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The Superior Horse Race

Cover Story by
Johnny Duckworth



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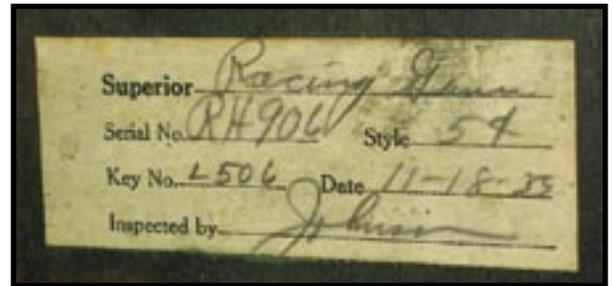
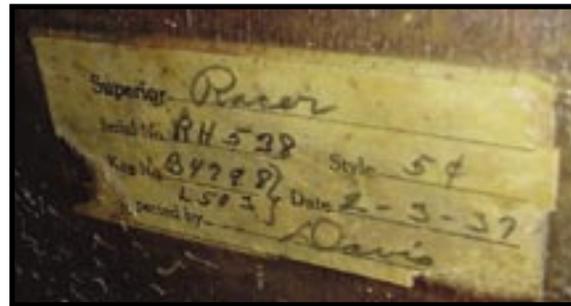
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This antique slot machine is known as a Superior Horse Race, and is very easy to identify as a Superior model with the art deco coin motif and escalator design. Superior used this coin entry design on several models as well as producing various gooseneck models. Most of the machines you will find produced by The Superior Company explode with style and vibrant colors. Superior also made a 2 reel slot machine as well, called the Midget. They bought that design from Vendet in 1932 which they later sold to Burtmier in 1933.



Superior fabricated the horse race cabinet around a redesigned mechanism with the majority of the parts coming from Mills Novelty and some from Watling Manufacturing. The mechanism is unique; it uses a Watling reel bundle on its end so the reel pay discs are spinning horizontally as opposed to vertically. Three concentric circles, each with different colored tin horses mounted on them, spin inside one another. The players' goal is to line up the correct colors of horses to make a payout. To win the large payout the





player will need to line up the 3 gold horses which will then dump a brass token from the left side of the machine. Another odd thing about the Superior Races is the award cards. Numerous versions were put on machines. Instead of just showing the number of coins received, some cards say “Free Replays” before the payout number. For the gold award, some cards say only “Token” while others say an amount the token is worth. Probably the machine came with all these cards and you could put in the one you wanted.

This slot machine is one of the most highly sought after machines from the 30's. The machine was introduced in 1934 in a 5, 10, & 25 cent model. Each machine came with alumi-

num filler plates which would hide the mints or lack of mints. At least three different paint schemes have turned up on these machines. The early machines consist of a light green body color with red and blue accents. The other paint schemes you will find are various colors of wrinkle paint and have no polished areas on the castings. These machines seem to have been sent back to the factory and refurbished. A number of the wrinkle painted machines are copper wrinkle with red and black accents. They have serial numbers with later dates on new labels inside, which are clearly pasted over the old date labels. You will observe a low serial number with a later production date due to this procedure.

(continued on next page)

The Superior Confection Company has an interesting history behind it. Gustavus Snyder, better known as 'Gus', started his slot machine and mint Company in 1924. The business was successful and sales were good for his Columbus, Ohio company, but on March of 1936 everything changed. Gus was convicted of tax evasion, amounting to \$10,000. He was sentenced to two years in the Milan, Michigan federal prison as well as a \$5,000 fine. While in prison he needed an operation to have his appendix removed. Snyders's family petitioned the prison to let him be operated on by a private surgeon but the prison officials said he was a prisoner and he would be operated on by the prison surgeon. So 10 days before he was to be released from prison, he had the operation, and on November 24, 1938, two days before he was to be released from prison, Gus died of complications from the surgery. He was only 52 when he died, and that left his wife and son to deal with the business. The Superior company liquidated its stock and the company was sold on July 26, 1939.

There is only one known advertising flyer of the horse race which has been partially reprinted on page 121-122 of Dick Bueschel's book, "Lemons, Cherries and Bell Fruit Gum". This is a very interesting flyer since it was printed up by Buckley Manufacturing in Chicago. This 4 sided color flyer also shows a machine filled with Superior play ball mints to add to the confusion. We will never know but it just makes you wonder if Buckley could have built this machine for Superior just as they did for others such as Bally with the Bally Reliance.

Printed on the inside of the flyer it states; Buckley Manufacturing 2156-58 West Washington Boulevard Chicago. Racetracks consist of 3 large revolving tracks, outside track 15 inches in diameter with choice of 14 horses or 13 dogs and one rabbit, center track 13 _ inches in diameter with choice of 12 horses or 11 dogs and 1 rabbit, inside track 11 _ inches in diameter with choice of 10 horses or 9 dogs and 1 rabbit, all character horses, dogs, and rabbits are numbered with special reward card paying off win, place, and show combinations. No dog races have ever been found as listed in the flyer.

The list of serial numbers with this article represents most of the known machines which have survived to date. It is estimated that only 20-25 of these horse race machines still exist today. If you know of any Superior machines please contact me at 816-835-3316 or by email at johnny@kccoinop.com.

- SERIAL LIST -		
<u>Serial</u>	<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Date</u>
RH-538	5 cent	02/03/37
RH-546	5 cent	06/29/34
RD-549	5 cent	06/29/34
673	25 cent	Tag Missing
RH-684	5 cent	08/29/34
RH-769	5 cent	10/17/34
RD-780	25 cent	10/19/35
D-794	5 cent	11/02/34
RD-811	5 cent	12/02/36
RD-821	5 cent	06/17/35
870	5 cent	Tag Missing
RH-873	5 cent	09/04/35
RH-876	5 cent	09/16/35
RH-882	5 cent	10/21/35
RH-906	5 cent	11/18/35
RH-945	5 cent	04/04/36
RH-947	5 cent	Tag Missing
RH-953	25 cent	04/19/36
RH-974	10 cent	07/27/36
RH-986	10 cent	Tag Missing

