



Table Top Folding Horse Racing Steeplechase Game

Sold



REF: 31930

Height: 66 cm (26")

Width: 160 cm (63")

Depth: 2.5 cm (1")

Description

Very Rare Victorian Folding Horse Racing Board Game.

An exceptionally rare and high-quality Victorian 'Royal Race Game', offering an entertaining representation of a traditional Steeplechase. Beautifully made and remarkably complete, this superb tabletop racing game contains everything required to stage your own nineteenth-century equestrian derby, even comes with a (new) instruction leaflet.

The folding mahogany playing board is inset with a finely gilt-tooled green leather racecourse, laid out with graduated playing boxes surrounding a boxwood inner track numbered from 0 to 100. Each numbered position corresponds to the marked divisions on the playing surface, while every tenth number features a peg hole used during play. The final position, numbered 100, is fitted with a hole to accommodate the removable Winning Post, marking the finish of the race.

Accompanying the board is an original, fitted mahogany box with a velvet-lined interior, housing a complete set of accessories. These include twelve individually hand-painted and numbered lead horses with jockeys, four patinated cast lead fences, a cast lead water jump, an ebonised dice shaker, two original dice, a Winning Post, and nine wooden peg markers. The fitted compartments ensure the set remains both practical and beautifully presented. The mahogany frame to the race track also bears a faint impressed maker's stamp, although it is now difficult to decipher (?????? MANUFACTURER REGISTERED LONDON). Unlike the more commonly encountered Victorian racing games produced on printed card or cloth, this is a superior-quality example with a gilt-tooled embossed leather playing surface mounted onto a substantial folding mahogany board. The course recreates a classic steeplechase, allowing the lead horses to negotiate fences and the water jump in a realistic and engaging simulation of a nineteenth-century race meeting.

Games of this calibre were produced for affluent Victorian households as elegant drawing-room entertainment and are considerably scarcer than the later commercially printed examples. Comparable pieces are occasionally found within the finest Victorian games compendiums by makers such as Jaques of London and F.H. Ayres, although large standalone leather steeplechase sets of this quality are encountered far less frequently.

The board displays a rich patina consistent with its age, with expected wear to the leather playing surface. The lead horses retain their original hand-painted decoration with honest age-related wear, while the fitted mahogany box remains in very good original condition and houses a remarkably complete set of original playing pieces.

A wonderful example of Victorian craftsmanship and ingenuity, this exceptionally rare game is not only an engaging piece of social history but also an outstanding display item for collectors of antique games, horse racing memorabilia, and Victorian sporting antiques.