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# THE HORSEMEN'S JOURNAL

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# GUEST COMMENTARY

BY JEFF LANDRY

## JOIN OUR FIGHT AGAINST HISA

**A**s a young boy, I spent summers mucking out stalls, painting fences and helping out on my great-uncle's farm. Early in the mornings, his grandson and I could hear him tapping on the door, telling us to wake up and get moving in Cajun French. "Levez, levez!" We'd jump out of bed and ride down to the track to watch the jockeys breeze the horses as the sun was coming up.

Those are memories I fear the next generation might never experience as we battle the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA), legislation slipped into the COVID-19 relief package and passed by Congress in the dark of night to federalize the horse racing industry and give complete regulatory power to a private corporation without consent of the individual states or even input from the horsemen themselves.

Horse racing in Louisiana has its roots in Cajun and Creole culture, and it's where the infamous bush tracks of the 1950s produced some of the finest jockeys in the world. Soon, Acadiana became known as a place where you could start out riding barefoot and work your way up to winning the Kentucky Derby with an entire community not only to cheer you on but also to finance the first major racetrack in the region—Evangeline Downs, where announcer Gene Griffin would say, "Ils sont partis!" which means "And they're off!"

Fueled by this rough-and-tumble past, Louisiana racing has effectively policed itself for more than 200 years, evolving over time to meet modern challenges while maintaining its unique identity. It's an industry built with our own sweat and blood, supported by a tight-knit group of horsemen, racing fans and family businesses. We know how our horses handle our unique climate, our tracks and our footing. We know the history of our bloodlines, the traditions of our sport and the nature of this industry far better than anyone else.

That hard-won knowledge has created an entire culture within Louisiana, one that has grown from an economic impact of \$460 million in 1979 to \$1.5 billion today. As Louisiana's attorney general, I have a duty to protect this industry, its culture and its people. That's why I have been fighting against HISA from the beginning, even as political players pressured my office not to get involved. But like most Cajuns, when I stand for what's right, I don't back down.

At the core of HISA is this: A handful of wealthy players wish to control the sport through a one-size-fits-all, pay-to-play scheme that will decimate the inclusive culture of horse racing. And while we all can agree that we want integrity and safety in the sport, perhaps it also must be stated that we should never let a few bad actors define the whole. Yet under the guise of "integrity," the federal government is using the excuse of bad actors to take away the freedoms and liberties of all horsemen while completely ignoring the unique cultures of each individual state and the people who have created them.

As a result, if HISA is successfully enacted, many of those who have been racing horses in their states for generations will be run out of business by ridiculously expensive fees, fines and other barriers to entry. This will affect breeders, jockeys, farriers, veterinarians, tracks and supply shops. Entire cultures will be decimated in support of unclear, inconsistent and oftentimes dangerous new rules designed by political and corporate elites who can't even decide what kind of shoes a horse should wear.

For Louisiana and her people, my solicitor general, Liz Murrill, and I took on this battle. We stood up for horsemen when it was neither popular nor politically convenient because we knew it was the right thing to do. We believe horse racing should be enjoyed by all—not just an exclusive elite. And our fight is now leading to the U.S. Supreme Court, where a disagreement between two federal courts must be decided. That is why it is absolutely vital everyone stand up now for true integrity in horse racing, for state sovereignty and for the culture of this sport.

I almost feel like my great-uncle is knocking on your door, asking you all to wake up and fight with us. Place the power back into the hands of the people, where it belongs. I cannot guarantee you a win, but I do believe the greatest advantage we have is our numbers. So, if the attorney general of your state has joined our coalition in the fight against HISA, please thank them. But if your attorney general is not yet involved, please encourage them to file an amicus brief in support of our cause. And if you run an organization affected by HISA, please join us at the U.S. Supreme Court to voice your opposition to this gross federal overreach.

Now more than ever, our voices must be heard. If we are to protect horse racing, we must take action. And so I say, "Levez, levez!" Let's go.

*Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry, a candidate in the 2023 gubernatorial race in the Pelican State, was the keynote speaker at the National HBPA Conference March 7 at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans.*



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**Johnathan Estrada**

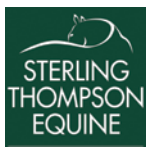
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HALL OF FAME TRAINER STEVE ASMUSSEN AND HIS FAMILY CELEBRATED ANOTHER MILESTONE VICTORY—NO. 10,000—AT OAKLAWN PARK IN FEBRUARY.

## Flightline Dominates at 52nd Annual Eclipse Awards

BREEDERS' CUP/ECLIPSE SPORTSWIRE PHOTO



FLIGHTLINE, RUNAWAY WINNER OF LAST YEAR'S BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC AT KEENELAND, EARNED HORSE OF THE YEAR AND CHAMPION OLDER DIRT MALE AT THE 52ND ECLIPSE AWARDS IN LATE JANUARY AT THE BREAKERS IN PALM BEACH, FLORIDA.

**J**ohn Sadler stepped to the podium in front of Flightline's owners, jockey, breeder and other assorted associates and did his best to sum up the superstar that received the top prize at the 52nd annual Eclipse Awards.

He also did his best almost three months before, when Flightline destroyed the Grade 1 Breeders' Cup Classic field at Keeneland Race Course to earn the Horse of the Year title his connections officially took home from the posh January 26 celebration at The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida. This time around, Sadler welcomed an assist from another Southern California icon.

"Obviously, **Flightline** is a horse of a generation, and in the words of Trevor Denman, 'We may not see this again,'" Sadler said, echoing Denman's call of Flightline's Pacific Classic victory last summer at Del Mar. "He's a fabulous horse, and I feel so blessed to have trained him."

Flightline dominated the Horse of the Year and older dirt male division voting much like he did rivals in his unbeaten six-start career. The son of Tapit earned 239 of a possible 246 first-place votes for Horse of the Year, with a vote apiece going to Country Grammer, Life Is Good and Malathaat along with four abstentions. Flightline gained a vote in the older dirt male category, earning 240 of 246 votes.

Flightline's championship night capped his 2022 season that featured a trio of Grade 1 victories in as many starts—the Metropolitan Handicap at Belmont Park, Pacific Classic and Breeders' Cup Classic. He also won Santa Anita Park's

Grade 1 Malibu Stakes late in the 2021 season and retired to Lane's End Farm in Versailles, Kentucky, with six wins by a combined 71 lengths.

"I always said we were blessed to have Flightline, but Flightline was more blessed to have John Sadler because John did a great job with him," said Kosta Hronis of Hronis Racing, who campaigned Flightline in partnership with Summer Wind Equine, West Point Thoroughbreds, Woodford Racing and Siena Farm.

The Eclipse Awards, honoring excellence in North American Thoroughbred racing, are voted on by the National Thoroughbred Racing Association (consisting of member racetrack racing officials and Equibase field personnel), *Daily Racing Form* and the National Turf Writers and Broadcasters.

Shadwell Stable's **Malathaat**, who capped her career with a victory in the Grade 1 Breeders' Cup Distaff at Keeneland, took home the champion older dirt female title. Trained by **Todd Pletcher**, she was also named champion 3-year-old filly in 2021.

Pletcher, with training operations in Florida, Kentucky and New York, won an unprecedented eighth outstanding trainer Eclipse Award, having previously won the honor in 2004–2007, 2010 and 2013–2014. In 2022, Pletcher finished second among all trainers in total earnings with more than \$30.4 million. He won 223 races and saddled three champions. In addition to Malathaat, Pletcher trained champion 2-year-old male **Forte**, winner of the Grade 1 Breeders' Cup Juvenile for owners Repole Stable and St Elias Stable, and champion 3-year-old filly **Nest**, who won three Grade 1 stakes races and finished second in the Grade 1 Belmont Stakes

for Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, Repole Stable and Michael House.

Winchell Thoroughbreds' **Epicenter** was voted champion 3-year-old male. Trained by Steve Asmussen, Epicenter finished second in both the Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes but won his next starts at Saratoga Race Course in the Grade 2 Jim Dandy and Grade 1 Travers to lock up the title.

D.J. Stable's **Wonder Wheel** won the champion 2-year-old filly Eclipse Award. Trained by Mark Casse, Wonder Wheel clinched the trophy with back-to-back Grade 1 victories at Keeneland in the Alcibiades and Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies.

Juddmonte's **Elite Power**, trained by Bill Mott, came on strong late in the year, taking the Grade 2 Vosburgh Stakes and Grade 1 Breeders' Cup Sprint to land the male sprinter title.

First Row Partners and Team Hanley's Goodnight Olive won the Grade 1 Ballerina Handicap at Saratoga and the Grade 1 Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint to secure the champion female sprinter award for trainer Chad Brown.

Godolphin's **Modern Games (Ire)** won the male turf Eclipse Award off victories in the Grade 1 Woodbine Mile in Canada and the Breeders' Cup Mile at Keeneland.

Brown also trained Peter Brant's **Regal Glory**, who captured the champion female turf Eclipse Award. During her 6-year-old campaign, Regal Glory won three Grade 1 stakes—the Jenny Wiley at Keeneland, Just a Game at Belmont and Matriarch at Del Mar.

**Hewick (Ire)**, owned by T.J. McDonald and trained by John "Shark" Hanlon, was voted champion steeplechase horse. At age 7, Hewick won two races in Europe before coming to the U.S. and dominating the Grand National Hurdle at Far Hills, New Jersey, by more than 11 lengths last October.

**Godolphin** displayed its international prowess in North America by winning both the outstanding owner and outstanding breeder Eclipse Awards for the second year in a row. Godolphin topped all North American owners in earnings

with \$16,343,067, led by such Grade 1-winning stars as Cody's Wish and Rebel's Romance in addition to Modern Games. Godolphin-bred runners earned more than \$18 million in North America last year and accounted for 12 Grade 1 wins.

New York-based rider **Irad Ortiz Jr.** won the outstanding jockey Eclipse Award for the fourth time in the past five years, sweeping the honor in 2018, 2019 and 2020. Last year, Ortiz established new marks for total earnings by a jockey with \$37,075,772. He also set a North American record with 80 stakes wins.

Completing the human awards, **Jose Antonio Gomez** was voted outstanding apprentice jockey. A Michigan native riding on the New York circuit, Gomez led all North American apprentice riders with earnings of \$7,635,366. Gomez also won 152 races from 1,312 starts.

Others recognized at the Eclipse Awards included retired longtime *Daily Racing Form* Turf writer **Jay Privman** with the Special Eclipse Award for career achievement.

Media Eclipse Awards also are given in the categories of photography, audio/multimedia internet, news/enterprise writing, feature/commentary writing, television—feature and television—live racing programming to recognize members of the media for outstanding coverage of Thoroughbred racing. The 2022 Media Eclipse Awards winners, determined by a judges' panel for each category and previously announced, were News/Enterprise Writing – **Tom Law**, *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred*; Feature/Commentary Writing – **Tim Layden**, *NBCSports.com*; Photography – **Wendy Wooley**, *The Paulick Report*; Audio/Multimedia Internet – **Horse Racing Radio Network** (Mike Penna, President); Live Television Programming – **NBC Sports** (Lindsay Schanzer, Producer); Feature Television Programming – **NBC Sports** (Jack Felling, Coordinating Producer).

**David Harrison**, winner of the 23rd annual National Horseplayers Championship, was presented an Eclipse Award as the 2022 Horseplayer of the Year. —*Tom Law*

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# Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation Approves 2023 Funding

**T**he board of directors of the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation has authorized the expenditure of \$1,498,077 to fund 12 new projects and nine continuing projects at 13 universities as well as two career development awards. The 2023 slate of research brings Grayson's totals since 1983 to more than \$34.1 million to underwrite 426 projects at 45 universities.



## Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation

"The Grayson Foundation is dedicated to tackling a variety of equine health challenges, which is clearly reflected in our selected projects for this year," said Jamie Haydon, president of Grayson. "Our research projects and career development awards wouldn't be possible without the kindness of our donors, and we thank them for their understanding of the significance of equine veterinary research."

The new projects, listed alphabetically, are:

**Transcriptomic Response to Osteoarthritis** (Lynn Pezzanite, Colorado State University): The study will highlight the role that immune system cells play in contributing to disease progression of osteoarthritis toward the goal of developing treatments for each stage of the disease.

**Efficacy of Recombinant Equine Lubricin for Osteoarthritis** (Heidi Reesink, Cornell University): The study will assess the efficacy of recombinant equine lubricin (rEqLub) in mitigating equine joint disease and identify gene and protein pathways affected by rEqLub in equine joints.

**Treatment of Meniscal Injury With Mesenchymal Stem Cells** (Aimee Colbath, Cornell University): The study will determine whether intra-articular mesenchymal stem cells lead to improved meniscal healing, providing an immediate impact on how veterinarians treat equine meniscal disease.

**Stem Cell Neotissue Implants for Equine Tendon Healing** (Mandi J. Lopez, Louisiana State University): The study will determine if viable neotissue implants generated from stem cells will augment current therapies to treat debilitating tendon injuries in equine athletes and companions.

**Gallium Nitrate To Treat Bacterial Endometritis in Mares** (Dale Kelley, Oklahoma State University): The study proposes to develop new, safe and efficacious antimicrobial strategies to treat antimicrobial resistance.

**A VapA mRNA Vaccine for *R. equi* Pneumonia** (Noah Cohen, Texas A&M University): The grant evaluates an mRNA vaccine administered intramuscularly to foals to protect against pneumonia caused by the bacterium *Rhodococcus equi*, a major cause of disease and death in foals worldwide.

**Genomics of Thoroughbred Stallion Subfertility** (Terje Raudsepp, Texas A&M University): The project aims to identify candidate genes and regulatory variants underlying impaired acrosome reaction and subfertility in Thoroughbred stallions using multiplatform genomics.

**Validation of Biomarkers for Equine Neurodegeneration** (Carrie J. Finno, University of California, Davis): The study is expected to improve the diagnosis of spinal cord disease in horses.

**PET MRI Sport Horse Fetlock** (Mathieu Spriet, University of California, Davis): The study will compare 18F-NaF positron emission tomography (PET) with magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) for assessment of fetlock injuries in sport horses.

**Antibiotic Effects on Uterine Microbiome and Resistome** (Igor Canisso, University of Illinois): The study examines the uterine microbiome and resistome of mares resistant and susceptible to endometritis treated with post-mating antibiotics.

**Nanoparticle Vaccines for Equine Rotavirus B** (Feng Li, University of Kentucky): The vaccine candidate developed from this project will help the equine industry to control and prevent equine rotavirus B infection.

**An Efficacious EPM Vaccine Is on the Way** (Sharon Witonsky, Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine): The study plans to identify potential MHC class I CD8 and MHC class II CD4 protective epitopes for an efficacious vaccine against equine protozoal myeloencephalitis due to *Sarcocystis neurona*.

### Career Development Awards

Grayson awarded Dr. Shun "Shune" Kimura of the University of Georgia with the Storm Cat Career Development Award, which grants \$20,000 to an individual considering a career in equine research. Kimura's research will investigate how immune and metabolic responses in systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS) impact disease severity and determine if metformin has beneficial anti-inflammatory and metabolic effects in equine SIRS.

Dr. Bethanie Cooper of North Carolina State University earned the Elaine and Bertram Klein Career Development Award, which grants \$20,000 to a prospective equine researcher. Cooper's research, titled "Myristoylated Alanine Rich C-Kinase Substrate Protein as a Therapeutic Target in Equine Asthma," will examine this new protein-based therapy as a potential treatment for horses suffering from equine asthma.

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## Virtual OwnerView Conferences Planned for 2023

**O**wnerView announced in February that the 2023 Thoroughbred Owner Conference will continue as a free series of virtual panels over 10 months. The conference series, hosted by The Jockey Club and the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association and presented by Bessemer Trust, Stoll Keenon Ogden and The Green Group, started in March and is held on the first or second Tuesday of each month.

### THOROUGHBRED OwnerView

“This new format began in 2021, and over the past two years it has been very successful in reaching new and existing Thoroughbred owners,” said Gary Falter, OwnerView project manager.

The 2023 panels will be more interactive, with videos, open discussions and other enhancements. Panels will cover tried-and-true topics such as accounting and creating a business plan in addition to new topics such as handicapping for owners, buying at public auction, corrective surgeries and claiming.

The conference panels will be streamed live, and attendees will be able to ask questions during the discussion via typed messages that will be addressed at the end of each panel. Replays of the conference series panels also will be made available.

For those who wish to review previous conferences, recordings of all 17 panels from the 2021 and 2022 virtual series and from previous live OwnerView conferences can be watched on the OwnerView YouTube channel, and there is a link to the 2021 and 2022 virtual series replays on the OwnerView website.

There is no registration fee for the 2023 live or recorded virtual conference series, but registration is required. For more information about the owner conference series, including the schedule of panels and registration, please visit [ownerview.com/event/conference](http://ownerview.com/event/conference) or contact Gary Falter at (859) 224-2803 or [gfaller@jockeyclub.com](mailto:gfaller@jockeyclub.com). **HJ**



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## Dream Ride: Kitodan Earns 2022 Claiming Horse of the Year Honors

GRACE CLARK/KENTUCKY DOWNS PHOTO



THE ERIC FOSTER-TRAINED AND CO-OWNED KITODAN, NATIONAL HBPA 2022 CLAIMING HORSE OF THE YEAR, ROLLS TO A 4-LENGTH VICTORY UNDER GERARDO CORRALES IN THE GRADE 3 BIG ASS FANS DUELING GROUNDS DERBY LAST SEPTEMBER AT KENTUCKY DOWNS.

**T**urf specialist Kitodan, who went from being claimed twice last year to winning Kentucky Downs' Grade 3, \$750,000 Big Ass Fans Dueling Grounds Derby, was selected as the National HBPA's 2022 Claiming Horse of the Year.

"We are blessed that we were able to claim that kind of horse compared to where we were just a few years ago," said western Kentucky-based trainer Eric Foster, who claimed the now 4-year-old colt for \$80,000 last May for wife Brooklyn's Foster Family Racing and partners Doug Miller and Bill Wargel. "We're really happy and humble to own him and thank the National HBPA for having this award. Winning Claiming Horse of the Year came out of the blue, but we are honored and so proud of Kitodan. People like us, we can't go to the Keeneland sale, pick the ones we want and hold our hand up until we come home with them."

Kitodan was honored at the awards luncheon during the annual National HBPA Conference at the historic Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans' French Quarter.

"Kitodan exemplifies what we look for in the National HBPA Claiming Horse of the Year," said Todd Mostoller, chair of the National HBPA's awards committee. "He ran at five tracks on grass, synthetic and dirt and showed that it's better for a racehorse to have a big heart than a big price tag while going from three claiming races to graded stakes winner. We love these stories. It gives hope to horsemen everywhere that you don't have to buy six- and seven-figure babies to come up with a good horse."

Kitodan, a \$9,000 purchase at the 2020 Keeneland September yearling sale, made money for his three sets of owners as a 3-year-old. After running in stakes at 2 for Joker Racing, Kitodan was claimed in his first start of 2022 for \$35,000 by trainer Mike Maker on behalf of owners Paradise Farms Corp. and David Staudacher, who campaigned 2021 Claiming Horse of the Year Special Reserve. Kitodan promptly won another optional allowance race at Gulfstream Park before taking Turfway Park's \$200,000 Rushaway Stakes by 3 ½ lengths.

When Maker subsequently ran Kitodan for an \$80,000 tag in an optional claiming race at Churchill Downs, Foster was the only one to put in a claim.

The partners recovered their investment just three weeks later when Kitodan won Churchill's \$198,168 Audubon Stakes at 40-1 odds. That was followed by a respectable fourth in Churchill's \$200,000 American Derby taken off the turf and a close fifth against older horses in Ellis Park's \$99,858 Evan Williams Turf Mile Stakes. A son of five-time Grade 1 winner Point of Entry, Kitodan clearly appreciated stretching out to the Dueling Grounds Derby's 1 5/16 miles, winning by 4 lengths at 20-1 odds under Gerardo Corrales.

"It's one of those things you only dream about in racing to come up with a horse like this," said Miller of Junction, Illinois. "If we were trying to do this individually, we wouldn't even have thought about it. Partnering gave us the opportunity."

The Dueling Grounds Derby was the first graded stakes victory for the owners and by far the biggest purse.

"There are a lot of people who have a lot more money and investment in the horses and never get this kind of horse," said Wargel of Ridgway, Illinois, about 50 miles from Kentucky's Ellis Park. "We're just old farm boys, me and Doug. Whether we never have another one or that horse never wins another race, he made a dream come true for us."

Foster said that Kitodan winning Claiming Horse of the Year is a team award that includes his partners who made it possible, along with the trainer's staff and family, who help with the stable.

"We would never want to accept an award like this without thanking Juan Medina," Foster said of his assistant trainer. "He not only takes care of Kitodan

but is also his regular exercise rider. We are also very appreciative to Gerardo Corrales and his agent, Cliff Collier."

Kitodan spent the fall and winter getting time off at Foster's farm in Utica, Kentucky, near Owensboro, with a major goal being Kentucky Downs' \$1 million, Grade 2 Kentucky Turf Cup Stakes in September and hopefully a trip to Santa Anita Park for the \$4 million, Grade 1 Longines Breeders' Cup Turf, a race he missed last year with a minor leg issue.

"He's probably put on 100, 150 pounds," Foster said in January. "The time off has really done him some good. We're hoping to start back with him at the end of February. We'd love to get back to Kentucky Downs."—*Jennie Rees*

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## 'Ring the Bell' Program Returns to Oaklawn

COADY PHOTOGRAPHY



ARKANSAS HBPA PRESIDENT BILL WALMSLEY (LEFT) AND OAKLAWN PRESIDENT LOUIS CELLA KICK OFF THE RING THE BELL PROGRAM AT THE END OF THE 2021-22 MEETING IN HOT SPRINGS.

**A**fter some test rings last spring, Oaklawn Park's new "Ring the Bell" fundraising program for local Thoroughbred aftercare began in December with the opening of the track's 2022-23 live racing season.

The program gives the winning connections following each race an opportunity to donate at least \$100 toward aftercare. Donations are signaled—loudly—by ringing a large copper-colored bell hung at the back of the Larry Snyder Winner's Circle.

Oaklawn raised \$14,000 during the trial run over the final six days of the 2021-22 meet. Money raised is earmarked for the Arkansas Thoroughbred Retirement Program and Rehabilitation Foundation Inc., a collaboration between the Arkansas Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association and Oaklawn. The foundation was established as a safe path to a second career for Oaklawn-raced horses upon retirement.

The idea of intertwining a bell with aftercare was the brainchild of trainer and Arkansas HBPA board member Ron Moquett of Hot Springs, known for his work with 2020 champion male sprinter and seven-time Oaklawn stakes winner Whitmore.

"I wanted to bring attention and give everybody the opportunity to—when they're at their happiest—they can help right then," Moquett said. "Ring that bell, and it starts up a conversation. 'Hey, that bell is ringing for the respect and love of the horse.' The bell is symbolic, and it teaches everybody through the whole grandstand that whenever you hear that bell that means somebody has donated money to the retired racehorse program. We'd like to hear the bell ring every race, every day. What the sound means is we're helping retired racehorses."

The Ring the Bell program was officially launched following the third race April 29, 2022, when Oaklawn President Louis Cella and Bill Walmsley, a longtime Thoroughbred owner and president of the Arkansas HBPA, each

donated \$5,000 on behalf of their respective groups. Cella is also a Thoroughbred owner and the son of Oaklawn's late president, Charles Cella, who campaigned 1995 champion grass horse Northern Spur.

"It's tough to jump-start something that is difficult for other horsemen to follow there in Arkansas," said Louis Cella, who was named Oaklawn's president following his father's death December 2017. "They participate in other jurisdictions. Our jurisdiction, our constituents if you will, are not as big and able to take care of the horses like they are in Kentucky, in Florida, in Texas. So, we need to jog them a little bit. I think the bell is a super idea to give everyone that one last pause to say, 'You know what? This is important for Arkansas.'"

Moquett said his inspiration for a bell came from Saratoga, the historic upstate New York venue. A bell in the winner's circle there is rung five times "precisely" 17 minutes before post time of each race, according to the New York Racing Association. Oaklawn's bell features a prominent three-line engraving stacked across

the front: "This Bell Rings for The Love & Respect Of The HORSE!!!"

"We think that it's going to be a really good deal to help raise awareness and funds to do good stuff," Moquett said. "Nobody is doing it like this. This will spark some things across the country."

Moquett and Jeanette Milligan, Arkansas HBPA executive director, both said they had hoped to begin the program earlier in the 2021-22 meeting, but the project was delayed because the bell was shipped from Pennsylvania, and time was needed to mount it properly. Milligan said the bell was purchased by the Arkansas HBPA.

The Arkansas Thoroughbred Retirement Program uses a nearby farm of longtime Oaklawn pony person Jan Pettinger and her husband, retired jockey Don Pettinger, as a foster home for horses awaiting adoption.

Milligan said 15 horses were on the farm at the end of the 2021-22 Oaklawn meeting last May. That number was six in December, according to Jennifer Hoyt, Oaklawn's director of racing and the point person for the retirement program. Hoyt said it costs at least \$500 each month to properly care for horses waiting to be rehomed. Second careers for retired Thoroughbreds range from stable pony like former Moquett trainee Meanbone to eventing horse like 2017 Oaklawn Handicap winner Inside Straight to simple pleasure horses for trail riding.

"As the game has progressed, everybody's aware that there's a lot of horses out there, and you've got to find a home for them when they're done competing," said Robert N. Cline, an Arkansas owner and trainer who made three donations following victories during the final two days of the 2021-22 meet. "I've fed horses for months, waiting to find them a good home. So, we do our best. If we can all chip in and help on the cause, we all benefit from that. It's not hard to talk a guy out of \$100 after he wins a race. Everybody's happy and cheery. The purses are big enough here that if you're lucky enough to stagger across there in front, what's \$100?"





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## CHRIMS-PGSI Joins Stable of National HBPA Corporate Sponsors

**T**he National HBPA has announced that CHRIMS-PGSI has become a corporate sponsor of North America's largest horsemen's association.



# CHRIMS-PGSI

Based in California, the company provides a variety of technology and software solutions for the pari-mutuel and gaming industries, including pari-mutuel settlements and host fees, a runners database using Equibase data and a full range of accounting, auditing and consulting services. Its client list includes racetracks and regulatory agencies around the country as well as in Mexico and Europe.

"CHRIMS-PGSI has been a vital part of our industry for more than 25 years, and their services have proven to enhance the marketing plans and pari-mutuel results for many racetracks," said Eric Hamelback, CEO of the National HBPA. "I also know from talking to racing regulators that their accounting and auditing

services are an important part of the process in ensuring that horsemen get their proper share of the handle for purses. I encourage all of our affiliates to schedule a consultation with

the team at CHRIMS-PGSI, and they should feel confident their plans will be of benefit to horsemen."

"The National HBPA and its affiliates and racing commissions serve a critical role in the preservation and integrity of racing, supporting the men and women who have dedicated their lives to the horses in their care," said Gunner LaCour, president of CHRIMS-PGSI. "With the Thoroughbred Owners of California as a founding member of our board, part of our mission has always been to empower horsemen through data and auditing services. We are proud to work with the National HBPA in support of their local affiliates and partner commissions."

For more information about CHRIMS-PGSI, go to [portal.chrims.com](http://portal.chrims.com) or contact LaCour at [glacour@chrims.com](mailto:glacour@chrims.com) or Kaitlin Fox at [kfox@chrims.com](mailto:kfox@chrims.com).

## Horsemen's Track and Equipment Is New NHBPA Corporate Sponsor

**T**he National HBPA is pleased to announce that Horsemen's Track and Equipment Inc. has joined its roster of corporate sponsors.

"We are thrilled to welcome Horsemen's Track and Equipment to our stable of corporate sponsors," said Eric Hamelback, CEO of the National HBPA.

"No other company offers a greater selection of track equipment, and they have a sterling reputation around the racing world. I know they provide great service to so many of the racetracks in North America, and I hope that our members who have training tracks will strongly consider Horsemen's Track for their needs."

For more than 35 years, Horsemen's Track and Equipment has served the industry as a leader in racetrack design, installation and renovation. Its proprietary Rider Protection Rail System is installed at many of the pari-mutuel tracks across the country. In addition, the company offers an extensive



# HORSEMEN'S TRACK AND EQUIPMENT, INC.

selection of equipment for track maintenance, from conditioners and harrows to water trucks and an advanced equine ambulance.

"Horsemen's Track is excited to expand our support of horsemen through the National HBPA partnership," said Randy Bloch, president of Horsemen's Track and Equipment. "This sponsorship is important to our relationship with tracks, farms, training centers and track personnel. As we share in our marketing materials, 'We are ... first, last and always ... horsemen.' That

is truly our unique position in the industry in that we are horse owners and always emphasize safety in all that we do. We try to always work with the track superintendents to introduce new equipment to help improve rider and horse safety."

For more information about Horsemen's Track and Equipment, go to [horsemenstrack.com](http://horsemenstrack.com) or call (502) 423-7798.



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## National HBPA's Corporate Partner Group Going Strong in 2023

The National HBPA is proud to announce that eight valued corporate partners have renewed their relationships with North America's largest horsemen's association. These join new corporate partners for 2023 CHRIMS-PGSI and Horsemen's Track and Equipment.

"The support of our corporate partners is more important than ever, and we truly appreciate each and every one of them," said Eric Hamelback, CEO of the National HBPA. "By partnering with the National HBPA, these companies have made a statement about how important horsemen are to them, so I ask all our members to make that same statement and patronize our corporate partners whenever possible."

Following is an overview of the other eight corporate partners.

 **Daily Racing Form**, "America's Turf Authority since 1894" for Thoroughbred racing horseplayers and professionals, is the industry's dominant multichannel media company. *Daily Racing Form* is the only daily newspaper in the United States dedicated solely to the coverage of a single sport. Its companion website, drf.com, is the most heavily trafficked horse racing destination, providing players with extensive racing news coverage, interactive past performances, exclusive handicapping tools and access to the online and mobile wagering platform DRF Bets. Since making their published debut in 1991, Beyer Speed Figures have become an industry standard for the comparison of one horse's performance to another. One of the company's newest offerings, Beyer Sire Performance Standings, examines stallion performance beyond wins and earnings by measuring a sire's ability to produce high-quality horses, not necessarily the most winners or highest earners. For more information, go to drf.com.



**Equine Equipment**, which helps members of the horse industry get discounts on farm equipment, mowers and more, joined the list of National HBPA corporate partners in 2018 through a marketing partnership with Tenda Horse Products. Tenda is approaching five decades of serving the performance horse industry with products that promote and improve the overall health, soundness, performance and well-being of equine athletes. Visit tendahorse.com or call (888) 836-3213 for more information. Equine Equipment also can help horsemen save up to 26 percent off MSRP on equipment from Toro and Exmark, along with discounts on FarmPaint. The company recently announced a partnership with New Holland that provides horsemen with discounts on agricultural and construction equipment. Find out more at equineequipment.com or by calling (877) 905-0004.

 **Equineline.com** provides a variety of services and reports for horsemen. Among the reports offered are pedigrees, race records and an assortment of breeding, racing and sales information for individual horses (Thoroughbred and American Quarter Horse), including free five-cross pedigrees for Thoroughbreds, free auction results search for Thoroughbreds and a free racing recap for Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse races. Many of the Thoroughbred reports include video replay capabilities. Equineline.com, a service of The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., also offers products that can help save horsemen both time and money, including the Trainer Program, Farm Program, Owner Program, Sales Catalog App and Portfolio Service. To find out more, visit equineline.com.



**Finish Line Horse Products Inc.** manufactures products for racing and other performance horses and strives to provide the right products at the right price. The company offers a free hotline for customers to ask trained staff about Finish Line products or general equine-related questions. Although Finish Line has grown to serve many other equine disciplines over the years, Thoroughbred racing was the first and is still a core business for the company. Finish Line products are made in the United States and are 100 percent guaranteed to horsemen every time with the goal to "produce products that will show you a noticeable improvement in your horse." That makes Finish Line's products a necessary part of many trainers' barn programs and a factor in racing barns throughout the country. For more information, visit finishlinehorse.com.



**Horseman Labor Solutions** provides immigration services to the industry and assists trainers in maintaining their staff of skilled guest workers. Whether it is a 10-month temporary visa for a skilled groom or hot walker or a five-year visa for exercise riders and jockeys, Horseman Labor Solutions and its immigration services are considered second to none by many horsemen. CEO William Velie is a frequent speaker at National HBPA conferences and is hands-on in meeting with trainers and guest workers to cover all details in the visa process. For more information, call (800) 678-RACE (7223).



**Sterling Thompson Equine** administers the National HBPA-endorsed Owners' and Trainers' Liability Program, which provides coverage for assets in cases of injury or property damage as the result of equine activities such as racing, sales, training and breeding. The policy covers liability claims, contractual liability and premises and operations liability at an affordable cost to horsemen. The policy includes up to \$1 million in coverage for each occurrence and \$2 million general aggregate. For more information, visit sterlingthompson.com/farmequine or call (502) 585-3277.



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# From Beginning to End

Overreach of Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act permeates horsemen's gathering

By Tom Law and Jennie Rees; photos by Denis Blake



**T**he agenda laid it out, and the panels and speakers delivered at the 2023 National HBPA Conference with in-depth discussions offering critiques and alternatives to costly federal regulations wreaking havoc throughout the Thoroughbred industry.

The controversial Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) figured to dominate the conference held March 7-9 in conjunction for the first time with the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI) meeting at The Hotel Monteleone in the historic French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana.

The topic came up—either on purpose or because of its underlying overreach—time and again during panel discussions and presentations from the conference's start to its finish. The critiques came from lawmakers, horsemen, regulators and scientists, particularly during the conference's opening and closing panels and the keynote address.

"The whole thing is a façade; it's been all smoke and mirrors," said trainer Bret Calhoun, a member of the Louisiana HBPA board who also maintains strings in Kentucky and Texas, during the closing "Trainer's Talk" panel. "They sold this thing as the safety of the horse. It's absolutely not about safety of the horse. It's a few people with self-interest, and they have their own personal agenda.

"If it was all about the horse, we'd be spending a lot more time on racing

surfaces," Calhoun continued. "We could probably cure about 50 to 75 percent of the injuries if we had somebody overseeing surfaces on a daily, weekly basis, not somebody taking soil samples before the meet and at the end of the meet and calling it good. They've been taking away certain medications, therapy machines, things that are truly beneficial. They're having the opposite effect of what they're saying ... safety of the horse and rider. They're doing absolutely the opposite. Like I said, it's all a façade."

"I could go on for days about these horses."

**Morgan Vaughn, program facility manager and trainer for New Vocations, on success stories of retired racehorses**

"Uniformity should exist across jurisdictions, but uniformity should also exist across time."

**Daniel Suhr, managing attorney of the Liberty Justice Center**

Calhoun, Ron Faucheux and Jason Barkley participated in the panel and pulled no punches questioning the need, validity and overreach of the legislation pitched as the savior of racing while the industry heads into a challenging economic and logistical future.

Faucheux, also a member of the Louisiana HBPA board and in the hunt to top Fair Grounds' trainer's list that he also led for the 2021–2022 meeting, conditions a stable of about 60 horses and hasn't left his native state since HISA rules went into effect last summer.

"I haven't signed up, and I won't sign up; I'll get out of training if I have to sign up," Faucheux said. "A stable like mine, 55-to-60-horse-horse stable, I couldn't afford the cost of having to hire somebody to do the paperwork for me. The added expenses of it all, it wouldn't work financially for me. It's a struggle to get by the last couple years. Feed costs have gone up 50 percent, hay, shavings. It doesn't make financial sense for a trainer in Louisiana year-round to sign up and have to take on all those added fees because right now we're barely making it as it is."

Barkley maintains a stable of about 30 horses based at Fair Grounds and Oaklawn Park in the winter and in Kentucky the majority of the year. A member of the Kentucky HBPA board and a third-generation horseman, Barkley said he feels the impact of the regulations already and only sees them as potential obstacles for trainers hoping to grow their stables.

"A lot of my smaller clients, they don't want to pay the added cost of a per-start fee, the extra vet checks and all the added fees they want to put on us," Barkley said. "There's added costs and the time to do all the work. Between me and my main assistant, who is my wife, Shelbi, we do the extra paperwork, keeping track of everything. We already kept track of what every horse got every day, but to then have to put it into files, that doubles the workload. That is time taken away from actually working with your horses, which is what you should really be focused on."

The trio also talked about everything from challenges facing small to midsize stables, finding and keeping help and what gives them motivation in spite of all of racing's uncertainties. Even when the topic went in a different direction, HISA seemed to return one way or another.

"What is HISA's ultimate goal?" Faucheux asked. "I'm sure there is one. To me it looks like about half the racetracks to close down and about half the people to get out of it. And I think that's what will eventually happen if it's implemented across the country, over the span of several years."

"These are people sitting in offices and coming up with these rules and regulations that really aren't for the benefit of the horse, the riders, the owner, the industry as a whole," Calhoun said. "It's not good for the industry. ... To get this bill, to attach it to a COVID-19 bill, an emergency bill, that's something that should be stopped with every instance. No emergency bill should ever have anything attached to it. That's how they got this going. ... That's how Congress works, unfortunately."

## Opening Predictions

Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry and Daniel Suhr, managing attorney for the Liberty Justice Center, told an assembly of racehorse owners, trainers and racing regulators during the conference's opening day that they expect HISA to wind up before the U.S. Supreme Court—and they also believe America's highest court will strike down the legislation as unconstitutional.

Landry and Suhr said the four legal challenges before the appellate courts for the 5th and 6th circuits have much broader implications for the country. HISA, originally passed by Congress when slipped into the 2020 COVID-19 relief bill, sets up a private corporation, also known as the Authority, with broad powers to create, implement and enforce safety rules and drug and medication



"When I realized quite early that I wasn't going to be the quarterback for the New Orleans Saints, I said I want to do this. This is probably second to that. But all jokes aside, I

love it. I love being a trainer. I love my horses, the staff and I love the lifestyle. ... There's a lot that goes along with it that can sour you up. Recently, with HISA brought about, and the price increases of everything, it makes it hard to go on and do it the way you want to do it."

**Trainer Ron Faucheux**

"I've traveled across the country, and it's a great sacrifice to be on stage with an LSU grad."

**Attorney and Tulane University graduate Pete Sacopulos joking with National HBPA CEO Eric Hamelback**



"The bedrock concept of what curbs regulators is the fact that there's transparency, there's accountability. And HISA lacks that."

**Attorney Daniel Marquez, joining pharmacology experts on the medication panel**

"There's not a racing regulator who is not concerned about how this is going to play out. ... HISA is learning about how complicated and hard it is to regulate this sport. You can't sit in an ivory tower and think you've got all the answers, because you don't. Then when you go out and start implementing, you start affecting real-life people. And you start impacting the economics of an industry that was fragile to begin with in many corners."

**ARCI President and CEO Ed Martin**



DR. THOMAS TOBIN SHARES INFORMATION ON UNUSUAL CASES THAT SHOW HOW MINUTE LEVELS OF SUBSTANCES CAN TRANSFER TO A HORSE WITHOUT DIRECT ADMINISTRATION.

policies with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) providing some measure of oversight.

Landry, who brought suit against HISA in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, was the conference's keynote speaker.

"If we don't get this thing struck down, you better have this meeting in probably the dining room—and I mean the small dining room here at the Monteleone," Landry said. "It will be a bunch of folks who have more money in their pockets than they know what to do with. And they're going to control the tracks and horse racing, and the rest of us really won't be able to enjoy the sport. . . . This law is actually designed to eliminate the very fabric of horse racing.

"I said, 'We are going to keep filing suits, and we're going to find a way to bring this thing to the U.S. Supreme Court if we have to,'" Landry continued. "Guess what? We are there. And I'm glad we're there. I know the 6th Circuit decision [upholding HISA, in contrast to the 5th Circuit's ruling] was not all that great for us. But quite frankly, I think it was. Because it is going to absolutely force this case before the United States Supreme Court. This, in my opinion outside of horse racing, is actually one of the most important cases that will go before the Court this century. If this law is upheld, there is nothing that is out of reach of the federal government. There is no industry. There is no activity. There is nothing those boys in Washington can't lay their hands on."

The nonprofit Liberty Justice Center represented the National HBPA pro bono in what became the first challenge to HISA's constitutionality filed in the 5th Circuit, whose Court of Appeals ruled 3-0 in favor of the horsemen. Those judges remanded the case back to the lower district court for reconsideration.

"I believe this case is important not just for this industry," Suhr said. "I know it is. But I'm here because I believe it's important for our country and our democracy, and I don't say that lightly. Because fundamentally what we're fighting about is accountability, transparency and fairness, which are core guarantees of our Constitution to all of us as citizens. When the government exercises power in our lives, when it comes into our business, our families, it is accountable to voters, it is transparent to the stakeholder community, to the news media and to all of us as citizens. And it is neutral. It is independent and it is fair when it exercises that power."

Suhr said he believes there are enough justices who will vote to strike down HISA.

"There's no such thing as a slam dunk in my business," he said. "It's a lot like yours. Everything is a little bit of a gamble. But I do this for a living, and I can tell you, we brought this case because we believe when it gets to the Supreme Court, those fundamental principles we've been talking about are actually going



THE PANEL "STATUS REPORT ON HISA," WITH PETE SACOPULOS, JOHN DUVIEILH, DANIEL SUHR AND PETER ECABERT, OPENED THE 2023 NATIONAL HBPA CONFERENCE IN NEW ORLEANS.

to decide the day. I think we have a really great shot at this."

Joining Suhr on a Tuesday morning panel updating the audience about the four court cases were attorneys John Duvieilh, Pete Sacopulos and National HBPA General Counsel Peter Ecabert, who all represent plaintiffs in the HISA cases.

Suhr said proponents of HISA incorrectly compare having the Authority regulating horse racing to the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) regulating the financial services industry under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

"You'll hear this line, 'Well, we're just doing for horse racing what Congress has already done for the financial services industry,' that there's this self-regulatory industry organization and the SEC will oversee them and it's the exact same model," he said. "It is not the exact same model. Everybody who is licensed by FINRA gets to vote as to who sits on the board. HISA, the Authority, is a self-perpetuating oligarchy. They pick themselves, and they pick their successors. Does anybody in this room think if there were an open election . . . on who would sit on the board of HISA, that we'd have the same board we have today? Not going to happen. The second big difference is that if enough people didn't like FINRA, the law allows them to set up their own alternative."

Another difference, Suhr said, is that the SEC is composed of experts in that industry, which is not the case with the FTC and horse racing.

"They're just going to rubber-stamp it," he said of the rules. "That's very different from the SEC model, where you have truly independent, truly expert checks and balances on FINRA."

## Alternatives to HISA

Another panel offered concepts that could lead to uniformity without vesting so much control and power in one entity and still utilize the existing racing commissions.

"As we all look through a different lens now, something has to be established for uniformity," said National HBPA CEO Eric Hamelback. "We want to make it constitutional, and we want to make sure the right participants are helping to make the decisions. I see it as the right participants are in this room. . . . We want uniformity based on science. We want it based on peer-reviewed research. We feel the way the [HISA] legislation was drafted, it doesn't lean toward being based on science. I think there's a lot of opinion in there."

One alternative path forward is adopting an interstate compact, in which states opt in to agree to the same rules. The National HBPA's Ecabert said





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“The horse is what makes you want to get up every morning and do it.”

**Trainer Bret Calhoun**



“I just love the action. It’s all fun to me. I heard Mike Maker say, ‘They’ll run out of stalls before I run out of horses,’ and that’s kind of how I think. Bring them on. We’ll fight the fight as well

as we can for as long as we can.”

**Trainer Jason Barkley**

“The 6th Circuit pretty much diminished HISA. The [6th Circuit] court believed the regulator is the [Federal Trade Commission (FTC)]. That ruling pretty much said that HISA enforcement action is not final. It’s the FTC that makes it final. The Federal Trade Commission all of a sudden getting a lot of clenbuterol positives is not something that is going to go over very well in the internal staff meetings. So that kind of weakens that whole adjudication, arbitration system that HISA hopes to create for themselves. The other thing I got out of reading that thing is that HISA is just advisory, and if you don’t like a rule, you can go directly to the FTC.”

**Ed Martin**



“He has done everything.”

**Kevin Delahoussaye introducing Don Stemmans during the Living Legends Luncheon**



**DOUG MILLER ACCEPTS KITODAN’S NATIONAL HBPA CLAIMING HORSE OF THE YEAR TITLE ON BEHALF OF TRAINER ERIC FOSTER AND OWNERS FOSTER FAMILY RACING AND BILL WARGEL.**

compacts are “basically a vehicle where states get together and agree to act cooperatively. It allows for responsive and quick resolution.”

Ed Martin, the president and CEO of the ARCI, said a compact could be a workable alternative “so as not to bankrupt an industry by replicating things already in place. . . . ARCI has proposed interstate compacts in the past as a way to avoid the federal government getting into something that has been handled by the states. It’s welcome that the HBPA now has interest in this.”

Equine veterinarian Dr. Connie McNabb, vice chair of the Texas Racing Commission and a career military officer in the U.S. Air Force and Texas Air National Guard, said uniformity could be achieved using existing state structures through master cooperative agreements between federal agencies and states. In the case of the National Guard, the federal government provides funding and equipment to the states, which in turn must meet the same strict standards and a high level of accountability.

“Uniform national standards are also highly attainable by another mechanism,” McNabb said. “Our state statute specifically does not allow us to relinquish our responsibility and control over racing, even though we do agree that national standards, more integrity, all of that is very good. But state control and state sovereignty are not on the table and don’t have to be. Why are we inventing a whole new mechanism, when something has been very well road-tested? . . . This is not rocket science. It does not have to be an independent group that, as the lawyers put out there, very well might be trampling on our rights under the Constitution.”

Hamelback said there are several congressmen “bipartisan and bicameral, that are very interested in a repeal of HISA. But they also are just as interested in moving something forward that is driven from the ground up, utilizing the state commission infrastructure.

“Basically, what we are considering is an example of the federal interstate compact,” Hamelback continued. “The suggestion is a board of directors made up of nine individuals, five of them set by the states that have the most racing dates. It doesn’t matter what breed. The members of the compact would then elect the other four. From there we’ve also suggested emphatically that there be three scientific advisory committees—one for each major racing breed—and a fourth committee, a safety committee. Looking at some of the same sort of structures that we’ve seen with HISA, we think there is a model there. We have recommended that there be funding from the government, funneled through the United States Department of Agriculture and they be involved with equine research. . . . The ultimate enforcement, we feel like it still comes from the racing commissions and the structure we have now. We don’t have to reinvent the wheel.”



DR. STEVEN BARKER OUTLINES HOW A POSITIVE TEST OF A SUBSTANCE WEIGHING THE SAME AS A FLEA COULD COME FROM NEW TESTING PROTOCOLS MANDATED BY FEDERAL LEGISLATION.



LOUISIANA ATTORNEY GENERAL AND GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE JEFF LANDRY DELIVERS THE CONFERENCE'S KEYNOTE ADDRESS.

## 'Just Trust Me. I Know What I'm Doing'

The importance of screening levels based on science for post-race testing and the integrity of the horse racing industry—along with fleas and dogs—were a major part of the discussion during the Kent Stirling Memorial Medication Panel on the second day of the conference.

The National HBPA has long advocated for using scientifically developed screening and threshold levels to determine if a positive finding is a legitimate rules violation or if a negligible amount was inadvertently transferred to a horse or contacted by contamination with no pharmacological impact on the animal's performance. The topic has added urgency with HISA expected to take over control of equine testing policy and enforcement as early as March 27.

HISA CEO Lisa Lazarus has said trainers will not be penalized nor horses disqualified for irrelevant trace levels of substances readily found in the environment. However, there is nothing in HISA's proposed medication and drug rules that state that. Lazarus' comments also seem at odds with what has been said by Dr. Mary Scollay, chief of science for the organization contracted to implement and enforce HISA's rules.

"The scariest thing for me is when somebody who is in a position of authority—a regulator, a prosecutor—says, 'Just trust me. I know what I'm doing. Just trust what I'm doing,'" said El Paso attorney Daniel Marquez, whose law practice represents horsemen in the Southwest. "OK. I've been there, been that person. I don't trust me. There needs to be accountability."

Bringing sensitivity into sharper focus, drug testing and toxicology expert Dr. Steven Barker, now a professor emeritus at Louisiana State University after retiring following years as head of the state's equine drug testing lab, used an example of bufotenine, which can be detected in horses' post-race tests if (among other things) they ate hay with reed canary grass in it, and a flea.

First, a couple of explanations about metric measurements: Barker said a small paper clip weighs a gram. A microgram is a unit of mass equal to one-millionth of a gram. A picogram is equal to one-trillionth of a gram.

Barker cited three horses in the mid-Atlantic in whom bufotenine was detected at the extremely low levels of between 34.5 and 56.6 picograms per milliliter in blood and between 731.5 and 1,964.5 picograms per milliliter in urine. If those sound like big numbers, Barker said to consider that "the weight of a newborn female flea, prior to its first blood meal, is 450 micrograms. The blood volume of a horse is approximately 50,000 milliliters.

"So if a horse has 56 picograms per milliliter of bufotenine in a sample, the total amount of bufotenine in the entire horse is 2.8 micrograms, which would

be 0.62 percent of a female flea," Barker said. "So you imagine a 500-kilogram animal that has 0.62 percent of a female flea distributed throughout its entire body, what do you think the drug effect would be? Zero to nothing. And this is the case in a lot of the positives being called now. If HISA is going to do its job, these kinds of positives have to be given scientific consideration. Not 'Oh, we found it, we confirmed it, you're guilty.' I've seen that way too much. Are they going to worry about the integrity of the industry, worry about giving the industry a black eye for all these positives? When really the more important thing is the integrity and reputation of trainers, owners and the horses affected.

"What if it had been a horse that won the Kentucky Derby?" Barker added mischievously, having been an expert witness for trainer Bob Baffert in the appeal of Medina Spirit's disqualification of his 2021 Kentucky Derby victory for a medication overage. "So, using science, coming up with reasonable levels to call positives that really do meet their mandate, is what HISA should be doing. I don't know that they will. I certainly hope they do."

Dr. Clara Fenger, a Central Kentucky-based veterinarian and racehorse owner with additional degrees in internal medicine and equine exercise physiology, started off the panel with some statistics. She said in 2021, the World Anti-Doping Agency reported 0.77 percent positive tests out of the 241,430 athletes tested worldwide, with 40 percent of the violations being for illegal anabolic steroids. A very small amount were from inadvertent environmental contamination, she said.

In the United States in 2020, out of 243,627 racehorse tests, only 0.43 percent were declared post-race positives. Of those, 28 percent were for Class 1 substances, and most of those could reasonably be considered inadvertent environmental transfer, such as with methamphetamine and morphine, she said.

But while violations in human sports were down 1.19 percent from 2013, U.S. horse racing rose to that 0.43 percent of positive findings from 0.34 percent in 2013, Fenger said. While that still reflects few "true" attempts to cheat, in her words, she said the bump in horse racing is explained by labs using their increased sensitivity to find irrelevant minuscule levels of substances that would not be called positives in human testing.

Dr. Thomas Tobin—longtime National HBPA consultant, veterinarian and renowned expert in equine pharmacology and toxicology at the University of Kentucky's Gluck Equine Research Center—shared a couple of unusual cases that illustrate how minute levels of substances can transfer to a horse without direct administration.

One came amid a rash of positive findings for the seizure and shingles drug gabapentin in Ohio, which has an "in-house" screening level of 8 nanograms (parts per billion) per milliliter of plasma, Tobin said. The finding of 89.4 nanograms per milliliter in a horse's post-race test was traced to the groom,

who had a prescription for gabapentin and urinated in the horse's stall. Three other drugs prescribed for the groom were found in the horse—the largest known number of human prescription medications transferred together to a horse to date, Tobin said.

In another case, the urinating culprit was ... a dog.

*The Irish Times* reported that a racehorse owned by a veterinarian was disqualified from a victory after the post-race test revealed the presence of gabapentin. That result was determined to have come from the family dog, who was being treated with gabapentin and had access to the horse stalls.

"It's now official in the published domain that you can dose a dog with gabapentin and it can turn up in a racehorse," Tobin said.

Tobin said he was asked to work on a plasma cutoff for fentanyl for equine testing, below which there would be no pharmacological effect, because of the street drug's widespread availability. (He said he's in the process of publishing a recommended screening level of 50 picograms per milliliter of plasma.)

## American Fixed-Odds Betting

Two executives from major horse racing content distributors and two executive directors of horsemen's associations encouraged horsemen to embrace the entry of fixed-odds wagering on racing in America. Participants in the panel "Fixed Odds and the Positive Swing in U.S. Wagering" addressed both the growth of American tracks sending their race product to legal bookmakers overseas and the possibilities and challenges of introducing bookmaker-style fixed odds as a wagering option at U.S. tracks, whether at the actual track, another brick-and-mortar facility or online.

Panel moderator Michele Fischer said \$44.3 billion globally was wagered in 2022 through legalized fixed odds on horse racing. That's led by Australia at \$19.1 billion and the United Kingdom at \$12.9 billion. Sports betting in the United States is predicted to gross \$10.2 billion this year and hit \$16 billion in 2026, according to Fischer's research. The point is that fixed-odds wagering on horse racing is popular around the world, and American tracks need to get into the sportsbook action igniting around the country.

Sports betting is now being offered in some form in 36 states and Washington, D.C., with the enabling legislation in place in several other states and before lawmakers in a few more. Presently only New Jersey and Colorado have implemented fixed-odds wagering on horse racing.

Offering the same structure as sports betting, with its fixed odds, has the potential to grow horse racing's market, the panelists agreed. But they stressed it will take some time for the industry to reap the full benefits, with the betting public potentially reacting in unexpected ways.

"There are ways in which a low-percentage margin can turn into huge amounts of profitability, but to believe you're going to know exactly what is happening from Day 1 is completely unrealistic," advised Richard Ames, CEO of the British-based Sports Information Services and president of SIS Content Services, the largest horse racing content supplier to global bookmakers/sportsbooks. "Starting is important. Transparency of the data is important, and then move forward. Not having long-term deals on Day 1 or having some flexibility to adapt to the way consumers want to play, that's the way to approach this challenge."

The risk of cannibalizing the existing pari-mutuel pools if fixed odds are also offered was discussed.

"Everybody in this room agrees we want to get our racing product in front of the sportsbook customers," said Scott Daruty, president of U.S.-based Monarch



THE PRESENTATION "FIXED ODDS AND THE POSITIVE SWING IN U.S. WAGERING" LED BY MICHELE FISCHER SPARKED PLENTY OF LIVELY CONVERSATION FROM PANELISTS (FROM LEFT) DAVE BASLER, OHIO HBPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; ED FENASCI, LOUISIANA HBPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; SCOTT DARUTY, PRESIDENT OF U.S.-BASED MONARCH CONTENT MANAGEMENT; AND RICHARD AMES, CEO OF THE BRITISH-BASED SPORTS INFORMATION SERVICES AND PRESIDENT OF SIS CONTENT SERVICES.

Content Management, the simulcast purchase and sales agent for more than a dozen premier North American tracks. "But it's important that we introduce it in a way that doesn't hurt our pari-mutuel pools. We have some pretty definitive thoughts on what that means. First and foremost, we believe fixed-odds wagering should be offered on a win and place basis only."

That brought pushback from Ames.

"Going in [saying] we're going to restrict what you can do misses the point in terms of the sportsbooks' attitude to horse racing," Ames said. "We have to remember these sportsbooks are generating huge amounts of revenue, and horse racing comes in late to the party. Those sportsbooks need to want to do it. ... It will cost them money to get ready to be able to bring these props into the market, and those props will be competing against other sports. I do recognize the challenge around cannibalization. But I think going into sportsbooks with the attitude 'we'll restrict you from the beginning' is not going to get them to buy into the production and do it in a way that will maximize the profitability for all."

Ohio HBPA Executive Director Dave Basler and Louisiana HBPA Executive Director Ed Fenasci stressed that horsemen need to be informed and part of the decision-making process.

"There's a strong possibility [fixed odds] could bring a lot more volume in, and any cannibalization is minimal because it brings additional pari-mutuel wagering in through the new volume," Basler said. "But I don't know ... If you're doing \$250,000 a day in total handle, you don't have a lot of downside to trying fixed odds. It's going to be a different equation to what deal you approve than a [track such as] Santa Anita that's betting \$10-\$12 million a day, a lot of it on track."

Fenasci said he was surprised to find out last summer that Louisiana Downs' best overseas outlet was Spain, saying, "When I'm looking at these contracts, it was very important for horsemen to get the feedback exactly where the product is going and what is the volume that is being generated in those markets, so that you can continually evaluate and make good decisions."

The Ohio and Louisiana horsemen have been at the forefront of ensuring their purses benefit from overseas betting on their races.

"It is imperative that your product get into as many bookshops as you can," Fenasci said. "When you're dealing with distribution, you want to work with reputable companies that have the relationships around the world to get your content the widest distribution. We've had long-term agreements with our racetracks that our purses will share in revenue generated directly from horse racing." **HJ**



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# SECRETARIAT'S LEGACY



## THE SONS, DAUGHTERS AND DESCENDANTS WHO KEEP HIS LEGEND ALIVE



PATRICIA MCQUEEN

Foreword by Kate Tweedy and Leeanne Meadows Ladin

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATRICIA MCQUEEN

# PURE GOLD

*Secretariat's Legacy*  
tells the stories  
of the 1973  
Triple Crown  
winner's notable  
and sometimes  
unknown offspring

**S**ecretariat's name will be everywhere this year and rightfully so since 2023 marks the 50-year anniversary of his legendary sweep of the Triple Crown. Secretariat ended a 25-year drought by winning the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes and Belmont Stakes in electrifying and record-setting fashion, captivating the nation and becoming an icon still revered five decades later. He also became a fan favorite, and his legion of supporters continue to fly the flag, including award-winning journalist and photographer Patricia McQueen.

McQueen's book *Secretariat's Legacy* will be available this spring and provides a "fresh look into the lives of Secretariat's sons and daughters and the impact many of them continue to have today through their significant descendants." Among the racing legends profiled in the book are Hall of Famer and Horse of the Year Lady's Secret, champion and two-time classic winner Risen Star and Melbourne Cup winner Kingston Rule. Secretariat's breed-shaping daughters Terlingua, the dam of Storm Cat, and Weekend Surprise, the dam of A.P. Indy, along with Secrettame, the dam of Gone West, also are featured.

McQueen, who lives in Massachusetts and received an Eclipse Award honorable mention for photography, has been published in *The Horsemen's Journal*, *Thoroughbred Times*, *BloodHorse*, *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred*, *Thoroughbred Record*, *The Florida Horse* and other publications. She also serves as the editor and primary writer for *Insights*, the official publication of the North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries. She earned the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling's Media Award and is a recipient of the John K. Goodman Alumni Award from the University of Arizona Race Track Industry Program.

*Secretariat's Legacy*, a 298-page coffee table book, features 282 photos, mostly in color. The book contains the largest collection of photos assembled of Secretariat's stakes winners and other key offspring gathered from around the world.

*The Horsemen's Journal* joins the racing industry in celebrating Secretariat's Triple Crown anniversary and is pleased to publish a few excerpts from *Secretariat's Legacy*.

## Lt. Pinkerton

By the end of the 1980s, wheels were already turning to define Secretariat's ultimate legacy through his runners and mares. After the stallion died at the relatively young age of 19 on October 4, 1989, he had one last crop of foals on the way, one last group of horses with a chance to add to that legacy. They did their best to deliver on that challenging task.

Included among them was one of Secretariat's best runners, Tinnors Way, and French stakes winner Insijaam; both are profiled in earlier chapters. Two of the 1990 foals, Secret of the Sea and Secretariat's Fire, were blessed with long life and were among the last surviving Secretariats; their stories are told in the next chapter.

There was one other stakes winner in the last crop, and he was actually the one who struck first—a chestnut colt named Lt. Pinkerton.

He was produced from the Stage Door Johnny mare Kapalua Butterfly, a full sister to One on the Aisle, a marathon turf specialist who won the Grade 1 San Juan Capistrano Invitational at Santa Anita. Like her brother, Kapalua Butterfly had an affinity for turf, having won the 1985 Grade 3 Modesty Stakes at Hawthorne. She sped the 1  $\frac{3}{16}$ -mile distance in 1:55, just two-fifths off the course record. Her winning margin of 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  lengths was the widest in the race's history.

It's not surprising that her son by Secretariat also preferred the grass. Born in Kentucky on February 13, 1990, the colt was bred by Mrs. Louis Aitken and James Mamakos. He was offered at the Keeneland July Selected Yearling Sale, but failed to sell with a \$95,000 bid. Therefore, he raced throughout his career for various combinations of Dr. Louis Aitken and his daughter Nancy Vanier, plus Al Loeb and John Fike. He was trained by Harvey Vanier, who with his wife Nancy were often called the "First Family of Illinois Racing." They were a dominant force in the region's racing and breeding for decades; Vanier had also trained Kapalua Butterfly.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PATRICIA MCQUEEN

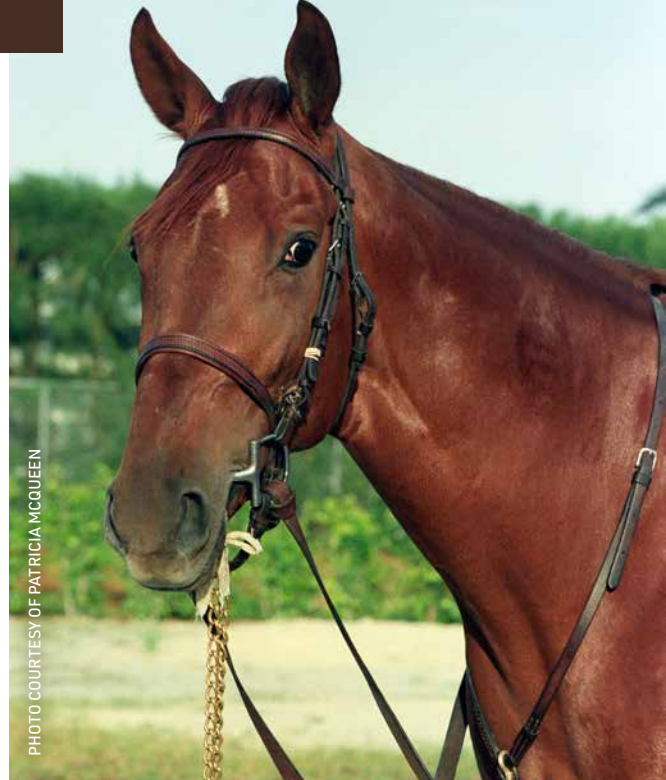


PHOTO COURTESY OF PATRICIA MCQUEEN

## LT. PINKERTON

Named after a major character in the *Madame Butterfly* opera, Lt. Pinkerton made his racing debut at Arlington International Racecourse on August 26, 1992. Favored by the bettors, he finished fourth going 6 furlongs on the dirt. Another fourth followed 11 days later when stretched out to a mile.

Vanier then put him on grass for his third start at the track on September 24, a 1-mile maiden race run over a yielding turf course. He lagged behind early, made up ground to be third after a half mile, and drove through the stretch to win by 2  $\frac{1}{4}$  lengths.

Next came two turf starts at Keeneland. A rallying second in a 1-mile allowance race on October 21 was followed by an unplaced effort in the October 30 Hopemont Stakes at 1  $\frac{1}{16}$  miles.

As any trainer would do with a promising youngster, Vanier wanted to see if he had a potential Kentucky Derby horse and put Lt. Pinkerton back on the dirt. The colt answered a clear “no” with three straight poor results on the surface, one at Churchill Downs in November and two at Florida’s Gulfstream Park in January. That was it for the dirt experiment.

However, a return to turf didn’t help, at least not right away. Three starts on the Gulfstream grass produced middle moves that he couldn’t sustain, and he finished off the board each time.

Vanier had several veterinarians look at Lt. Pinkerton that winter, and it was determined that a soft or lazy palate was causing breathing problems. The trainer would tell the media later that spring, as reported in the *Chicago Tribune*: “Some of those things come around with age and settle down. So, when we got to Kentucky, I finally started giving him longer works, and he came around. I really worked him hard and got him real fit. The problem just seemed to subside overnight.” He noted that the horse thrived on the extra workload.

Indeed, the colt showed signs of life when Vanier’s horses returned to Kentucky. In a 1  $\frac{1}{16}$ -mile turf allowance race at Keeneland on April 4, he made a furious rally from last to finish fourth, only 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  lengths behind winner Desert Waves.

In a Keeneland allowance race on April 23, Lt. Pinkerton returned to the winner’s circle for the first time since the previous fall. After a slow start, he rushed up under jockey Tracy Hebert to get the lead after 6 furlongs and drew off

to win the 1-mile turf race by 3 lengths. Finishing second was Llandaff, a regally bred colt by Lyphard out of champion Dahlia, who would become a multiple stakes winner.

It was on to Churchill Downs. Not for the Kentucky Derby, as Vanier had originally hoped, but at least the colt did become a stakes winner at the historic track. First, though, was a turf allowance race on May 16, at 1  $\frac{1}{16}$  miles on a firm course. As was his style, Lt. Pinkerton was last early and made a big rally. This time, he got the lead in the stretch yet couldn’t hold off the winner Snake Eyes. The two 3-year-olds would get to know each other quite well over their next few starts.

They met next in the Jefferson Cup at 1  $\frac{1}{8}$  miles on May 29. Lt. Pinkerton was the third betting choice behind Snake Eyes and Mi Cielo. It was a small field of just six runners, and Lt. Pinkerton was in his usual spot far back in the early stages. He wasn’t there long—he roared up to grab the lead before the field hit the far turn. He drew off in the stretch, and had plenty left to hold off Snake Eyes to win by 2 lengths. The time of 1:48  $\frac{1}{5}$  was a full second faster than the previous stakes record.

It was Hebert’s first stakes win at Churchill Downs. In the *Louisville Courier-Journal*’s coverage of the race, the jockey said: “He’s the kind of horse who makes that one big run, but the pace was so slow that I was running over horses when I hit the backside. And I played my cards right. I was a little worried, but he went to the lead in hand. It wasn’t like I had to ask him. I couldn’t hold him anymore ... I had to give him his head to where he could relax a little bit. Everything just turned out perfect.”

Three weeks later, Snake Eyes turned the tables on Lt. Pinkerton, winning the Isaac Murphy Stakes at Arlington as Lt. Pinkerton finished fourth. The poor performance puzzled the trainer, who said later that summer that his colt may have eaten something that disagreed with him. As reported in the *Chicago Tribune*: “He just didn’t come up a sharp horse like I expected ... I think there was something dietary about it. He might have had a stomachache. He was dull for a couple days after the race, too.”

Whatever the reason, on July 10 Lt. Pinkerton ran back to form in the 1  $\frac{1}{8}$ -mile Grade 3 Round Table Stakes at Arlington, yet still finished a neck behind



Fleet Secretariat was the only stakes winner among Sister Fleet's seven foals ... She was durable, starting 37 times over five years, winning six races and placing in 12 others.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PATRICIA MCCUEEN

#### FLEET SECRETARIAT

Snake Eyes at the wire. After an awkward start where he broke in the air, he settled in near the back. With him was Snake Eyes, and while they both came flying in the stretch to catch the frontrunner Lykatill Hil, Snake Eyes had the edge. Vanier told the media that his starting gate antics probably cost him the race; the trainer began giving his colt gate schooling lessons.

Lt. Pinkerton failed to show much in the Grade 2 American Derby on July 25, finishing sixth on the soft turf. He appreciated much easier company in the Golden Act Stakes at 1  $\frac{1}{16}$  miles on August 11. Lagging behind early, he quickly gained on the field and was in front after 6 furlongs. He drew off and won by 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  lengths to notch his second stakes victory, getting the distance in 1:41  $\frac{4}{5}$ .

That set the colt up for a chance in the race named after his famous sire, the Grade 1 Secretariat Stakes on August 29. The race was created by Arlington management in 1974, the year after Secretariat won the Arlington Invitational in his first start after winning the Triple Crown. The Secretariat Stakes quickly became an important stakes race for top 3-year-old turf runners.

"Wouldn't it be something for him to win the race named for his daddy?" mused Vanier before the race. "It'd be fun, wouldn't it?"

It was certainly Lt. Pinkerton's biggest test to date. As was common for the Secretariat Stakes, a big international field of 14 had been assembled, including familiar rivals Snake Eyes and Lykatill Hil. Favored was New York invader Strolling Along, who finished a lackluster eighth. Second choice went to Explosive Red, who had won the American Derby. They were all upset by Eastern-based longshot Awad, who had a 1  $\frac{1}{4}$ -length advantage over Explosive Red at the finish. Italian invader Brazany was third, followed by Snake Eyes.

While Lt. Pinkerton checked in fifth, he didn't disgrace himself. With a mild rally, he reported home before several others who were more highly regarded and was only 5 lengths behind the winner.

The final in-the-money finish of his career came in his next start, the Grade 3 Hawthorne Derby on October 9. Last of 12 in the early stages, he made a steady run to close in on the leaders; the best he could do was second, 3  $\frac{1}{2}$  lengths behind Snake Eyes.

After a last-place finish in the Grade 3 Hawthorne Budweiser Breeders' Cup

Handicap on October 23, Lt. Pinkerton was put away for the year. He returned in May 1994 and showed nothing in two starts. After another year off, the horse made three poor starts at age 5, the last being on August 26, 1995. He was plagued by tendon issues, recalled Nancy Vanier years later. She remembered the colt as a good-natured horse, nice and friendly.

His record stood at four wins in 27 starts, with four seconds. The vast majority of his \$165,429 in earnings was won on the grass; he never hit the board on the main track.

Lt. Pinkerton was sold to Argentine interests for \$14,000 at the 1996 Keeneland November sale. He stood four seasons at Haras Caryjuan, siring only 89 foals. His best runner was 2004 classic winner Deleite Pin, who won the Group 2 Clasico Chacabuco at Hipodromo Palermo for his third win in just four starts. He defeated the country's top stayers in the 2,500-meter race (a little over 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles). Deleite Pin's third dam was the Secretariat mare Assemblage.

A few years later, Lt. Pinkerton showed up as the broodmare sire of Malhechor Int, who won the Group 1 Grand Criterium on May 29, 2010. Run at San Ysidro, the race is an important Argentine event for 2-year-olds. Malhechor Int was sired by A.P. Indy's son Gradepoint.

## Fleet Secretariat

Another filly who started her career in California only to find the company much easier to handle in the Midwest was Fleet Secretariat. Her dam was multiple graded stakes winner Sister Fleet, a daughter of Fleet Nasrullah, a fast runner heralding from the breeding families of Mrs. John D. Hertz. Fleet Nasrullah's broodmare sire was Triple Crown winner Count Fleet.

Fleet Secretariat was the only stakes winner among Sister Fleet's seven foals. Born April 23, 1981, the Kentucky-bred bay filly was a homebred racing for Sonny Henderson. She was durable, starting 37 times over five years, winning six races and placing in 12 others. Trained by Chuck Taliaferro, Fleet Secretariat didn't start until the end of her 2-year-old year, showing little in a maiden race at Hollywood Park on December 10, 1983. She finally broke her maiden in her 10th

## Fast Market

The word “star” certainly applied to Fast Market, a son of Secretariat born February 4, 1986. He was bred in Ontario by Kinghaven Farms, who bought the stakes-winning Cyane mare Tina’s Ten, in foal to Secretariat, at the 1985 Keeneland November sale for \$625,000. She delivered a beautiful chestnut colt with four white feet and a star. As a racehorse, he would often be called “Little Red” because of his resemblance to his sire.

Fast Market was proof that a well-managed racehorse can stay sound and race competitively for years, and then go on to live a long, happy life. In fact, he raced more than any other Secretariat, with 144 starts from age 3 through 12. Almost all of them were in the claiming ranks, first in Ontario and then at Mountaineer Park in West Virginia. He won 21 races, finished second 16 times and third 20 times, for earnings of \$132,586. He had more than a dozen different owners, either through claims or private sales.

The gelding found his greatest success at picturesque Fort Erie. In 1992 he was voted the track’s Horse of the Year, best male and top grass runner. In a two-month summer stretch, he won five of six races at the track, including the Puss n Boots Stakes, the lone stakes win of his career.

In late 1994, he arrived at Mountaineer Park. A year later, he was purchased by trainer Louie Gallo, sight unseen, for \$1,000 after a chance meeting in a grocery store. Gallo really loved Secretariat, and when he went to pick up his new acquisition, he thought, “Wow! He looked really good, and he was the cutest little horse. He looked a little like a miniature Secretariat.”

Racing for Gallo and his owner and friend Chuck Bosco, Fast Market stayed competitive through age 12. The trainer never pushed him and gave him time off when needed. “Horses love to run, and I always let the horse tell me what he wants to do,” he said.

At the end of 1998, Fast Market was retired and sent to Bosco’s farm. When the owner died, Gallo turned to Bev Dee of Bright Futures Farm, an equine rescue and sanctuary in Cochran, Pennsylvania, accredited by the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance. Dee had previously found good homes for many of Gallo’s horses. Gallo had one condition this time: that she keep Fast Market herself. She agreed in a heartbeat, and the gelding arrived at Bright Futures in 2004.

From then until his death at the ripe old age of 33 in January 2019, Fast Market, nicknamed Markie, was a real local celebrity. His Facebook page launched in March 2015. He had visitors from two countries and a dozen states, and routinely received Christmas and birthday cards, along with treats and care packages. His best buddy at the farm was Brite Decision, the horse that started Dee in the rescue business in 2000 and for whom the farm is named.

Even in his old age, Fast Market still had the striking Secretariat-like appearance. “He’s a beautiful horse to look at, and he’s a beautiful horse on the inside,” marveled Dee in 2018. “He’s got the gentlest, kindest soul. And he has a zest for life and an uncomplicated lifestyle that helps keep him young.” **HJ**

**Secretariat’s Legacy may be purchased for  
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PHOTO COURTESY OF PATRICIA MCGUIRE

### FAST MARKET

race, drawing off to a 9-length victory in a 1  $\frac{1}{16}$ -mile maiden event at Hollywood on May 28, 1984.

She made 11 more starts in Southern California over the next 12 months, winning two allowance races at Santa Anita. Then Fleet Secretariat headed east to Minnesota and the first racing season at Canterbury Downs (now Canterbury Park). She made three starts at the track in the summer months of 1985, finishing third in an allowance race and fourth in two stakes races. She got some time off after that, returning to finish far back in a Santa Anita allowance race in April 1986 before heading back to Minnesota.

She raced seven times at Canterbury over the next few months, and it was the most productive time of her career. The 5-year-old mare began with a fifth in the City of Minneapolis Stakes on April 27, 1986. She followed that effort with a second and then a win in allowance races, before getting her first stakes placing in the June 7 Fargo Stakes. Another allowance win followed, then an unplaced run in the Stillwater Invitational Handicap. She finally put it all together for the August 9 Burnsville Handicap.

Fleet Secretariat was co-topweight at 118 pounds with Rascal Lass, a classy filly who had won the Grade 1 Fantasy Stakes the year before. However, Secretariat’s daughter had a 1  $\frac{1}{2}$ -length advantage over Rascal Lass at the end of the 1  $\frac{1}{16}$ -mile race, run in 1:45  $\frac{3}{5}$ .

Henderson and Taliaferro sent their newly minted stakes winner to Ellis Park for her next run, the Coca Cola Centennial Stakes on August 23. It was the first \$100,000 race ever offered at that Kentucky track. Fleet Secretariat ran well and closed late, yet couldn’t catch race favorite Queen Alexandra, who won by 3 lengths in 1:49  $\frac{1}{5}$  for 1  $\frac{1}{8}$  miles.

The mare returned in 1987 at age 6, but failed to place in four more starts. She completed her career with earnings of \$165,760.

As a broodmare, Fleet Secretariat’s durability was passed to some of her foals. Her first foal, Gunpowder Falls, won 12 of 134 starts through age 10. Her leading earner was High Drama, who won 11 of 52 starts through age 8. She also produced two stakes winners, Fleet Broad and Houston Fleet M D. Fleet Secretariat’s daughter Jolly Ginny produced Seafaring Man, who won the Grade 2 Georgia Cup Hurdle and also equaled a 2  $\frac{3}{8}$ -mile steeplechase course record at Tryon, North Carolina.



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# Differentiation With Quality

COURTESY OF HIGHLANDER TRAINING CENTER

Highlander Training Center continues to grow and gain acceptance

By Jennie Rees

Larry Hirsch, searching for a facility to prepare his young racehorses and provide R&R for others, had a vision when he saw the old Rafter L Ranch. It just required looking past the dilapidated barn, the full-sized trees that took over the paddocks and pasture, the widespread stash of rusty and broken machinery and a training track obscured by towering weeds.

TRAINING AT SUNRISE AT HIGHLANDER TRAINING CENTER IN SULPHUR SPRINGS, TEXAS

Hirsch built his Dallas-based private equity firm, Highlander Partners, into a global force by recognizing diamonds in the rough. So when looking at Rafter L Ranch, Hirsch didn't see a massive reclamation project after two decades of neglect. He saw possibility.

"You could see it had 'good bones,' " he said. "It's beautiful property, great topography—as opposed to flat ground in Texas. It had rolling grounds that came down, which means that water and rain—which we have a lot of in East Texas—would roll off the property. It was treed, which meant we have shade for our horses. It had a wonderful track that hadn't been used for 20 or 25 years. But the soils, everybody we showed them to said they're extraordinarily good for preserving the health and training of horses. It wasn't hard to come to the conclusion that this was the right place to be."

That was 2017.

Today, yearlings and weanlings romp in undulating pastures that are part of Hirsch's 189-acre Highlander Training Center on Texas Highway 19, just minutes off Interstate 30 in Sulphur Springs. Two-year-olds learning the fundamentals and older horses coming off layoffs jog and gallop over a traditional training track and lope up a 1  $\frac{3}{8}$ -mile turf gallop.

The spacious barns feature vaulted ceilings and skylights that can open and close via remote control but are programmed to automatically close when it rains. The 12-by-12-foot stalls with springy flooring under bedding provide horses with maximum comfort.

"You'd think you just drove into Lexington, not Sulphur Springs, Texas," said trainer Lon Wiggins, whose main circuit is Kentucky and Arkansas.

"It's a facility that belongs in Kentucky as far as the quality is concerned," concurred Kentucky-based trainer Joe Sharp, whose main winter stable is based at Fair Grounds. "To have that in the South and give people down here options like that, it's really beneficial."

Sulphur Springs, with a population of 16,000, is home to the Southwest Dairy Museum and Education Center, which chronicles the town's roots as Texas' one-time dairy capital. The region is populated with cattle farms interspersed with horses of various breeds. And located 80 miles east of Dallas, Highlander is an easy drive to tracks in Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana and less than 800 miles from Churchill Downs and Keeneland Race Course.

"I know of only one other facility similar to this, which would be WinStar," said Dr. Ali Broyles, the veterinarian and equine surgeon who oversees Highlander's equine medical care, in reference to WinStar Farm in Versailles, Kentucky. "For this kind of weanling-throughout-racing timeline, in addition to these therapy modalities, there are not very many facilities of this scope in the country. It's a relatively new facility, but I know they have already seen a lot of growth and acceptance from the Thoroughbred community on a national level."

The 11,000-square-foot Highlander Fitness and Therapy Center was a critical part of Hirsch's game plan. Depending on horses' needs, they could head to the above-ground cold saltwater spa where 35-degree water churns around their legs, in-ground and above-ground aqua treadmills or two stalls with full vibration-plate floors.

Soft-tissue injuries that once would have forced a horse's retirement are treated with such tools as groundbreaking regenerative laser therapy from Sound. The list of diagnostic equipment on hand includes a portable digital X-ray machine, ultrasound and dynamic endoscopy (examining the upper airway to detect abnormalities that may only be found during high-speed exercise).

"What is going to make you different from competition from Ocala, Kentucky, Louisiana, et cetera?" Hirsch said. "Those of us who believe we want to have horses that run at 4 and 5 years old and retain them in a healthy manner throughout their lives know the importance of having some place to lay up horses, some place to improve them, some place to get over injuries. That was the concept—differentiation with quality—with creating something special here."

“  
You could see it had 'good bones.' It's beautiful property, great topography ... It wasn't hard to come to the conclusion that this was the right place to be.  
—Larry Hirsch



COURTESY OF HIGHLANDER TRAINING CENTER

HORSES CAN TRAIN ON HIGHLANDER'S TRADITIONAL DIRT TRACK OR ITS 1  $\frac{3}{8}$ -MILE TURF GALLOP.



For years, Hirsch trusted his yearlings, 2-year-olds and layups to the father-son team of Ed and Scooter Dodwell at their Diamond D Ranch in Lone Oak, Texas. After Ed died and the ranch was sold, Hirsch opted to establish his own training center. He tasked Scooter Dodwell with finding suitable property.

That turned out to be the Rafter L Ranch property 12 miles away. Much of the Diamond D crew relocated with Dodwell, who served as Highlander's president and head trainer before retiring in 2022.

Highlander general manager Jon Newbold—a Diamond D veteran whose deep experience included working for Valor Farm in Texas, Taylor Made in Kentucky and Eddie Woods in Ocala—was charged with cleaning up the property so horses could return.

"It was wilderness," Newbold said. "It was really beautiful, but it was a challenge to get it fenced to where we could make it functional. ... To see all of the progress and the transformation, there has been so much done every single day to get it to where it is now."

Newbold heads the training preparation of yearlings and 2-year-olds. Shannon Ritter, a WinStar veteran brought in to lead Highlander's therapy center, oversees the racehorses preparing to return to the track.

"Shannon has an exceptional reputation of working with horses at the track, of working with project horses and horses that needed a little extra TLC and incredible horsemanship," Highlander Chairman and CEO Jeff Hooper said of Ritter, a successful jockey and trainer who also served as assistant trainer to Elliott Walden before Walden became WinStar CEO. "By having Shannon overseeing our operations in the therapy center and also leading the training of the older horses, it's really a seamless process. ... We're getting very positive response from trainers at the track about the horses they're getting back, their condition and their fitness."

Just ask Robertino Diodoro, who races all over the country. He's had "a little bit of everything" at Highlander, from rehabbing horses to 2-year-olds and yearlings being broken.

"It's first-class facility with a first-class staff," Diodoro said. "I've been to a lot of places that have a beautiful facility, but they don't have the staff to go with it. Highlander has both, very top-notch and great communicators."

Hooper joined Highlander in 2019. He is one of Texas' most respected executives, having worked on both the racetrack (Lone Star Park) and the horsemen's (Texas Thoroughbred Association) side. Jose "Cuco" Mendez works as a trainer alongside Newbold and Ritter after 28 years as an exercise rider, assistant and trainer. Office manager Dee O'Brien, from a racing family and with extensive experience on the equine auction side, heads up administrative functions, including client relations and new project initiatives. Destin Heath, formerly WinStar's farm trainer, helps out as a consultant.

Highlander places so much importance on its eight full-time riders and 14 full-time experienced grooms that their photos are included on the operation's website along with management.

"We think horsemanship is the key and foundation of what we do here," Hooper said. "We want to bring each horse to the best of their abilities, whatever that may be. We're fortunate to have experienced and highly professional people in all of our leadership roles here. But we always want to learn from others too and blend old-school horsemanship with the cutting-edge technologies available. Racing can be a game of inches. So anything we can do to help these horses achieve what they're capable of, we want to have those tools at our disposal."

While Highlander values the Texas market, the goal has always been "to be a top facility on a national basis that is strategically located in Texas," Hooper said. Highlander averaged 135 horses on its property in 2022, up 22 percent from 2021, he said.

"The best advertising is the quality of the product that we're sending to the trainers at the track," Hooper said. "While our ultimate goal isn't to see how many horses we can get, we're pleased that owners and trainers are entrusting us more and more with their horses and with some really nice horses."



LARRY HIRSCH (CENTER WITH TRAINER JOE SHARP TO THE LEFT AT KENTUCKY DOWNS) HAS SEEN HIS HIGHLANDER TRAINING CENTER DEVELOP INTO A TOP-TIER FACILITY ACCESSIBLE FROM TRACKS IN THE SOUTHWEST AND MIDWEST.

“

We think horsemanship is the key and foundation of what we do here. We want to bring each horse to the best of their abilities, whatever that may be.

—Jeff Hooper

”

Highlander for the first time had a yearling consignment at the Texas Thoroughbred Association's sale in August and utilized its aqua treadmills to help prepare the youngsters.

The average and median prices for that first consignment were more than double the Texas Summer Yearling Sale's overall average and median prices. Highlander sold the sales topper, with the Texas-bred daughter of Too Much Bling going for \$100,000 to Mansfield Racing.

Trainer Bret Calhoun, whose main divisions are in Kentucky, Louisiana and his native Texas and whose clients include Hirsch, said selling yearlings was a logical extension of the Highlander facilities, which he said fill a gaping hole in the South and Southwest.

“It was a much-needed place in the region, for sure, if not across the United States and racing in general,” said Calhoun, who will train the sales topper. “The therapy center is a big addition but also the training facility. There are less and less training facilities in that region, fewer people breaking and training. With all that together, it's been a very important place and getting more important all the time.” **HJ**



COURTESY OF HIGHLANDER TRAINING CENTER

DR. ALI BROYLES (RIGHT), A VETERINARIAN AND SURGEON WHO OVERSEES EQUINE MEDICAL CARE, AND SHANNON RITTER, WHO LEADS THE OPERATION'S THERAPY CENTER AND OVERSEES RACEHORSES PREPARING TO RETURN TO THE TRACK, ARE TWO KEY MEMBERS OF THE HIGHLANDER TEAM.



# The Path to Uniformity: Where to From Here?

By Clara Fenger, DVM, PhD, DACVIM; Steven Barker, and PhD; Kimberly Brewer, DVM

**T**he path to uniformity of medication regulations in the United States has been rocky, winding and all uphill.

Uniformity has been the rallying cry of every stakeholder, although every stakeholder seems to have a different idea of what it means. Hay, oats and water? Science-based administration and withdrawal times? Thresholds? No thresholds? European model?

The latest salvo in the battle has been the passage of the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA), with its additional legislation passed and ongoing legal challenges, the outcomes of which are likely months or years away. In the event that HISA fails, the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI), composed of members from almost every racing jurisdiction in North America, remains the organization positioned to lead uniformity going forward. Or is it?



HISA (15 U.S. Code Section 3055(b)) requires that “(1) Covered horses should compete only when they are free from the influence of medications, other foreign substances, and methods that affect their performance, and (2) Covered horses that are injured or unsound should not train or participate in covered races, and the use of medications, other foreign substances, and treatment methods that mask or deaden pain in order to allow injured or unsound horses to train or race should be prohibited.” While this sounds like a laudable goal, the fact is that, even without HISA, these restrictions were already in place in every jurisdiction.

So where is the current system failing? *Is the current system failing?*

Prior to 2019, almost all jurisdictions had adopted the National Uniform Medication Program. This system was based on the idea that we first identify common non-performance-affecting therapeutic medications used for the health and welfare of the horse and apply thresholds based on commonsense withdrawal times.

Scientific research would be conducted to determine rational withdrawals that would still permit therapeutic medications to protect the health and welfare of the horse. A group of 23 industry organizations formed the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium (RMTC) to identify these medications and conduct the scientific enquiry to provide thresholds and withdrawals.

While all stakeholders were in favor of uniform medication rules, not all stakeholders were in favor of these medication rules. The RMTC hurriedly put the uniform medication program in place amid shortcuts in the scientific evidence and in the statistical determination of thresholds and even amid arguments among the members of its own scientific advisory group. Every time RMTC regulations came up at open meetings, these warts were exposed. It made a seemingly forced placement of the uniform medication program into every jurisdiction difficult. Despite its shortcomings, the uniform medication program, in some form or another, was in place in almost every jurisdiction by 2019.

Supporters of HISA have been critical of ARCI because it represents the “status quo,” which they claim has failed to achieve uniformity. This criticism comes despite almost uniform adoption of the ARCI Controlled Therapeutic Medication Schedule and the Uniform Classification of Foreign Substances, with drug and penalty class designations, until 2019. The ARCI system, composed of all government members, mirrors a governmental system of transparency and open meetings, including the opportunity for input by stakeholders.

ARCI develops model rules for everything in horse racing from types of wagers to requirements for licensing to medication rules in racehorses. It is an iterative system in which input from its regulatory members and comments from industry stakeholders lead to change. The opportunity for input creates a slower process, but any critics are welcome at the table.

In 2019, a rash of breakdowns at Santa Anita Park created national headlines. Stakeholders, headed up by The Stronach Group and followed by the California Horse Racing Board soon after, decided to increase restrictions on therapeutic medications. The evidence for any relationship between therapeutic medications and breakdowns was never actually clear, but the intense scrutiny resulting from the injuries required some response.

The concept of commonsense withdrawals and rational thresholds based on clear scientific evidence was thrown out in favor of zero tolerance.

These medication rules, in combination with a whole host of additional regulations, were accompanied by a drop in the breakdown rate. However, as a result of the sheer volume of different regulations and procedures that changed simultaneously, there was no way to figure out exactly which regulations resulted in a decrease in breakdowns or if it was simply an unfortunate statistical spike that was fated to revert regardless of any change in regulations. The other problem was that there’s no such thing as zero.



COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

SUPPORTERS OF HISA HAVE HERALDED FEDERAL REGULATIONS PROCLAIMING LONG-AWAITED UNIFORMITY OF MEDICATION RULES, BUT A CLOSER LOOK AT THE PROPOSED ANTI-DOPING AND MEDICATION CONTROL REGULATIONS MIGHT SAY OTHERWISE.

## Medication Regulations Proposed by the RMTC

As the years have progressed from the initial medication proposals from the RMTC, the organization has provided less and less research data to support its proposals. At an open ARCI model rules meeting, the RMTC proposed a cobalt threshold of 25 parts per billion (ppb) based on unpublished research. When actual published research supported a threshold of 70 ppb, the RMTC would not back down, and the ARCI continued to support the 25 ppb threshold for which there is no scientific evidence.

At a subsequent ARCI model rules meeting, when stacking violations for nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs, e.g., phenylbutazone, flunixin, Ketofen) were proposed, the RMTC was unable to provide a “background” level for phenylbutazone or flunixin. This is despite multiple published research papers on the problems with inadvertent and actual environmental transfer of these substances, effectively guaranteeing that horsemen will be penalized with stacking NSAIDs despite having never administered a second medication. Overzealous application of this concept in some racing jurisdictions has resulted in positives being called for unfathomably small amounts of drugs and naturally occurring substances.

The use of directed corticosteroid therapy to quiet inflammation in joints was originally restricted to seven days before racing for the purpose of permitting the attending veterinarian to assess response to treatment before racing. It was changed to 14 days following California’s lead after the Santa Anita fatality cluster. The basis was purported to be a research paper from Australia that actually concluded that the local use of corticosteroids could not be determined to be detrimental—another example of the disconnect between scientific evidence and the regulations.

The drawbacks of the current system would appear to be a combination of too many positive tests and not enough positive tests. An overaggressive stance on some medications, particularly those for which we possess exquisitely sensitive testing methods, has resulted in penalties that include disqualification and suspension for levels of substances in the range of 1/100th or less of the

## Sixth Circuit Ruling Muddies HISA Waters

The constitutionality of the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) became less certain March 3 when the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit ruled the 2022 legislative amendment to HISA cured its unconstitutional defect. In contrast to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision on November 18, 2022, that held HISA unconstitutional on its face due to its violation of the nondelegation doctrine, the 6th Circuit held that HISA is constitutional, finding no violation of either the nondelegation doctrine or the anti-commandeering doctrine.

With the addition of HISA, the Association of Racing Commissioners International/Racing Medication and Testing Consortium rulemaking process results in not one but two private, unregulated entities engaging in medication rulemaking. Arguably this is a double nondelegation doctrine violation. The lack of transparency, scientific data and industry input is also of serious concern to horsemen.

Assuming the “legislative fix” proves convincing on appeal to the nine justices of the U.S. Supreme Court, the covered person alleged to have violated an Anti-Doping and Medication Control rule under HISA remains entitled to due process.

It is unclear how that covered person will receive substantive due process when they are prohibited from obtaining or presenting evidence of the laboratory data package, the scientific basis for the alleged violation, the minimal level of detection or other criteria. Also unclear is how the covered person will be afforded the right of due process when they are not guaranteed a right of review by the Federal Trade Commission and, absent such a review, face a direct appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals. The estimated cost of appealing a matter to the U.S. Court of Appeals is approximately \$30,000 to \$50,000. That is pricey due process to say the least.

**Peter Sacopulos**



ALL EYES ARE ON THE OUTCOME OF COURT CASES—NOT UNLIKE THE ATTENTION FOCUSED ON KEY WORKOUTS BEFORE MAJOR STAKES RACES AROUND THE COUNTRY—INVOLVING THE CONTROVERSIAL HORSERACING INTEGRITY AND SAFETY ACT.

amount that could have a pharmacological effect. This has doubled the number of positive tests reported over the time frame in which these RMTC-driven regulations have been in effect.

On the other hand, as evidenced by the 2020 round of federal indictments that included trainers Jason Servis and Jorge Navarro and other trainers and veterinarians, the substances used by those who pled guilty to doping escaped detection by the same exquisitely sensitive testing methods. Routine testing for growth hormone, erythropoietin and a mélange of growth factors purported to be in sheep placenta extract (aka SGF-1000) simply does not occur.

The rallying cry that brought HISA from the backrooms of congressional subcommittees onto the front burner and ultimately led to its passage stemmed both from the injuries at Santa Anita and the federal indictments of trainers and veterinarians for what was heralded as a “vast doping conspiracy.”

Other than the vague understanding that horses were doped with substances on raceday, little is widely understood about what happened, and HISA was clearly put in place to prevent this from happening again.

Much of the chatter was about a little-understood product derived from sheep placenta called SGF-1000 and alleged to contain any number of performance-enhancing growth and cellular factors. This allegation was despite repeated laboratory analyses that determined the product contained no banned substances. There is nothing in any of the HISA regulations that could have prevented this chapter in horse racing any better than the system in place at the time.

## Medication Regulations by HISA

HISA’s supporters have heralded its debut by proclaiming that the long-awaited uniformity of medication regulation is finally here. Many racing participants have welcomed the idea of HISA because surely it will fix both the overzealous prosecution of inadvertent environmental transfer and the overt failure to identify the real threats to the integrity of racing. However, a closer look at HISA’s proposed Anti-Doping and Medication Control (ADMC) regulations should dash all hopes that this represents an improvement over the existing program.



A RASH OF BREAKDOWNS AT SANTA ANITA PARK IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA IN 2019 SENT WAVES THROUGH THE THOROUGHBRED INDUSTRY, AND STAKEHOLDERS LED BY THE STRONACH GROUP AND CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD OPTED TO INCREASE RESTRICTIONS ON THERAPEUTIC MEDICATIONS DESPITE ANY CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT THE INJURIES AND MEDICATIONS WERE RELATED.

“ The entire point of HISA was to provide medication uniformity.

HISA's ADMC does nothing to solve the problems inherent in the current system of medication regulation. It is actually a further extension of the RMTD trend in which the basis for thresholds and withdrawals is now completely void of common sense or scientific basis.

Despite the mandate of its enabling Act that horses should compete free of influence from substances, HISA's ADMC has doubled down on zero tolerance, far below any level at which there is any possible influence. It has provided essentially no withdrawal guidance, only detection times, and those detection times are not even provided by the laboratories contracted to perform testing for HISA. Since detection times depend on the limit of detection of the laboratory, the detection times provided by HISA's ADMC are of no value in this country, where the detection times have not been determined.

Only a small handful of substances are listed with screening limits, including some common contaminants of hay and feed. Some have urinary screening limits provided, but any detection in blood is a violation. For example, a laboratory with high sensitivity for a common substance like bufotenine in blood is likely to call positives despite the fact that no drug was ever administered to the horse because the screening limit only applies to urine.

The entire point of HISA was to provide medication uniformity. Instead, the concept of zero tolerance for almost every substance throws the entire industry into disarray. Zero tolerance for detection of substances and zero tolerance for illegal administration are not one and the same.

Most positive tests in the current system already result not from nefarious drug administration but rather from detection of infinitesimal levels of substances days to weeks beyond their pharmacological effect or inadvertent transfer of tiny amounts from the environment of the horse. Both scenarios result in disqualifications, fines and suspensions for drug violations that had no effect on the integrity of the race or on the health and welfare of the horse. HISA takes this zero tolerance even further, pulling back even more on common therapeutic medications and moving the entire process away from transparency and into backrooms. Is HISA's goal to save the industry or destroy it?

## Significance of Minimum Required Performance Levels

In HISA Rule Series 1020, Definitions, the minimum required performance level (MRPL) is defined as the “minimum analytical criterion of Laboratory technical performance established by the Agency, including the minimum concentration at which a Laboratory is expected to consistently detect and confirm a Prohibited Substance, Metabolite of a Prohibited Substance, or Marker of a Prohibited Substance or Prohibited Method in the routine daily operation of the Laboratory.”

This means that a level is established at which all laboratories must have the capability to routinely screen for prohibited substances. This MRPL differs greatly from a screening limit, in that laboratories must be able to screen at this level but may call an adverse analytical finding (a positive) at any level below the MRPL. A screening limit represents a level below which adverse analytical findings are not called, similar but not identical to a threshold. All substances are effectively prohibited on raceday, although “Prohibited Substance” is not specifically defined in the HISA regulations.

The MRPL results in the most lopsided of medication regulations. Every laboratory differs in its methodology for screening blood and urine samples for foreign substances. While every laboratory is able to screen samples at the MRPL levels, some have the ability to identify substances much lower than the MRPL. The end result is that, even in the use of common therapeutic medications, a rational treatment plan that never causes a positive test in one jurisdiction because it stays below the screening methodology for that laboratory will cause a positive in another jurisdiction.

Imagine that a topical cream for the treatment of a fungal infection containing a small amount of the anti-inflammatory betamethasone is routinely used in a jurisdiction that typically screens for corticosteroids in urine. The trainers, veterinarians and regulators are comfortable with a 24-hour withdrawal because that route of administration would never cause a positive above the screening limit in that laboratory. Now, take the same horse and the same

# Uniformity? The Case of Bufotenine

The HISA medication regulations include a handful of screening limits on substances that may commonly be found in feed and hay. One such substance is bufotenine, which is associated with a screening limit of 10 micrograms per milliliter of urine but would incur a positive test at any level detected in the blood.

On one hand, bufotenine has been suspected to be a potent hallucinogen at pharmacological concentrations, although the evidence for this is sketchy in humans and nonexistent in horses. On the other hand, it is found in abundance in reed canary grass, a common contaminant of hay across a large swath of North America.

There is also a good possibility that bufotenine is actually a naturally occurring metabolite of the amino acid tryptophan in all mammalian species, including the horse.

Substances are typically concentrated in urine many times higher than in blood in all species of animal. However, only in rare circumstances do concentrations of substances in urine

exceed 200 times the levels in the blood.

A regulation that acknowledges the ubiquitous presence of bufotenine in the horse's diet and therefore establishes a urinary screening limit becomes a random weapon against the innocent when there is no corresponding screening limit in blood. Regulators seem to lack the understanding that the only way for a drug to get into the urine is through ... wait for it ... the blood.

Current drug testing technology can detect bufotenine in picogram concentrations, or less than 1/1,000th of the levels present in urine. Using the ratio of 1 to 200 for blood and urine, a rational screening limit in blood would be in the range of 50 nanograms per milliliter corresponding to the permissible urine level. The HISA regulation permits the calling of an adverse analytical finding at levels well below this. In one jurisdiction screening in urine, a horse consuming reed canary grass in its hay is clean, whereas the same horse in another jurisdiction screening in blood will call a positive.

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- Many updates including New European Oak Flooring
- Minutes from Historic Hot Springs, Arkansas & Historic Spas
- 10 Stall barn includes, 2 - 1 bed/1 bath apartments

10% Buyer's Premium required. \$50,000 non-refundable down payment required at close of auction. Sold "As Is, Where Is." Visit [www.SoldASAP.com](http://www.SoldASAP.com) for full terms & conditions.

topical cream and race it in a jurisdiction using a laboratory that screens using blood. Suddenly, the very comfortable withdrawal period of 24 hours changes to an unknown number of days. Since neither the screening methodology of the different laboratories nor the consequences of these differences are publicized to the industry, there is no possible way for the connections of the horse to predict this change. Now imagine that the horse wins the Kentucky Derby.

The racing industry has already had a glimpse into its own future when the use of MRPLs are employed. These standards do nothing to improve integrity, safety or welfare and without question tarnish the image of the sport.

## Inadvertent Environmental Transfer

HISA includes many substances commonly used in humans either as prescription medications or recreational substances in its S0 category, which means banned at all times in any concentration. Because horses live in proximity to humans, they are exposed to everything we do. Positive tests for substances passed readily in the urine of humans with legitimate prescriptions—for example, HISA S0 substances atenolol, dextropropranolol and venlafaxine—already have been identified regularly in post-race samples in horse racing. The same substances are commonly identified in surface waters that feed into the water supply of those very horses.

Illegal recreational substances similarly come up, including morphine (HISA S7), benzoylecgonine (metabolite of cocaine, HISA S0), methamphetamine (HISA S0) and fentanyl (HISA S7). While morphine is identified as a potential feed contaminant and, as such, has a screening limit, the others do not. The morphine screening limit of 30 nanograms per milliliter (ng/mL) in urine is taken from the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA), far below the level considered to be of no consequence for humans, or 2,000 ng/mL. In humans, benzoylecgonine contamination likely results from inconsequential environmental transfer at 150 ng/mL in urine and methamphetamine at 500 ng/mL.

As a consequence of the uptick in fentanyl contamination of human street drugs, fentanyl was recently added at a level of 1 ng/mL. These are rational, commonsense screening limits because environmental transfer is unavoidable. Without commonsense screening limits for environmental contaminants, the MRPL again results in the most unlevel of playing fields. And it's not just drugs, per se. There are pharmacological properties being discovered for plasticizers, fragrances and a variety of other natural and synthetic substances. If every substance not natural to the horse becomes the cause for calling a positive, the industry is doomed.

## Uniformity Without HISA

If the HISA approach fails, where will the uniformity come from?

The ARCI has developed model rules that include medication classifications, thresholds, withdrawals and a penalty structure. The fact that it has not been adopted universally is not necessarily bad. For example, it is far from inappropriate to have a different threshold in urine for scopolamine in California, where jimsonweed, the source of scopolamine, is common compared to other locations.

Racing is also not uniform everywhere. Regulators in France regulate French racing, and regulators in Ireland regulate Irish racing.

The U.S. foal crop, according to the last publication by the IFHA in 2019, was 19,925, almost 7,000 more foals than the next closest country, Australia.

Considering the size of the industry in this country, the gradual but open ARCI approach to regulation, in which industry participants can attend and comment, is actually working.

## TOBA, American Graded Stakes Committee and TOBA Testing

The Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) founded its American Graded Stakes Committee in 1973 for the purpose of grading races according to quality and providing breeders and buyers a means to understand relative class among the racing population. As part of its oversight of graded stakes, TOBA has provided a list of drugs that must or should be identified in testing for graded stakes to maintain their status.

This program initially provided only a list of drugs that must be identified, but in recent years, it has added “minimum performance limits,” a term with a meaning very similar to HISA’s MRPLs. TOBA’s minimum performance limits are provided by the RMTC, with no open meetings, no opportunity for public comment and no transparency as to where these “limits” come from.

While this may seem to apply only to a small group of samples, those from graded stakes, it turns out that most laboratories have no idea which samples arriving on a given day are from a graded stakes race, so the same standards are applied to all the samples. When laboratories modify their screening methods, it is generally simpler to apply the same screening methodology to all samples.

TOBA, as a private organization, is relying on another private organization, the RMTC, to set medication policy completely outside of any usual rulemaking process, including open meetings, mandated by commissions and legislatures. Add HISA to the mix, and there are three private organizations without open records or open meetings setting public policy.

We can applaud this system on one hand as being more stringent than the racing commissions—and stringent certainly sounds better. On the other hand, while drug testing technology has become increasingly sensitive to the point that we can detect blood levels associated with the transfer of minute amounts of inconsequential substances, erythropoietin and growth hormone are not even included on the TOBA list.

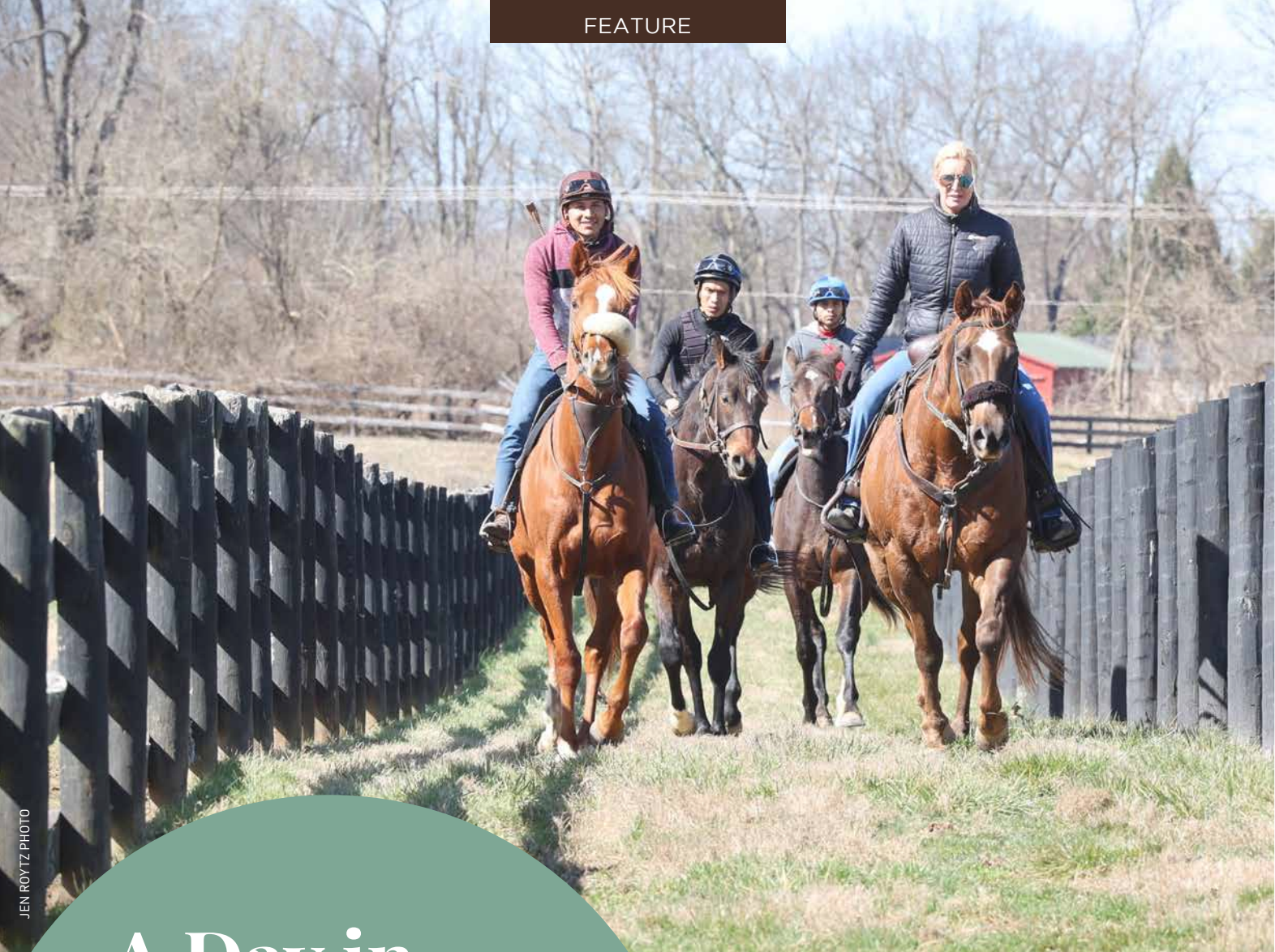
Spending our limited dollars on the detection of picogram concentrations of therapeutic substances transferred through urine contamination of hay and bedding or topical creams is not improving the integrity of horse racing.

## Conclusion

Until we, as an entire industry, can recognize that it is not the quantity of positive tests that define integrity in our sport but the quality, uniformity will not be achieved. Rather than focusing on ever-restrictive policies on therapeutic medications and common environmental contaminants, we need to redirect our efforts to the identification of real threats.

The real threats are out there, but we cannot seem to stop litigating picogram concentrations of therapeutic medications.

HISA cannot fix this, the RMTC has not fixed this, and TOBA is certainly doing nothing to fix this. Only an open, iterative method can fix this by allowing professional regulators to get together, weigh input from industry stakeholders and set policy. **HJ**



JEN ROYTZ PHOTO

# A Day in the Life of... *...an Equine Rehabilitation Specialist*

By Jen Roytz

Attention to detail is the name of the game when it comes to training horses, and it's just as important, if not more so, when you are the one tasked with bringing a horse back from injury. Layup specialist Rebecca Maker has built a career on that premise, helping horses like Eclipse Award champions Jackie's Warrior, Echo Zulu and Epicenter return to their winning ways or new careers after injuries or setbacks.



## Get To Know Rebecca Maker

Hometown	Metamora, Michigan
Notable employers	Jack Van Berg, D. Wayne Lukas, Dallas Stewart, Todd Pletcher
Notable horses ridden	Serena's Song, Honour and Glory, Cara Rafaela, Sharp Cat, Kimberlite Pipe, Dollar Bill
Years as a trainer	2002–2009
Family and pets	Son (Chase); two Quarter Horses (Buck and Hancock); one show jumper (Inis Gluair)
What do you enjoy most about your job?	"I love sending healthy horses back to the track and making it as easy as possible for them to transition back to their track life. Seeing them go on to race and win again is incredibly rewarding."
What is your favorite part of the sport?	"I love the magnificent horses, first and foremost. Watching the best horses run against each other on those big race days is incredible."

A former trainer herself, Maker has earned the trust of the sport's top conditioners to care for and rehabilitate their equine athletes.

"There is often a trust gap with trainers sending horses to farms," Maker said. "They often don't want to let their horses out of their hands, especially their good horses, because they don't know who's managing and handling them. Having been a trainer myself, they know how seriously I take it and how detail-oriented I am. I'll take the same respect and care for [their horses] that they would and they're comfortable with that."

Growing up in Metamora, Michigan, Maker knew from an early age that she not only loved horses but had a talent for working with them. She fox-hunted, showed and participated in 4-H, but it wasn't until the age of 19 when she took her first job at the racetrack walking hots that she started envisioning a professional path in the horse world.

Like most trainers, Maker worked her way up, going from hot walker to galloping and then working as an assistant trainer before taking out her own trainer's license in 2002. During her training career, Maker conditioned several horses to stakes success, including Grade 2-winner-turned-stallion It's No Joke. But the life of a trainer is nomadic, and Maker wanted to stay in one place

year-round rather than move with the racing circuit, so she stepped away from training at the close of 2009 and began focusing on racehorse rehabilitation and starting young horses under saddle.

"At first I leased a farm and immediately started getting business from people who knew me at the track," she said. "It's hard to make money when you don't own your own business, so a few years ago I bought a farm."

## IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

Based in Versailles, Kentucky, Maker's Shantera Farm has the perfect footprint for managing layoffs and, in the fall through winter, starting young horses under saddle. Located five minutes from Keeneland Race Course in Lexington, the facility is 73 acres of gentle rolling land and includes four barns, a covered electric free walker, an indoor arena, a shed row for jogging, a round pen, a trail system that goes around and throughout the farm, 18 smaller paddocks and several larger fields for group turnout.

"I focus solely on horses that are being pointed to the track—post-surgical, mental refresh, turnout, horses that have come from a 2-year-old sale that need a rest," Maker said. "We also start a limited number of babies under saddle each year. I'd say we have about 300 or more horses come through the farm annually, and most stay for around 90 days or so. I really think the time away from the track, whether for injury rehabilitation or simply to get a break from the track and refresh, really does a world of good for both their mind and their body."

Based on a horse's injury or presentations, Maker uses a variety of therapeutic modalities, including chiropractic adjustments and pulsed electromagnetic field (PEMF) therapy, to name a few. Since she is conveniently located just a mile up the road from KESMARC (Kentucky Equine Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation Center), she also can utilize their offerings, including their equine swimming pool, aquatread and hyperbaric chamber.

While she has a multitude of treatment options at her disposal, Maker said one of the most effective is actually one of the simplest—turnout.

"I really like to let horses get outside and have time to themselves to just relax and graze," Maker said. "When they come from a racetrack environment, sometimes it can be hard to get them to relax and enjoy being outside for four or five hours a day, but once you get them settled into that routine, moving around and being outside can do wonders."

Maker also said one of the things she takes great precaution in is hoof care. Coming from a racetrack environment, horses are on manicured footing all the time, from the stall to the shed row to the track, but being on a farm, especially when turned out, their feet can feel the effects of the moisture and uneven ground if not managed properly.

"[Managing their feet] is a big thing that trainers are concerned about when they send horses to a farm for time off," she explained. "I typically keep front shoes on them, especially if they're going back to the track in weeks instead of months. While they're here, I try to get a good [hoof] angle on them and get them to grow as much hoof as possible. It's just basic good horse care."

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

At Maker's farm, days begin around 6 a.m. as staff start to arrive and prepare the horses' morning feed.

"We tend to keep the babies out at night as long as the weather is good, so they get brought in, get their legs checked and get looked over as they're fed," Maker said. "The older racehorses are in at night, so they get fed, and after they're done eating, we try to get them outside so the team can get their stalls cleaned."

## GRADUATES OF NOTE

When we see champions and Grade 1 winners in all their glory on the sport's biggest days, it can be hard to imagine all it took to get there and the obstacles overcome along the way. For some of racing's biggest stars, their path to victory included some quiet time with Rebecca Maker and her team.

Recent stakes- and graded stakes-winning graduates of Maker's program include:

<b>BARESE</b>	<b>HAUGHTY</b>	<b>MITOLE</b>
<b>BY MY STANDARDS</b>	<b>HIDDEN CONNECTION</b>	<b>SPECIAL RESERVE</b>
<b>ECHO ZULU</b>	<b>HOT AND SULTRY</b>	<b>SURVEILLANCE</b>
<b>EPICENTER</b>	<b>JACKIE'S WARRIOR</b>	<b>SWITZERLAND</b>
<b>FLIPPANT</b>	<b>JILTED BRIDE</b>	<b>TRADEMARK</b>
<b>GULFPORT</b>	<b>MACRON</b>	<b>WICKED HALO</b>
		<b>WHITMORE</b>



COURTESY OF REBECCA MAKER

EPICENTER, THE CHAMPION 3-YEAR-OLD MALE OF 2022 WHO PULLED UP IN THE BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC, REHABBED AT REBECCA MAKER'S FACILITY BEFORE STARTING HIS STUD CAREER AT COOLMORE'S ASHFORD STUD IN KENTUCKY.

Most horses in Maker's care are fed three to four times a day, spreading out their meals to aid in digestion and gastrointestinal health.

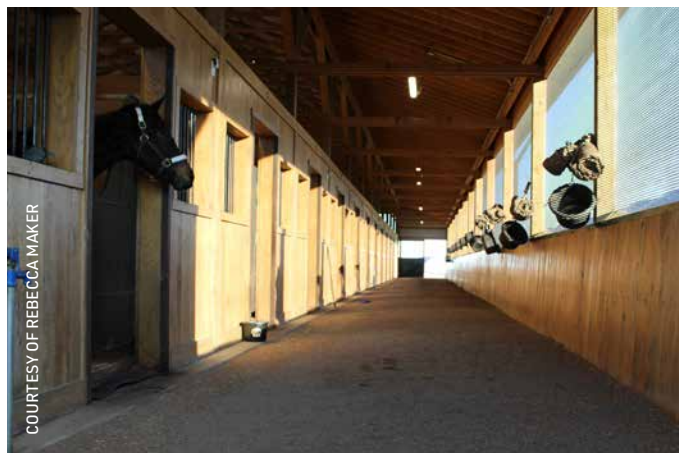
Between rehab horses and those being started under saddle, Maker usually has a number of horses exercising under tack each day. With her background in both racing and equestrian sports, she understands the importance of having riders who know how to handle everything from green youngsters to fit racehorses but who also have a solid equestrian foundation to encourage the horses to be balanced and supple under saddle and are sensitive enough to feel the slightest gait abnormality or deviation from how the horses typically travel.

"Most of my riders gallop at the track in the mornings, so they get here around 11:30 and start getting on sets, doing everything from arena work, galloping in the fields or hacking out on the trails," Maker said. "That's also around the time we start bringing in the older horses that were turned out for the morning."

Throughout the afternoon, all horses in Maker's care get groomed and undergo any treatments, therapy or veterinary work. She and her team are meticulous in following all veterinary recommendations for horses on layup, and she prides herself on maintaining regular communication with veterinarians and trainers about their horses' rehabilitation progress.

"When a horse comes in that was attended to by a specific vet, such as if they come in from Keeneland or post-surgery from one of the clinics here in town, we stay with that attending veterinarian so he or she can monitor the horse's recovery and progress," Maker said. "Having regular dialogue with trainers and vets allows us to adjust a horse's recovery plan based on their progress and presentations and gives them peace of mind that their horse is getting the best possible care."

As the day comes to a close and horses have finished their evening feed, the 2-year-olds and any others on evening turnout go back out to their paddocks, and her daytime crew heads home. By 6 p.m., Maker's evening crew arrives to check on the horses, feed any that get a fourth feeding and clean stalls and the barns.



COURTESY OF REBECCA MAKER



COURTESY OF REBECCA MAKER

SHANTERA FARM, REBECCA MAKER'S 73-ACRE FACILITY ON GENTLE ROLLING LAND IN VERSAILLES, KENTUCKY, PROVIDES THE PERFECT SPOT FOR MANAGING HORSES ON LAYUPS AND STARTING YOUNG HORSES UNDER SADDLE.





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JEN ROVITZ PHOTO



JEN ROVITZ PHOTO

HORSES TRAIN INSIDE OR OUTSIDE, DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER AND THEIR PROGRESS, AT REBECCA MAKER'S SHANTERA FARM IN VERSAILLES, KENTUCKY.

## WHAT SETS MAKER APART

As a trainer at the track and now running her own rehabilitation and training facility, Maker always has subscribed to the theory of quality over quantity. By keeping her numbers manageable, she ensures she puts eyes and hands on every horse, every day.

"I am very hands-on and present," Maker said. "There are so many things that can get missed from one day to the next if you're not paying attention. I have a great team here, and they know how I like things done. We are very careful with how we manage horses in terms of safety. Many of these horses are going 60 to 90 days without a rider on them, so we take every possible measure to ensure they are in a safe and controlled environment as they get back under saddle. With horses, so many things can happen, so we go to great lengths to keep everyone—both horses and humans—protected."

While many of Maker's lessons in equine rehabilitation and horse care were learned as a trainer at the track, she says there are a few key lessons she has gleaned since having her own farm.

"If I've learned one thing over the years, it's to be more patient," she said. "When I was training, I didn't realize truly how much getting time off and just being outside in a paddock does for them. The whole racetrack mentality is evolving that way. People want to do right by their horses and give them the time they need when they need it. In the long run, it helps everyone—most importantly, the horse." **HJ**

“

There are so many things that can get missed from one day to the next if you're not paying attention. I have a great team here, and they know how I like things done.

**REBECCA MAKER**

”



JEN ROVITZ PHOTO

REBECCA MAKER TAKES A HANDS-ON APPROACH TO HORSES IN HER CARE.

# Finger Lakes Racetrack

## 2023 Live Racing Schedule (Proposed) 90 Days

### April 24 – November 22

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- Backside Open  - Live Race Days

**POST TIMES**  
Post Time: 1:10

## ALABAMA HBPA

## Ken Cotton Classic Heads to Evangeline Downs

The final date for the Ken Cotton Classic Stakes for Alabama-breds had not been determined by early March but was slated to run at Evangeline Downs the week after the May 6 Kentucky Derby.

The Alabama HBPA-sponsored event will feature the same conditions as in 2022—a \$25,000-guaranteed purse for 3-year-olds and up, with older horses carrying 123 pounds and non-winners of a race other than maiden, claiming or starter allowance allowed three pounds and maidens allowed five pounds. The Ken Cotton goes at 6 furlongs and was scheduled to be listed in the upcoming Evangeline Downs condition book.

The \$50,000 Magic City Classic and \$25,000 Kudzu Juvenile, sponsored by Birmingham Racing, were run December 9 at Fair Grounds. Diane Harrington's homebred filly Fired Up Tiger won the Magic City Classic. Foolish Steve, owned by Winalot Racing and bred by Jerry Hughes, finished second with Kellys the Boss, owned and bred by Kent Gremmels, third.

Hackett Brothers Thoroughbreds' homebred Unitedappeal won the \$25,000 Kudzu Juvenile. Alabama Queen, owned and bred by Melanie Hackett, finished

second with Pure Pam Demonium, owned and bred by the Gremmels, third.

Supplemental purse distributions paid out to Alabama-breds running in open company and finishing on the board were represented by leading money earners Fired Up Tiger and Kellys the Boss, who both received \$3,200. Pintlala, campaigned by Ronnie Ward, received \$3,000, and Abbey's Snow White, Foolish Steve, I Love You More and Liken It all received \$1,600 in 2022.

The Alabama HBPA will continue to pay supplemental purse monies to Alabama-bred horses running in open company and finishing first, second, third and fourth. Please notify Nancy Delony at (205) 612-1999 or nancy.m.delony@ms.com to collect these funds.

With the help of the Louisiana HBPA, we will continue to offer the added monies for Alabama-breds running at the four Louisiana tracks. These funds are distributed with purse monies paid by the racetrack.

As always, wishing you healthy and happy racing.

Nancy Delony  
Executive Director

## CHARLES TOWN HBPA



## 2023 Stakes Schedule

DATE	NOMINATION CLOSING	RACE	PURSE	CONDITION	DISTANCE
April 15	April 5	Original Gold S. (WV)	\$75,000	F&M 3&UP	7 Furlongs
April 22	April 12	Confucius Say S. (WV)	\$75,000	3&UP	7 Furlongs
April 29	April 19	It's Binn Too Long S. (WV)	\$75,000	F 3 YO	4 1/2 Furlongs
May 13	May 3	Coin Collector S. (WV)	\$75,000	3 YO	4 1/2 Furlongs
June 3	May 24	Fancy Buckles S. (WV)	\$75,000	F&M 3&UP	4 1/2 Furlongs
June 17	June 7	It's Only Money S. (WV)	\$75,000	3&UP	4 1/2 Furlongs
July 22	July 12	Robert Leavitt S. (WV)	\$75,000	3 YO	7 Furlongs
July 29	July 19	Sylvia Bishop S. (WV)	\$75,000	F 3 YO	7 Furlongs
August 25	August 15	Sadie Hawkins S. (WV)	\$75,000	F&M 3&UP	7 Furlongs
August 25	August 15	Frank Gall S. (WV)	\$75,000	3&UP	7 Furlongs
August 25	August 4	Charles Town Classic (G2)	\$1,000,000	3&UP	1 1/8 Miles
August 25	August 4	Charles Town Oaks (G3)	\$750,000	F 3 YO	7 Furlongs
August 25	August 11	Robert Hilton Memorial S.	\$350,000	3YO	7 Furlongs
August 25	August 11	Misty Bennett Pink Ribbon S.	\$250,000	F&M 3&UP	7 Furlongs
August 25	August 11	Russell Road S.	\$250,000	3&UP	7 Furlongs
August 25	August 15	Autumn S. (WV)	\$75,000	F&M 3&UP	4 1/2 Furlongs
August 25	August 15	Last Enchantment S. (WV)	\$75,000	3&UP	4 1/2 Furlongs
September 22	September 12	Rachel's Turn S. (WV)	\$75,000	F 2 YO	4 1/2 Furlongs
September 23	September 13	Henry Mercer S. (WV)	\$75,000	2 YO	4 1/2 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Dash for Cash Breeders' Classic	TBA	3&UP	4 1/2 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Div of Tourism Breeders' Classic	TBA	F 3 YO	7 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Moscarelli Memorial Breeders' Classic	TBA	2 YO	6 1/2 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Triple Crown Nutritional Breeders' Classic	TBA	F 2 YO	6 1/2 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Lottery Breeders' Classic	TBA	3 YO	7 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Onion Juice Breeders' Classic	TBA	3&UP	7 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Classic Distaff Breeders' Classic	TBA	F&M 3&UP	1 1/8 Miles
October 14	October 4	WV Cavada Breeders' Classic	TBA	F&M 3&UP	7 Furlongs
October 14	October 4	WV Sam Huff Breeders' Classic	TBA	3&UP	1 1/8 Miles
October 14	October 4	Blue and Gold S. (WV)	\$75,000	F&M 3&UP	4 1/2 Furlongs
November 4	October 25	James & Eleanor Casey S. (WV)	\$75,000	F 2 YO	7 Furlongs
November 11	November 1	My Sister Pearl S. (WV)	\$75,000	F&M 3&UP	1 1/8 Miles
November 18	November 8	Randy Funkhouser Memorial S. (WV)	\$75,000	3&UP	1 1/8 Miles
November 25	November 15	West Virginia Futurity (WV)	\$50,000	2 YO	7 Furlongs

# HOLLYWOOD *Casino*

AT CHARLES TOWN RACES

## 2023 Live Racing Schedule

Approved 12/20/2022



7:00 PM Post Time



5:00 PM Post Time

August 25: Charles Town Classic  
October 14: West Virginia Breeders Classics

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### Remembering Racing Legend James W. Casey



James W. Casey, who made indelible marks on West Virginia racing and became a legend in his own time, passed away January 8 at the age of 92.

A former teacher and coach of the James Wood High School football and wrestling teams, Casey joined with his wife, Eleanor, to become leading figures in West Virginia Thoroughbred racing. They established Taylor Mountain Farm near Charles Town in 2000 to breed, raise and train Thoroughbreds.

“We had a horse win the Tri-State Futurity in 1963, and we got \$39,000 for winning that race,” Casey told The Racing Biz in 2017. “That was almost eight times what I made teaching. So, we’ve been awful lucky in this game. You never know what’s going to happen, but we’ve been lucky to have good stallions, good mares and good racehorses.”

Most of the Casey-trained horses ran in Eleanor’s name until her passing. In more recent years, they ran in the name of his Taylor Mountain Farm LLC, where he stood such regional stallions as Juba, Luftikus, Denis of Cork and Windsor Castle.

That breeding operation helped him win more than 1,200 races, including a record 35 West Virginia Breeders Classics, with nine wins in the Classic itself.

A friend, mentor and advocate to horsemen, Casey served on the board of directors of both the Charles Town HBPA and the West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association.

Casey’s legacy was etched with his continuous generosity, humility, kindness and friendship.

## COLORADO HBPA

### Arapahoe Park Applies for 2023 Dates

Bally's Arapahoe Park has notified the Colorado Racing Commission of its intent to apply for 39 live racing dates over 13 weeks from June 17 to September 11. Racing will be conducted Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays with a 1 p.m. MT first post on weekend dates and 4 p.m. MT Mondays.

## IOWA HBPA

### Prairie Meadows 2023 Racing Season

Horsemen! It's that time of year when we look forward to seeing everyone come back for racing here in the great state of Iowa.

Our racing calendar for 2023 includes a full 80 racing days for Thoroughbreds. In addition, we'll be offering 600 racing opportunities with more than \$17.7 million in total purses for 2023.

The backside will open April 14 with the first day of training set for April 16.

Thank you to Prairie Meadows Race Track for working with the Iowa HBPA in getting our 2023 racing season scheduled, and we look forward to seeing our horsemen here soon!

### Horsemen Information

Condition book No. 1, Thoroughbred stall applications, the 2023 Thoroughbred meet live racing and training schedules and other racing-

related documents can be found on the Prairie Meadows website under the Horsemen's tab and in print at the Prairie Meadows racing office. We also have some information posted on our Iowa HBPA Facebook page and the Iowa HBPA website at IowaHBPA.org.

### 2023 Iowa HBPA Schedule of Events

- May 11: Iowa HBPA general membership meeting
- May 12: Opening day of the Prairie Meadows race meet
- May 13: Annual Iowa HBPA awards presentation held in conjunction with the ITBOA awards
- July 3: HART (Hope After Racing Thoroughbreds) silent auction
- July 7-8: Iowa Festival of Racing showcasing graded races
- September 30: Iowa Classics Night featuring Iowa-bred stakes races

### Iowa HBPA Office Hours and Information

Until the opening of the meet, our office hours will be 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Once the meet begins on May 12, we will have the office available six or seven days a week, with hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We can be reached at (515) 967-4804.

To see information about the Iowa HBPA, please visit our website at IowaHBPA.org. To keep up to date on news and issues occurring in Iowa, you can find us on our Facebook page at Iowa Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association Inc., follow us on Twitter @IowaHBPA and sign up to receive our emails at info@iowahbpa.org.

We look forward to seeing the return of our horsemen, including familiar and new faces.

## PUTTING THE POWER OF DATA TO WORK FOR HORSEMEN

*The only INDEPENDENT third party providing daily audits of track and ADW pari-mutuel distributions.*

*We work hard to make sure the horsemen get their fair share!*

### Schedule A Demo Today!

**Gunner LaCour**  
**President**  
 glacour@chrim.com

**Kaitlin Fox**  
**Chief Operating Officer**  
 kfox@chrim.com



KENTUCKY HBPA

President's Message

Winter racing is alive and well in Kentucky, with the newly reconstructed Turfway Park hosting fans at the races again. Increased purses and a consistent, safe racing surface have attracted full fields of quality competitors. The betting public has taken notice of Turfway's racing product, fueling strong handle.

Our efforts during the 2022 Kentucky legislative session to allow Kentucky Thoroughbred Development Fund incentives for claiming races paid off, bolstering an energetic claiming market. Now horsemen running at all levels can realize the benefits of this important purse support program.

Historical horse racing machines at Turfway Park and Newport Racing and Gaming are beginning to move toward reaching their potential in supporting future purse increases. This bodes well for the continued improvement of Kentucky winter racing and the overall health of the year-round racing circuit.

These positive developments have positioned Kentucky to become the premier racing state in the country and have already prompted many horsemen to increase their participation here or relocate their base of operations from other states. We truly are entering the golden age of Kentucky racing, and Kentucky horsemen will stay at the forefront in protecting these important gains.

Despite the good news coming out of Kentucky, uncertainty around the future of HISA continues to be on the minds of our horsemen as we await court rulings to multiple challenges to the law's constitutionality. This uncertainty has led to selective enforcement, which has created less uniformity than existed prior to HISA's passage.

The Kentucky HBPA is proud to have assisted the National HBPA and other state affiliates in mobilizing horsemen and their supporters across the country to fight Senator Mitch McConnell's legislative "fix" tucked into the year-end omnibus funding bill and to submit their comments to the Federal Trade Commission in opposition of HISA's proposed Anti-Doping and Medication Control rules. To date, more than 2,700 horsemen across the country have made their voices heard.

It is critical that horsemen remain engaged and unified in the effort to protect our industry against unnecessary regulatory and bureaucratic overreach and work toward addressing issues everyone recognizes to be hindrances to the betterment of horse racing. It's a challenge we must meet to protect the future for the next generation of horsemen.

Good luck in your racing endeavors,  
Rick Hiles, KHBPA President

Asmussen Surpasses 10,000-Win Plateau

While becoming the first North American trainer to win 10,000 Thoroughbred races, Hall of Famer Steve Asmussen has run horses at 76 tracks in 29 states and provinces, according to Equibase.

Through February 26, Kentucky ranked fourth among total Asmussen wins at 1,204 but was likely to blow past Oklahoma (1,206) to trail only the trainer's native Texas (2,638) and Louisiana (1,898). In importance to Asmussen's record-breaking operation, the Bluegrass State takes a backseat to no one.

Since starting a Kentucky division in 1997, Asmussen has based his top string at Churchill Downs much of the year, where in 2020 he surpassed Dale Romans as the all-time win leader, with Keeneland Race Course also a priority. He added a large operation at Ellis Park in 2016 and now is year-round in the state with 25 horses currently at Turfway Park. He also is a strong supporter of Kentucky Downs, where he tied for the 2021 training title.

"The importance of Kentucky has always been extremely significant," Asmussen said. "But I think that is nothing compared to the importance Kentucky is going to be for horse racing going forward. There is no doubt in my mind, it has far surpassed California and New York now, and that would have been laughable to say five to 10 years ago.



HODGES PHOTOGRAPHY

HALL OF FAME TRAINER STEVE ASMUSSEN PASSED 10,000-WIN PLATEAU THIS WINTER AT OAKLAWN PARK.

"[Of] the trajectory of racing in states, Kentucky is the most important, and the gap, I think, is only going to widen," he continued. "The only thing that hasn't caught up is the graded stakes committee. Saying how tough races are is one thing. [You should] be in them."

A huge part of the equation is Kentucky's escalating purses, with Kentucky Downs and Churchill offering among the highest in the world when factoring in Kentucky-bred purse enhancements. The Kentucky Thoroughbred Development Fund also allows Turfway Park to offer purses in the maiden and allowance ranks that are higher than Santa Anita Park and similar to Aqueduct.

While Asmussen acknowledges that "money matters," it's also cheaper to train in Kentucky, and there's a less-congested quality of life many find appealing. And, as Asmussen said, "It can be explained that there are horses on the license plates for a reason."

Asmussen's top 10 states for wins through February 25: Texas, 2,638; Louisiana, 1,898; Oklahoma, 1,206; Kentucky, 1,204; Arkansas, 839; New York, 745; Illinois, 395; New Mexico, 283; Ontario, 193; and New Jersey, 133.

His top 10 tracks for wins: Lone Star Park, 1,523; Remington Park, 1,199; Fair Grounds, 1,120; Sam Houston, 918; Churchill Downs, 865; Oaklawn, 839; Louisiana Downs, 431; Aqueduct, 283; Sunland Park, 243; and Arlington, 238.

His wins at the other Kentucky tracks: Keeneland, 162; Ellis Park, 138; Kentucky Downs, 23; and Turfway Park, 16. —Jennie Rees

Kentucky HBPA's Advocacy Strategy Up and Running

Late last year, the Kentucky HBPA board approved an advocacy strategy that included online resources to make it easier for horsemen to communicate with government representatives and agencies on the state and federal levels. With so much recent activity surrounding HISA, the renewed commitment to advocacy along with the launch of a user-friendly online communications platform has yielded quick results, both with getting our message to members and empowering owners, trainers and other horse racing participants to have their voices heard.



The Kentucky HBPA now can create campaigns to send not only to state officials in Kentucky but also to state and national officials across the country, both elected and regulatory. In just two months, some 2,700 individuals from across the country have participated in at least one of the advocacy campaigns set up by the Kentucky HBPA.

Joe Clabes, the Kentucky HBPA's interim executive director, and communications specialist Jennie Rees also have used the platform to set up messaging campaigns on behalf of the National HBPA and the Iowa HBPA.

Users in possession of the campaign link just need to type in their name, address and email address to send messages to the intended target.

The early campaigns dealt with the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act and its Authority corporation. One of the first efforts utilizing the Kentucky HBPA's advocacy platform was to gather signatures for an open letter written by trainers Wesley Ward and Larry Rivelli committing to push for positive change instead of a flawed HISA with its crushing costs. The campaign resulted in almost 1,500 individuals from across the country signing on.

The Kentucky HBPA also plans to use its newly implemented advocacy tools to send messages to our Kentucky state representatives and senators during the 2023 legislative session in support of collaborative racing industry efforts.

"We're very pleased with the early results from our revitalized focus on advocacy and the investment in the effective tools needed to execute the strategy," said Clabes, who developed similar advocacy programs for the National Thoroughbred Racing Association and Kentucky Equine Education Project during his time with those organizations. "Communication and coordination are key to getting the horsemen's viewpoint across to public officials. Obviously, horsemen need to be focused primarily on their horses, but it's vital that government officials and regulators hear from them. We make it simple and convenient to stay informed about issues that arise and when it's time to speak up. Horsemen should know that, if you have 30 seconds, you can make a difference and help protect our industry." —*Jennie Rees and Joe Clabes*

## The HBPA Is You

The HBPA, established in 1940, is an organization of owners and trainers, approximately 40,000 nationally in 23 states and Canada and more than 6,000 in Kentucky. The association is governed by a board of directors consisting of owners and trainers volunteering their time and elected by the membership every three years. The HBPA is committed to working for the betterment of racing on all levels.

The HBPA represents owners and trainers on several fronts:

- The HBPA negotiates with each racetrack regarding purse structure,

equitable share of simulcast revenues, overall track safety, sanitation and security.

- The HBPA provides benevolence to horsemen in need, education and recreation programs to the backstretch and various insurance packages that include—free of charge to members—fire and disaster insurance. Visit one of the fully staffed HBPA offices at the currently running racetrack in Kentucky for details.
- The HBPA works in conjunction with the chaplaincy program and the Kentucky Racing Health and Welfare Fund to provide support and benefits for horsemen.
- The HBPA supports scientific research and marketing initiatives on a regional and national level to help promote interest in Thoroughbred racing.
- The HBPA is at the forefront in litigation and legislation on issues involving horsemen's rights with regards to interstate simulcasting, proprietary rights, casino gambling, therapeutic medication, sports betting and many other areas of concern to horsemen.

### How Can I Join?

You are invited to drop into the HBPA office to meet the staff and learn more about current projects and how you can get involved in helping to improve the industry. There are no membership fees. Remember that this is your organization. Become an active participant and one of the "horsemen helping horsemen." To join, all you need to do is fill out our membership card and fax, mail or email it back to us. For more information, please visit our website at [kyhbpa.org](http://kyhbpa.org) and click on "Become a Member."

## LOUISIANA HBPA

### Delta Downs

The 2023 Quarter Horse meet at Delta Downs begins April 28 and ends July 15, featuring the Lee Berwick Futurity on closing day. The Futurity has an estimated purse of \$1 million for the 2023 edition. The July 15 card also will feature Louisiana-bred races including the Delta Downs Louisiana-Bred Derby and the new \$75,000-added Delta Downs Louisiana-Bred Oaks for 3-year-old fillies.

The \$100,000-added Firecracker Futurity will be contested July 8. For additional information, contact the Delta Downs racing office at (888) 589-7223.

Pending final approval, Fair Grounds' 15-day Quarter Horse meet also will race at Delta Downs starting in late July.

### Evangeline Downs

The 2023 Thoroughbred meet at Evangeline Downs runs from April 5 to August 26. Louisiana Legends Night will be June 3 with six Louisiana-bred stakes for more than \$450,000 in purses. The Shine Young is scheduled for August 26 with \$60,000-guaranteed filly and colt/gelding divisions. For a complete stakes schedule, visit the Evangeline Downs website at [evdracing.com](http://evdracing.com). Turf racing will begin in late April. For additional information, contact the Evangeline Downs racing office at (337) 594-3022.

### Louisiana Downs

The 2023 Louisiana Downs Thoroughbred meet begins May 6 and runs through September 26. For additional information, contact the Louisiana Downs racing office at (318) 741-2511.





# 2023 Racing Schedule for Louisiana Tracks:

Fair Grounds Race Course 2022-2023 Race Meets 1751 Gentilly Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70119 504-944-5515 * www.fairgroundsracecourse.com														
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
<b>November 2022</b>							<b>February 2023</b>							
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<b>December 2022</b>							<b>March 2023</b>							
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<b>January 2023</b>							<b>80 Thoroughbred Days</b>							
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Evangeline Downs Racetrack & Casino 2023 Race Meet 2235 Creswell Lane Extension, Opelousas, LA 70570 Toll Free: 866-4-Racing * www.evangelinedowns.com																	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat				
<b>April 2023</b>							<b>July 2023</b>										
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<b>June 2023</b>							<b>84 Thoroughbred Days</b>										
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Delta Downs Racetrack & Casino 2023 Race Meet 2717 Delta Downs Dr., Vinton, LA 70668 337-589-7441 * www.deltadowns.com															
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<b>46 Quarter Horse Days</b>															

Louisiana Downs Casino & Racetrack 2023 Race Meets 8000 Hwy 80 East, PO Box 5519, Bossier City, LA 71171 318-742-5555 * www.ladowns.com																					
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat								
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							<b>84 Thoroughbred Days</b>														

## MOUNTAINEER PARK HBPA

### Retirement Plan for Backstretch Workers

The enrollment period for the West Virginia Racing Commission Retirement Plan for Backstretch Workers for the 2022 plan year will take place April 15 through May 15. Visit the HBPA office for more information and applications. Participants must complete the applications each program year to be eligible.

The plan has moved to a participant-directed plan managed by Empower Retirement. As part of this transition, there will be a blackout period beginning the end of March through mid-April. The participant-directed plan will enable participants to have real-time access to their accounts and control over investment strategies. An informational meeting for all participants to explain the benefits will be held in May.

### 2023 Race Meet Kicks Off April 30

Mountaineer Casino Racetrack and Resort will kick off its 2023 race meeting April 30 and race through December 13 with a 7 p.m. post. The Grade 3 West Virginia Derby and Grade 3 West Virginia Governor's Stakes will be run August 6 with a 5 p.m. post.

The barn area opened March 20, and training started March 24. The exerciser also will be available for trainers.

### Continuing Education for Horsemen

The Mountaineer Park HBPA will continue to host continuing education classes for trainers and assistant trainers. Trainers and assistant trainers also can take their classes online to earn their continuing education credits. Anyone needing assistance should contact the HBPA office.

### Mountaineer Park Chaplaincy

The Mountaineer Park Chaplaincy is excited to kick off its third season under the direction of Rick Anderson. The chaplaincy will continue the donuts and coffee events as well as the increasingly popular Monday Mid-Day Ministry, but it is always looking for input and new ideas. Please take a minute to stop by and visit with Rick to provide some feedback.

The food pantry remains available to those in need. Stop by the chapel or the HBPA office for more information.



## NEW ENGLAND HBPA

### Chapter Vows To Fight On Despite Setback

Even though the citizens of the Town of Hardwick, Massachusetts, overwhelmingly defeated a ballot initiative to authorize a new Thoroughbred racetrack, breeding center and equine retirement home in a town-wide special election in January, officers of the New England Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association pledged to continue all efforts to restore live racing to the region.

"We will continue to work diligently toward the return of live racing and the preservation of our organization and the many benefits we offer our members," Anthony Spadea Jr. wrote in his president's message to the membership.

The rejection of the proposal from Commonwealth Equine and Agricultural Center to develop the new track on a 360-acre farm in central Massachusetts was the latest in a line of stumbling blocks since the former owners of Suffolk Downs announced in 2014 that live racing was no longer economically viable. The property was sold in 2017, and the last of the short boutique-style racing festivals was held in June 2019.

"It has been three years since any live racing in Massachusetts," Spadea said. "The New England HBPA ran racing festivals for five years in 2015 to 2019 to help trainers, horsemen and breeders along with all the employment to run and maintain the racing facility. We helped many local individuals who benefited from these events.

"Over the past three years, we all have come to realize how difficult it is to secure a community that would welcome Thoroughbred racing," he continued. "The constant efforts and endless hours of the New England HBPA and its executive director [Paul Umbrello] to restore racing will continue as we pursue prospects in several Massachusetts communities."

The New England HBPA did experience a major win in 2022 involving the passage of the Massachusetts sports betting bill, which was signed into law. Sports betting went live January 31 across the state.

"We were successful in 2022 in our efforts on Beacon Hill [the state Capitol] to secure language around the sports betting bill that would grant a license if a racetrack is built," Spadea said. "This has drawn interest by investors who realize an additional revenue stream is a necessity today to operate a facility. Today, all racetracks built in the past 15 years have other income-producing activities to support racing, like historical gaming and casinos." —*Lynne Snierson*

### Recent Board Election Results

The New England HBPA recently elected the following owners and trainers to terms on the board of directors:

**Owners**—Chris Trakas, Dan Joyce, Shirley Dullea, Al Tassone and Joe Lewko

**Trainers**—George Saccardo, Leona McKanas, Kevin McCarthy, Matthew Clarke and Tim Kirby

Anthony Spadea Jr. was the unanimous choice to continue to serve as New England HBPA president.

"I say thank you to the membership in their support on my reelection to the board of directors, and I want to thank the new board for their confidence in electing me unanimously as their president for the next three years," he said.



Coady Photography

**\$1,000** Purse Increase on All Overnight Races

**\$300** paid from 6th through last place

**Stall Application Deadline : April 4**

# 2023 LIVE RACING

FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS ♦ POST TIME 6PM\*  
 SUNDAYS & MONDAYS ♦ POST TIME 4PM\*

■ Thoroughbred Only  
 May 12 - June 17

■ Thoroughbred &  
 Quarter Horse  
 June 18 - Sept 30

■ Special Race Days  
 and Events

## MAY

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### TRIPLE CROWN RACE DAYS

May 6 ♦ Kentucky Derby ♦ **NO LIVE RACING**

May 20 ♦ Preakness ♦ Post Time 6pm

June 10 ♦ Belmont ♦ Post Time 6pm

### SPECIAL RACE DAYS & EVENTS

July 3 ♦ Fireworks ♦ Post Time 4pm

July 7 & 8 ♦ Festival of Racing ♦ Post Time 6pm

Aug 18 & 19 ♦ Regional Challenge Finals ♦ Post Time 6pm

Aug 20 ♦ Regional Challenge Finals ♦ Post Time 4pm

Sept 29 ♦ QH Championships ♦ Post Time 6pm

Sept 30 ♦ Iowa Classic ♦ Post Time 4pm



Iowa  
 Horsemen's  
 Benevolent &  
 Protective  
 Association

Advertisement brought to  
 you by the Iowa HBPA to  
 promote Live Racing

\*Post times are tentative and subject to change.

## OHIO HBPA

## Belterra Park

Belterra Park kicks off its 93-day 2023 live racing schedule Thursday, April 27.

Live racing will be conducted on a Thursday through Saturday schedule the first three weeks of the meet. Wednesdays will be added to the schedule each week beginning May 17 through the remainder of the meet, which concludes Saturday, October 7.

Highlights of the Belterra meet include the Best of Ohio program featuring five \$100,000 stakes for Ohio-breds in various divisions on Friday, June 2, and the return of the Cradle Stakes and Bassinet Stakes, Friday, September 1.

The Cradle is a \$100,000 event for 2-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles on the turf while the Bassinet is a \$100,000 race for 2-year-old fillies at the same distance also on the turf. First post throughout the season is scheduled for 12:25 p.m. at Belterra.

## Thistledown

There is some uncertainty as we approach the start of the 2023 Thistledown live racing season. The Ohio State Racing Commission has approved a 125-day live racing season at Thistledown based on the minimum required days required by statute in the absence of an agreement on racing days between Thistledown and the Ohio HBPA.

The previous racing dates agreement is part of a 10-year video lottery terminal (VLT) contract between the parties, which expires this April. The Ohio HBPA is seeking to extend this agreement and is currently in discussions with Thistledown management regarding the VLT contract. The current VLT contract calls for 100 days of live racing each year at Thistledown with a minimum of 50 weeks of live racing at Thistledown and Mahoning Valley Race Course each year.

If the parties sign a new VLT contract, a revised schedule with 100 days of live racing is likely to be submitted to the Ohio State Racing Commission for approval.

The Thistledown live racing season as it stands would begin Monday, April 24. Racing will be conducted on a Monday through Thursday schedule during the meet as well as five select Saturdays.

The Saturdays will coincide with the Triple Crown dates as well as the two biggest days of the meet—Ohio Derby Day, Saturday, June 24, and Best of Ohio Day, Saturday, August 12. The Grade 3, \$500,000 Ohio Derby is the state's richest Thoroughbred race and its only graded stakes.

Thistledown's live season runs through November 28 on the current 125-day schedule. First post is set for 12:50 p.m. for Monday through Thursday cards and 12:20 p.m. for the special Saturday programs.

## WASHINGTON HBPA

## Training Begins at Emerald Downs

Two days after the February 25 awards dinner held by the Washington HBPA and Washington Thoroughbred Breeders and Owners Association, horsemen returned to Emerald Downs to prepare for an expected race meeting that begins May 6.

The 2022 Washington Horse of the Year Slew's Tiz Whiz, who won last year's Longacres Mile Stakes, was the first horse on the track on the last Monday of February. Besides Tom Wenzel, who conditioned Slew's Tiz Whiz to his championship season, trainers spotted in the stable area included Howard Belvoir, Candi Cryderman, Shelly Crowe, Steve Bullock, David Martinez, Jose

Navarro and Blaine Wright.

Slew's Tiz Whiz underwent an off-season ownership change from Darlyne Krieg's KD Thoroughbreds to Slew's Crew Racing, composed of Roy and Tammy Brewer, Terry and Mary Lou Griffin, Jason and JoDee Snyder and Wenzel and his wife, Melissa. According to Roy Brewer, the sale of Slew's Tiz Whiz was the culmination of a three-year phaseout from racing after the passing of Karl Krieg in 2019. The Whidbey Island to Emerald Downs commute had also become increasingly difficult for Darlyne Krieg.

The 2023 Emerald Downs meet runs through September 17. Opening day features a special 1 p.m. post and shares billing with the 149th running of the Kentucky Derby.

Emerald Downs announced 23 stakes worth \$1.24 million for the meet, including the 88th running of the \$150,000 Longacres Mile on Sunday, August 13. The \$50,000 Budweiser Stakes, Sunday, June 25, is the first stakes of the season for older horses. The schedule features eight stakes doubleheaders, the Super Sunday quadruple-header on August 13 and a closing day tripleheader on Sunday, September 17, featuring the \$70,000 Gottstein Futurity for the Pacific Northwest's top 2-year-olds.

Neither Emerald Downs management nor the Washington HBPA is satisfied with a 52-day meet, and both hope more days can be added. They continue to work together to create opportunities to increase both the required purse monies and the horse population to accommodate additional race days.

## Top Honors to Slew's Tiz Whiz, Dr. Everett Macomber



TODD HANSEN PRESENTS DR. L. EVERETT MACOMBER WITH THE S.J. AGNEW SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.

Popcorn, movie posters and film clips set the stage for a festive night recognizing "The Cinematic Horse" and Washington breeding and racing's 2022 champions. Nearly 200 Washington HBPA and Washington Thoroughbred Breeders and Owners Association (WTBOA) members and guests gathered at Emerald Downs Saturday, February 25, for a night that included dinner, a live auction and the awards celebration.

Retiring Washington Horse Racing Commissioner Dr. L. Everett Macomber became the 24th recipient of the S.J. Agnew Special Achievement Award since its inception in 1980. He was recognized for his leadership, willingness to share expertise and for his contributions as a veterinarian, breeder and racing commissioner who placed the welfare of the horse foremost.

Macomber retired from Cascade West Veterinary Hospital at the end of 2006 after 43 years as an equine veterinarian, including years caring for horses at Agnew's T90 ranch. It was fitting that Todd Hansen, a prominent Washington breeder and co-owner of Scatter Creek Training Center, presented the award to Macomber. Hansen and his wife, Shawn, both got their first job at the Agnew

COURTESY OF WASHINGTON HBPA

farm and grew into the industry with the aid of Macomber's mentorship. The popular Centralia veterinarian was also a successful Thoroughbred breeder before joining the Washington Horse Racing Commission as the commission's resident veterinarian at Emerald Downs. Shortly after retiring from that position, he was appointed to the commission where he served for nearly 10 years before retiring in January 2023. At the conclusion of his presentation, Hansen announced that the octogenarian Macomber had just renewed his veterinarian's license.

Many of Macomber's contributions to the industry were behind the scenes and unrecorded, according to Washington HBPA Executive Director MaryAnn O'Connell.

"As a commissioner, Dr. Macomber advocated for reasonable and reliable medication thresholds, based on science and always in consideration of the health and welfare of the horse," O'Connell said. "As a regulator and veterinarian, Dr. Macomber understood the variable factors which affected withdrawal times and the level of confidence one could have with adhering to them. He was one of the few if not the only regulator I know that actually read, studied and understood the available peer-reviewed research, and he always displayed the utmost respect for horsemen, practicing vets and other regulators when discussing often controversial issues. This made him a valuable asset to the rulemaking process, and I never knew him to make a decision based on politics over the welfare of the horse or the people caring for them."

Darlyne Krieg's homebred Slew's Tiz Whiz was named the Richard Wright Memorial Horse of the Year and Scatter Creek Training Center champion older horse. The gelded son of Slew's Tiznow won the Longacres Mile and Governor's Stakes last season. His trainer, Tom Wenzel, received the Backstretch Chaplaincy Special Training Achievement Award.

The 2022 Washington HBPA Most Improved Plater Award went to Pearl River Delta, a 5-year-old mare by Abraaj owned and trained by Alan Bozell and bred by Pat and Mullan Chinn. Climbing the claiming ranks during the 2022 Emerald meet, the mare finished third in her initial start for a \$5,000 tag. Her next two starts were a maiden win for an \$8,000 tag and a second at the \$25,000 level. Pearl River Delta ended the season with a September 10 victory in a \$25,420 allowance.

Bozell gave little explanation for Pearl River Delta's improvement and in his usual humble demeanor expressed gratitude for owning and training the horse. A fixture at Pacific Northwest tracks since the late 1970s, Bozell received the Scatter Creek Training Center Achievement Award for his work with stakes winner Zippin Seven and Pearl River Delta.

Retiring clocker and longtime industry member Joan Hutchison received the Clemans View Farm Special Racetrack Achievement Award for her longtime dedication to racing, its people and the horses beginning in the 1970s at Longacres and continuing at Yakima Meadows and Emerald Downs. Hutchison was praised for mastering multiple roles around the track, including her legendary clocker skills.

Other 2022 awards:

**Castlegate Farm champion older filly or mare:** Blazingbellablu (owners and breeders, Rainbow Meadows Farm and Charles Essex; trainer, Charles Essex)

**Blue Ribbon Farm champion 3-year-old and Pegasus Training and Rehabilitation champion 3-year-old filly:** Anthony's Cleopatra (owner and breeder, Cacchiotti Ranch; trainer, Tim McCanna)

**Clay Ward Agency LLC champion 3-year-old colt or gelding:** Itsallabouttheride (owners, Friendship Stable, Q Stable and Craig Fredrickson; breeder, Windway Farm; trainer, Bonnie Jenne)

**Freight NW champion 2-year-old and Freight NW champion 2-year-old colt or gelding:** The Big Wam (owners, Michael Bello LLC and Charles Bartlett; breeder, Keith Marks; trainer, Luis Mendez)

**Freight NW champion 2-year-old filly:** Miss Dynamic (owner and breeder, Antonio C. Mendoza; trainer, Rigoberto Velasquez)

**Duane Weber Insurance champion sprinter:** Papa's Golden Boy (owner, Lusk Racing; breeder, Bar C Racing Stables Inc.; trainers, Ashley A. Potts, Vince Gibson and Jack Steiner)

**WTBOA Staff plater of the year:** Cherokee Chatter (owner, Thomas E. Rozantz; breeder, Antonio Martinez; trainer, Cathy Rozantz)

**El Dorado Farms leading sire:** Conveyance (stands property of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick L. Pabst at Blue Ribbon Farm)

**John and Joyce Loftus leading freshman sire:** Gold Rush Dancer (stands at Blue Ribbon Farm)

**Griffin Place broodmare of the year:** Holy Rose (owned by Windway Farm)

**One Horse Will Do Corporation Top Washington-bred OTTB:** Back to Wine (owner and rider, Christina Klein; breeder, Henry O. Gott)

**Rainbow Meadows Farm/Van Dorm Realty Inc. leading breeder:** Nina and Ronald Hagen, El Dorado Farms LLC

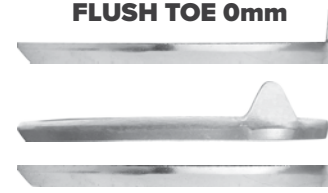
**NTRA Leading Owner:** Todd and Shawn Hansen, Scatter Creek Training Center



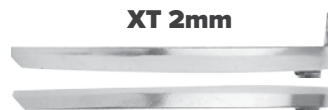
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## Chaplain Gilbert, Patsy Aguilar Earn 'Willing Hearts'

Gilbert Aguilar and his wife, Patsy, were emotional in accepting the 2022 Washington HBPA Willing Hearts Award during the Washington HBPA and WTBOA awards celebration. The bittersweet award culminated years of the couple's service to horsemen at Emerald Downs, where Gilbert served as chaplain and Patsy led women's fellowship.

Gilbert underwent a liver transplant in November in response to a recent cancer diagnosis. Due to immunity concerns brought on by required medications, Gilbert was advised to stay away from livestock, making his presence in the barn area impossible.

The Aguilars knew little about racing when they first arrived at Emerald Downs but soon got to know almost everyone in the barn area.

"When walking the barns with Gilbert, I noticed how he gravitated towards the people, putting a hand on their shoulder and talking, while I gravitated towards the horses, patting their shoulders," said longtime racetracker and chaplaincy board member Jill Hallin. "He learned the racetrack jargon and quickly learned the importance of moving to the left side of the shedrow to let a horse pass. It became natural for him. Patsy was also very involved and so appreciated by the women on the backside. She was so willing to be involved in their lives and whoever attended Patsy's craft activities left having laughed and enjoyed the fellowship of others."

## Farewell to Trainer Bob Meeking

Bob Meeking, a trainer for more than seven decades and one of the state's most popular and respected horsemen, passed away in late December at age 94 after a battle with cancer. Bob's wife, Barbara, died three weeks later.

Meeking missed the 2021 Emerald Downs meet while undergoing treatment but returned in 2022 with a nine-horse stable. The always jovial Meeking, riding his bike around the barn area until well into his 90s, was a breath of fresh air even on the rainiest of Seattle days. His humor was spontaneous and on cue. In an interview with *Daily Racing Form* in 2022, he was asked about his horses and replied that he was sending a few of them home.

"When they work a half-mile in :52 and come back smiling, it is hard to see them winning many races," he said. "Since I own them, it would not be a good investment keeping them at the track. They can laugh at me at the farm instead."

The Meekings owned the 60-acre Allaire Farms in Poulsbo, Washington.

"We have 100 goats, which doesn't include some of the horses we own," Bob said in that same interview.

Meeking was born June 6, 1928, in Victoria, British Columbia, and saddled his first starter in 1946 at Lansdowne Park in suburban Vancouver. Meeking trained for a remarkable 75 years, earning a reputation as a patient, high-percentage horseman while conditioning top-flight runners like Longacres Derby winners Mincemeat (1970) and Salad Sam (1976) and multiple stakes winner Bucksaw.

Meeking participated in a unique contest in 2018 at Emerald Downs when he saddled Trelawny to a runner-up finish in The Not in Any Rocking Chair starter allowance with the unique condition "whose trainer was born on or prior to June 6, 1928." Trainers of the four runners entered were 94-year-old Arturo Arboleda, 91-year-old H.R. "Pat" Mullens, 90-year-old Ira Rhodes and Meeking, who had celebrated his 90th birthday the week prior to the race.

Meeking's final win came July 22 with Emerald Sea, a 4-year-old filly that rallied for a 2-length victory in a \$15,000 claiming race.

A celebration of life for Barbara and Bob is planned for later this spring at Emerald Downs. **HJ**

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