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## Runaway horse gallops through Central Park before crashing into taxi door

BY Kerry Burke , Chelsia Rose Marcus , Ginger Adams Otis / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS / Published: Monday, June 9, 2014, 6:33 PM / Updated: Tuesday, June 10, 2014, 8:02 AM



A chestnut horse named Pumpkin, 6, slipped free of his bridle at about 5:45 p.m. while in the hack line on Sixth Ave. and Central Park South.

“(It) just fell off. As soon as he knew it wasn’t there, he just took off,” said driver Ata Ak, 27.

The Belgian draft horse galloped away on a high-speed loop along his usual circuit, startling pedestrians.

Joseph Siniscalchi, 33, a plumber who was riding a bicycle at the time, zipped off on his \$1,700 two-wheeler to try to catch Pumpkin.

“I was just thinking that someone could really get hurt, or the horse could,” said Siniscalchi, who lives in Manhattan but has two equines on his upstate farm.

Before he could nab Pumpkin, artist Randy Smith tried to grab the dangling reins.

“He pulled me right off my feet, and I did a belly flop on the street,” the artist said.

Siniscalchi finally caught up to the fleet-footed steed and, yelling to a woman nearby to watch his bike, jumped on board.

“I just kept pulling the rein to the right,” he said. “My hand is all red still. He was headed for out of the park and I wanted to keep him away from cars.”

He succeeded in steering the horse around its usual park circuit, back onto Central Park South headed toward Sixth Ave.

Joseph Siniscalchi

Courtesy of Riva Siniscalchi

Joseph Siniscalchi, 33, jumped into the runaway horse carriage in Central Park on Monday.

Spotting a triangle of space between a cab that was letting out passengers and an idling Mercedes, Siniscalchi wedged the carriage wheel against the taxi door, halting Pumpkin — but smashing the door in the process.

“Someone was going to get out, and I yelled, ‘Don’t get out of the cab!’ and he pulled his head back in,” said Siniscalchi.

The passenger turned out to be Mets outfielder Matt den Dekker.

“Almost got ran over by a horse carriage running wild through the city,” the speedy center fielder tweeted.

“I didn’t even know it was him,” Siniscalchi laughed. “I didn’t even get to say ‘hi.’ ”

Pumpkin was unharmed, his driver said.

Police reported no injuries among bystanders or drivers.