

August 1959

SIENA PALIO

The old traditional Siena Palio race takes place twice in a year: at July beginning (2nd) and middle August (16th) with the participation of the "Contrade" a sort of districts of the town.

Back in the centuries each Contrada with its own church was a little state within the State; they are 17, most named after animals' names: Istrice, Lupo, Bruce, Brago, Giraffa, Oca, Givetta, Pantera, Montone, Tartuca, Ghiocciola, Aquila, Nicchio, Leomorno, Selva, Torce, Onda.

Representatives of each Contrada, upon a parade along the main street of Siena, meet in Piazza del Campo to fight for the Palio award.

Thousands of tourists flock in, so the place is overcrowded; even tops of buildings are hired to watch the fight. Being it an historical celebration, the event is held with the ancient traditional colorful costumes.

This year's second tournament has been won by the Contrada "Oca" ("Goose").