



DTHA

Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Journal

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2008 meet: declines and disappointment!

We experienced many declines during the 2008 racing meet. There was a significant drop in Delaware Park's slot revenue and overall handle, with the largest drop in slot revenue this fall since the racino opened its doors. A number of factors probably contributed to the drop – new casinos in Pennsylvania, the economy, gas prices, smoke-free casinos and inadequate marketing.

On the racing side, field size improved somewhat over 2007, with 8,460 horses going to post, with an average of 7.7 starters. However, we ran fewer races even though we raced 135 days. Of those days, there were only 35 days when nine or more thoroughbreds were carded, (30 days with 9 races, 3 days with 10 races, 1 day with 11 races, and 1 day with 12 races.) The bottom line – we raced 133 less races overall, which represents the equivalent loss of nearly 15 full race days.

The overpayment grew to nearly \$6.5 million by the end of the meet, which means that we will start next year, January 1, 2009 with a deficit. Equally disappointing is the fact that our purse account continues to take a significant hit because of a decrease in both our live and simulcast handle as many bettors make their wagers through wagering outlets such as TVG, YouBet, etc. The convenience of wagering on the computers and telephones is costing your purse account!

We joined the Thoroughbred Horsemen's Group (THG) to work with other horsemen's groups to remedy this problem. The horsemen are merely looking for a fair share of revenue for their product. If the current state of decline continues, we could be out of business.

There's more. In November, Maryland passed a referendum to allow slots at several locations, including one in Cecil County, approximately seven miles from Delaware Park.

When the facility opens in about two years, Delaware Park's revenues will be affected by both Pennsylvania's slots to the north and Maryland's slots to the south.

The state of Delaware, however, does have an ace up its sleeve, sports betting, which may be approved for racinos early next year. The addition of table games and account wagering are also possibilities down the road.

At this time, we are in contract negotiations with Delaware Park to determine the number of race days, daily purse distribution, and the 2009 stakes schedule. John Mooney, Delaware

Park's Executive Director of Racing, is hiring a new racing secretary and he advised us that he will put a 40-stall limit per trainer for the 2009 meet as well as move to a 72-hour entry schedule.

Looking ahead to the 2009 meet, we may see a reduction in purse money, estimated to be \$24-\$26 million, down from an average of \$33-\$36 million in recent years.

The stakes schedule will be reduced and all overnight stakes may be eliminated, which will generate nearly \$1 million in the overnight purse distribution. While the number of race days has yet to be determined, John Mooney would like racing to start on Kentucky Derby day and end sometime after the Breeders Cup.

We will soon have a new Delaware governor, Jack Markell, and a new lieutenant governor, Matt Denn. There were many changes in the legislature as well. We will be working diligently to discuss our views on expanded gaming, sports betting, account



Bessie Gruwell
Executive Director



Photo: Hoofprints, Inc.

Rich Glazier presents the leading trainer trophy to Scott Lake.

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2008 meet, from front page

wagering, table games, and the state of thoroughbred horse racing in Delaware generally. We started our DTHA Winners Circle PAC fund and we believe these donations will help us develop a rapport with these newly-elected legislators and committee heads.

MEET HIGHLIGHTS

As we conclude the 2008 race meet, trainer Scott Lake secured his record tying seventh consecutive Leading Trainer title (trainer Grover "Bud" Delp won seven consecutive titles here from 1963 through 1969) by saddling 84 winners from 312 starters. Trainer J. Larry Jones finished second in the trainer standings by visiting the winners circle 68 times, and Randy Nunley was third with 45 wins.

After finishing second in the standings last year, jockey Ramon Dominguez secured his fifth leading riding title here. Although Ramon spent the summer riding at Saratoga, he was still the runaway winner of the title with 133 winners from 416 mounts. Joe Rocco, Jr. moved into second with 92 wins and Gabriel Saez rounded out the top three with 88 wins.

Leading owner honors went to Ben Mondello and Adam Russo with 28 wins from 63 starters. Porter Racing Stable LLC (John Porter) finished second with 22 wins and Old Coach Farm recorded 17 wins to finish third in the standings.

We are proud to report that the stable area will once again be open for winter stabling. Applications for nearly 600 horses to stable here this winter have been received. Beginning December 1, winter training hours will be Monday through Saturday 7 a.m. – 11 a.m.; break from 9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.; closed on Sunday. The starting gate will be open two days, on Wednesday and Friday 7 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Beginning December 1st, the Horsemen's Office winter hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. and the office will be closed on Sundays. The office will also be closed Thursday, December 25, 2008 through Thursday, January 1, 2009 and will re-open Friday, January 2, 2009.

Have a safe and happy holiday season,

Bessie



Photo: Hoofprints, Inc.

Chris Sobocinski presents the leading owner's trophy to Ben Mondello and Adam Russo.



Photo: Hoofprints, Inc.

Jockey Ramon Dominguez and his family accept his 5th leading rider's trophy from Clerk of Scales Sean Worsley.

Defined Contribution Retirement Plan update

At the end of October the Defined Contribution Plan held \$990,000 in assets. These assets are invested in two groups. One group holds \$770,000 and is invested in ten different mutual funds. The other \$220,000 is invested with an investment professional that has the money divided into either mutual funds or individual stock investments. The investment advisor is Mr. William Whitescarver, who also runs the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association Defined Contribution Plan.

Unfortunately, due to the current economic situation, both funds are down in value, 33% and 25% respectively for this year. However, the fund over the long term has been very positive. Since it's inception the fund is up over 66%.

For those of you who don't know, we dedicate 25% of income the DTHA gets to operate towards the Defined Contribution Plan. This amounts to about \$150,000 a year. In addition, we have added \$150,000 a year from our purse account for the last three years. Whether we continue with this additional money will be determined by the new contract between DTHA and Delaware Park. We are hopeful that this will be the case.

Vincent Moscarelli
DTHA Treasurer



Delaware Certified Thoroughbred Program sets new meet record



The Delaware Certified Thoroughbred Program (DCTP) posted record numbers again for the 2008 meet. The program had 210 different Delaware Certified horses go to post 690 times, to the winners circle 94 times, with 82 seconds and 109 thirds and earnings of \$367,963.60 in Owner bonuses and \$433,265.20 in Certifier bonuses for a total of \$801,228.80.

In June the purse bonuses for all Delaware Certified horses was increased to 20% for both the owner and the certifier. In September we hosted the inaugural running of our two-year-old 5/8 turf stakes – The Small Wonder and The First State Dash. Be sure to get your yearlings to a Delaware farm before December 31st to be eligible for the 2nd running of our two-year-old stakes next year.

We would like to thank everyone for their support and participation in the Delaware Certified program. Without you, this program could not flourish and have the outstanding success that it has had. Most recently, we've had four new farms join the program, bringing to 74 the number of

participating Delaware farms. Applications continue to roll in as the year comes to an end.

As a reminder, applications must be submitted within ten (10) days of the thoroughbred's arrival at an approved DCTP farm or training facility. Days WILL NOT count until ALL paperwork has been submitted. If purchasing at a sale, send in pictures immediately or copies of the papers as soon as they are available (the sale company will fax us a copy of the papers if they have not been released). In order to be eligible for certification, horses must complete a minimum of ninety (90) consecutive days on an approved DCTP farm or training facility. Certification applications will not be accepted after December 31st of the yearling year.

For further information, please contact Bessie Gruwell at (302) 994-2398 or visit the DTHA website, www.dtha.com and click on the DCTP link. From this website you can also check to see if your horse is Delaware Certified.

Delaware Horsemen's Assistance Fund elects officers

The DHAF recently held the election for their Board officers. We are pleased to announce the results for the 2008-2009 DHAF Board:

President:	Peter Alexander
Vice President:	Michael Jester
Treasurer:	Cassandra Horner
Secretary:	Suzanne Moscarelli

Also on the board are James P. Connor III, Bill Ferguson, Roberta Mendenhall, Greg Petkiewicz and Allen Wolfe III. We would like to thank all the members of our Board for their participation and years of service to help improve the lives of backstretch workers.

When winter stabling officially starts December 1st, our Medical Clinic will be open on Mondays. Flu shots are still available at no cost if you haven't received one yet. Armando Gonzalez will be available on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., and the Backstretch Boutique is also open during

this time. For counseling needs, contact Wes Jones at (302) 383-7233. For other benefit information, contact Lynda Furlong at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7289 or the Horsemen's Office.

The upcoming year should be a challenge to maintain the standard of assistance we have offered to workers in the past. With an uncertain economy, and decreased revenue, we will be working hard to keep everything in place with the programs we currently offer.





Delaware
Thoroughbred
Horsemen's Association, Inc.

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Happy Holidays

SEE YOU IN 2009

Blanket Race 2008

DATE	HORSE	OWNER	TRAINER
10/21/08	PAPI CHULLO	Winning Move Stables, IEAH Stables, Sanford H. Robbins LLC	G. Contessa
10/28/08	TRUCK RIDE	See You Stable	D. Capuano
11/04/08	DEEP MYSTERY	Old Coach Farm & John Murphy	M. Gorham
11/11/08	DOC'S FRIEND	Cottonwood Stables LLC	L. Jones

2008 Delaware Park Leader Board



Ramon Dominguez	133 wins
Joseph Rocco, Jr.	92 wins
Gabriel Saez	88 wins



Scott Lake	84 wins
J. Larry Jones	68 wins
Randy Nunley	45 wins



Ben Mondello & Adam Russo	28 wins
Porter Racing Stable LLC	22 wins
Old Coach Farm	17 wins

WINTER HOURS

The Horsemen's Office will be open all winter. Beginning December 1st, the Horsemen's Office winter hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. and the office will be closed on Sundays. The office will also be closed Thursday, December 25, 2008 through Thursday, January 1, 2009 and will re-open Friday, January 2, 2009.

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.

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