



PHOTO COURTESY SANTA ANITA PARK

Santa Anita Park opens for live horse racing Monday. The winter/spring meet runs through April 23.

And they're off!

Annual horse-racing meet to open at Santa Anita

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In a time when "newfangled" is everywhere, it's nice to break away and spend a day steeped in history. Santa Anita Race Track is such a place. This 71-year-old icon offers a respite from the "keep up with the Joneses" modern world. The ubiquitous "faux this" and "nouveau that" don't exist in this simple playground

for the fun-at-heart.

Opened on Christmas Day in 1934 to an astounding attendance of 30,777, Santa Anita proved to be a viable outlet for those reeling from the effects of the Great Depression. The beauty of horse racing was that you didn't need to know diddly to have a good time. A bet of a few cents would elicit hoots and hollers from hopeful winners.

Anticipation would course through the bodies of every bettor as the pack of horses rounded the last bend of the track. Some would leave victorious, others defeated. But

no matter what the outcome, men and women had escaped their woes for a few hours.

The same still holds true today. Although we've recovered from the crash of 1929, we still need to break up the day-to-day monotony that plagues the general populace. The horse world allows people like you and me a chance to massage our alter ego — the side of us that wants to swim with the sharks, hobnob with the unpredictable and maybe

