



Earle Ziegler and Andy Kozar, remembering.

## Steeplechasing in Middle Tennessee: The Smyrna Chase

Ralph Ballou

Middle Tennessee State University

The Smyrna Chase became a featured event of the annual Smyrna Horse Show and Steeplechase sponsored by the Smyrna Horse Show Association in 1937. This Association was organized and chartered in 1937 following a highly successful horse show sponsored by the Smyrna Parent-Teacher Association in 1936. The success of these and subsequent shows was made possible by the total commitment of the community to the project.

As the show developed a chase for non-thoroughbreds was added in 1938 and a chase for mules in 1939. By the 1941 show both of these had been dropped. Very strong rivalries developed

between horses as well as between riders which resulted in spectacular and exciting races for the spectators.

Some speculations exists that this show was a stepping stone to the development of the Iroquois, a very successful event still running. Little evidence, beyond opinion, seems to exist for this point-of-view but further research might uncover some.

The chase evidently came to an end after 1941 when much of the property on which the course was built was purchased by the government and became part of Sewart Air Base.