



The Black Stallion Challenged

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The Black Stallion is the fastest horse in America and he and his jockey, Alec Ramsay, are training for a big race. Suddenly there comes a new challenger: Flame! An unproven racer, the Island Stallion can run like the wind and his jockey, Steve Duncan, knows that Flame will give the Black the race of his life. But what neither Steve nor Alec know, is that these two stallions have met before, and they hate each other.

The Black Stallion Challenged Details

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Bonnie says

A far more realistic storyline than The Black Stallion and Flame, with those two facing off in a horse race. Other than the fact that Flame's owner, Steve, becomes a total pod person, I liked this one. I was, however, rather amused by the exclamation point in the title. Why?

Tania says

In an epic and inevitable story - the Black and Flame finally meet on the track. Steve Duncan travels to the U.S. with his horse in a bid to finally secure his future and his horse's safety. They have their eye on big money - and The Black.

It's an easy decision for me to root for Alec; I've never connected with Steve in the same way, and The Black Stallion is simply too much of a survivor for me to want anyone to best him. Still, tension remains throughout the story, regardless of who you root for, because once and for all it's proven these horses are each other's equal. Hang on for the ride of your life. I'd say my number one favorite race of all time happened during Alec and The Black's race against fire in The Black Stallion and Satan, and this race is a close second.

Zoann says

I read this childhood favorite for my work challenge. It does not break the Law of Sustainability: An author's ability to write well, especially for a series, deteriorates over time. (I'm guessing someone could graph this and show a direct inverse correlation between the number of books in a series and the quality of each book.) This is the 16th book in the Black Stallion series, and it is a lame sister compared to the first book. I did learn something about the business of horse racing in the 1960's.

Kristen Coffin says

"Having a great horse could make anyone really enjoy life to the fullest."

Honestly, I would give this book an entire other star if not for one reason...

I HATE Steve Duncan in this. He was not obnoxious in The Island Stallion, The Island Stallion's Fury, OR

The Island Stallion Races. But here he's this conceited, arrogant little... ugh! He was the worst thing about a book that could have been a great match between two literary stallions.

Rose says

This is a fast paced one! Literally and figuratively. Steve Duncan contacts Alec wanting to race Flame against the Black. Alec is very open to the challenge, but not in an aggressive way; Alec is the perfect sportsman. Steve has a chip on his shoulder and doesn't want to take any advice about racing. He knows his red stud will take the lead and keep it. While Alec sympathizes, he knows that his own horse is every bit as good, and this is one race that will be up to the riders.

I absolutely loved this book. I love both stallions, but I think that Alec is by far the better man of the two. He is sportsmanlike and quiet spoken, with deep respect for his fellow riders. He is a true horseman, as in he knows that you never stop learning, and bragging about all you can do is a good way to tell everyone that you don't know much. He may be young, but he is fully matured.

Steve is still a boy, with the follies of youth. He is a cool guy, but not so mature.

Five stars of reading it over and over. Some things never get old.

Skjam! says

Alec Ramsay and his faithful trainer Henry Dailey are wintering in Hialeah, Florida, where they hope to race their prize horse, the Black Stallion. Provided, of course, that the Black has fully recovered from the hoof injury he received some months back. One day Alec receives a piece of fan mail asking for his help. It seems that young Steve Duncan has a horse he'd like to race, a stallion named Flame...if he can convince the racetrack officials to let him.

Unbeknownst to Alec or Steve, Flame and the Black have met before, and feel a strong rivalry towards each other. Plus, Steve needs to make a lot of money very quickly, in order to save Flame's island home. The stage is set for a thrilling match between the two great stallions!

This is the sixteenth in the Stallion series penned by Walter Farley, and the last that's a straight-up horse racing story. There's some time compression involved; the first book, *The Black Stallion*, clearly takes place in 1940 when it was written, and this volume takes place in 1964, but the Black is most assuredly not twenty-four years older.

However, the main attraction of the series is less the plausibility of the setting (one book had aliens!) and more the detailed descriptions of horse care and racing, and Mr. Farley delivers well in this volume. (Some details are different—the rules of horse racing have changed since the 1960s, let alone the 1940s.) The final race in particular is exciting as the outcome is in doubt until the horses pass the finish line.

The Stallion series is nominally children's books, so I should mention that there is an operation on an injured horse that may be too intense a scene for sensitive readers. Several characters smoke; one specifically mentions that he neither smokes nor drinks alcohol for his health. I am told there's period racism and sexism in some of the volumes, but this one manages to avoid that.

The book starts slowly; a one-page letter gets stretched over an entire chapter in a manner that does not build

suspense in the mind of anyone who read the back cover copy. A couple of scenes stuff a lot of telling about the personalities of supporting characters in, rather than showing by their actions. And to be honest, Alec, Henry and Steve are not deep characters. (Steve's a bit more of a hothead here than in his solo appearances.)

But all of that pales compared to the exciting race scenes and the bond between the riders and their horses. The hardback edition with illustrations by Angie Draper may be hard to find, but there are inexpensive paperback reprints which you can probably get through interlibrary loan. Recommended to young horse lovers and horse lovers young at heart.

Melody says

Oh, Henry, you cranky old geezer! Oh, Steve, you hot-headed young punk! Oh, Alec, you wise-beyond-your-years paragon! Oh, Flame, you wild and unreliable stallion full of beauty and heart! Oh, Black, there aren't any words big enough for you, you are Horse Incarnate.

Which is to say, yes, more of the same, but who can quibble with races like these?

Wendy says

The Black Stallion Challenged! is really not a good book, not if you've read any of the Island Stallion sub-series. In those books, Steve is a good, nice kid who loves his horse, just like Alec. But suddenly, when the two meet up, Steve becomes a snotty, arrogant jerk with anger problems. Just like in *The Black Stallion's Sulky Colt*, any time Alec meets up with another boy who loves a horse, he becomes a saint. This is not an enjoyable thing to read.

Also, Farley doesn't really clear up the issue of whether Flame or The Black is faster. He leaves you with the implication that The Black is a nose-bob faster, but never really comes out and definitively says (most likely trying not to make any Flame fans angry). It would have been a little easier to take if he'd had The Black a narrow but clear winner.

Texas State Poder says

Have you ever been scared while being challenged in a race? The black stallion is a champion until an unproven racer with skills. Steve Duncan his owner thinks that he can beat the black. The black always wins with out a challenge. Flame proves in a workout that he can keep up with the black. Will the black have the race of his life? Read to find out if he will be defeated by the island horse Flame.

-Juan Romero

Mirrani says

Yes, there are elements of the predictable in the Black Stallion series. Yes, this is one book that isn't all about

adventure, being stranded on an island, wandering the desert, or surviving another plane or boat disaster. But this is a book by Walter Farley and I am certain that those who love horses, those who love the track, will enjoy this book from cover to cover. Farley writes racing like no one else can, making you believe you are living the book yourself. In this installment, where the Black meets his rival Flame on the track, readers get to see almost every aspect of life behind the scenes of racing. There is a surgery, there are workouts, there is time in the jockey's room, and, of course, there are the races themselves. Never before have I put down a book feeling as if I have just spent the day in front of the television, watching the day's racing and news reports. For those who love the sport will be a very wonderful and welcome experience to become lost in time with these two beautiful horses at historical Hialeah Park.

Josh says

"The Black Stallion Challenged" was a book that got intense in some parts but for the most part this book was not a very good book. The book was for much younger kids and the only reason I picked this book was because I thought I would still like the series. This book had a very limited vocabulary and also had a corny ending which I did not like. Overall this book is one of the worst books I have ever read and I will not read another one in this series again.

Rena Sherwood says

I read this dozens of times when I owned a paperback copy and yet I still cannot decide how many stars to give it. Maybe I'll need to buy myself a replacement copy to determine star value if Goodreads demands I do.

Although **The Black Stallion Challenged!** (don't forget that !) had many enjoyable elements (a great race -- Flame Vs The Black) it also had some cheesy elements (Steve wants to buy the island where Flame and his herd live). It's hard for me not to look back at this book without wearing the rose-tinted glasses of nostalgia.

Charles says

Finally a horse that can give the Black Stallion a run for his money. The ending had to work out the way it did.

Kensie Linton says

The main characters are Steve Duncan and Alec Ramsay. Steve Duncan has blonde hair and rides a red horse named Flame. Alec Ramsay rides a horse named the Black. This book takes place at Hialeah, Fla. The problem in this book is a guy named Steve Duncan writes a letter to Alec about his horse, Flame, and how he needs "help" to buy an island for his horse. He also puts in the letter that he thinks his horse is faster than the

black. In the end Steve brings Flame to Hialeah and they end up racing together in the Widener Cup. In the race it is very difficult for Steve and Flame to get in the lead but in the end they end up racing in the backstretch together and the Black won by the thinnest fraction of a nose. In my opinion I think the book was perfect. I don't have any issue with the book. I would very highly recommend this book to you. It has a lot of excitement, wonder, and curiosity in it. This book is awesome!

Michelle says

I enjoyed the official meeting of the Black and Flame in this book. I remember well Flame's meeting with the Black on Azule Island. I would like to know more of Flame's training and progress that made him so well mannered to run these handicap races without fighting his dominant stallion instincts.
