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Belgian - American Patriarchs Indulge In Speed Footrace

Frank Ervinck is our second great grandfather on mum's side. I think this demonstrates the ingrained competitiveness and sense of fun in the McCarty family.

-Kathlene

## BELGIAN-AMERICAN PATRIARCHS INDULGE IN SPEEDY FOOTRACE



FRANK ERVINCK.



DESIRE DE LODDER.

The Detroit Tigers' neck-and-neck race with St. Louis was forgotten by the Belgian and American residents around P. J. Ervinck's saloon, 583 Holcomb avenue, last evening. Young and old turned out for the championship "past-70" foot-race billed to take place between Desire DeLodder, 82 years old, John Louwers, 78 years old, and Frank Ervinck, 71 years old. The race was the outcome of an argument among the three men over a game of cards. They began boasting of youthful prowess, and DeLodder challenged the others to a sprinting match. Last night the street for two blocks was lined with friends of the trio.

Ervinck, despite a game leg, was on the spot early, eager for the encounter, and declaring that if the others backed out there would be trouble. The white-whiskered DeLodder also was on hand, Louwers, however, left the scene early, and when the time for the race was 30 minutes past, he could not be found. Desire Lancrede, 57 years old, agreed to start in his place; but, as he was not in shape to run, did not get more than 10 yards from the starting place.

DeLodder left his home by the back way, his jolly wife waving good luck to him, and joined his rivals. Al. Bauman, the timer, handed each a bottle of good beer, with which they drank each other's health, saving half the contents for any emergency on the course. Henry VanSlembrouck, the timer, stationed himself on the cross-walk, near the saloon, which marked a 116-yard course. Then he waved his hand. Bauman dropped his hat and the

three participants were off, DeLodder and Ervinck easily in the lead.

Ervinck's gameness, however, was not backed by his physical endurance. Half way down the course his leg gave him a twinge, whereupon he doubled-up and limped to the sidewalk, uttering imprecations on the faithless limb. His mishap was not seen by DeLodder, who now was alone on the course, cheered by children and grown persons. About 30 yards from the finish he fell flat in the dust, but, thinking his opponent behind him, sprang up like a school boy, shook the dust out of his whiskers and sprinted toward the line, landing on the sidewalk with a gleeful jump, and looking around for Ervinck and Lancrede, who were coming on the sidewalk, far in the rear.

"I told you; I told you," he shouted, laughing and shaking hands all around, as he waited for Ervinck. Then the two old cronies went into the saloon and told of the roasting they would give Louwers when he showed his face again. Ervinck took his defeat gracefully, except for pounding his faulty leg with his fist and saying, "If he hadn't given out with me."

Preliminary races were run by neighborhood children and won by John Sheehan, Fred Schultz, August Lancrede in the boys' races, and Margaret Hoffman and Kathleen Garvey, tied for first place, and Laura Grulke, third, in the girls' race.