

Trotter sets new standard

Armbro Booth proved the fastest of the 24 2-year-old trotting colts that took part in three divisions of a \$31,600 Ontario Sires Stakes feature Saturday night at Barrie Raceway.

The colt, competing in the last split of the race, sped to a narrow head decision over pace-setting J.J.'s Penthouse in a mile timed in 2:08, the fastest clocking by a 2-year-old trotting colt over a half-mile track in Canada.

It was the second straight success for Armbro Booth in as many attempts this season. Three weeks ago, in a schooling race at Toronto's Greenwood, he had trotted a mile in 2:08 4/5, the best by a young trotter in the country over a five-eighths mile strip.

The colt, which was bought for \$22,000 at last fall's Canadian Standardbred Horse Society Yearling sale by the John Burns Stable of Milton and the Slabtown Farm of Croton, took to the sometimes difficult trotting gait like a duck to water.

A son of the very successful Ontario trotting sire Dream of Glory and the mare Armbro Tonia, he soon became the talk of the town during the winter while being trained by Burns and assistant Joe Currie.

Veteran driver Charlie Lawson was on the bike Saturday and said after the race that he was only worried when he heard the big steps of Brisco Herbert coming closer in the stretch. Brisco Herbert, highly touted after trotting an impressive 2:09 3/5 mile at London's Western Fair, was back in the pack but finished a game fourth. The colt, which was bought by Ruth Herbert of Lambeth for \$100,000 at the same sale last fall, was sick earlier this week.

J.J.'s Penthouse, a Surge Hanover colt driven by Paul Walker, set the pace in the fastest division and gave up the lead only reluctantly. Town Marshall, co-favorite with Armbro Booth, with Tom Strauss driving was third.

In the Stakes' first division—each split of the race had a purse of a little over \$10,400—Dave

Furness, assistant trainer in the powerful Ron Waples Stable, guided Turmeric, also sired by Dream of Glory, to a half length win over Sure Profit, in the time of 2:09.

The colt, which had already won a race in five previous starts this year, was never headed.

Sent to the Waples outfit in Toronto, Furness saw the colt for the first time last Wednesday when he trained him for last night's Stakes.

"He's a good gaited colt and all I had to do was just tap him at the wire when that other horse came closer," said Furness after while acknowledging that this was his first Stakes victory, "although I've won bigger purses."

Turmeric doubled his earnings to \$10,000 this season for the R. G. McGroup Ltd. of Bathurst, N.B. The colt's regular trainer is Archie McNeill who races mainly in the U.S. Waples, too, was in the U.S. on Saturday night, leaving Furness to come to Barrie and drive him.

Sure Profit, co-owned by driver Terry Kerr, raced behind the leader all the way but couldn't catch him. Kajases Kolt, driven by co-owner Carman Hie was third.

Most lop-sided victory came in the middle division when Kawartha Rex, driven by 23-year-old Robert Megens, slipped away from the field rounding the paddock turn to open up a 12 lengths advantage. He won by 10 1/2 lengths in the time of 2:10 4/5.

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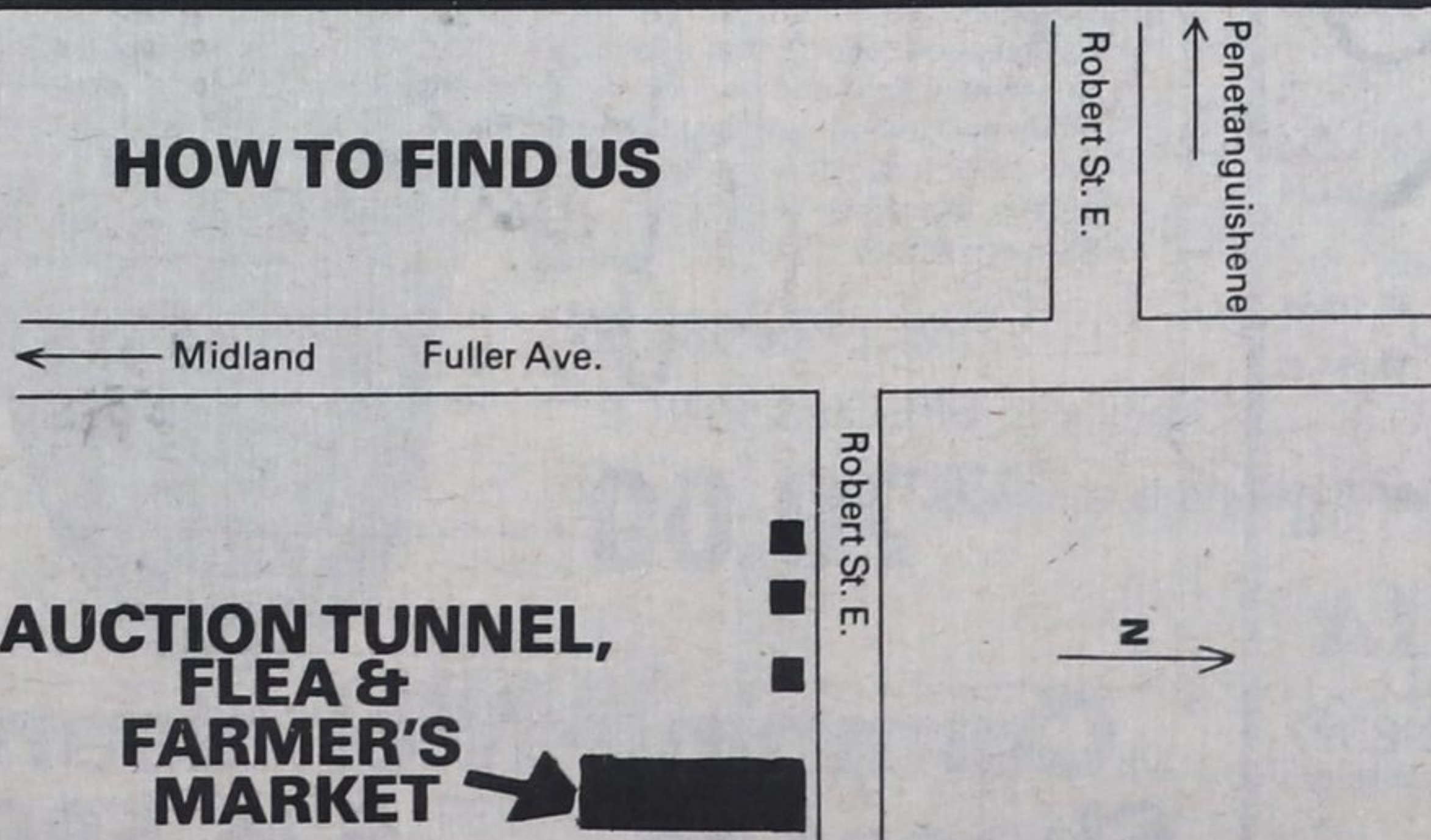
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