range.

He's wearing a cowboy hat, old jeans and boots, he's chewing tobacco and he's slapping a horsefly off his mare while a radio speaker perched atop a corral fence blares out a song about the good old days of Hank Williams and Patsy Cline.

From the clouds of dust to the cackling of hens nearby, this has got to be as close to the roots of competitive cutting as anyone's likely to get this side of the Continental Divide.

Out there where the buffalo roam, more than a century ago, cutting was something that simply had to be done. A cowboy's horse had to be specially trained to work with the rider, pick out the cow that's ready for branding, cut it loose from the herd and keep it running separately until it could be roped.

Speed, stamina and an inborn cow sense set the cutting horses apart from the thoroughbreds, equestrians and plain oldworkhorses. Compared to most, their abilities once the rider lets the reins drop are nothing short of amazing.

And if the cutting horse is the true star of today's increasingly popular competitions, then the rider must be the awestruck magician's assistant, guiding a little with the reins here, a bit with the knees there, and then sitting back to watch and admire along with the crowds lining the corral.

"It really is addictive," Thompson says, serving as one of two mounted "turn-back" men while Inglewood veterinarian Jim Henderson does some fancy cutting nearby. Founder of the annual Leathertown Cutting Show, Thompson plays host to the free Aug. 11 meet for which a number of local businesses have donated prize money. About 50 competitors from a wide area are expected to attend, bringing with them years of experienill see horses cutting cattle just like they did in the old days, but the competitions stop short of roping and branding. With a host of judges looking on, the horses must cut two or three different cows away from the herd during a two and a half minute time period.

Exactly how the horse goes about keeping the cut cow away from the herd is something to marvel at. The horse relies on instinct to anticipate the cow's every move, rapidly switching the position of its front hooves, darting to and fro to cut off the cow's escape routes and even turning in mid-air, every hop, skip and jump in conjunction with its rider.

The cutting horse owners have looked for the best stock, bred them accordingly and groomed and rehearsed them to the point of perfection. They know the horse that carries its head low and moves furtively toward the

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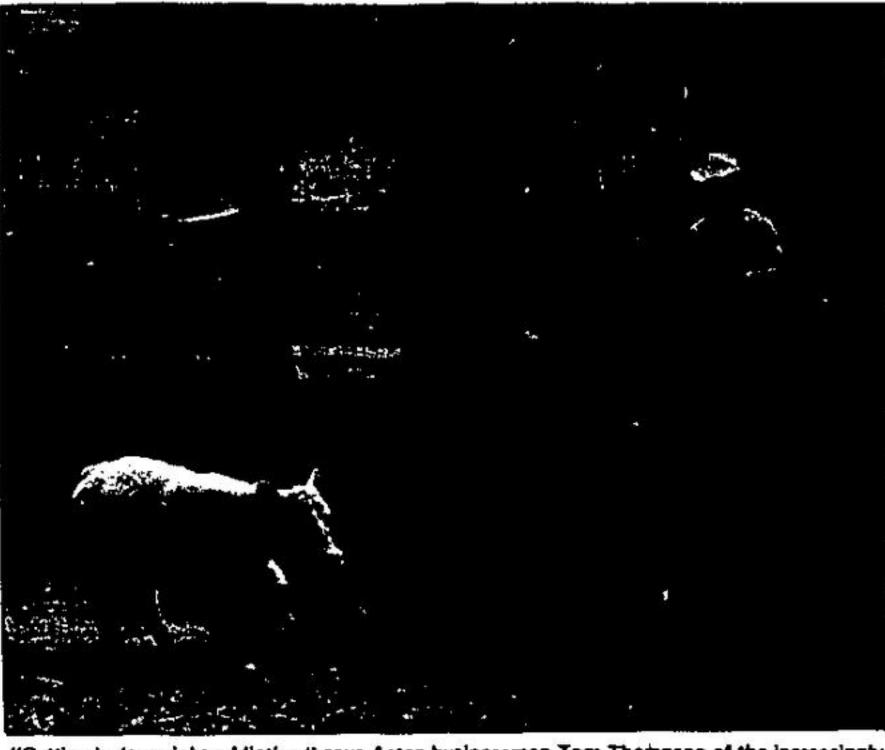
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"Cutting is downright addictive," says Acton businessman Tom Thompson of the increasingly popular sport that pits specially-trained cutting horses against a shy and slippery cow. Other area riders back Thompson's claim, and they'll be at his Ospringe area ranch August 11 to show their skills and learn from the pros in a free competition open to the public.

back men wait nearby astride their own mounts to keep the cow from dodging off to the far end of the corral, thus keeping the pace rapid.

While Thompson's farm will see some of the finest cutting horses in Canada and the northeast U.S. Aug. 11, the cream of the crop spend most of their time on the cutting circuit of the southern states. Cutting has its own Fort Worth-based magazine, the Cuttin' Hoss Chatter, and regularly sees hundreds

herd is the best bred for the job. Two turn- of thousands of dollars change hands for one horse. Thompson says he's seen individual cutting horses so valuable they need an armed guard round the clock.

> Local businesses helping out the Leathertown Cutting Show this year are Tyler Travel, Willow Lane Natural Foods, Acton IGA, Acton Photo and Camera, Acton Pharmacy, Beardmore, the olde Hide House, Shortill's Tack Shop, Country Mart, Biltmore Stetson Hats, Design Dynamics and Thompson Chiropractic Clinic.

# Town approves new homes for Park Ave. site

Last night Council approved a zoning bylaw change so developer Berislav Skoko can build four two-storey, semi-detached units on the northwest corner of Park Avenue and Mill St.

The lands currently have a three-units one-storey residential building which is aged and in disrepair, according to planning director Ian Keith in a report to council.

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Skoko proposed to tear down that building and replace it with two buildings with attached garages. The public meeting last night was held to see if there were any public objections to the rezoning. There

The change to Bylaw 1358 will allow an R3-3 Special zone for the lands to have a reduced lot frontage requirement from 35 feet to 30 feet as well as smaller front and rear yards. The proposed rezoning does not change the residential zoning.

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## Halton NDP chooses Flynn to carry banner

The Federal New Democratic Party Riding Association kicked off its election campaign Monday 29-year-old

night unanimously Kevin Flynn as its unseat incumbent Progres-Conservative MP Otto Jelinek.

"We're on the verge of an historic moment," campaign manager Doug Black told supporters at an Oakville union hall. "We are going to

a third or a quarter of the cost Otto has spent on his campaign." The Halton NDP

defeat Otto Jelinek at

has invested more than \$2,500 in Flynn's campaign. NDP Ontario

leader Bob Rae. guest speaker at the nomination meeting. praised Flynn as "a great candidate" but stressed that the battle must be won in the streets.

"We can only do so much, we goldentongued leaders, but you people are the



party," he said. "You've got to work for the victory. You've got to get out there knocking on

doors." The uncontested choice of Flynn as the riding's NDP

association would be women, should he be running a woman elected. candidate, but the Flynn, a 15-year focus of member of the NDP. prime Flynn's campaign has already made his will centre mark the for the Ward society

pay standards for municipal election. said.

politics, having run imple- council seat in the mentation of equal 1982 Oakville

Flynn's campaign will also concentrate on wooing Halton's undecided Liberal Conservative and who voters disenchanted their parties' Det-Black formances,



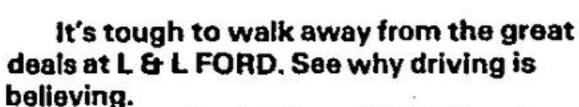
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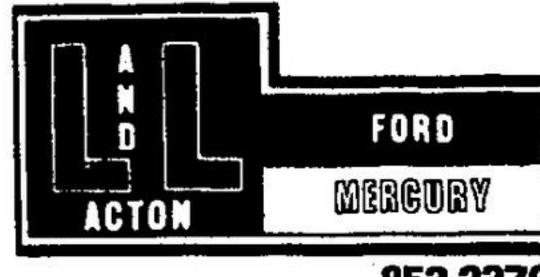
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