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Friday, March 27, 2020

# Gural weighs in on whether to defer stakes payments

*The owner of the Meadowlands said people have to consider the economic reality of staking standardbreds.*

by Dave Briggs



USTA

**Jeff Gural, owner of the Meadowlands Racetrack, Tioga and Vernon Downs.**

Jeff Gural said the COVID-19 pandemic is a "once in every 100 years" catastrophe. But when it comes to the issue of whether to defer April 15 stakes payments, the owner of the Meadowlands Racetrack and Vernon and Tioga Downs sides with the Hambletonian Society's decision to stay the course and require them on schedule.

On Wednesday, Toronto-based Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG) announced it was suspending April 15 stakes payments. Thursday, the Hambletonian Society announced April 15 payments were due on schedule (see story pg 3).

Early Thursday afternoon, Gural pointed to the economics behind stakes races as a reason for thinking it should be business as usual despite unprecedented societal turmoil.

"I think we all know that the purses for these stakes races are mainly generated by the horses that people think are good that don't turn out to be so good," Gural said. "The likelihood, hopefully, is that the vast majority of these stakes races will take place either on schedule or will be pushed to

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a different part of the calendar.

"I don't think it's fair to give people an extra month or two to find out whether their horse is any good or not."

Gural said giving people more time to assess their horses before opting whether to stake them will "unquestionably lead to a decrease" in the number of horses stakes, which hurts the purses for those stakes. "Obviously, you learn more when you put a horse behind the gate, but hopefully we can get some of these tracks up and running in a couple of weeks even if it's without customers."

Asked whether insisting people stake horses on schedule despite massive economic upheaval and uncertainty would also lead to a decrease in the number of horses staked, Gural — a man never afraid to speak an uncomfortable truth as he sees it — said the reality is that stakes races are a rich person's game.

"Anybody that doesn't have the money shouldn't be buying yearlings," he said. "Honestly, when somebody asks me about buying yearlings my response is always the same, 'If you hate money, it's probably a good thing to do.' The only way you can make money is if you can get lucky with a stallion. When you look at it, most yearlings that you buy, if you look at it at the end of the year, you needed to make \$100,000 to break even or make a small profit."

"Everybody goes into this for the fun of it. This is a fun thing and it's a thrill when you win and it's deflating when you lose and you have to enjoy the high points because there are more lows than highs. I've lost a lot of money and I don't regret any of it, other than the fact that we allow these drug guys to go on for so long."

Asked whether the economic crisis would inevitably lead even wealthy people to pull back on their expenditure on horse racing, Gural said that it is likely, "but that's not going to determine whether they should make a payment in April or May. The stock market is up a lot again today and the government is printing money and I just think that things are going to be better... maybe better, I don't know. This is catastrophic, don't get me wrong, and hopefully if it ends in two months that's a lot different than if it ends in six months."

For the record, despite his tracks playing host to a number of Hambletonian Society stakes, Gural is not a director of the Hambletonian Society. Neither is he directly affiliated with WEG. He did say the Hambletonian Society did contact him — as it did with many important players in the industry — to get his opinion about whether to keep to the April 15 stakes payment schedule

As for when he foresees live racing to resume at the

Meadowlands, Gural said he plans to appeal to the governor of New Jersey to, "let us race in a few weeks, even if it's with an empty grandstand."

"If I knew this was going to be over within two months, I think we'll come out of it pretty well. If it's six months, I make no predictions because that would mean that we're not even racing. That would be catastrophic."

"The 2-year-olds, I would expect, will be totally unaffected by this unless this really drags on."

Gural said he's not so sure the 3-year-olds will be so lucky.

He said the fact many thoroughbred tracks have continued racing by banning spectators and instituting strict social distancing procedures helps the argument that harness racing might be able to resume safely soon.

For the moment, he said he has much bigger concerns.

"This is terrible, people are dying," Gural said. "It's a mess, but remember this is once every 100 years and we'll have to get through it."

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## Woodbine suspends April stakes payments; Hambletonian Society opts for payments as usual

On Wednesday, Toronto-based Woodbine Entertainment Group announced it was suspending April 15 stakes payments. A day later, the Hambletonian Society announced it had decided to require April 15 stakes payments on schedule. Respective press releases from both organizations follows as issued:

### Woodbine to suspend April stakes payments

Due to the suspension of live racing at Woodbine Mohawk Park caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Woodbine Entertainment has made the decision to suspend the upcoming April 15, 2020 standardbred stakes payments.

"It's important for us to recognize the challenges facing everyone in the horse business at this time, and we want to help where we can," said Jim Lawson, CEO of Woodbine Entertainment. "We want to thank all of the owners that have staked their horses for 2020."

Woodbine will re-evaluate all stakes purses and sustaining payments in May.

—Mark McKelvie / Woodbine communications

### Hambletonian Society April 15 stakes payment statement

After careful and extensive consideration, the Hambletonian Society, in conjunction with Meadowlands, The Red Mile, Little Brown Jug Society and other industry clients, partners and stakeholders, have concluded that the April 15 payment deadline for stake and early-closers will remain intact.

All entities fully realize that all members of the racing community are in the midst of extremely difficult and unprecedented circumstances on a global level.

We are also aware that financial resources for many people will be stretched and staking horses is not going to be a priority.

The staking of horses has always represented a long term investment – from yearling payments to entrance fees, they accompany every horse through the span of the payments, enhance the value of every "staked" horse, and the final number of paid-in (eligible) horses, along with added money from the stake sponsor, determines the value of each stake

race.

"The Hambletonian Society's 95-year mission statement of promoting stakes event and the standardbred breed means we remain committed to flexibility in scheduling, placing and moving races if necessary, in partnership with stake sponsors and host tracks," said Hambletonian Society president John Campbell.

"We want all owners who have paid into races to stay in the event so they share in the accumulated value to date either by eventually racing or being refunded as the owner at time of cancellation."

The racing conditions and payment schedule for each event that are printed and posted are a contract between the owners of each horse and the Stake Sponsor. To change this contract would alter this legal agreement and could be challenged in court as a breach of contract.

The Hambletonian Society would like to reinforce our policy that when any Stake or early-closer is canceled [see below] any staking fee will be refunded to the owner of the horse at time of cancellation.

**CANCELLATION:** *The Sponsor further reserves the right to cancel either or both of the races if for reasons beyond its control it becomes impractical or undesirable in the opinion of the Sponsor to conduct said race or races. If an event is not*





*raced due to circumstances beyond its control, the Sponsor's responsibility and liability will be limited to refunding without interest: nomination, sustaining and entrance fees collected toward canceled events that have not been disbursed at the time of cancellation. If canceled after the first 2-year-old payment, these monies will be prorated among the owners of the horses eligible at the time of cancellation. If canceled prior to the first 2-year-old payment, the nomination fees will be refunded to the nominators.*

Since 2009, the Hambletonian Society has successfully refunded to individual nominators and owners more than \$700,000 in payments from canceled races.

Most recently, the Art Rooney and Lismore were canceled by Yonkers Raceway in late 2019, and all monies for two and three-year-olds eligible at time of cancellation were refunded to owners within 30 days of cancellation.

Stake sponsors and host tracks have currently closed February payments for the stakes they service with that deadline, and are finalizing March 15 payments.

The racing season and stakes calendar is unknown at this time and it is possible that stakes may be canceled and others moved and rescheduled. Our conditions allow for and are clear that dates and venues may be changed.

***Definite dates will be published in the U.S.T.A. Stakes Guide in the year of the races. If for any reason it becomes impractical or undesirable, in the opinion of the Sponsor, to hold this race at the Track designated, the Sponsor reserves the right to change the date and/or the location of the Track for either any or all races.***

As soon as racing does resume we all will make every effort to hold as many stakes and early-closers that we service as possible, and will be involved in rescheduling, moving races and setting up schedules that are in the best interests of everyone involved.

We realize that stake payment decisions may be difficult and will be a hardship for many people, but we request that everyone be cognizant of our obligations.

*\* Accepting credit card payments for staking fees was instituted by the Hambletonian Society this year through a secure PNC bank platform. Should any race be canceled, all collected payments, regardless of method, will be refunded in total, to the owner at time of cancellation.*

— Moira Fanning / Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown

## HARNESS RACING UPDATE

### About Harness Racing Update

Harness Racing Update is owned by HRU Publications of Millwood, NY and will publish Fridays and Sundays from fall through late spring. HRU will add Saturday editions early summer through fall, publishing 3 days per week, and will add editions throughout the year as major news breaks.

**Editor:** Dave Briggs

**Production:** Brian Fuller

**Graphic Design, Ads & Placement:** Lisa Bihuniak

**Advertising Sales:** Wilma Van Vaerenbergh | [contact for ad sales/questions](mailto:contactforadsales@harnessracingupdate.com)

**Results & Stats Editor:** Lisa Duong

**Founder:** Bill Finley

**Contributors:** Claus Andersen, Garnet Barnsdale, Tim Bojarski, Jerry Connors, Frank Coto, The Curmudgeon, Paul Delean, Bill Finley, Joe FitzGerald, Dean Gillette, Ron Gurfein, Thomas Hedlund, Bill Heller, Bob Heyden, Dean Hoffman, Victoria Howard, Melissa Keith, Dave Landry, Lauren Lee, Dave Little, Chris Lomon, David Mattia, Trey Nosrac, Tom Pedulla, Andrea Pietrzak, James Platz, Bob Roberts, Sandra Snyder, Brett Sturman, Jay Wolf

### Get in touch with HRU

PO Box 230 | Millwood, NY | 10546 | Telephone: (226) 374-9999

Editor/News Stories: [editor@harnessracingupdate.com](mailto:editor@harnessracingupdate.com)

Advertising: [advertising@harnessracingupdate.com](mailto:advertising@harnessracingupdate.com)

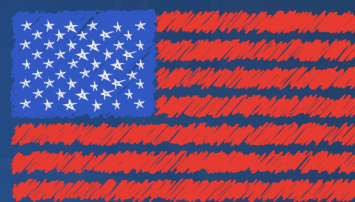
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## Urging Hambletonian Society to reconsider decision not to defer stakes payments

*The most difficult decisions during these times are the ones that will define us as an industry.*

**by Anthony MacDonald**

This is not the first pandemic the world has faced and it won't be the last.

Influenza killed 50 million people when it struck in 1918. In 1957, the Asian flu killed 1.1 million people worldwide. Another 1 million died in 1968, and half a million died a decade ago from H1N1. These are things that grandfathers recall and tell their families about.

I suspect our stories, someday, will start with phrases like *shelter in place*, and *social distancing*. It's hard to believe that we got to this point so quickly, but scientists said this could, and likely would happen again. They said we should prepare, but how do you prepare for the world screeching to a halt in mere weeks?

Millions in society are now left out of work, and we all know some of those businesses will never open again. How do you operate a business, or in this case an industry, in these truly terrifying times?

Firstly, you try and protect the most vulnerable.

I saw the tears in the eyes of our caretakers the day after Ontario first ceased operations. They were listening to the news and were terrified that I would simply come in and start laying off people. I didn't because I couldn't live with that decision.

Instead, I messaged all of our 800 clients to update them on the situation and ask them how they were doing.

Would they be able to continue with their financial obligations in general, and with [thestable.ca](https://www.thestable.ca)?

This is noteworthy because they too have contracts and I made it clear that I was going to do what I could to ensure all of them could continue on with horse ownership.

Two things happened: A few came forward and said they may need help, but many more said they would help those in need. It was one of the most heartwarming displays I had ever seen.

Secondly, you look to the future. Look past the clouds of the now, no matter what they are, and try to see what is in store for us next. One of the most important factors to getting through this is understanding our stakeholders' needs and doing our very best to facilitate them.

What can we do to ensure our participants can continue to participate? This should be asked, answered, and revisited constantly. One key component is financial security, or the lack thereof, for all of us.

We have seen almost every jurisdiction defer stake payments including Woodbine. Jim Lawson's statement from Woodbine's decision speaks directly to their leadership and their commitment to the future of this industry:

*"It's important for us to recognize the challenges facing everyone in the horse business at this time, and we want to help where we can," said Jim Lawson, CEO of Woodbine Entertainment. "We want to thank all of the owners that have staked their horses for 2020."*

Horse racing is used to bad economic news, but this is new even for us. If it was business as usual we would be racing, training, and writing cheques soon for our April 15 sustaining payments. But it's not business as usual. Or is it?

I'll be honest, I was truly disappointed with the Hambletonian Society's decision to continue forward with April's sustaining payments. They referenced legalities and regulations, but I doubt anyone has a pandemic clause in their contracts. What's best for the future of horse racing in extraordinary times should always outweigh contracts written in ordinary times. Simply put, extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures.

Our industry is an extremely vulnerable position right now and business as usual is simply not in line with reality. To ignore the economic turmoil in the world right now and expect our participants to be able to make these payments is simply not realistic. It is easy to mis-step in the here-and-now of a pandemic, and I hope the Hambletonian Society revisits its decision quickly.

I know many of the board members of the Hambletonian Society and one thing is for certain; they all want what's best for our industry. Yet this announcement certainly doesn't appear to reflect their tireless work.

I think this week's announcement was one made through the eyes of a lawyer, and maybe given the amount of money at hand, it seemed like the best way to move forward as the path of least resistance.

I ask you now to look through the eyes of the people unemployed, out of work, and desperately trying to remain a part of this industry.

Being responsible for our industry's future is a burden we all need to carry at the moment.

When the person besides you falls down, you need to try and help them up if you can. That is what being a horseman



is, and has to be now more than ever.

The average person in society today has the ability to defer their mortgage payments, and soon will have access to relief packages from our governments. We need to fully grasp what is happening to our clients in their day-to-day life.

I imagine many people are upset, but I think the proper thing to do is to send your thoughts (not your anger) to the Hambletonian Society explaining how this decision affects you in these financially crippling times.

I would suggest that the Hambletonian Society take another look at this with a full view of the entire industry. From where I sit, this decision does not reflect what is best for the everyday people of horse racing. I'm asking you to do what is right in these desperate times, so we can at least

pretend things will be normal again, someday.

I submit that Mr. Campbell and all the Hambletonian Society take a week to revisit this and listen to the horse racing community.

If we make decisions moving forward based on what's best for all of us, we will all prosper on the other side.

Respectfully,

Anthony MacDonald

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## **Brian Brown gives trainer's perspective on trying to navigate COVID-19 turmoil**

*He also weighs in on whether April 15 stakes payments should be deferred, or not.*

*by Brett Sturman*

Like practically every other industry in the civilized world, harness racing has been brought to nearly a total halt. But while racing has ceased everywhere with the exception, for the time being, of Cal Expo, time continues on. Horses still need to be trained, help needs to be maintained, and bills still need to be paid. In addition to owners not having a source of income from their horses, trainers must adapt and condition horses through an indefinite period of time before knowing when they can actually race.

As 2017's Dan Patch Trainer of the Year Brian Brown said, training horses without any idea of a specific date to prime them for presents challenges.

"It has affected my 3-year-olds' schedule. I actually qualified 11 last Thursday (at Spring Garden Ranch in Florida) that were supposed to qualify today (Thursday) and would have been ready to go as soon as I got back to Ohio.

Well now with everything shut down, I trained them and backed off," Brown said.

"I only trained them an easy trip in 2:15 earlier in the week, trained them back two trips today in 2:10, but didn't train them real hard. I'm going to try to follow that schedule, maybe even only go around 2:15 twice, until I hear something different."

For Brown, the timing of having some horses ready is more of a priority than others. "The stakes horses, you've got a certain time they need to be ready by," said Brown. "Overnight horses, even if they're not ready when they say you can go back to racing, you can race later in the year or through the winter if you normally don't. But stakes horses, there comes a time when they need to be ready and you need to be ready."

"The most positive thing to me would be if we could be racing May 1 in Ohio; I would feel fortunate. I'd like to race next week if I could, but I don't see that happening. Nobody knows how this is going to work out. So, we're just trying to keep them, train them light. If we get maybe a couple weeks' notice of when we'll be back up, I can have mine trained up, sharpened right back up. But you know, there is such a thing as overtraining too. You've got to be careful that we don't train them into the ground. It's as much attitude, horses will get tired of just training all of the time. We have to be careful we don't do that and ruin attitudes as much as having horses getting sore."

In readying his barn of 2 and 3-year-olds for the coming stakes season, there was some controversy made Thursday when the Hambletonian Society announced their decision to not defer stakes payments scheduled for April 15, despite the current global economic calamity. This decision was somewhat amplified considering that just the day prior Woodbine announced that they would in fact be suspending the April 15 standardbred stakes payments.





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While I think it's safe to say the reaction from most was negative to the Hambletonian Society's decision, Brown had a somewhat different take.

"Last month (February) was the hard month. I own horses and I've got to pay too. Last month was when all these 2-year-old payments are due at the same time as the 3-year-olds, and the ones you like, you stake a little higher. Our Ohio races were all due last month and we have no payments due now, so last month was a tough month."

On the issue of deferring the April 15 date, "To me, it's a double-edged sword," said Brown. "It would be nice if we didn't have to make those payments this month coming up and to be able to make sure you hold onto your money if this drags on for several months. But, say we defer the payments back to May. In July already we're going to go to racing, so what does that do to the purse? Right now for example, I'm keeping my 2YO's on schedule hoping that we qualify in June like normal. If I keep going and we don't have to make any payments until May or June even, I'm going to know the ones that I shouldn't be paying. There's no guarantee that I'm going to know which ones that are really good enough, but I'm going to know who the bad ones are going to be by June. And all of us are going to know by June that we shouldn't pay certain horses that could be doing good now that you're willing to stake. So, what does that do to the purse by race time? Are we going to have enough people paying to keep the purses up that'll be really worthwhile racing for?"

For most harness tracks, it's been about one to two weeks since racing has been suspended. In the extreme short-term, industry participants may be able to make ends meet but at some point a critical mass will be reached. How much longer can the entire industry business model be sustained during an economic shutdown.

"It all goes by my owners," Brown said. "If they're willing to keep paying us to train and we can keep waiting, I'm going to be fine and my help is going to be fine. But if we're not going to race for several months and my owners say that we've got to stop this and turn these horses out and wait until they tell



Dave Landry

**Trainer Brian Brown.**

us they're going to get ready to go, then we're all going to be in trouble. Everything is up in the air. Nobody knows anything, so there's no real way to plan for any of this."

In the meanwhile, Brown and everyone else continue going forward on a day by day basis, planning the best they can without knowing when normal resumes.

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  - **Top Flight Angel**, 1:52.3f -'18 (**\$918,699**) CAD
  - **Celebrity Ruth**, 1:51.4 -'18 (**\$508,429**) CAD - sold at the 2019 Harrisburg Mixed Sale for \$400,000
- From 2 Ontario-eligible crops of racing age, he is the sire of several 2019 Ontario Sire Stakes Gold Winners including:
  - **Teddys Littleangel**, 3, 1:54.4s -'19 (**\$365,743**) CAD
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P.O. Box 26, Inglewood, Ontario L7C 3L6 / 905.838.2145 / pat.woods@winbakfarm.com

www.winbakfarm.com / f / t



# 15 DAYS TO SLOW THE SPREAD

Listen to and follow the directions of your **STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES**.

**IF YOU FEEL SICK**, stay home. Do not go to work. Contact your medical provider.

**IF YOUR CHILDREN ARE SICK**, keep them at home. Do not send them to school. Contact your medical provider.

**IF SOMEONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS TESTED POSITIVE** for the coronavirus, keep the entire household at home. Do not go to work. Do not go to school. Contact your medical provider.

**IF YOU ARE AN OLDER PERSON**, stay home and away from other people.

**IF YOU ARE A PERSON WITH A SERIOUS UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITION** that can put you at increased risk (for example, a condition that impairs your lung or heart function or weakens your immune system), stay home and away from other people.



For more information, please visit  
**CORONAVIRUS.GOV**

## DO YOUR PART TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS

Even if you are young, or otherwise healthy, you are at risk and your activities can increase the risk for others. It is critical that you do your part to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Work or engage in schooling **FROM HOME** whenever possible.

**IF YOU WORK IN A CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRY**, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule. You and your employers should follow CDC guidance to protect your health at work.

**AVOID SOCIAL GATHERINGS** in groups of more than 10 people.

Avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants, and food courts —  
**USE DRIVE-THRU, PICKUP, OR DELIVERY OPTIONS.**

**AVOID DISCRETIONARY TRAVEL**, shopping trips, and social visits.

**DO NOT VISIT** nursing homes or retirement or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.

### PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE:

- Wash your hands, especially after touching any frequently used item or surface.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.

**CORONAVIRUS.GOV**

School operations can accelerate the spread of the coronavirus. Governors of states with evidence of community transmission should close schools in affected and surrounding areas. Governors should close schools in communities that are near areas of community transmission, even if those areas are in neighboring states. In addition, state and local officials should close schools where coronavirus has been identified in the population associated with the school. States and localities that close schools need to address childcare needs of critical responders, as well as the nutritional needs of children.

Older people are particularly at risk from the coronavirus. All states should follow Federal guidance and halt social visits to nursing homes and retirement and long-term care facilities.

In states with evidence of community transmission, bars, restaurants, food courts, gyms, and other indoor and outdoor venues where groups of people congregate should be closed.

## Coping with COVID-19, Part III

*The continuation of individual industry stories and thoughts from the front lines in North America.*

by Dave Briggs

*\*Illinois comments by Neil Milbert*

Harness Racing Update asked a wide number of people in the harness racing industry to share their personal stories and thoughts about coping with COVID-19. Most of the responses were published March 20 ([Part I here](#)), but a few more responses came in that we published on March 22 ([Part II here](#))

Here are more individual stories from across North America.

Each person was asked the following questions:

- 1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**
- 2. What is the situation like in your area?**
- 3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**
- 4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**
- 5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

We thank everyone for taking the time to respond.

### DELAWARE

#### George Teague / Trainer/Owner/Breeder

- 1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

I am in between my farm at Harrington and the racetrack at Harrington Delaware.

- 2. What is the situation like in your area?**

We are definitely paranoid so that helps us cope with this a lot better than most.... Nobody close around us, as far as I know, has tested positive or showed any signs of the coronavirus. For now we seem to be in a lucky area, but not backing off of practicing common sense survival skills.

- 3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

We still have to function because we own horses and they have to be taken care of. But pretty much shut down jogging



Dave Landry

**Trainer/Owner George Teague, Jr.**

and training right now. Unfortunately I hope I don't get too far behind trying to guess when we will start back up racing. At the racetrack there is just one guy working the track and kind of overseeing everything. But we are in good shape there. He's a good guy to have around working the track. But back at my farm we're pretty much cleaning stalls and grooming the horses but no track work.

I'm like everybody else I think that we are most concerned about how are we going to survive economically without income? I'm probably in worse shape than most because I got quite a few horses so feeding and buying hay is always going to be concerning when you don't earn any money for possibly months. But, so far, everything is going well

- 4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

Yes, I agree. I think people are always quick to help each other in this business. And I am sure if things get bad with each other I'm sure we could lean on friends and each other to try to help as best as we can. Because we are all in this together the struggle is going to be the same for everybody.

- 5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

The last question is the unpredictable part of it. Two or three months is a short time frame for the way this thing is spreading in some areas. So, I'm realistically hoping for only two months downtime I'm probably being conservative with that.

### FLORIDA

#### David McDuffee / Owner/Breeder

- 1. Where are you located right now and how are you and**



**your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

We are now in Delray Beach Florida. My family is in New Hampshire. Everyone is doing well.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

It is very quiet in Delray. Only drive thru pizza places open. Even the beach is closed.

**Erv Miller / Trainer/Owner****1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

We are located in Florida at Southern Oaks Training Center and commute between our home in Debary, Florida and the training center in Sorrento. COVID-19 has definitely slowed things down, but we have been able to continue training on an almost normal schedule.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

The situation in our area has a lot less traffic on the roads, more people staying home, out walking, riding bikes and more vehicles in the driveways. All restaurants and bars are closed except for take-out or drive thru's and grocery stores are very busy with long lines.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

It has not affected my wife (Heidi) and I much up to this point. We had horses racing up north until they closed the tracks, but a little time off won't hurt any of them. Hopefully, they will be back racing in the very near future. This is especially important for those horses racing up north that count on the daily overnight racing and it also impacts the stakes horses because of the uncertainty of when they will be starting.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

From what I've read, most horsemen's organizations and tracks are stepping up and helping which is very important. Take COVID-19 seriously, wash your hands, keep your distance and keep saying your prayers.

**5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

Everything depends on COVID-19, but I think first and foremost about the people in the world getting back to work and a new normal; secondly to our industry to get back to and racing as soon as possible. I believe that things will start moving forward by mid-April with the tracks starting to race

shortly after that with some new guideline in place for Social Distancing.

**KENTUCKY****Bob Brady / Kentuckiana Farms****1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

We are here in Lexington on the farm. We are fortunate that all our family lives close by and we are able to check on them daily. We are basically going to the farm and staying home as we are being asked to do. We are all fine.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

Kentucky is pretty much shut down like a lot of the nation. Only essential businesses are left open, agriculture being one of them.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

Work on the farm has to go on. Like everyone else, we are in the middle of foaling and breeding season. We've made a big effort to keep barns and warm rooms clean and disinfected, space out employees, closed the farm to all visitors and let the office staff work alternating days. We've



Dave Landry

**Kentuckiana Farms' Bob Brady.**

also implemented for our management team to keep a safe distance and not work together whenever possible. Biggest concern going forward is for all to remain healthy and there's no interruption in getting mares bred. With flights being cancelled we are utilizing more FedEx than in the past.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

This industry has always stepped up and helped each other in difficult times. Lot of wonderful people involved with the same goals and needs. I think communication with others is key and help is usually a phone call away.

**5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

Today (Tuesday, March 24) was very encouraging with the imminent stimulus package. Stock market roared to a record high. I'm very hopeful we will start racing in three months and our lives will return to normalcy.

## **ILLINOIS**

### **Casey Leonard / Driver**

**1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

My father (Hawthorne's defending champion trainer Terry Leonard) and I are just training horses at his farm in Harvard (located about 70 miles northwest of Hawthorne). We probably had about a half-dozen getting close to race when Hawthorne closed, 3-year-olds and horses we were rehabbing. Those horses should be ready to go when we get back. We're trying to keep our horses fit and healthy so when they turn the lights back on we can fill the entry box and race.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

I live about two minutes from the farm and my 12-year-old boy came with me today and helped me jog horses and clean up the barn. Like everywhere else in Illinois, the schools and churches are closed but the supermarkets are open.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

I thought studio racing would have been a viable alternative. Now, I'm hoping everyone involved (in racing) stays healthy and I want to get back to racing as soon as possible.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in**

**the industry through this crisis?**

I would think it'll be studio racing.

**5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

My hope is we'll be back racing by April 10 and back to normal racing by the end of May.

In the meantime I'm spending a lot of quality family time.

### **Jim Miller / director of publicity and horsemen's relations and racing analyst at Hawthorne Race Course**

**1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation and 2. What is the situation like in your area?**

My family life has been impacted quite a bit. My wife probably is facing being laid off. Both kids are off from school (because of a directive from Gov. J.B. Pritzger closing all of the state's educational institutions at least until April 8). Both kids are doing learning from home. It has put a stop to my daughter's track season (because all high school sports have been cancelled for the duration of the school year) and it has delayed the start of the youth baseball season for my son.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

Our last night of racing was March 15. I'm here every day because I'm in charge of assigning stalls on the backstretch. Horses are coming in from other locations that either had threatened to close or were finishing meets. The track crew has to be here because the track is still open for training. Our backstretch maintenance crew has to be here because there is a lot to take care of.

We have about 650 horses on the backstretch and around 350 of them are thoroughbreds (whose trainers are awaiting the resolution of a new contract impasse with Arlington International Racecourse and the opening of its backstretch).

On the front side of the building a lot of our staff in working remotely. (Track president) Tim Carey comes in every day.

I've been handicapping other tracks and posting my picks on our website. About 15 thoroughbred tracks are running and pretty much everybody is doing studio racing. Here's a great example on how well they are doing: typically on a Monday, the average handle at Will Rogers Downs would be just over \$800,000; on Monday (of this week) they handled an incredible \$2.4 million with no fans on site and everybody



betting remotely. Fonner Park, which doesn't even have ADW (advanced deposit wagering), did \$1.3 million on Monday; normally it would take them five days combined handle to get to \$1.3 million.

The construction (on the on-track casino that was legalized last spring) is pretty much on hold because we don't have any income. Before the pandemic hit we got a lot of tear down work done and work on fixtures and wiring. Some of the light poles were relocated. We were hopeful we were close to getting our casino license (enabling Hawthorne to open the casino during its thoroughbred meeting this fall) but this has slowed things down.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

If this (shutdown of racing) goes past April 10 it's going to be very tough on everybody. We have a plan in place to do studio racing without a problem if we have to. We can limit the number of people in the paddock because we paddock out of one of the barns on the backstretch. You can keep separation.

The horsemen's association has a benevolence fund. If someone wants to help the people involved they can do it by contributing to that fund. But the longer this drags on one of the questions becomes: what's going to happen to horse retirement and horse rescue facilities? At some point they'll be inundated with too many horses.

**5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

I'm hoping it doesn't come to that. I'm hoping in two or three months we'll be back to racing (as usual) and going strong again.

**Neil Milbert / Freelance writer**

**1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

My wife, Jill, and I live in Wilmette, a North Shore suburb of Chicago. Restaurants and bars, business places, churches, schools and recreational facilities all are shut down. For those of us who are Catholics the local ABC affiliate is televising Sunday Mass.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

We've have had to modify our lifestyle. Ordinarily, Jill goes to our daughter's home about 45 minutes from our house to care for her 2 ½-year-old boy three days a week and I travel a half hour to our 7-year-old twin grandsons' school to pick them up three days a week and take them to soccer practice.

But in the middle of last week all that changed. Our daughter and son-in-law are working from home and sharing day care duties. The twins' school is closed until April 8 and their dad and mom, both of whom are high school teachers, are doing their teaching from home. Our son also teaches a college course one night per week and that also is being done via computer.

Normally, I play pickup basketball one or two days a week and Jill does Zumba classes two nights a week but our venues are shut down indefinitely.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

I do a lot of freelance work for a chain of seven weekly newspapers on the North Shore. My last assignments were a school board meeting on March 16 and a park board meeting on March 17. Since then most civic meetings and earlier all high school and college spring sports have been cancelled for the duration of the school year. Bottom line for me for the next few months at least is only a few assignments and working solely by phone.

In keeping with our governor's instructions, we are staying home and limiting our social contact to weekly trips to the grocer and, if need be, the drug store. We communicate with our son and daughter and our three grandchildren via video phone calls. I go for an hour-long jog every day and Jill walks for an hour daily.

Every afternoon we watch the telecast of Governor Pritzger's coronavirus update that he Dr. Ngozi Ezike, the director of the Illinois Department of Public Health. He is very thorough and reassuring in telling us what the state is doing and what needs to be done but he doesn't sugar-coat the situation. He cautions that this may turn into a marathon and there is no quick fix. The governor is working closely with Chicago's mayor, Lori Lightfoot, and she too conducts very comprehensive and informative briefings.

My work with the weeklies during the past month helped prepare me mentally prepare for the situation we are confronted with... at virtually every city council, village board and school board meeting I covered there was an agenda item on the impending crisis and the steps being taken to prepare and make a coordinated response were detailed.

Based on that experience and what I have learned in the interim I anticipate the crisis will continue until late June and perhaps longer. The harness meeting at Hawthorne that continue through Sept. 20 will to be impacted but I have no idea to what extent.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

World War II was still being waged when I was a little boy and I was aware that something terrible was menacing us. I believe, with the exception of the Cuban Missile Crisis, this is the greatest threat to the U.S. and the world since that terrible war. The Cuban Missile Crisis was short-lived although it didn't seem so at the time; the COVID-19 pandemic is a clear and present danger with no solution in sight.

**Tony Somone / executive director of the Illinois Harness Horsemen's Association**

**1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation and 2. What is the situation like in your area?**

I've moved my office (from the IHHA headquarters) into the basement of my house. I just got my printer and scanner. It's funny because it seems like I'm working harder at home than I did at the office. There's just so much work to do.

My wife also is working from home. We had to divvy up the house. She took an upstairs spare bedroom and I'm in the basement.

My daughter is a nurse who works at UIC (the University of Illinois at Chicago) and my son-in-law is a Chicago para-medic who got his mask last week. My son is home with us and he's getting worried about his grandparents.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

The horsemen are all a little bit nervous. This is an agriculture-based sport and those animals require care 365 days a year. For two, three or four weeks we should be all right. If it goes much beyond that people will start to get in trouble (financially), especially those on the lower end of the economic spectrum. We're trying to figure out how we as an organization will assist if it goes that far.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

We want to get back to racing as soon as possible but we respect the governor's decision. This is about the greater good of society not individual rights or civil liberties. The state is going to err on the side of caution and that's a good thing because life is the most important piece of this puzzle.

**5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3**

**months?**

We hope in two months it'll be business as usual but if anybody tells you that they know specifically when it will be safe to resume normal life don't believe them. None of us know where this pandemic is going. None of us know what decisions the state is going to be making.

I would suspect when we return it'll be studio racing for a while. In the meantime the horsemen should continue to do what we've always done. We're incredibly competitive when we step on the racetrack but if you're down and out we'll help you. Horsemen look out for each other. If somebody needs a little help to feed a family or feed a horse I'm sure horsemen will step in and do what we have to do.

**Dr. Ken Walker / Veterinarian/Breeder/Walker Standardbreds**

**1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

The pandemic hasn't affected us too much. This time of year we never get too far off the farm. It's probably a good time to be on a farm. The 15 people who work on the farm come in as usual but they're in the open air and they're spread out.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

If you go to downtown Springfield (located eight miles from the rural Sherman farm) it's pretty vacant and you see the toll it's taking on the economy in general. If this continues it's going to be tough for small businesses to stay afloat.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

They're still training horses at the state fairgrounds in Springfield. We plan to sell 17 horses at the Illini Classic sale (at the fairgrounds) over Labor Day weekend, 6 at the Fasig-Tipton sale in Lexington from Oct. 6-10 and 9 at the Hoosier sale in late October.

**4. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

By that time I hope the pandemic is over and we're on the rebound. The people who have already gotten it and recovered now are immune and once a large part of the population gets it and recovers those people also will be immune. It will take time and it will take a toll.

**NEW JERSEY**

**Dr. Patty Hogan / Equine Surgeon**



**1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

My home and veterinary hospital is in Cream Ridge, NJ – therefore we are in the thick of things as far as the general epicenter of the outbreak goes. We have a very large population of equine patients currently here at the clinic that require daily care. Fortunately, my staff and I are healthy and are able to continue to do surgery and provide care for these horses. We have a tiered approach to our contingency plan as to how we would handle any increased strict state travel and quarantine requirements so that the horses continue to get "business-as-usual" care. So far we have been able to receive horses locally and from out-of-state with no restrictions on vanning. We have limited any personal contact with any trainers/van drivers/veterinarians and no outside people have been allowed in the clinic or barns for the past 2 weeks. On a personal note, my husband, Ed Lohmeyer, is stuck in Florida with his stable and that separation has been very tough.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

New Jersey is considered a "hot spot" so there are strict travel restrictions and most businesses are closed. We are considered essential services so we are open and providing veterinary care. Basically, my staff and I go to work and go home with very little in between. We have staggered our shifts so we have less crowding in the clinic and employ best practices for distance, washing hands, etc. My staff has been with me since I started this clinic 14 years ago and I am committed to keeping everyone employed as we go through this. I reached out to all of our clients and asked them to pay their invoices upon receipt so I could guarantee payroll costs in case things really drag on and the response was really very humbling. People called immediately with credit cards, overnighted checks, etc. It was really touching and I am so grateful. The harness horse community has been hit particularly hard with the loss of the Fusco family members, John Brennan, and there are several horsemen in our area who are positive for the virus. That has been an added worry for all of us as far as exposure, not to mention the personal loss of knowing these people and working with them for years.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

My practice population is 99 per cent racehorse – both TB and STB. So the cessation of all racing and the uncertainty for our clients training 2-year-olds is a huge worry for both our immediate and long-term future. Horses are still

currently able to train at the racetracks and training centers, so we are still seeing horses for the typical injuries and sickness. However, if things do not change in the near future, many of our clients will not be able to afford to participate in racing any longer and will leave the business. Many of the small stables will not survive this.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

I would say if you are a 'big fish' in this industry, now would be a good time to lend a hand to the little guy. I am not talking a large donation to a support organization, but rather looking at the small family stable who is worried about keeping help, feeding the horses, etc. This type of stable is vital to the sport. Send a load of hay or grain to someone you know, send a few bucks anonymously, etc. If you own a training center, consider giving a month free stall rent to someone you know needs it – anything like that to just give a hand to someone trying to get by. This time of year is normally the leanest for anyone in the horse business as the racing season is not really in full swing yet and if you are training babies, it is particularly tough. This crisis has multiplied those issues exponentially.

**5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

I was already extremely concerned about the future of harness racing before Covid-19 hit us. We have A LOT of game-changing issues facing us as it is. With this current economic uncertainty as a result of the virus outbreak, I fear many good people will be put out of business. Let's be honest – on a good day it is hard to make a profit in harness racing. Many people are in it because they love the horses and the sport, and if they are able to eke by a living at it, well that's just a bonus! So with this unprecedented health and economic crisis, I think we will lose many great contributors to our sport. I know there is a lot of "noise" in the government's ears right now, but they need to know that shutting down racing is not necessarily helpful to the overall cause, and carries many more negatives than positives. Especially for tracks with horses on site. The same people care for the horses every day – having them there at night to run the races is not all that different. Protocols can be put in place to minimize contact. Also, these horses are finely-tuned athletes. Laying them up for an extended period of time is detrimental to their health and makes them more prone to orthopedic injuries when started back up again. This issue is greatly magnified for the TB population.

**Tim Tetrick / Driver****1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

We are home in southern New Jersey. We are doing well. This ironically has been the most time I have ever spent home with my family. As much as I miss racing, I'm enjoying this time. I do get a little lost at night, but maybe this is a good time to find a hobby.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

It's quiet. Not a lot going on. Our grocery stores are limited, but not crazy.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

My heart is still so broken for John Brennan and the Fusco family that it was truly a reality check that we needed to slow down. My biggest concern is for the horsemen, whether you have a large stable or small we are all pretty asset heavy and cash poor which makes times like these hard. I'll be glad for everyone when we get back to normal.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

Well, first I need to say a big thank you to Dover Downs and the SBOA of NJ. Dover sent checks out to the horseman

that had horses in to go but didn't race due to a cancellation. I appreciate them going above and beyond to help. Also I saw the SBOA of NJ has started a horsemen's food bank. I don't know all the details but I thought it was terrific. Bob Krivlen, an amateur driver and owner reached out to help with the food bank idea so I've been trying to get them in touch as well. We have lots of great people doing great things.

**5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?**

I'm hoping to see us back in full swing while still being aware of social distancing and good hygiene. I think Ohio did a terrific job of trying to limit those in the paddock to decrease the number of people within a small area. This can be something all racetracks should adopt during these times. We should also try to take an extra step to sanitizing our cross ties, stall gates, race bikes, etc. in the paddock which can possibly help in the future.

**NORTH CAROLINA****Mike Keeling / Trainer/Owner****1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?**

We are currently in Pinehurst NC, but are in the midst of making plans for a return to Canada.

**2. What is the situation like in your area?**

We feel safe here as the population is small and there is only two confirmed cases in our immediate area.

**3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?**

We had planned on staying until mid-April as we normally do, but decided to turn our horse out for month of April in the U.S. and return home ourselves so we can do our 14-day quarantine without the worry of taking care of our animals, too. We hope by mid-to-late April there will be a clearer picture of the future and we can start to look forward to bringing the horses back in for preparation to race. We were at a crossroads where we had our 3-year-olds and older horses within 2-3 weeks of qualifying and to try and hold them there for an undetermined time frame seemed futile. It's not a hard decision to give the 2-year-olds a little break at this time.

**4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?**

I think it's important for industry people to remember we



Raymond Lance

**Driver Tim Tetrick (after winning the 2019 Jugette).**



are all in the same situation and it's our lives and the welfare of our animals that is paramount. It is going to be a tremendous financial burden, but if you've been in this business for any length of time you've dealt with it and came through and battled on. There are programs in place to assist and I would encourage people to seek as much help as possible whether it be financial or just a supportive voice.

### 5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?

The optimist in me is hopeful we can see a road back within 6-8 weeks but the pragmatist is preparing for longer. We are horsepeople and in my experience there is no more resilient persons in the world. Better days ahead and stay safe.

## ONTARIO

### Al Libfeld / Breeder/Owner

#### 1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?

I am still in self quarantine having coming back from Florida. Bored, but fine.

#### 2. What is the situation like in your area?

Toronto is being shut down except essentials.

#### 3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?

We would like to race after investing so much time, effort, dollars and passion into the sport. I am concerned that this season is in jeopardy giving the appropriate emphasis on health and safety. This may carry forward to the sales, as well.

#### 4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in



Dave Landry

Paul MacDonell signing autographs at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

#### the industry through this crisis?

Help one another as best you can!

#### 5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?

Stay safe everyone!

### Paul MacDonell / Driver/Trainer

#### 1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?

We are located in Guelph, ON. I would say we are coping with the situation as best we can, Netflix is getting a workout in our household.

#### 2. What is the situation like in your area?

In our area, things have ground to a halt. Traffic in the area is slowed, shopping areas are quiet, a few more people walking the sidewalks lately.

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### 3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?

I think that what is most impactful thing is the unknown. Worrying about everyone's health is first and foremost, but also no time frame on when we can return to racing and our normal way of living

### 4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?

The only thing I can suggest is to keep your family safe, hang in there, and our business will be up and going as soon as we can get through this crisis.

### 5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?

I try to be as optimistic as possible and I'm going to say we'll be back to racing by then.

#### Bob Young / Trainer/Owner

### 1. Where are you located right now and how are you and your family coping with the COVID-19 situation?

Gail and I live in Guelph. Scott and Heather also live in Guelph, however, they have their own places. We are stabled at First Line Training Centre. We are all in good health (so far). Heather and Scott are both practicing social distancing with skype, text and calls every day.

### 2. What is the situation like in your area?

There has been one positive case at a nursing home here in Guelph, and two additional cases of workers at the Guelph General Hospital. These two are somehow not included in the Guelph numbers, as they live in another county.

### 3. How has it impacted your work in the industry, so far, and what are you most concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?

I have five horses ready to qualify. However, that's been postponed as you know. I still go to work every day, but restrict those who I interact with to those in my barn. No visiting other barns on the premises. Obviously, I am concerned about when racing will resume. I hope the steps we are taking is going to flatten the curve.

### 4. This is an industry big on hope and helping others. What suggestions can you offer for how people can help others in the industry through this crisis?

Both Gail and I have made a point of reaching out to those we know are on their own. Anything that we can do to help out others in the industry has always been a priority.

### 5. Where do you see the harness racing industry in 2-3 months?

Hopefully, we will be back racing in the next six weeks. Even if we have to go without fans in the grandstand.

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## The greatest trainer of all time, the secret to keeping a winning horse and thoughts on Workman's Compensation

by Ron Gurfein

**Tidbits:** Whatever you push on your remote control you will eventually hear about the Coronavirus. Hopefully, this will be the LAST TIME you see it in my column. I personally am sick of it as I am certain you are. Let's just hope it leaves as quickly as it arrived.

\* \* \*

For those of you shut ins that are stir crazy and need a new TV series to stream, I suggest the following, all I really enjoyed. Start with Berlin Station about a CIA undercover agent in Berlin, I found it very watchable although I warn you it's three seasons and I am sure they were expecting at least four and then the show was cancelled. Unless some network picks up the pieces there were many open strings left to the drama that needed to be solved. It was originally on Epix but may be streamed on Amazon Prime and YouTube TV. On USA, I loved The Sinner. The season just ended but it is exciting to watch although a bit farfetched. Lastly, I return to Berlin for a late twenties early thirty's period drama called Babylon Berlin. It's vice, murder, political intrigue and bizarre sex all rolled into one. If you are a nut like me that showers twice a day you may find it a bit off the wall for your tastes. I myself found it easy to put the once a week watching behind me. It has three seasons worth of programs and has received many awards including best drama in Germany. You may view it on Netflix.

I also have a movie to suggest. Ride Like A Girl, the true story of the first and only woman jockey to win the Melbourne Cup. Lots of fun and can be rented on Comcast.

\* \* \*

Interesting note. A high school buddy asked me about my closest friend's passing and I didn't remember the year, which to all of you in the greatest generation it comes as no surprise. So I Googled Eric Kronfeld, who by the way came close to being my brother in law, and what did I find. Eric was the breeder of Zenyatta. We only had a few conversations in the years before he died and most were about attending reunions. He knew about my career and I knew he was the attorney for many rock bands including The Rolling Stones, but not once did he mention he owned and bred racehorses.

Now with my interest piqued I had to find out her sales price. Sadly, arguably the greatest mare of all time and the winner of over \$7 million only brought \$60,000. I read on to find that she had a horrid case of ring worm.

In the YouTube video of her sale she looked like a beautiful yearling. My question is why did she even go to auction when her appearance was so compromised and why did my friend sell her at such a ridiculous price?

Unfortunately, there is little chance that I will ever know the rest of the story.

\* \* \*

Workman's Compensation is the bane of existence to the horse trainer. I read all the time about the thoroughbred trainers and the hundreds of thousands of dollars they spend every year paying the exorbitant prices for the necessary evil. This has gone on for ever and there is never any relief.

The prices are derived on an actuarial type basis and to my mind there should have been some relief in the last 60 years. There has been none. Why should the rate be 9 per cent in one state and 22 per cent in another?

The risk in not paying for Workman's Comp is insane, yet many trainers could not stay in business and cover the cost.

I have read recently that many top thoroughbred trainers have moved their operation from New York because of the ridiculous numbers. To the standardbred guy or girl, New York has the best purses. What can you do? The answer is nothing.

New Jersey and Pennsylvania are not much better. To catch a break you have to go south or west. The last time I looked there was very little racing opportunity in Kansas.

I put this in because it has bothered me for my entire career and I was sure that most of you feel the same way. I

have no solution to the problem. If some of the great business minds that read my column have a cure for the dilemma please write me and I will publish it immediately.

There is another angle to this story, Many thoroughbred trainers have left New York because of a new crusade by the New York Department of Labor investigating minimum wage requirements. Famed trainer Kiaran McLaughlin has already decided to move his operation from New York to Kentucky, his home state, after being fined \$306,000 by the State of New York. Chad Brown went through a similar scenario last summer at Saratoga, although I don't remember the exact figures.

I have never heard anything like that in our industry but if you are stabled in New York I would advise having you accountant look into the rules because one thing is certain, the fines always outweigh the actual price.

***Billy Bigler asks: You have trained standardbreds for 60 years. In your time in the business who, in your opinion, was the greatest trainer of all time?***

I grew up with the best of the best. There are real old timers that will throw names at you that most have never heard before. To me the Haughton/Dancer era stands as a benchmark of what is great and what is not. I am not smart enough to separate them as to who was the better trainer. They ran very different style businesses. Stanley had what I would call today a boutique operation and Bill had an army. One thing for sure, they could both train and drive.

I would be remiss if I didn't post some of my own favorites from that era to modern day. You cannot leave Howard Beissinger or Gene Reigle out of the mix. They were both sensational in their own right. Soon after came Robert Macintosh and Charles Sylvester, who were the first true trainers and non-drivers elected to the Hall Of Fame.

Then for more modern day, I will add Steve Elliot and Per Eriksson, neither of whom has been nominated to the Hall of Fame, but should at some point be installed.

That leaves me with my one of a kind trainer of the century or of all time as you prefer, Jimmy W Takter. The man has truly done it all, but on one night October 24, 2015 he painted a mural. On that evening at Woodbine Racetrack, Sir James won six Breeders Crowns, four on the trot and two on the pace. That after winning his fourth Hambletonian two months before.

I am not in the habit of listing numerical achievements but

I will take a quick leave of absence from the usual and give you some quick numbers.

2015 — the Hambletonian and 6 Breeders Crowns \$13 million

2016 — 3 Breeders Crowns \$10 million

2017 — 3 Breeders Crowns \$8 million

2018 — 1 Breeders Crown \$8 million

2019 RETIRED with 2,000 wins and \$130 million

In 17 of his last 19 years training, his UDRS was over .325.

When it comes to horses, Jimmy is a genius. His depth of knowledge of the equine athlete, and how to get peak performance from them, is without equal. His yearling selection, with the aid of his good friend Perry Soderberg, has produced the most durable cast of characters I have ever seen in the industry.

Jimmy is not easy on his horses. To survive his program they must be tough. However, he buys right and in my opinion most do survive. There are not a lot of throw always in that outfit.

I wish my friend health and happiness in his retirement and may he and Christina get all the pleasure in the world from their wonderful children and grandkids.

Jimmy Takter has set a standard. For those who wish to try and climb that mountain I wish you luck.....

***Neil Goldstein asks: (another novelette I will shorten to a readable question) Basically, I love owning harness horses but I find there is no way to keep a horse and win. If I claim one and he is good, if I don't raise him to a class where he can't win he gets claimed. If I race a conditioned horse, after winning a race or two if I don't race in the claimer she is finished winning also. What is the answer?***

The claiming game is instant satisfaction and if you want to make money immediately I suggest you put your love of the animal behind you and play musical horses. If you have a sharp trainer it can be fun and profitable. I personally don't like that game at all.

The road you should take is a bumpy one at best but it is the only road to take to achieve your goals. Buy a yearling. If you get lucky you have your dream. A top horse cannot be written out of stakes and if you get a good one and take care of him you can have the goose that laid the golden egg.

(In your original question, you) mention Miami Valley. I am going to guess you are in the Ohio Area. There is a thriving



new stakes program in that state and many fine trainers. Add to that there are many races for state-bred colts.

It's a very slow process, but can be quite rewarding. To me it's the only way to achieve what you want from the business.

**Paul Bishop asks: Is it proper for Gulfstream Park to lower the purse of the Florida Derby a Grade 1 event, from \$1 million to \$750,000 when the Louisiana Derby a Grade 2 race last week went for \$1 million, also under the conditions with empty stands?**

Not knowing the workings of racetrack finance, I called Frank "The elder" Antonacci and asked if the same situation came to the Red Mile involving the purse to the Kentucky Futurity what would he do? He answered that there really was no choice on his part. Frank said, "the money comes from the horseman's account and the purse cannot be changed." He added that Gulfstream did not have the money for the entire purse on hand in the horseman's account and thus the shortfall.

I asked with all the financial power of the Stronach Group wouldn't it have been better if they just threw in the extra \$250,000 ? Frank answered that, "in times like these it would be better if they spent the money helping the backstretch employees." I certainly don't disagree with that thought, but I

do not understand for that amount of money the quick decision that was made to reduce the purse of Gulfstream's signature race.

*I have so many questions about the FBI indictments, but I am putting them on hold for the time being because all the hearings have been postponed without any date given. If there are new revelations I will cover them right away but let's let the entire process work its way out. Thanks so much for all the kind words. With everything at a snail's pace, it's a good time to conjure up some questions for me. As I am a poster boy for high risk, I will no longer be venturing to Sunshine Meadows. However, if you are in desperate need to learn about the babies and the 3-year-olds Donna Lee and Casie Coleman do an excellent job of posting videos of the colts training regularly on Facebook. If you are a member I will try to share them when I see them so if you are listed as my friend you will be able to view them. Have a wonderful week....and STAY SAFE.....*

**Have a question for The Guru?**

Email him at [GurfTrot@aol.com](mailto:GurfTrot@aol.com).

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## Community focus: Amy and Stacy Butewicz and New Jersey's food assistance program

by Ken Weingartner / USTA media relations manager

Amy and Stacy Butewicz have been around horses for nearly their entire lives. Amy began riding at the age of 4 and Stacy followed in her older sister's footsteps. Several years ago, they were introduced to harness racing and fell in love with the standardbred, the sport, and the people.

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced the closing of New Jersey's racetracks earlier this month, Amy and Stacy knew there would be people in the harness racing industry in need of assistance because of the loss of income. Last week, with cooperation from the Standardbred Breeders & Owners Association of New Jersey, they announced a food assistance program for those in the industry in the state.

The program allows an individual or family to obtain a food assistance bag, every other week. The bags will include non-perishables, canned goods, household products and more. As of Tuesday morning, 13 individuals/families were enrolled in the program.

"We expect that number to grow as people find out about the program and we will continue to accept anyone in need from the industry within New Jersey," Amy said. "Just in the days that we've rolled out this program, it's really been a tremendous help. We're going to have our first deliveries go out this week and we will keep it going every other week until live racing resumes."

Amy and Stacy, who work together at Butewicz Equestrian Lifestyle Real Estate – Keller Williams Princeton, have received support from others in harness racing, including trainers and veterinarians, in the form of donations or supermarket gift cards.

The sisters are no strangers to helping others. Among their philanthropic endeavors, they volunteer at a food pantry in central New Jersey.

"I think our experience definitely made us feel more capable in taking this on, but Amy and I are always looking for ways to help people," Stacy said. "The opportunity to be able to help people one-on-one is what we love the most. Once we realized what was going on with the industry and how many people could be affected, we realized some of those people would be struggling. We thought of those people and jumped into it."

Stacy and Amy hope the program reduces the financial impact on people, who must feed not only themselves and their families, but their horses.

"The horsepeople we know care so much about those animals that they're willing to give up a meal for



Susanne Kovacic

**Amy and Stacy Butewicz have helped launch a food assistance program in New Jersey.**

themselves," Stacy said. "We are thinking about the horses, too, and wanted to do whatever we could to lighten the burden on what is coming out of people's pockets in their personal situation."

To register for the program, please use either following method, and include your name, address and training center/stable location. Requests will be kept confidential.

TEXT "ASSIST" to 732.887.5649.

EMAIL "ASSIST" to [albutewicz@gmail.com](mailto:albutewicz@gmail.com).

Items will be delivered directly to individuals/families or placed in a secure location for pick up.

Arrangements also can be made for anyone wanting to donate dry goods or supermarket gift cards by contacting the above number or email address.

"Both of us in the past three or four years have absolutely grown to love the Standardbred as a horse," Amy said. "Horses have always been in our blood. We got into this fairly late in our equestrian careers, but we absolutely love it."

"The other thing we have seen is this is an industry that is so much like a family. One person really and truly cares about another; one stable is friendly with another. With what is going on right now, we've seen people really uniting and working together. It's been great."



## Blake MacIntosh in the HRU Twos in Training video spotlight

*In the third installment of HRU's 2020 Twos in Training videos, Jaimi MacDonald interviews trainer Blake MacIntosh at the Meadowbranch Training Centre in Ontario about the 2-year-olds he has in training – including offspring of first-crop sires Control The Moment, Betting Line and Always B Miki.*

**by Dave Briggs**

*(\*Editor's Note: The following video – as with ALL HRU 2020 Twos in Training videos released to date – was filmed before the COVID-19 pandemic led to the adoption of social distancing, pleas to remain at home and the closure of racetracks. It is presented here to, hopefully, be a diversion for those that need it. Please also note that the filming of future 2020 Twos in Training videos will be delayed by the pandemic, but it is our hope to bring those to you when it is safe to shoot them)*

Blake MacIntosh is the third trainer in the spotlight in HRU's 2020 Twos in Training video series now posted on our [YouTube channel](#).

MacIntosh was interviewed by Jaimi MacDonald at the Meadowbranch Training Centre in Ontario about the 2-year-olds he has in training –including offspring of first-crop sires Control The Moment, Betting Line and Always B Miki.

That video, produced by Curtis MacDonald's CUJO Entertainment, is available [here](#).

Special thanks to [Blue Chip Farms](#), [Jimmy Freight](#), MacIntosh trainee [Courtly Choice](#) and [Woodbine Mohawk Park](#) for sponsoring the MacIntosh video.

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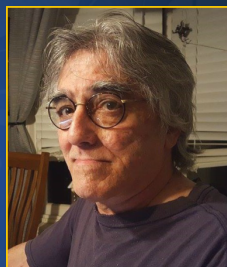


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# BETTORS BANQUET



with FRANK COTOLO

## Handicappers in quarantine may still be productive

by Frank CotoLO

For the most part, as of this writing, harness racing pari-mutuel bettors are complicit with all professions on Earth in that they have lost the choices where they use their talents. As sure as barbers have lost the variety of shaggy locks needed to be barbers at all, harness racing handicappers/bettors have had the limestone rugs pulled out from under them as most racetrack communities have shut down per the COVID-19 pandemic.

This hiatus has no deadline, but it should have a purpose. Whatever you do, be sure you understand this not a vacation from the work you do (and should be doing anyway) before betting on harness racing, again. The facts that you may be locked in your home and locked out of choosing races for betting, does not truly change the very nature of how you work.

Handicappers are loners, so in a sense, being quarantined is already a part of their lives. That is, the act of handicapping is not a community project. Certainly, a handicapper flirts with the opinions of others and is influenced by their means while searching past performances to measure the prowess of race horses. But, when all is said and done, the handicapping done is a unique product.

Let me suggest you do something I do regularly (alone, like you, pandemic or not). Those of you who handicap ad hoc and you others who sit around, waiting for raceway action to return to your paws, need to embrace the extra loneliness forced upon you in this frightening spring of 2020 in order to put your handicapping house in order.

If you are not inspired by what I will suggest you do with your immense free time, consider a higher historic source. In the early 1600s, during the bubonic plague, William Shakespeare was twice self-quarantined. Instead of any number of Elizabethian frivolities available to The Bard, Willy wrote "Macbeth." And two others. Maybe three.

## CHART PERFORMANCES

I have always encouraged handicappers to construct a Horses-To-Watch list. From my old blogs at YouBet, I created the H2W list and added it to my TwinSpires blogs. The work involved has paid off greatly over the years. Writing an H2W takes time but can be set up much faster than such a list would have taken in the days before the Internet. That's because two websites, Standardbred Canada (dot com) and US Trotting (dot com), post-race charts, which are, arguably, some of the greatest tools a handicapper might employ.

I read copious charts, mostly to make trip notes. I love finding horses that have made bold moves in races, especially when they lose badly because of them. I list such horses in columns headed by the name of the track where I found them.

I also make note of horses' odds in mediocre performances. I want to know if a horse that had strong support failed to fire. I do not need to know why. Sometimes, more than you may guess, one of the top three favorites in a race tosses in an unexplainably miserable performance, and that horse returns in his next race to sparkle as was expected, but the horse goes off at higher odds. (I used to keep a separate list of horses that were solely beaten favorites, which became a popular item in the Youbet days for the same reasons, but I merged them with the larger, generic list).

You will be surprised how many tracks you will be able to cover when reading charts and how, after scanning hundreds, your eyes will focus on the specific types of trips I mentioned. Make note of anything that impresses you about a horse's performance and add that horse to the H2W.

Here are three essential rules about maintaining an H2W list.

When a horse wins the first time you put it on a list, take it off the list (you might add the win price).

Next, always keep a losing horse on the H2W one more time after it loses. Two races are enough to prove you were right or wrong about the potency of the trip that earned the horse a spot on the list. I have found over tens of thousands of horses I listed that greater across-the-board prices are the rewards for giving horses two shots on the H2W list. Of course, the value of high place and show prices means H2W lift exotic prices substantially.

Finally, always keep the lists. I collect them weekly and start a fresh one using the horses that did not race and adding new ones. I also review the lists, which is how I learn about the trends I have mentioned.

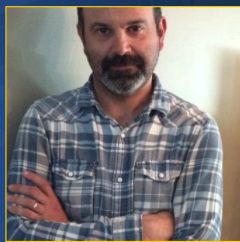
Collateral knowledge will seep in along the way. Whatever gets your attention, make a note of it. All in all, an H2W list saves you time and makes you money. If time is money, as is said, quarantine time may become a solid investment.

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## GRASSROOTS PERSPECTIVE



with CHRIS LOMON

### New Jersey's Zingale relishes opportunity to improve horses with problems

*"I thank my problem children for teaching me horsemanship," said the freshly-minted trainer, driver and Racing Under Saddle participant.*

**by Chris Lomon**

Problem horse? No problem at all for Sofia Zingale.

Her greatest challenge in horse racing also happens to be her favorite aspect of the sport.

It's something that elicits a laugh, an admission, and finally, a logical explanation from the up-and-coming standardbred trainer.

"I have no idea where it comes from," said the New Jersey-based Zingale. "I think, growing up, I was familiar with riding horses. When I was doing the riding horses, I didn't have the money to buy the more expensive horses, so I always had the challenging horses. Years of taking in these problem children and watching them become awesome, and seeing a huge difference in them, it's so rewarding to do that."

An unabashed love of horses, along with a little geographical help, led her to become a licensed trainer in two years ago.

An accomplished Racing Under Saddle (RUS) trainer and jockey, Zingale was looking for a horse-related calling she could make a full-time career out of.

After nearly 15 years of ties to non-racing equestrian events, she moved to Delaware to ride for the Delaware State Equestrian team as well as get her college degree in biomechanics/kinesiology.



Courtesy Sofia Zingale

**Zingale competing in a Racing Under Saddle event at the Meadowlands.**

With Dover Downs less than a two-minute walk from her home, she decided to head down the harness racing path, literally and figuratively, to see if it would be a good fit.

It didn't take long for Zingale to get her answer.

"Honestly, I needed a job when I was in college and Dover Downs was right across the street. It just fell into my lap. I never expected to be a harness racing trainer at all."

But that's what she would become.

She got to know Leigh and Tyler Raymer, who hired her to work in their barn. After the Raymers moved on from the racing scene, she worked for Joe Columbo and the George Dennis Stable.

Zingale also bought Hybrid Heidi, her first racehorse. It prompted her to earn her trainer's license and go out on her own in May 2018.

Her rookie campaign yielded eight wins, nine seconds and four thirds from 52 starts. In 2019, she won eight races and posted 36 top-three finishes from 89 starts while nearly doubling her purse earnings.

A strong start to 2020 has been offset by uncertainties related to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

"I have five racehorses and four riding horses that are all in training," said Zingale. "It really hasn't been that different. It's the same for us – we really can't change. I know a lot of people are giving their horses some time off, but I'm opting to keep them in training, but backing off a little bit, giving them some time to relax. We don't know when the tracks are going to open, so I don't want to give the horses too much time off and rush them back. I feel like we'll have more problems if we do that."

Speaking of problems, which of the current horses under her care present the greatest challenges?

"Out of the five racehorses, two (Egosnattitudes and Eza Oneknightstand) challenge me every day and one (Touch Mac) is a rehab with a 50/50 shot of returning to racing. Out of my four riding horses, three came to me because other trainers lost hope in them. Seeing these horses transform is the most rewarding part of working with them. They have taught me so much. They have taught me true horsemanship. It's easy being a horse trainer of any discipline. Being a horseman is not as common to find, so I thank my problem children for teaching me horsemanship."

Although she has fewer than 200 starts on her trainer's resume, Zingale is enjoying the ride, in spite of the ups and downs.

There is, she offered, one big reason that keeps her coming



Courtesy Sofia Zingale

back every day.

"Everyone loves winning, but I just really love being around the horses. Harness racing has allowed me to make horses into my career. I always wanted to do it with the riding horses, but I could never find a way to truly enjoy it and make a living from it. Harness racing has allowed me to do that. Now that I've brought the riding horses back in, it's been really great to work with both disciplines. I'm able to use things from each discipline, back and forth. It gives me out-of-the-box ideas from both sides, which is great."

And it's also effective.

Egosnattitudes is a perfect example.

Zingale teamed with the 8-year-old trotting son of Great George Two (DE) to win a RUS MidAtlantic Trot at Rosecroft





Vicki Wright

**Apart from being a new trainer, Zingale also has earned her driving license.**

in 2018.

And yes, the bay gelding, sporting a few white hairs on his forehead, was a problem horse.

"I've had a little bit of success in RUS," she said. "They did a series at Yonkers where they brought over a bunch of French horses. One of the horses that didn't work out in their program, Atout De Fontaine – I call him "Frenchie" – I got to take him in. I won a race with him and that was awesome. But my favorite problem child, Egosanattitudes, has allowed me to have success in RUS and in harness racing."

This year, the horse, bred and owned by Graham Grace Stables, has a win and a second from five starts. Last year, he went 1-1-1 from eight races, limited in action due to a hind suspensory tear. Vets had originally told Zingale he had a slim chance to make it back to the racetrack.

"He's been a problem child his entire life," she said of the horse who has been in her barn for about a year and a half. "And now he's racing as a harness horse at The Meadowlands, and he's doing amazing."

The same can also be said of Zingale, who is understandably thrilled to have found her horse-related career.

Last summer, Brad Irvine encouraged her to get in the sulky, which led to her earning her harness driver's license.

"He helped me out immensely by giving me qualifying drives and being an amazing mentor. In my four driving starts last year, I picked up a win at Pocono, and had two fifths. I can't wait to start driving again this year."

It's an optimistic outlook that doesn't let a tough result, a bad day or a difficult horse diminish her enthusiasm for standardbreds or RUS horses.

"The most challenging part is the money. It's not always consistent. Unfortunately, these animals are not machines and luck has a lot to do with the sport. My horses are my children, though. Their health, well-being, and happiness are a priority in my stable. I truly believe that happy and healthy horses will take care of you. It might not happen when you want it to or need it to, but they will take care of you. I want my stable to grow under those circumstances. Love for the animal comes first."

Especially the problematic ones.

"Obviously, winning is great. Making money is great. The problem children in my life make the winning moments amazing. Sometimes you don't even have to win though – the small and large improvements made over time are just so rewarding to watch. I have a horse (Sadiq Hanover) who every single morning, without fail, when I arrive at the barn and slide the door open, sticks his head out of the stall and whinnies. I image that he's saying, 'Mom! You're here! Good morning!' It is the best way to start my day. I couldn't imagine starting my day any other way."

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# HRU NEWS



News in harness  
racing, notes and  
announcements

[www.harnessracingupdate.com](http://www.harnessracingupdate.com)

## Disaster loan assistance

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has made Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EID Loan) available for qualifying businesses that have suffered economic injury as a result of the epidemic.

Funds from an EID loan may be used by small businesses to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. The terms of an EID loan are determined by the SBA on a case-by-case basis. Generally, the maximum amount of an EID loan for the Coronavirus disaster is \$2 million with an interest rate of 3.75 per cent for small businesses. The maximum repayment term of an EID loan is 30 years. There are no pre-payment penalties imposed by the SBA on an EID loan.

The SBOANJ will continue to monitor the situation and will continue to keep our members up to date with all aid available at this time.

[Click here for an online application.](#)

— Courtney Stafford / PR consultant SBOANJ

## Ontario Racing needs names of horses in training to provide industry relief

Ontario Racing's newly formed task force, created in response to the many challenges horse racing and its horsepeople are currently facing, is requesting information to help assist in its decision-making process for **standardbred industry relief**.

In order for the task force to craft appropriate relief terms, the names of all Ontario-based standardbred horses 3 years old and up, in your care, currently in training to race in April 2020 is required. Trainer name, horse name, owner(s) name and training centre name must also be included.

Once the mandatory information has been collected, the details can be emailed or faxed to COSA: [cathy@cosaonline.com](mailto:cathy@cosaonline.com) or (905) 854-2644.

For transparency, the names of all standardbred horses and trainer will be posted on the Ontario Racing ([ontarioracing.com](http://ontarioracing.com)) website and its affiliated social media channels.

The Ontario Racing task force, representing all three breeds in the province, will continue to provide regular updates to the industry and its horsepeople.

— Ontario Racing

## Coronavirus halts Ohio racing

The Ohio State Racing Commission (Commission) announces that horse racing at all Ohio racetracks is officially cancelled through April 6, 2020. The Commission will be in contact with the permit holders and the horsemen to discuss further cancellations, if needed.

Racetrack backside are to remain open.

The racetrack is to be maintained and made available for training. Horsemen and racetrack employees are strongly encouraged to practice safe social distancing procedures. The Commission will continue to keep everyone informed and will post updates when pertinent information becomes available.

The Commission thanks everyone for their patience during this unprecedented and very fluid situation. For questions or concerns, contact executive director Bill Crawford at 614-466-2758 or at [bill.crawford@racing.ohio.gov](mailto:bill.crawford@racing.ohio.gov). If you need further information on COVID-19, please visit, [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov) or call 1-833-427-5634. -30-

— Kim Rinker

## Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame 2020 ballot announced

The Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame is pleased to announce its 2020 ballot. A total of 30 people and horses comprised of 15 thoroughbred and 15 standardbred candidates, have been selected to appear on the voting ballot. A 20-person Election Committee for each breed will determine the recipients in their respective categories. Results will be announced Tuesday, April 7.

The five categories selected by the Standardbred nominating committee to appear on the 2020 Standardbred ballots are: driver, trainer, female horse, male horse and veteran horse.

The 2020 standardbred driver ballot features **Paul MacDonell**, **Ed Tracey** and **Randy Waples**.

In the standardbred trainer category voters will select from **John Bax**, **Jack Darling** and **Ben Wallace**.

The standardbred female horse Category features **Amour Angus**, **Great Memories** and **West Of LA**.

Nominated In the category of standardbred male horse are **Majestic Son**, **McWicked** and **Shadow Play**.

The 2020 veteran horse ballot offers **B Cor Tamara**, **Rambling Willie** and **Western Dreamer** for the voters to select from.

— Linda Rainey / CHRHF

## New date for 2020 World Harness Handicapping Championship (WHHC) presented by DerbyWars.com

Due to the COVID-19 virus and the indefinite shutdown of harness racing at the Meadowlands Racetrack, the 2020 World



Harness Handicapping Championship presented by [DerbyWars.com](#) has been rescheduled to July 25, 2020.

The Meadowlands will look to add an additional qualifier or two once it reopens for live racing.

DerbyWars will host regular online Qualifiers for the WHHC through July. Players can qualify for as little as \$22. Complete DerbyWars Qualifier information can be found at [DerbyWars.com](#).

The World Harness Handicapping Championship presented by [DerbyWars.com](#) is a one-day tournament with a welcome reception the evening prior. Players that did not earn a seat through a qualifying event can directly buy-in for \$1,300. The \$1,300 entry fee includes a \$300 bankroll, with the remaining \$1,000 going to the prize pool. The \$150,000 prize pool is based on an estimated 150 entries. The WHHC contest format requires players to bet 10 races: their choice of seven Meadowlands races, plus three designated mandatory races. Players keep all pari-mutuel winnings. Prize payouts are to the Top 10.

For more information on how to become a WHHC partner outlet or sponsor, contact Rachel Ryan, Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment ([rryan@playmeadowlands.com](mailto:rryan@playmeadowlands.com) or) 201-842-5015. For online qualifying on [DerbyWars.com](#) players may contact [support@derbywars.com](mailto:support@derbywars.com).

[All WHHC details can be found here.](#)

– *Meadowlands media relations*

## Dupuis Farm adds Thirty Two Red

The impeccably-bred Bettors Delight stallion Thirty Two Red will stand at Dupuis Farm in Saco, ME this breeding season for an introductory fee of \$2,000. A winner of more than \$430,000 during his career, he was a multiple stakes winner as a juvenile.

Raced by noted trainer Ray Schnittker throughout his career, Thirty Two Red was a tough campaigner with 173 lifetime starts under his harness.

From the Artsplace mare Sakura Hanover, Thirty Two Red is a full-brother in blood to Miso Fast (\$897,881) and half-brother to Forty Five Red (\$709,167). His dam's eight yearlings sold for an average of more than \$105,000. It's the immediate family of Glowing Report and Well Said both winners of well over two million dollars in their illustrious careers.

For more information or to book, please call 207-284-4726, text: 207-468-7693 or visit the website [www.dupuisfarm.com](http://www.dupuisfarm.com).

– *Dupuis Farm*

## First Lazarus foals arrive at Deo Volente

Deo Volente Farms is excited to announce the arrival of its first two Lazarus foals of 2020.

The first is a colt out of Worldly Beauty 1:49.3 (\$1,900,255). Worldly Beauty is the matriarch of the farm's pacing broodmare band and was the 2 and 3 year old Dan Patch champion filly of the year. Her full sister, Worldly Treasure is the dam of superstar stallion Captaintreacherous.

"This baby is beautifully bred, strong and handsome," said Deo's farm manager Fidencio Cervantez.

Deo's second colt is out of Daut Full 1:51.3 (\$158,994).

Said Cervantez "We are very happy with the looks of both these colts and we can't wait for the arrival of two more foals by Lazarus this season — one out of Rocklamation 1:48.3 (\$2,277,384), and one out of Double Jeopardy from the family of Delinquent Account."

Deo Volente has also been receiving news about other Lazarus foals that have arrived. Ken and Kathy Weed, of Shadowbrook Farm, have welcomed a colt out of The Signature 1:56.1 (\$37,047), and a filly out of Make Magic 1:53.4 (\$135,038). They stated, "Our two foals from Lazarus are stunning. They are smart, correct, and very athletic. They travel across the field faster than their mothers can keep up. We can't wait to see them on the racetrack. Both babies are a joy to be around. They handle like a Porsche. We are very excited and blessed."

Jess Smith also welcomed a colt from Veiques 1:56.1 (\$37,639) from the family of Sannabelle Island. Jess said, "We are very pleased! The colt is well conformed with great bone. His head and eye are sharp with a regal bearing. I look forward to getting started on next year's crop!"

In addition to being extremely impressed with Lazarus' first two foals, Fidencio Cervantez went on to say that "in his 30 plus years in the business he has never seen a stallion with such an impressive and near perfect conformation as Lazarus." He is so thrilled with Lazarus and the first two colts that he decided to personally purchase a share in the Lazarus N syndicate.

Mike Gulotta, CEO of Deo Volente Farms had this to say about the arrival of Lazarus' first two foals: "We are grateful to Duncan and his brothers at Taylormade Stallions for their confidence in Deo Volente. By the looks of these foals, Lazarus is certain to make his mark on the pacing world."

"New Jersey's future has never been brighter due to the tremendous support from our state legislators and from the contribution to racing revenues from Sports Betting. Our new breeders' award program, increased NJ Sire Stakes and other NJ restricted race purse increases are making it quite attractive to breed in New Jersey."

Limited breedings are available to Lazarus for the 2020 season.

– *Deo Volente Farms*

## Confederation Cup and Battle of Waterloo/Belles included in Woodbine stakes payment suspension

Woodbine Entertainment announced Wednesday (March 25) the suspension of all standardbred stakes payments due on April 15, 2020.

The suspension of payments is for all Woodbine administrated stakes event. This includes the Confederation Cup at Flamboro Downs and the Battle of Waterloo and Battle of the Belles at Grand River Raceway.

Woodbine will re-evaluate all stakes purses and sustaining payments in May.

– *Mark McKelvie / Woodbine communications*