

# Mostly about People

By Wally Traling



## Will Chariot Racing Return?

Those of you with sportive minds have noticed, no doubt, that chariot racing is not included in this year's Olympics in Japan.

Pray tell, why not?

A few years back (this was even before Jimmy Durante) it was hot stuff at the Panathenaic Games in Athens and at the games in Olympia, Greece.

And later, oh, 80 A.D., the Romans were nuts over chariots at their Coliseum circuses.

Well, what ever happened, Jack Hyde, 43, of 3950 Paul Sweet road, is doing his best to bring the sport back.

He's a chariot racer.

This sun-browned, ex-movie actor (tank commander in "Redball Express"; deputy sheriff in "Redhead from Wyoming"; cowpuncher in "Texas Man"; and has appeared in TV series "Texas Rangers" and "Casey Jones") maintains four chariots for exhibition at fairs and rodeos in the western states.

★ ★ ★

The past six years he has found plenty of acceptance for this sport.

Each chariot, carefully copied after those in Ben Hur which in turn were copied after the Roman vehicles—is pulled by four Shetland ponies.

Horses aren't practical in his case, because he works in small arenas and small turning spaces.

Still it's a thrilling ride, says Hyde, one which will give a driver an idea of the skill and daring possessed by the Romans and Greeks.

His four teams race against one another, six or seven turns around an arena, and usually in every race someone steps off balance and spills.

"Chariot racing is balance," said the ruggedly handsome Hyde.

"We have the reins in our hands, but otherwise we stand free in the chariot. Four animals give you a lot of power and the vehicle is so narrow

that a step to one side in a turn will spill it.

"It's like surfing. We get slammed around the inside of the chariot during a race."

★ ★ ★

During the Roman days this type of racing was so popular it has been recorded that once an emperor debated whether to spend a certain allotment of money to import Sahara sand for the Coliseum or buy wheat for the people.

He finally decided in favor of sand, rationalizing that chariot racing would keep the people's minds off hunger.

"I think this excitement still exists when we race," said Hyde. "Of course we don't treat the horses as cruelly as the Romans did, but we have crashes and run into a wall now and then."

"We race for show, but it could very well become a serious sport and even an Olympic sport some day, like it once was.

Finding drivers is a tough proposition. The lack of chariot drivers in this country today is atrocious.

His son, Bob, 18, is a steady driver, but he must train the others. They wear tunics, capes, leather cuffs and Roman type breast plates, but little protective clothing.

"In the Roman days, very few charioteers lived past 24, according to history," he said.

This makes Hyde look pretty good.

★ ★ ★

During the thousands of years the chariot was in favor as swift transportation, they have been pulled by dogs, ostriches, and as many as 10 horses on spectacular occasions.

Everyone who wants to see chariot racing return, raise your hand!



Will the chariot make a comeback?

DR. TON F. JUÉ and  
DR. FRANCIS TOMOSAWA  
OPTOMETRISTS

Take pleasure in announcing their association for the practice of Optometry and the fitting of Contact Lenses.

Watsonville Office  
9 East Lake Ave.  
Phone 722-1196

Capitola Office  
521 Capitola Ave.  
Phone 475-0953

HAVE  
A GOOD  
LOOK  
AT  
THESE  
BEAUTIES!



4-Door Holiday	
'63 Oldsmobile 98	\$2999
2-Door Hardtop. 31,000 mile Factory Warranty left	
'63 Plymouth Fury	\$2299
Deluxe Model	
'63 Olds F-85 Sedan	\$2199
Holiday Coupe. (2 to choose from)	
'62 Oldsmobile Starfire	\$2599
2-Door Hardtop. Full power & factory air	
'62 Pontiac Catalina	\$2399
Safari Wagon	
'62 Pontiac Bonneville	\$2299
Holiday Coupe	
'62 Oldsmobile 88	\$2199

## WOMAN KILLED IN AUTO-TRAIN WRECK

Stockton (AP). — A Modesto woman was killed and 34 cars and four diesel units of a freight train derailed Thursday when her car and the train collided at a highway grade crossing between Manteca and Lathrop. The victim was Louise M. Senizio, 58, who apparently was alone, California Highway Patrolmen said.

## MURDER ARRAIGNMENT

Fresno (AP). — Orval K. Inman, 44, of Visalia was arraigned Thursday on a charge of bludgeoning to death his estranged wife, Martha.

