

Horse racing memorabilia

Weekly Times Column

By Warren Joel

Many of us cannot afford to own the champion race horse but the memorabilia associated with it can be a fun and valuable collectable. Unlike many of the popular sporting codes it would appear that the horse racing industry currently has a lower profile in terms of marketing its memorabilia.

Auction records show that there is certainly a large demand for the top end of this market. The pinnacle, in terms of the horse racing industry, is anything to do with the great Pharlap: whether it is simple photographs of the great horse, racing horse shoes worn by him or almost anything associated with the stable and/or Tommy Woodcock.

The simple reason for this high demand is of course the rarity factor. Back in the 1930s when the great horse was at its peak no one had the foresight to see the marketing potential. In terms of sporting memorabilia there are two major icons that are collectable: Pharlap and Don Bradman.

In terms of modern collecting we need to apply the same simple rules we apply to all collecting. That is: the limited number in circulation and the status of the sportsperson/animal. Maykebe Diva may well be considered a modern icon, along with Black Caviar. If you were collecting memorabilia from these two great horses I would look to the more one-off items like the jockey's whip as opposed to a salmon and black dotted suit.

It is important with this type of collecting to research providence of the item carefully. I know horses have race shoes fitted for every race but Pharlap must have had more legs than a centipede, for the number of his shoes in circulation.

Next week: Lalique Glass

Free Valuation for Weekly Times readers.

Byjoel will do a free valuation of your collectables via email. If you send a photo and description of your item to hwtvaluations@byjoel.com.au I will access the item and respond.

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Warren is a third generation auctioneer and valuer specialising in Art, Antiques and Collectables, accredited by the Commonwealth in 2002 different areas of collectables.

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