

STEWBALL [LAWS Q22]

Traditional Old-Time and Bluegrass Song; **DATE:** 1784; **CATEGORY:** Early Country and Bluegrass Songs; **RECORDING INFO:** Joan Baez; Greenbriar Boys; Memphis Slim; Leadbelly & Golden Gate Quartet; Country Gentlemen; **OTHER NAMES:** Skew Ball; **NOTES:** The facts are that sometime around 1790 a race took place near Dublin between a skewbald horse owned by Sir Arthur Marvel and "Miss Portly", a gray mare owned by Sir Ralph Gore. Skewball appeared as broadside ballad in 1784. In America, the Stewball ballad was "...most popular in the South, where the winning horse is known variously as 'Stewball' or 'Kimball,'" and was apparently one of the chain-gang songs. The song was recorded by Leadbelly in 1940 and then by Memphis Slim, whose slower bluesy rendition is echoed in this version.

There's a big day in Dal-las And I wish I a-were there Spend my
 last hun-dred dol-lars on that i-ron gray mare, See her trav-el
 All day long, long, long, See her trav-el all day long, all day long.

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G C7 G
 There's a big day in Dallas and I wish I a-were there
 C7 G
 Spend my last hundred dollars on that iron gray mare
 C G C7 G C7 G
 See her travel, all day long, long, long. See her travel all day long, all day long.

Well I don't mind horse racing if it wasn't for my wife.
 Old Stewball may stumble and away with my life
 Wife and baby, left behind, yeah yeah . Wife and baby, left behind, left behind.

Old Stewball was a black horse jus' as slick as a mole,
 Had a ring 'round his fore-shoulder, and it shined just like gold.
 Shined like gold, shined like gold, Lord, Lord
 Shined like gold, shined like gold, shined like gold.

Old Stewball was a racehorse, but the poor horse was blind.
 He ran so fast in Texas, left his shadow behind
 Behind, behind, Left his shadow behind, left behind.

Old Stewball was a racehorse and old Molly, she was too.
 Old Molly, she stumbled and Old Stewball, he just flew.
 Round the track, round the track, yeah, yeah. Round the track, round the track, round the track.