



Man O' War

Page Cooper, Roger L. Treat

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Man O' War, or "Big Red" as he was affectionately called, was the greatest racehorse that ever lived. In 1919 and 1920, he won 20 of 21 starts and set eight records, including three world records, while conceding as much as 30 pounds to his rivals and still beating them by large margins. His time in the Belmont Stakes stood for an incredible 50 years. Man O' War's last contest, and greatest achievement, was a match race against Sir Barton, the first Triple Crown winner, where he vanquished the Canadian horse by seven lengths. He was sire to War Admiral, Crusader, and Battleship, and was grandsire to Seabiscuit, who perhaps most of all inherited the indomitable spirit and great heart of the champion.

With his distinctive blazing white star on his forehead and deep red coat, Man O' War was a major star in the first half of the twentieth century, and his popularity is credited with reviving the scandal-ridden sport of horseracing. Bought for \$5,000 by Pennsylvania horseman Samuel Riddle, Man O' War ended up winning more money than any American horse up to that time. He lost only once, in a controversial race, and was so good that his odds of losing races reached an astronomical 100-1, even though he was heavily handicapped with more weight than any of his challengers. Rather than jeopardize the health of his horse under such enormous weights, Riddle retired him at the age of three. Man O' War lived for 27 more years and sired 379 foals, 61 of which were stakes winners. He became a legend in his lifetime, retired to Kentucky, cared for by his groom, Will Harbut, and visited by millions.

In *Man O' War*, the classic biography by Page Cooper and Roger L. Treat, Big Red emerges as an unforgettable animal full of personality, good looks, and blazing speed. It is a dramatic story, as in race after race, other stables try to beat the magnificent horse with the tremendous stride and determine just how fast he can really run. Page and Cooper present Man O' War vividly and authentically, as he was seen by those who trained and loved him, and whose hearts rode with him as he raced to victory.

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