

8-YEAR-OLD "HARVEY WALLBANGER" HAS WON 20 OF 25 RACES SO FAR

Trained Buffalo Wins Races Against Horses

Like many cowboys, T.C. Thorstenson, Rozet, Wyo., likes to compete in races and rodeos in his spare time. However, instead of a horse, Thorstenson rides "Harvey Wallbanger", a 2,000 lb. buffalo that outraces and out-performs most horses.

Thorstenson and "Harvey Wallbanger" have appeared in races from Canada to Mexico and have won 20 of 25 races against horses. The 8-year-old buffalo is named after his father, who had a habit of crashing through walls.

Thorstenson, a rancher who broke horses for a living for 10 years, spends about a third of his time on the road with Harvey. "There are two or three other trained buffalo in North America, but Harvey is the only one that races competitively," says Thorstenson. "Most people have never seen a buffalo. About half of them come just to see a buffalo. The other half come to see Harvey win."

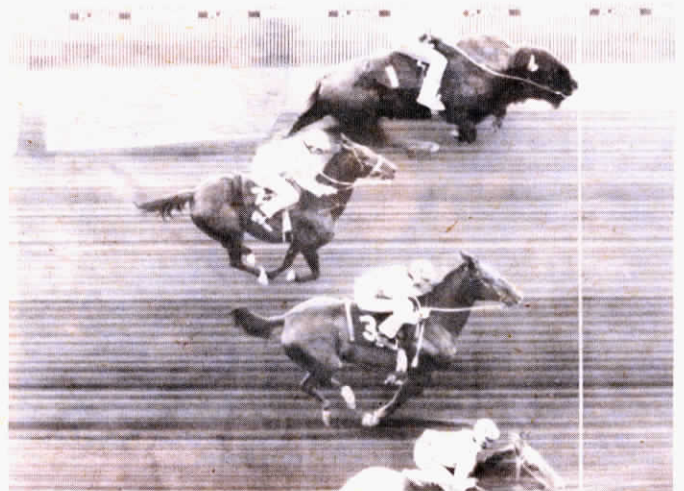
Thorstenson also owns a 2-year-old, 1,200 lb. buffalo named "Speedy Gambler", which he has trained to perform such tricks as bowing, playing dead, and allowing Harvey to stand on its back. "Speedy" entertains the crowds before Harvey races.

Thorstenson and Harvey race a maxi-

mum of 110 yards. "Most horses get nervous when they see the buffalo because of its quick movements and unusual sounds, so Harvey usually runs on the rail," says Thorstenson. "I use a bareback saddle pad with my feet alongside Harvey's back. There are no stirrups because Harvey is so big he fills the starting gate. Harvey gets a quicker start from a take-off than most horses. It's a lot different riding a buffalo because the saddle sits one to two feet farther back than it does on a horse due to the buffalo's big shoulders. Balance is the key to staying on top. I wear tennis shoe boots with cowboy boot tops so my heels won't dig into his back."

Thorstenson began raising Harvey in June, 1980, when he was a two-day old, 35-lb. orphan. Harvey's mother had been shot by a poacher. At the time, Thorstenson was working on a road gang for the Milwaukee Railroad. The baby buffalo required bottle feeding, so Thorstenson carried Harvey back and forth with him to work in his car for six months until he weighed 260 lbs. During this time, Harvey became used to life on the road.

Thorstenson began racing Harvey in 1985 when the racing staff at Energy Downs in Gillette, Wyo., heard about Harvey and in-



Thorstenson started training Harvey to race when he was two days old.

visited Thorstenson to race Harvey against a quarter horse. To make the horse less nervous, Thorstenson hauled in a couple of his own quarter horses to run against Harvey. Harvey won the race and his career has blossomed ever since.

According to Thorstenson, buffalo live to be 60 years old - twice as long as a horse. They can't be raced until they're 6 years old and aren't mature until they're 10 years old.

Thorstenson doesn't recommend buffalo racing for the average person. "A buffalo's wild instincts make it difficult to break, and not all of them are trainable. Even Harvey may never be completely trustworthy. Buf-

falo are strong enough to flip a horse off the ground and kill it with their sharp horns. I could have trained 40 good horses during the time I spent training Harvey."

Thorstenson and Harvey will appear in several races and rodeos around the country this year. Contact Thorstenson for a full listing of race and rodeo dates.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, T.C. Thorstenson, Buffalo Flats Ranch, Box 94, Rozet, Wyo. 82727 (ph 307 682-9574).

TAKE THEIR "DOWN HOME" ANTIQUE CAR TO SHOWS AND PARADES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

Parade Crowds Love This "Hillbilly" Dream Machine

"We have loads of fun taking our Ford Roadster to fairs and parades all over the country," say Sonny and Barbara Taylor, Humansville, Mo., better known as "Zeek and Klemie", operators of the "hillbilly's dream machine", a "converted" 1930 Model A Ford.

The Taylors dress the part of hillbillies. "Zeek" wears long underwear and ragged, patched overalls held up with one strap. "Klemie" wears a black mourning dress gussied up with a scarf around her neck and a hat topped with feather plumes.

Taylor, a retired truck driver, restores old cars as a hobby. "I had five old Model A's. I got to thinking one day that I'd like to see how bad I could make a car look. This old Model A is the kind you used to find behind barns in the '30s. Cars in those days became a repository for all sorts of farm junk - metal files, gate hinges, barbed wire, washboards, plow shares, etc. People used their cars to move all the belongings they could - pots, bedpans, tea kettles, coffee pots - as they migrated to California or other areas of the country during the Depression."

The car's paint is somewhere between blue, black and rust. There are parts missing here and there, and rust everywhere. There are a few items that Henry Ford didn't furnish in the original car, including a car phone, wash basins, a bullet-riddled, rusted chamber pot wired to the rear end, an ice chest, a shotgun to keep Klemie from running off with a city slicker, and a mouse trap to keep the rodents from eating through the cloth-covered electrical wires. Mounted on the back of the car is a white porcelain can,

called an "enema can", used in the outhouse days.

Both front headlights contain real bird's nests. In front of the radiator and on the driver's side are "moonshine jars" - fruit jars into which parade bystanders or fair showgoers can donate "moonshine money".

The front bumper is equipped with a "single tree" - an old mule hitch - and a log chain. "The single tree came in handy whenever a Model A got stuck on a muddy country road," says Taylor. "It saved the farmer from having to haul out his own

single tree to pull out the driver."

Taylor keeps one side of the hood raised, allowing bystanders to view the Model A's 4-cylinder, 40 hp engine. He uses pieces of baling wire as spark plugs. "People who own new cars with electronic ignition and vacuum control get a kick out of seeing the engine," says Sonny. "It was designed to be started with a hand crank. However, it's modified so we can start the car by kicking the tires or by dialing '100' on the car phone."

An unwary bystander leaning on a fender

gets a blast from the ooh-gah horn or a siren.

The car's top speed is 50 mph. It's equipped with a three-speed manual transmission and a hand control gas lever - the 1930 version of cruise control. The car is equipped with 6.00 by 16 tires, introduced in the 1940's, instead of the original thinner-but-taller 19-in. dia. tires. "The balloon tires offer a more comfortable ride," notes Taylor.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, W.P. Taylor, Rt. 2, Box 185, Humansville, Mo. 65674 (ph 417 754-2666).



"Zeek" and "Klemie" can start the engine on their hillbilly car by kicking the tires or dialing "100" on the car phone.