



DTHA

Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Journal

Published for the members of the Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, Inc.

Volume 20, Number 1

April, 2009

A Promising Meet

We are all looking forward to the first Call to Post at 1:15 p.m. Saturday, April 25 and the continuation of live racing through November 7. We dropped 19 days from last year's 136-day meet by mutual agreement with Delaware Park during contract negotiations. The drop in slot revenue and overall drop in all-source handle (live on-track and simulcast-out) of more than 22 percent from the prior year was a contributing factor.

Purses are expected to average approximately \$200,000 per day, up from \$160,000 per day at the end of last year.

Under the direction of our veteran Executive Director of Racing John Mooney, our new Racing Secretary Pat Pope, Assistant Racing Secretary Jerome Doro, Stakes Coordinator Jim Hamer and Paddock Judge Alice Marcacci, we are hopeful the overall quality of the meet will be improved compared to last year's meet, when the average field size was a disappointing 6.8 horses per race. On many days, nine thoroughbred races did not fill. On many other days, we only carded seven races.

The DTHA Board and Delaware Park previously agreed during contract negotiations in the fall that the stake schedule would need to be reduced and the overnight stake schedule should be analyzed. Consequently, the percentage paid to stakes was reduced from 18 percent to 12 percent.

All overnight stakes have been cut from the 2009 schedule and twelve stake races have been eliminated, with purses either reduced or redistributed for the remaining twenty. The savings of nearly \$1 million in overnight stakes and the reduction of \$2.125 million in all other stakes will allow our overnight purses to remain competitive in the region. John Mooney and his staff analyzed all of the stakes and the changes were made after thorough research.

"Why is Delaware Park not racing on Sunday's this year, except during June and July," we are often asked. After reviewing the handle, Delaware Park found that more revenue is generated on Wednesday than Sunday. To help offset the steady decline in the handle, we hope that this schedule change will help.

In April we will race Saturdays, Mondays and Tuesdays; in May we will add Wednesdays. Note that our post time has changed to 1:15 p.m.

Also note the change in the shoe rules for all surfaces – NO toe grabs other than wear plates with a height no greater than 2 millimeters: bends, jar caulks stickers or any other traction device on the front shoes of horses while racing or training on all surfaces.

In addition note the preference date – all Foal Certificates must be on file with Horse I.D. within 48 hours of shipping onto

the grounds. **Horses will not be eligible to receive a date until their papers with a VALID COGGINS are on file.**

The Horsemen's Office is open every day from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Our office is located next to the Tack Shop across from the security gate. Kim Sprenger, Program Coordinator, and I will be on hand for all your horsemen's needs. Stop in for overnights, condition books, sales catalogues, faxes, etc. or just to say hello. We can be reached at (302) 994-2521 ext. 7284.

As spring arrives we hope it also brings a fresh beginning for great racing at Delaware Park.



Bessie Gruwell
Executive Director

Bessie

2009 Meet Directors nominations needed!

Nominations are needed for owners and/or trainers to serve on the DTHA board during the 2009 Delaware Park meet. Meet directors are elected by a vote of the membership stabled at Delaware Park.

The new meet directors will attend monthly board meetings as well as serve on various committees. They serve on the board from May to November and have the same voting rights and privileges as the three-year board members.

Nominations to be placed on the ballot will be accepted until Friday May 1, 2009. Voting will take place by casting your ballot in the Horsemen's Office from Saturday, May 2, 2009 until 2:00 p.m. Friday, May 15, 2009.

The FOUR new meet directors will be announced following the election and will begin their duties at the DTHA board meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2009.

If you would like to be nominated or would like to nominate someone, contact the Horsemen's Office at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284.



DTHA Workers' Compensation Plan update

Welcome back! MOC is excited to continue providing insurance services for DTHA members! As we all are painfully aware, other states continue to face insurance challenges in these challenging economic times. We are pleased to offer DTHA members a straightforward insurance program:

- While negotiations have not yet been finalized as of the deadline of this newsletter, rates are projected to remain stable.
- Continuation of an all inclusive workers' comp, trainer's accident and health and general liability policy. The only one of its kind in the thoroughbred racing industry!
- A rate that is based on a per stall per day basis.

The success of this program relies upon communication on all levels; MOC, DTHA and **YOU!** As always, please feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the workers' compensation program. The subject of workers' compensation can be confusing and frustrating by nature; pick up the phone and call MOC and we will clarify any questions so you can get back to running your racing stable.

AIG has certainly made the headlines as of late and caused American taxpayers a fair amount of stress. Our job at MOC is to negotiate in good faith with carriers that remain financially stable and have the ability to pay claims. As you are probably aware, AIG Commercial Insurance Unit is completely separate from their parent company and highly regulated. We constantly monitor AIG's Commercial Insurance Unit's financial strength and they remain very solid. We will leave copies of the latest financial news on AIG's Commercial Insurance Unit at the front desk area of the DTHA office and posted on our website at www.mocins.com.

Stay safe,

John Patrick Unick
President
415-357-9219

Sara Przemielewski
Manager
415-357-9234

Frankie Spitaleri
Account Executive
415-357-9229



Delaware Park names Pat Pope as Racing Secretary

Pat Pope will serve as racing secretary for the track's 2009 meet. Pat is a horse racing industry veteran as he has more than 29 years in the business.

A graduate of the University of Arizona Racetrack Management program, Pat established his early experience at Park Jefferson and Sodrac tracks in South Dakota. His career began full-time at Louisiana Downs in 1980 where he started as a claims clerk and moved up the ladder quickly to become Assistant Racing Secretary. By 1985 he assumed the Racing Secretary's job. He has been Oaklawn Park's Racing Secretary since 1994 and assumes his duties at Delaware Park after the Oaklawn meet.

Scott Peck, DTHA president said, "Pat Pope is an industry pro. We are delighted that he will put his extensive thoroughbred racing experience to work as Delaware Park's new Racing Secretary during this year's meet."



Pat Pope, Racing Secretary

Winter stall rent rebate!

It was agreed in our new contract that "Delaware Park shall charge \$8 per day per stall for winter stabling and training. Horsemen who pay stall rent for winter stabling shall receive a rebate of one month's stall rent for one stall for each start from Opening Day of the meet through July 30. No one horse may receive more than 3 month's stall rent rebate."

This is a win for horsemen and a win for Delaware Park. If horsemen stabled at Delaware Park for this last winter and support the race meet when it begins, they will essentially end up paying for only one month of rent during winter stabling.

Editor's Note

The Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Journal is published monthly. Members are invited to submit suggestions for future articles and letters to the editor. Contact Kim Sprenger at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284; Fax (302) 994-3392.



 **NOW..**
DELAWARE CERTIFIED
PAYS UP TO 50% BONUSES!!



Our 4th Annual DCTP Awards Banquet is scheduled for Friday, April 24 from 6 – 9 p.m. at Delaware Park's White Clay Creek Country Club. We will award the leading DCTP certifiers with the highest earnings in six different categories, the leading DCTP horse and the leading DCTP certifier whose horses accumulated the highest overall bonuses in the program. If you would like to attend, please call our office (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284.

Four Delaware Bred or Certified stakes races are scheduled again this year. They are The Small Wonder, two-year-old fillies, 5/8 turf; The First State Dash, two-year-olds, 5/8 turf; The Tax Free Shopping Distaff, three-and-up, fillies and mares, six furlongs; The New Castle, three-and-up, six furlongs on Saturday, August 22, 2009. All have free nominations and each purse is \$75,000 guaranteed!

Visit our website, www.dtha.com, and click on the DCTP link to download an application or to find a list of participating Delaware farms.

From the website you can also check to see if your horse of racing age is Delaware Certified.

For further information regarding the Delaware Certified program, call our direct line at (302) 994-2398 or email dctp@dtha.com.

Effective with the start of the 2009 Delaware Park meet, the Delaware Certified Thoroughbred Program (DCTP) will increase the program's purse bonus from 40 percent to 50 percent. DCTP bonuses for the thoroughbred owner will increase from 20 percent to 25 percent and the thoroughbred certifier will also increase from 20 percent to 25 percent if the Delaware Certified Thoroughbred finishes first, second or third in any race, including open stake races, at Delaware Park. The awards in stake races are not to exceed \$15,000 for owner bonus and \$15,000 for certifier bonus per race.

The Delaware Certified Thoroughbred Program continues to grow, with an additional 362 two-year-old thoroughbreds eligible this year for the certifier purse enhancements at Delaware Park. There are now 1,568 Delaware Certified thoroughbreds and the program has paid owners and certifiers nearly \$2.5 million.

With 74 farms participating, the DCTP is a significant contributor to Delaware's agricultural economy and fosters the preservation of farmland.

DTHA Defined Contribution Plan provides savings for retirement

This is a reminder that Delaware trainers and backstretch personnel should take the opportunity to sign up for the backstretch Defined Contribution Plan (retirement plan). The plan was established in 2002 by the DTHA to help eligible backstretch personnel make a start on their retirement savings.

A representative of the plan will be in the Horsemen's Office on **Tuesday, June 16** and **Thursday, June 18, 2009**. These will be the **ONLY** two dates available, so please make every effort to sign up. You must bring your current Delaware Park badge along with proof of working at Delaware Park in 2008. Your 2008 W2 or 1099 forms from your employer will be sufficient.

For further information, call the Horsemen's Office at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DTHA Board Meeting	April 21
DCTP Banquet	April 24
Opening Day	April 25
Meet Director Nominations	May 1
DTHA Open House	May 2
Backstretch Retirement Sign Up	June 16 and June 18
Paddock Party	August 7
DCTP stakes	August 22
DTHA Horsemen's Classic	September 11
Owners Day	September 12

DTHA Board meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. in the Horsemen's Office. All owners and trainers are encouraged to attend.



Delaware Park joins National Thoroughbred Racing Association integrity alliance

Delaware Park announced that it has become one of the first racetracks in the nation to seek accreditation through the National Thoroughbred Racing Association's (NTRA) new Safety and Integrity Alliance.

Delaware Park joins Churchill Downs (KY), Pimlico (MD) and Belmont Park (NY), along with Arlington Park (IL), Calder Race Course (FL), Keeneland (KY) and Hollywood Park (CA), which all agreed to alliance review.

"Delaware Park has a long standing commitment to both safety at our track and the integrity of our sport," said Bill Fasy, the track's chief operating officer and an NTRA board member. "We worked with the Delaware Thoroughbred Racing Commission to ban steroids at the track in 2007 and today we are the first to support the alliance effort."

Standards cover five broad areas: injury reporting and prevention; creating a safer racing environment; aftercare and transition of retired racehorses; uniform medication, testing and penalties; and safety research. Within those five categories, specific standards will focus on many areas including:

- Systematic reporting of equine injuries
- Aftercare of racehorses
- Pre- and post-race veterinary examinations
- Post-mortem examinations
- Health and safety of jockeys
- Riding crops and their use
- Horse shoes and hoof care
- Safety research
- Safety equipment for jockeys and horse handlers
- Exogenous Anabolic Steroids
- Alkalinizing agents (TCO2)
- On-track emergency medical care for humans and equines
- Out-of-competition testing
- Freezing and retrospective testing of post race samples
- Continuing education
- Security assessment and training

The Alliance was formed in October to establish national uniform standards in the areas of safety and integrity for all racetracks. For more information on the alliance, visit www.ntraalliance.com.



THE TIME IS NOW.....

A problem which has plagued our industry for many years is finally being addressed. I refer to the problem of the aftercare of our thoroughbreds after their racing careers end. Finally, I see the light at the end of the tunnel.

An important initiative at many racetracks is to provide a program for the care and retraining of racehorses after racing. The NTRA, track management and horsemen organizations are now recognizing the problem and are willing to correct it. Will we at Delaware Park be a leader or a follower in this movement? As the founder and current president of Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA) and also a member of the DTHA Board of Directors it is important to me that Delaware Park be a leader.

I am sure that in the near future some type of retraining and retirement program will be in operation in every racetrack in the country. The time is now to work out the details for Delaware Park.

TCA has established the Racehorse Retraining and Retirement Fund (RRRF) to work with, and help horsemen and tracks implement their program. To encourage the initiative, the Jockey Club has authorized a Foal Registration check off and with a matching donation has guaranteed \$200,000 per year for racehorse retraining and retirement.

This racehorse retirement program requires a method of raising funds as well as a plan to place the retired racehorse in a place which fits its ability and condition. The program has been established and is fully operational at Suffolk Downs, Philadelphia Park, Penn National, Finger Lakes, Sunland Park, Santa Anita, Golden Gate and Woodbine. The New York tracks, Aqueduct and Belmont have voluntary contribution accounts, which are funded through TCA and Churchill Downs, has begun discussions to establish such a program.

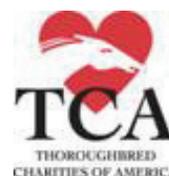
There are many different methods of financing. Suffolk supports the program with a payment from the track marketing budget; Philadelphia Park is funded with a per start and a per win, place and show charge, with track match; Woodbine is a percentage of the purse account. For Delaware Park, I would suggest an entry fee of \$5 per start where the purse is less than \$20,000; \$10 where purse is \$20,000 to \$100,000 and \$50 for purses more than \$100,000. I would also ask for a jockey contribution from the winning jockey also based upon purse structure.

The funds paid out are also very different. Philadelphia Park pays a one time fee of approximately \$2,500 when a horse is retired to a farm. Penn National pays a day rate of \$5 per day per horse. I would prefer a one time fee similar to Philadelphia Park for us.

The Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF) has agreed to work with TCA in this program by taking responsibility of placing horses when they retire from racing. With TCA raising funds and TRF, with the help of some very capable backstretch people who have volunteered, placing horses, this program will be successful.

I think everything is in place for a successful program at Delaware Park and again *the time is now!!* Let's all get behind this and put Delaware Park in the forefront of this movement. **This is no longer charity—this is an obligation and the responsibility of all horsemen and track management.**

Respectfully submitted,
Herb Moelis
President, TCA
Director, DTHA



Counselor's Corner

Backstretch Employee Assistance Program

Delaware Horsemen's Assistance Fund receives funding for English/Spanish programs and Groom Elite Program!

Welcome back! We have some great news to report. In conjunction with Delaware Horsemen's Assistance Fund, (DHAF), Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association (DTHA) and St. Paul's Roman Catholic Parish we are proud to report that we have received a \$21,050 grant to provide teaching resources and teacher training to establish English/Spanish programs for Hispanic families working at Delaware Park.



Volunteers and prospective students gather to celebrate the grant. From left to right, Dr. Leo Landoll of the Holy Angels Parish; Wes Jones, LCSW, Backstretch Employee Assistance Program of the DHAF; Octavio Amaro Guerrero and Elizabeth Vega, ESL students at Delaware Park; Friar Michael Tyson of St. Paul's Church, Lillia Arriaga and Juan Perez Corona, ESL students at Delaware Park; Miguel Gutierrez and Lissette D. Alfaro of St. Paul's Church in Wilmington.

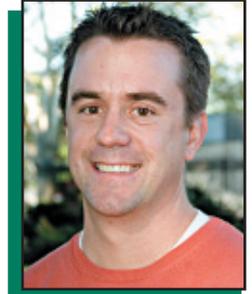
We have also been funded to provide the Groom Elite Program here at Delaware Park for thirty grooms seeking additional horsemen skills. This program will provide knowledge and skills that will enhance the ability of grooms and other equine care workers to tend to their horses.



The Groom Elite program will be run by Reid McLellan, the Executive Director of the Groom Elite program. We will be partnering with volunteers from the Just Faith Social Justice Program centered at Holy Angels Parish in Newark, Delaware. Please contact me or

stop by the Horsemen's Office for further information. Classes will start in May!

We are very fortunate to have Lissette Alfaro working with the Backstretch Employee Assistance Program (BEAP). She will be with us six hours per week during the live meet to provide counseling for our Spanish speaking horsemen.



G. Wesley Jones, LCSW

If you or anyone you work with is going through a difficult time, you can contact me confidentially to discuss those matters. My office is located above the Horsemen's Office with a private entrance located on the left side of the building. My spring hours were effective April 1st and are posted in the Horsemen's Office. You can reach me anytime on my cell phone (302) 383-7233.

Wesley Jones Schedule

Monday 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Wednesday 12 p.m. – 9 p.m.

All other days by appointment only

Lissette Alfaro Schedule

Wednesday 2 p.m. – 8 p.m.

G. Wesley Jones, LCSW

Backstretch Employee Assistance Program

DTHA Winner's Circle PAC authorization

The Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association has formed a political action committee, called the DTHA Winner's Circle PAC Fund. Any licensed horseman with an account at Delaware Park may elect to make a one-time donation of \$50.00 to the PAC from funds in his or her horsemen's bookkeeper's account. This donation is voluntary, and contributions to the PAC are not tax deductible for Federal or State income tax purposes. Participation or non-participation in the PAC will have no impact on any horseman's membership or standing in DTHA. PAC contributions will be utilized for city, county and state elected office.

Authorization forms may be obtained from the Licensing Office, Horsemen's Bookkeeper or the Horsemen's Office.

To learn more about the PAC, contact DTHA Winner's Circle PAC Fund, 777 Delaware Park Boulevard, Wilmington Delaware 19804, or call Bessie Gruwell at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284.





Delaware
Thoroughbred
Horsemen's Association, Inc.

777 Delaware Park Blvd.
Wilmington, DE 19804

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WILMINGTON, DE
Permit #605



Welcome Back

SEE YOU IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE _____



NOW..

DELAWARE CERTIFIED PAYS UP TO 50% BONUSES!!

Bring your weanlings or yearlings to a Delaware farm for 90 days before March 31st of its two-year-old year to become Delaware Certified and eligible for purse bonuses up to 50%*. Your Delaware Bred or Certified thoroughbreds are also eligible for restricted Delaware Certified stakes every fall.

For information and a list of participating Delaware farms, contact us.



**DELAWARE CERTIFIED
THOROUGHBRED PROGRAM**
777 Delaware Park Blvd.
Wilmington, DE 19804
TEL 302-994-2398 • FAX 302-994-3392
Email: dctp@dtha.com
Website: www.dtha.com



**DELAWARE THOROUGHBRED
HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION**
*is the founder and proud sponsor of
the DCTP*

**25% owner bonus; 25% certifier bonus*

Note: your newsletter is online at www.dtha.com