

Crowds adding up to something like a quarter of a million people came to the famous Grand National Course at Aintree to watch the greatest steeplechase in the world over a distance of four and a half miles with thirty jumps. Our Russian visitor, Mr Malenkov, was being shown around by Aintree's own Mrs Topham and being tackled by an enterprising autograph-hunter.

In the places where money talks in loud and hoarse voices, the Union Jacks were hoisted in token of the fact that this was a royal occasion. Her Majesty the Queen, the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret --- ~~and the Duke of Edinburgh~~ --- were welcomed by the Stewards; the Earl of Sefton, Earl Derby, and the Duke of Roxburghe. A royal occasion --- with two runners ~~the field of twenty-nine~~ carrying the colours and the hopes of the Queen Mother.

Let's look in at the Paddock; one of the entries from the royal stable is M'as-tu-va? --- who also ran in 1955 but fell. A

And the second horse carrying the colours of the Queen Mother is Devon Loch --- destined this year to finish with such tragic bad luck. A

Now --- come into the weighing-in room, and watch the weighing-in of Dick & Francis; hopeful now, but marked out by Fate for disappointment in a race where chance and mischance ride alongside every jockey. Now it's nearly time for the start --- and the field ~~is~~ is on parade. ✓

In the Royal Box, the eager anticipation of an owner is an extra thrill, as the field turns and canters back towards the start. ✓

The start itself is long-delayed. (Wild Wisdom is one of the chief causes of the held-up.) ✓

But it'll be any moment now --- and --- ~~they're~~ there they go, away to a good start..... a field of twenty-nine racing for a good position at the first of thirty jumps. ✓

GRAND NATIONAL.1956.

24/3/56.

And now for the first time our newsreel camera gets a unique running shot beside the horses as they tackle the first jumps. No. 1 brings down Must --- High Guard the grey --- Reverend Prince --- and Early Mist, a previous winner.

~~No. 2 Jump --- and one of the two horses --- Response ---~~

~~No. 3 Jump --- and one of the two horses ---~~
ONE MORE JUMP BEFORE BECHER'S.
~~are the leading horses ---~~ This is where Armorial began to establish the lead that he maintained for three-quarters of the race.

~~One more jump before Becher's.~~
And now our slow motion camera takes them over mighty Becher's. But first time round in 1956 this awesome rail, fence and brook was nobody's problem.

Over to the Canal --- tricky Canal Turn --- ~~and~~ thorn fence and a right-angle, left-handed turn. Armorial leading Sundew --- Eagle Lodge and E.S.B. well placed --- and, once again, no casualties.

Jump No. 10 --- ~~and Armorial is slightly increasing his lead under the withstanding of Eaker, Dandewell.~~ The field of twenty nine is down to twenty-three --- no, twenty-two --- and they come ~~thundering~~ thundering on to the rail, ditch and fence of Jump No. 11 where Domata bids farewell to his chance.

Now --- the Water Jump --- but ^{A SCORE OF} ~~twenty~~ thoroughbreds still in the race make no trouble at all.

Rounding the bend to start the second circuit out into the ~~hazy~~ country --- it's Armorial still leading comfortably and going like a champion.

Becher's --- for the second time. And it's here that Sundew fell. Armorial still in the front ~~with Earl~~

~~with Earl~~ --- ~~with Earl~~ All the rest are comfortably over --- except one who is over but not comfortably.

Now the Canal Turn for the second time --- Armorial still leading from E.S.B. and Eagle Lodge and Devon Loch.

Slow motion at Valentine's --- no change.

Jump No. 26 ---- There goes gallant Armorial; and Devon Loch, E.S.B. and Eagle Lodge are striving for leadership. Gentle Moya's there and Royd Tan's come up --- and Ontray.

Now watch how the Queen Mother's Devon Loch comes up strongly into the lead from Eagle Lodge and E.S.B. --- beginning to look like a certain winner.

The last jump but one and there goes Ontray.

~~Jump No. 30 was the last jump. Devon Loch in the lead at the crucial point pulling away from E.S.B. and Eagle Lodge.~~

~~Continued...~~ --- and now our newsreel picture provides the dramatic climax of disaster as millions heard it on the radio.

Yes, Devon Loch is out of it at the eleventh hour; the remainder of the reduced field goes wearily by, as Dick Francis dismounts --- the most broken-hearted man in all the world. Tough luck, indeed!

Mrs Leonard Carver leads in her winner, E.S.B., and jockey David Dick --- to finish the most dramatic Grand National of all time.

Congratulations to David Dick --- whose last-minute good luck overshadowed what had still been a magnificent ride; congratulations to E.S.B. --- ten lengths ahead of Gentle Moya the mare, and now we take you back to that terrific high spot of disaster --- to show you what happened in detail --- when victory was snatched from the Queen Mother's Devon Loch.

1956 was the year of the Hard Luck National --- Hard Luck for a very gallant loser.