

Sunday, Dec. 23, 2012

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Mark Loewe Making Things Happen in Ohio.....p3
Meadowlands Entry Box Gets Flooded.....p4
Some Really Good Stats...p6



BRUSH and CRUSH

with Dean Towers

ROCKNROLL HANOVER

p,3, 1:48.3 (\$2,754,038) • 2013 Fee: \$15,000

MUSCLES YANKEE

3, 1:52.2 (\$1,424,938) • 2013 Fee: \$10,000

LUCKY CHUCKY

3, 1:50.4 (\$2,099,973) • 2013 Fee: \$5,000

Will stand for 2013 at the newly leased Perretti Farm of PA...

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The Annual Harness Racing Holiday Party Breeds Fireworks

Each year the harness racing holiday party is a semi-secret gathering, where only the crème de la crème in racing receive an invite. It usually is not reported on in any way, shape or form, but this year the crack staff at Harness Racing Update were there, and we were taking notes. We strive to bring you - the reader - the very best inside harness racing scoops we can find.

This year the event was held at the Meadowlands, graciously hosted by Jeff Gural. He came dressed in regalia, with a red cape and a large crown.

"Did you make sure Joe Faraldo's invitation got lost?" he asks right-hand man Jason Settlemoir.

"I accidentally sent the invite to Joe Fitzgerald, that guy who writes letters to the editor to Harness Racing Update", replies Jason.

"Good" says Gural, with a knowing grin.

The early attendees are mostly Meadowlands staff. Sam McKee is telling obscure harness racing stories. Ken Warkentin is chatting up the bartender, but he can't stop referencing racing. It's fascinating to watch.

"You're moving like a tremendous machine", he says as the bartender serves drinks. "You're stirring that drink like you're weaving through traffic at Flamboro Downs in a snowstorm. You have plenty of go, lots left in the tank, you are under a hand drive, no tippy taps needed. By the way, do you know I have a horse named after me? He's at stud now".

The first horsemen to show up is trainer Ron Burke, and it is quite an entrance. He arrives in a sulky, being pulled by something commonly seen by horseplayers at various race-tracks in programs: "Weaver Brussemi Llc".

"I had to come like this," informs Burke. "I lose track, but I think I have like a thousand horses to train each day. This is my natural position. If I walk or lie down I cramp up".

Strangely, he looks very comfortable.

Jeff Gural makes a bee line to Ron, asking him to enter the Meadowlands box come December 28th, but he tells

him that he can't enter seven horses in each race. The discussion looks animated. Gural moves on, but jack-of-all-trades Nick Salvi takes over to do some convincing.

More and more people enter; so many so that I've lost track. One thing though, they're all carrying beach towels, courtesy Hanover Shoe Farms. The towels look to be embroidered in gold. I guess that's what happens when foals earn something like eight gazillion dollars of purses in a first crop. The towels are quite nice, actually.

I glance across the room and notice Jerry Silva is here, and he has a checkbook. I surreptitiously sneak over to see if I can listen to the conversation he is having with Intimidate's owner, Luc Blais.

"1 million for 20%?" says Silva. "I must not understand Francais. That's almost even too high for me. How about a million for a quarter instead; he's a Justice Hall gelding for cripes sake."

I learn later that Jerry Silva buys a percentage of nine horses during the evening, which beats last year when he set a new holiday party record, buying eight. He later talks to Gural about constructing a new stakes series where

(continued on next page)



Congrats to Dan Patch Award Winners

2-YEAR-OLD FILLY TROTTER OF THE YEAR
To Dream On
Credit Winner – Satin Pillows – Conway Hall
B: Valley High Stable, NJ; O: Marvin Katz and Al Libfeld; T: Jimmy Takter

3-YEAR-OLD-MALE PACER OF THE YEAR
Heston Blue Chip
American Ideal – Shot Togo Bluechip – Cam's Card Shark
B: Blue Chip Bloodstock Inc., NY; O: Ken Jacobs; T: Linda Toscano

3-YEAR-OLD-FILLY PACER OF THE YEAR
American Jewel
American Ideal – Trim Hanover – Camluck
B: Brittany Farms, KY; O: Brittany Farms; T: Jimmy Takter

OLDER FEMALE PACER OF THE YEAR
Anndrovette
Riverboat King – Easy Miss – Big Towner
B: Golden Touch Stable, NJ; O: Bamond Racing and Joseph Davino;
Trainer: P.J. Fraley



For more information contact:
Harness Horse Breeders of NY State
www.hhbny.com 518-785-5858

horses he owns pieces of can only compete against other horses he owns pieces of. Gural looks nonplussed. Nick Salvi thinks it isn't even worthy of another press release. The first driver to arrive is George Brennan.

"I got to the bridge in 25.2 minutes, and just kept smokin'. Made it here in no time flat" says the fit driver, who is at the opposite side of the venue to Jeff Gural.

While drivers like Jason Bartlett and Brian Sears share some stories about big races and how their year went, Tim Tetrick walks in and says "19 million," to anyone within earshot.



An unidentified guest at the annual harness racing Christmas party

by the group and the other drivers all bow, just like they do every year.

He says "hello fellow drivers" and gregariously tells a story about the time he got a slowing the pace fine at the Red Mile for driving a two year old through a 28.3 third quarter. Everyone shares a chuckle, except Yannick Gingras.

Ron Pierce arrives late and waits for John Campbell to leave so he can talk to the other drivers. It turns out he was tardy because he was taping a piece for a new USTA initiative called "How drivers should give trackside interviews".

"Ron was a natural fit for this because half the time we don't know what in the hell he's talking about in interviews, but 100% of the time people react," said USTA President Mike Tanner.

Ron agreed with Mike and then told a story that (to the best of my ability) sounded like it was about him and Mr. Muscleman going moose hunting in Northern Ontario. Moira Fanning of the Hambletonian then makes her second entrance of the evening.

"Why are you here twice?" asks Ray Schnittker.

"Heats" she replies.

Ray starts to argue with her, but she plugs her ears and hums "lalalalalala" over and over again.

The most energetic area of the party is in the Ohio section. There's drinking, smiling and everyone is carrying on. Someone tries to sell a 5 claimer 1/16th brother to Bettors Delight as a stallion, and is getting some serious action. Everyone orders drinks with cherries.

Outside the Ohio kerfuffle Perretti Farms' Bob Marks says, "There will be more studs in Ohio next year than there are at an Adult Video Awards banquet."

Suddenly the party stops. Heather Vitale stops talking harness fashion, Vernon and Tioga marketing man Justin Horowitz stops in his tracks from asking people to call him "J

"Sheesh, he does this every year" says Scott Zeron. "I won the Jug, and all I hear is '19 million'. I could cure the problems in the Middle East, and all I'd hear is '19 million' from Tetrick."

"Bionic 401k" counters Cory Callahan.

John Campbell walks

Ho". David Reid stops passing out sales catalogues, Bill Finley halts from selling advertising to unsuspecting party-goers. Everyone freezes.

In walks a portly man wearing a driving suit inscribed with something in huge letters on the right pocket. Aha, it's Governor Chris Christie!

"I'm here for harness racing" he bellows. "This Christmas I want to offer harness racing a deal it cannot refuse. I want to help the sport thrive in my state."

"If you, Jeff Gural, sell me space in the new Meadowlands grandstand to house slot machines, I shall pay you \$6 a square foot rent. You can use this windfall for purses, bringing the new Meadowlands' prize money in line with Pennsylvania and New York. By my calculations, a non-winners of two purse will go for \$80 more than it currently does. This can save harness racing in New Jersey. I got this idea from Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan."

The crowd boos.

Jeff Gural stands up, hands Settlemoir his crown, and says "That won't work Governor, we need 5% of the revenues for purses."

Christie holds firm.

But then - seemingly out of nowhere - up pipes a man in a suit and he says:

"We don't like what you're selling Mr. Christie. Jeff needs 5% for purses and it needs to be mandated as such. If not, no deal!"

Oh my. It's Joe Faraldo.

Joe and Jeff then join arms and escort Governor Christie for a pow-wow while Salvi looks at Settlemoir and asks "how did he get by security?"

Not long after, they come out with a meeting of the minds.

"Joe and I are working together," says Gural.

"We're simpatico," notes Faraldo. "Slots will come to the Meadowlands. Bet on it."

People cheer. Ron Pierce waves. Tetrick counts money. "J Ho" smiles. Jerry Silva buys another horse. Everyone is happy.

The gathering ends with hope. Working together, the industry appears to have achieved great things and 2013 will be a very good year for the sport. The annual Holiday Party says so.

-May I offer a sincere thank you for reading the column this year, including silly ones like this. From my family to yours I wish you a happy holiday season-

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We WANT you to win!

MEADOWLANDS RACETRACK

2013 EARLY CLOSING PROGRAM NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 15, 2013

EVENTS BOXED IN  STARS  ARE PART OF YEAR END \$500,000G FINALS

POINTS ARE EARNED IN ELIMINATION RACES AND FINALS
SEPARATE NOMINATING AND SUSTAINING FEES FOR ALL EVENTS

Declarations Close at the Time and Date Posted on the Weekly Condition Sheet

Event 28 – Pace – FFA

“Meadowlands Free For All Pacing Championship”

Saturday, November 30—\$500,000G

Race Date: Saturday, November 30	\$	500,000	G
Nominating Fee: February 15	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: March 15	\$	1,500	
Sustaining Payment: April 15	\$	2,000	
Sustaining Payment: May 15	\$	2,250	
Declaration Fee: FINAL	\$	5,000	

Event 29 – Trot – FFA

“Meadowlands Free For All Trotting Championship”

Saturday, November 30—\$500,000G

Race Date: Saturday, November 30	\$	500,000	G
Nominating Fee: February 15	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: March 15	\$	1,500	
Sustaining Payment: April 15	\$	2,000	
Sustaining Payment: May 15	\$	2,250	
Declaration Fee: FINAL	\$	5,000	

Full set of conditions for Meadowlands Free For All Championship at www.MeadowlandsRacetrack.com

Event 30 – Trot – FFA

“NAT RAY”

Saturday, August 3, 2013—\$150,000A

Estimated Total Purse—\$250,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, July 27	\$	50,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 3	\$	150,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15	\$	600	
Sustaining Payment: March 15	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: April 15	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: May 15	\$	1,500	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races	\$	3,000	

Event 31 – Pace – FFA

“WILLIAM R. HAUGHTON MEMORIAL”

Saturday, July 13, 2013—\$250,000A

Estimated Total Purse—\$500,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, July 6	\$	50,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, July 13	\$	250,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: March 15	\$	1,200	
Sustaining Payment: April 15	\$	1,600	
Sustaining Payment: May 15	\$	2,500	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races	\$	5,000	

Event 32 – Trot – FFA

“ARTHUR J. CUTLER MEMORIAL”

Saturday, May 18, 2013—\$75,000A

Estimated Total Purse—\$210,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, May 11	\$	40,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, May 18	\$	75,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: March 15	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: April 15	\$	1,500	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races	\$	2,000	

Event 33 – Pace – FFA

“US PACING CHAMPIONSHIP”

Saturday, August 3, 2013—\$100,000A

Estimated Total Purse—\$242,500

Elimination Races: Saturday, July 27	\$	50,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 3	\$	100,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15	\$	600	
Sustaining Payment: March 15	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: April 15	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: May 15	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races	\$	2,500	

Event 37 – Pace – Mares FFA
"GOLDEN GIRLS"
Saturday, June 1, 2013—\$75,000A
Estimated Total Purse—\$218,850

Race Date: Saturday, June 1\$ 75,000 A
 Nominating Fee: February 15\$ 600
 Sustaining Payment: March 15\$ 800
 Sustaining Payment: April 15\$ 1,250
 Sustaining Payment: May 15\$ 1,600
 Declaration Fee:\$ 2,500

Event 38 – Trot—2 Yr. Old Fillies
"MERRIE ANNABELLE"
Saturday, August 3, 2013—\$50,000A
Estimated Total Purse—\$354,450

Elimination Races: Friday, July 26.....\$ 20,000 G
 FINAL: Saturday, August 3\$ 50,000 A
 Nominating Fee: February 15\$ 250
 Sustaining Payment: March 15\$ 400
 Sustaining Payment: April 15\$ 1,200
 Sustaining Payment: May 15\$ 1,600
 Declaration Fee: Elimination Races\$ 2,500

Event 39 – Trot – 2 Yr. Old Colts & Geldings
"PETER HAUGHTON MEMORIAL"
Saturday, August 3, 2013—\$50,000A
Estimated Total Purse—\$387,250

Elimination Races: Friday, July 26.....\$ 20,000 G
 FINAL: Saturday, August 3\$ 50,000 A
 Nominating Fee: February 15\$ 250
 Sustaining Payment: March 15\$ 400
 Sustaining Payment: April 15\$ 1,200
 Sustaining Payment: May 15\$ 1,600
 Declaration Fee: Elimination Races\$ 2,500

Event 40 – Pace – Mares FFA
"LADY LIBERTY"
Saturday, August 3, 2013—\$75,000A
Estimated Total Purse—\$253,700

Elimination Races: Saturday, July 27\$ 40,000 G
 FINAL: Saturday, August 3\$ 75,000 A
 Nominating Fee: February 15\$ 800
 Sustaining Payment: March 15\$ 1,250
 Sustaining Payment: April 15\$ 1,600
 Sustaining Payment: May 15\$ 2,250
 Declaration Fee: Elimination Races\$ 3,000

Event No.	Name of Horse	Color Sex/Age	Sire	Dam	Owner & Address

Entered by _____
Owner or Authorized Agent
 Address _____

 Telephone No. _____
 Trainer _____ Telephone No. _____
 E-Mail _____

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NEWS Today
 CHAPTER SEVEN
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In Resurgent Ohio, Mark Loewe Will Help Guide State's Future

By Dean Hoffman

Mark Loewe is a native New Yorker, but he sure likes Ohio.

Loewe has good reason to like Ohio. Back in 1978, he made his first trip to the Buckeye State as a groom for trainer-driver Bill Popfinger. Mark's colt Happy Escort was entered in the Little Brown Jug, but was given little chance against Abercrombie, Falcon Almahurst, and Flight Director. It was, however, Happy Escort who took a swig from the Jug in the winner's circle. And Mark Loewe was right beside him. A decade later, Loewe was a trainer of Threefold, who won a division of the Jug Preview at Scioto Downs, then finished second in the Jug after that.



Raceway Park GM Mark Loewe (USTA photo)

He trained other good horses such as Nuklear Weapon, Hit The Bid, Camourous, and Jane Ann Almahurst. He also trained Jug winners Fake Left and Goalie Jeff at times during their careers.

Loewe grew up in Manhattan and took a shine to harness racing at Roosevelt and Yonkers during his youth, and got involved as a trainer after college. Two decades ago, he traded the jog cart for a desk chair and wound up in management at Pompano Park.

"John Cashman [the late Hall of Famer who was the president of Pompano then] was very helpful to

me," Loewe says.

He worked in management capacities at Pompano for 15 years before moving on to other jobs in racing. He's been with Penn Gaming for five years, and before coming to Ohio he was vice president of Racing at Hollywood Casino at the Penn National track near Harrisburg, Pa.

Now at age 55, Loewe is vice-president for Ohio racing for Penn Gaming, which owns the harness track Raceway Park in Toledo and the Thoroughbred track Beulah Park in Columbus.

At least that's where those tracks are currently located. If all goes well, Penn plans to move the operating license for

those two tracks to new locations with gaming facilities. The new harness facility will be located just north of Dayton while the Thoroughbred meet at Beulah will be moved to the northeast section of the state near Youngstown.

"It was originally planned the other way," said Loewe. "The harness track was going to be in Austintown and the Thoroughbred track in Dayton. But the land in Dayton wouldn't accommodate a mile or 7/8-mile track, so it will instead become a 5/8-mile harness track."

Loewe added that noted harness track consultant Greg Coon has designed the racing layout for the new Dayton track.

Hollywood Slots at Dayton Raceway, as the new racino will be called, is set for a 119-acre parcel at Wagner and Needmore Roads, about halfway between downtown Dayton and the interchange of I-75 and I-70 north of the city. It's the site of a former Delphi plant.

The proposed new location of Lebanon Raceway will also be along I-75, but it will be about 20 miles south of Dayton.

"We've had some preliminary discussion with Lebanon officials on dates so that we can develop a season for horsemen in that area," said Loewe. "We don't want to step on each other's toes."

Loewe is currently based in Columbus and splitting his time between Beulah and Raceway Park. He will be the spokesman for Penn Gaming in the Buckeye state, regardless if it's a racing commission meeting, a city council meeting in Dayton, or a zoning meeting in Mahoning County. He works with Chris McErlean, former VP at the Meadowlands and now VP at Penn Gaming.

Despite the fact that Raceway's tenure in Toledo is limited, Loewe wants to establish a strong management team for the 2013 season and address marketing and food and beverage concerns to make sure the that 42 racing dates attain their full potential.

As you might suspect, after a lifetime in racing, both on the backside and in management, Loewe has firm opinions on what's best for racing. He likes quality racing, and he intends that to be a hallmark of Penn's tracks in Ohio. He's not a big fan of protectionism.

"The worst thing that a track can do is to close up its shop," he says. "We can't limit the quality of the product we put on the track because that limits the appeal of racing to simulcast bettors, and they're so important."

He added that whatever stakes will be contested at the Dayton raceway will be governed in large measure by its racing dates.

At Beulah Park, Loewe works with general manager Jim McKinney and they're mulling the possibility of hosting the 2013 racing dates of River Downs at the Columbus track. River Downs, located in Cincinnati, is beginning construction of its gaming facilities and thus wants to move the racing to Beulah.

"There are concerns with insurance, human relations, and horsemen," Loewe says, "but we are certainly making progress."

(continued on next page)

Moving the Beulah Park license to northeast Ohio puts it not far from Northfield Park and the Thistledown track for runners.

"It's an area of the state that is definitely getting full," he says, "but we believe that our location can be profitable." After Raceway Park and Beulah move, Loewe says that the track properties in Toledo and suburban Columbus will be sold. He stressed that Penn Gaming is working with local officials to find the best use for the former racetracks. Mark Loewe is excited about the future of Ohio racing and excited to play a role in the revival in the Buckeye State. After all, he's got fond memories of racing in Ohio.

Meadowlands Entry Box Jammed For Opening Night

Friday's opening night of the Meadowlands 2012-2013 meet will consist of 12 races, all of them with full fields. New Meadowlands GM Jason Settlemoir reports that more than 240 horses were entered, attempting to get in on the action. One race, the tenth, will have a 12-horse field.

The Friday card will mark the debut of the A, B, C classification system now in effect at the Meadowlands, which is designed to avoid races with overwhelming favorites.

Eight of the 12 races are ABC races.

Artificial Insemination a Positive for Standard bred Industry

(Editor's note: this story appears in the 12-23 edition of the Thoroughbred Daily News and is reprinted here with their permission.)



Australian thoroughbred breeder Bruce McHugh sued to allow AI in his country, and lost

Small-scale Thoroughbred breeder Bruce McHugh brought his case against the Australian Turf Club more than three years ago, claiming that the ban on AI was an illegal trade restraint, and violated Australia's competition and consumer act. The case garnered international attention, drawing witnesses from France, Ireland, the UK, and Hong Kong during its six-week trial last year. And for good reason: a lift of the AI ban in Australia would not only set a precedent for similar practices to be allowed in other countries, but it would also potentially restrict Australia's prospects of international competition, as its AI-conceived Thoroughbreds would not be eligible to compete outside the country.

A number of the world's Thoroughbred breeding officials and organizations breathed a collective sigh of relief at

Justice Robertson's ruling. In addition to challenging international standards, the practice of AI could invite a number of negative ramifications, including the narrowing of the gene pool and loss of business for boarding farms that would generally house mares shipped to their regions for covering.

It is important to note, however, that the Thoroughbred is the only major breed in the world that does not allow conception by artificial insemination. Harness racing in the U.S. began allowing AI in the late in 1950s when Hal Jones, a Harness Racing Hall of Famer and manager of Pickwick Farms in Ohio, developed the practice in order to grow the book size of his popular sire Gene Abbe from the standard 48 mares to 90.

"That was a number we had never seen before," explained Alan Leavitt, a Harness Racing Hall of Fame breeder and President and General Manager of Walnut Hall Farm in Kentucky. "There was a legal action brought against it by the United States Trotting Association, and they lost. From that time, other farm managers lost no time in taking up artificial insemination."

Leavitt noted that the development of the process has been gradual. In the beginning, mares were still required to ship to the stallion premises to be inseminated artificially. Today, semen is chilled and shipped to breeders, allowing everyone to stay at home.

Bob Marks, the Marketing Director of Perretti Farms, the largest Standardbred breeding farm in New Jersey, said he sees nothing undesirable about AI.

"I don't really see any negatives," Marks said. "It enables you to keep your mares home and simply breed them to the stallion of your choice, which may be totally out of jurisdiction. It's also easier on the stallion. It enables him to breed, from one collection, up to 15 mares, depending on how fertile he is. We can also send the semen all over the world. It seems primitive in this modern age to put a mare and foal on a truck and waste gas and time driving her someplace to get bred, when we have the technology to get the semen from here to there lightning quick."

New York is the only state that still does not allow semen to be shipped outside its borders. Marks said the necessity of sending his mares on long van rides to use New York sires affects his breeding decisions.

"I have a breeding to a New York stallion to use next year, and at first I'd been thinking I'd really like to breed a particular mare," he said. "But then I got thinking, she's 20 years old, she doesn't need to get put on a truck and go four hours up to the mountains of New York just to be bred. I have to actually change my breeding plans to select a younger, more appropriate mare to do that. That's the way we think."

Marks explained that even with transportation of semen permitted for Standardbred breeders, a certain amount of shipping and boarding of mares can be involved. Because quality of semen among stallions will vary, some breeders find it advantageous to house their mares, especially the better ones, nearer to the stallion, so as to make the AI process as quick and efficient as possible. He said board-

(continued on next page)

ing farms in New Jersey, even with few stallions in the state, have not been affected by the practice of AI, as far as he can tell. Leavitt, however, noted that he has seen a decrease of Standardbred boarding facilities in Kentucky.

"I've been in Kentucky for 18 years now, and I see all these Thoroughbred farms that live by boarding mares and bringing them to be bred to stallions," he explained. "It's a great economy for the mare owners."

While AI allows Standardbred breeders to ship semen around the globe, it does not eliminate the possibility of the stallions shuttling to the Southern Hemisphere. Perretti's leading U.S. sire Rocknroll Hanover, as well as young sire sensation Somebeachsomewhere, are currently finishing the Southern Hemisphere season at David James's Empire Stallions in Victoria, Australia.

"The Australians seem to want the horse there," Marks explained. "Some horses get sent down there and do double duty, other horses we simply send the semen, depending on what the supply and demand is, and how fertile the horse may be. Also, if you don't feel like he's a good shipper, you might just send the frozen semen. Rocknroll Hanover will breed 150 mares there, and I don't know if he would breed that many if we just sent his semen."

Some involved in the Thoroughbred industry have expressed concern that, because AI and shipping of semen would eliminate certain costs and allow for ease of access to any stallion, only the most prolific stallions would be in demand, causing a narrowing of the gene pool that would be a detriment to the breed. In 1992, a genetic analysis performed on the Standardbred breed showed this, in fact, to be the case.

"The woman who did the study, Dr. Judith King, a graduate student at the University of Kentucky, told us that there was a 16 to 17% loss of heterozygosity in the breed, particularly with trotters," Leavitt explained. "Heterozygosity is the variability factor. She said scientifically that's a terrible loss, and is heading the breed in totally the wrong direction." In 2007, a number of Standardbred breeders approached the USTA, which passed a rule that, beginning in 2009, any stallion entering the stud book would be restricted to covering a maximum of 140 mares. Because of legal considerations, the rule could not be extended to include active stallions that had already been sold and syndicated.

"A lot of us were not in favor of it, but they did it anyway," Marks said. "A lot of us felt that the market via supply and demand decided [how many mares a stallion would cover]. In other words, if a horse isn't any good, guess what? He's not going to have too many breeding applications. The most important thing is to make intelligent breeding decisions."

Tom Charters, the President and CEO of the Hambletonian Society, said he hasn't observed much protest to the limitation.

"When they enacted the rule, there were many horses covering more than 140 mares," he said. "But I haven't heard a great outcry where there's a dozen stallions that people aren't getting booked to. If you talk to the stallion owners, they'll tell you it's a bad thing, but in terms of diversity, it provides more opportunities for more stallions, especially for the state-bred programs. It gives the smaller programs better opportunity to get good horses."

Charters said that, while he is in agreement that AI contributed to narrowing the Standardbred gene pool, it has also accelerated improvement of the breed.

"The Standardbred, in my lifetime, has improved by about eight seconds, and that's 40 lengths," Charters noted. "[AI] has accelerated the improvement of the breed very much so. So that's the good part of it, other than the individual benefit to a few stallion owners. I think that the ability of the great stallions to cover so many mares in some ways narrowed the gene pool, but it also accelerated the speed and gait of our horses."

This is an observation that Marks said he shares. "It seems to me that the Thoroughbred breed probably peaked in the 70s, and pretty well stagnated from there," he said. "For argument's sake, you still can't run a Thoroughbred mile faster than 1:32 1/5, and Dr. Fager did that [in 1968]. At that time, a Standardbred mile may have been 1:52.00. Nowadays, it's 1:46 or 1:47. In other words, we've improved our breed."

More recently, the USTA implemented another measure that will influence stallion activity. Beginning with foals of 2014, any progeny of a stallion under four years of age will not be eligible for certain stakes throughout the country, unless that stallion was retired due to injury. Once the stallion turns four, his future progeny will be eligible for those races. Marks noted, however, that this new rule makes it difficult for owners to syndicate their stallions at a young age. He also said it could be difficult to determine which injuries would force retirement, leaving grey areas in the system.

Leavitt also noted that the switch to AI and transportation of semen has caused a steady decrease in fertility rates for Standardbreds. Where 90% in foal rates for stallions were once the norm, many stallion managers are now satisfied with 70%.

"The problem is that when you're shipping chilled semen, once you send it off, you have no control over it once it leaves your farm. Where it winds up frequently is with people that don't use a vet a great deal and rely on teasing to decide when their mare is ready to be bred."

Despite such downfalls, however, Leavitt noted that he still prefers AI to live cover, with safety to both horses and people being an important consideration.

"I would opt for artificial insemination [over live cover] without any second thoughts," he said. "The minute we got away from live cover, we got away from the accidents that occur every day in the breeding shed. We have none of that now."

Charters said that while AI has worked well for the Standardbred industry, he can appreciate the complexities of introducing it for Thoroughbreds.

"With Standardbreds, and I assume with American Quarter Horses and the other breeds that practice it, it's a no-brainer by now, but I can see where it's a complex problem, especially internationally," he said. "With the Thoroughbreds, you have so many signatories among all these stud books that have agreed [against AI], and now to break out of it, does everything become unraveled?"

--by Kelsey Riley

STATS CORNER

Leading Speed Sires (all stats courtesy of USTA)

Top Sires of 1:55 2-Year-Old Pacers

Sire	No. Of Foals	No. of Starters	No. In 1:55	Pct.
1. Somebeach	124	95	31	32.6
2. Dragon Again	102	73	20	27.4
3. Art Major	109	74	18	24.3
4. Mach Three	108	88	16	18.2
Western Terror	157	100	16	16.0
6. Bettor's Delight	126	87	15	17.2
7. Rocknroll Hanover	141	98	14	14.3
8. American Ideal	101	74	11	14.9
Always A Virgin	119	75	11	14.7
Western Ideal	102	68	11	16.2

Top Sires of 2:00 2-Year-Old Trotters

Sire	No. Of Foals	No. of Starters	No. in 2:00	Pct.
1. Donato Hanover	101	60	29	48.3
2. Muscles Yankee	105	64	19	29.7
3. Credit Winner	96	59	18	30.1
Dewey	92	51	18	35.3
5. Cantab Hall	80	55	17	30.1
6. Andover Hall	78	52	15	28.9
7. Broadway Hall	78	41	13	31.7
8. Muscle Mass	84	54	10	18.5
Yankee Glide	82	51	10	19.6
10. Conway Hall	81	53	8	15.1

one's part to use a performance enhancer but the drug was being used too close to the race date. I spoke with Dr. Dey, who is her veterinarian, who confirmed that he in fact did give the medication of Levamisole and that he thought it was safe to give that drug as it was more than 72 hours prior to when the horse was scheduled to race. He emphasized that he thought Linda ran a clean operation and that he does all of her vet work. He said this is entirely his fault and that he did not feel she should be penalized.

Subsequently, Linda called me and I told her that I thought under the trainer responsibility law she was in fact responsible and that the best thing for her to do would be to accept the minor punishment of a ten-day suspension and a \$1,500 fine. I told her I would allow her to race when the suspension ended but that if she did appeal and the suspension was upheld that I would not allow any of her horses to race at any of my three tracks while she was under suspension even if the horses were given to a new trainer.

I think we all recognize how ridiculous it is when a trainer gets suspended and the horses simply go under the name of the assistant trainer. I was pleased to see that she took my advice and assuming there are no other issues she will be allowed to race at my three tracks. I do not know what else I could do as the fact that Linda is a friend had nothing to do with my decision and I investigated the matter as best I could.

It should be clear that I watch every race at the Meadowlands either live on my dish at the farm or through the replay show and whenever I see something that looks fishy I contact the trainer or driver and ask the kind of questions that anyone would ask. I recognize that the integrity of our racing product is vital, which is why I am in the process of hiring my own private investigator and our racing application contains language that allows us to make random inspections at the farms where almost all of the horses that race at the Meadowlands train.

As far as the issue of post time not being post time, I totally agree with Mr. Brookhart. Unfortunately, when I tried that last year at the Meadowlands by having the racing start pretty close to post time we saw a decline in our handle. Several large betters told me that they basically sit in front of a group of TV monitors and do not even think about wagering until they see zero minutes on the tote board. As a result, at the end of the meet we tried starting the races about three minutes after post time and our handle did increase. Since the only revenue we have is from wagering I have no choice but to continue that policy. It certainly will not be as bad as other tracks whereas you pointed out the horses come out on the track at post time but it is not the way it should be and unless all of the tracks agreed to start the races at post time there is not much I can do.

As to the issue of grading our stakes, I think that is something that is clearly long overdue but when I re-

(continued on next page)

FEEDBACK!



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Gural Responds to Issues Raised in HRU

I thought I would comment on a couple of letters that you published on Sunday so your readers know that for the most part we take these suggestions and comments seriously.

On the Linda Toscano suspension, when I became aware of the positive test I reached out to Dr. George Maylin, who runs the testing lab in New York, for his appraisal of the situation. George explained the issue and agreed that because of a new testing procedure the drug Levamisole was showing up and a dozen trainers in New York had positive tests. He did not think it was an intentional effort on any-

searched it I found that this had been suggested over twenty years ago and nothing happened then and my guess is nothing will happen now. The sad part is that in reality no one really cares about any of this. As a result, we will continue to see a slow but steady decline in handle attendance and yearling prices.

I hope that answers some of the issues that your readers raised recently. I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy holiday. I honestly believe, with the exception of Chapter Seven, all of our good horses are coming back to race next year and that will add a level of excitement that has not been seen in a longtime.

- Jeff Gural

When Zero Means Five...or Six

Mr. Brookhart's observation that post times are wildly inaccurate is spot on. Several Betting operations offer "conditional betting," which allows the punter to set the acceptable odds for their wager. They might stipulate that the horse must be at least 3-1 at zero minutes to post. That is a wonderful idea - on paper. In reality, zero minutes to post is about 5-6 minutes before post time and very little money is in the pool at that time. A horse can easily be 3-1 at zero minutes to post, and 1-5 when the race finally goes off. How do you solve this problem? Lock the betting machines at zero minutes to post. The track officials will quickly relearn how to keep time, when they are not rewarded for their abuse of the post time.

Another pet peeve of mine is also eligibles. That idea is a throwback to when the horses were stabled at the track and if one was sick you just substituted the also eligible. That is no longer the case and also eligibles rarely get in the race even if there are multiple scratches. It is impossible to handicap a race until you know who will be in a race and what post they will have. The also eligibles make it impossible to handicap a race the night before (like a good handicapper should). Will your horse be the lone speed in the race, or if the also eligible gets in, will your horse probably wind up in a speed duel it can't win? Abandon the antiquated idea of also eligible horses and let handicappers get the night-before head start they need to be successful at this game.

These guaranteed pools make me laugh. A guaranteed pool of \$25,000 only means that the track is absolutely sure that the bettors will put at least \$25,000 in the pool. If not, the post time is simply delayed until the pool hits the minimum guarantee. If you really want to guarantee something juicy, then guarantee that the winner will pay at least the price set in the morning line. That would force the morning-line oddsmaker to make more realistic projections, at least. I rarely see morning lines under 5-2 at tracks where the favorite almost always goes off odds-on. To me, that is just the racetrack version of the "bait and switch." If the tracks want to make some enticing guarantees, they have to guarantee me more than ice in the wintertime. Guarantee

that the exacta will pay at least \$3.00. Force the racing secretaries to card more competitive races so that we don't have to watch a steady stream of 1-5 shots every race. (Though, I do enjoy betting against them.)

Get better cameras and GPS systems like the one used at Woodbine. I think the cameras should be set up in the infield and then follow the horses around the track (like the football cameras on wires above the field). Then the viewing angle wouldn't be changing every 28 seconds. Of course there could be a few angles shown on the monitor, but one should be consistent.

There are many ways to make a night at the races more enjoyable, but I fear that most tracks are more concerned with luring people away from the track and into the casino.

- Earl Paulson

Now, Now

With Deweycheatumnhowe, would you breed a good mare to stallion that raced with hobbles? My answer is NEVER. Happy New Year

- Richard Lavigne



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Woodbine Report

Saturday's Results:

10, Wdb, PACE, \$38,000. PREFERRED. 27, 55.2, 1:22.4, 1:36.3, 1:50.3, FT

High Def Z Tam (b,g,5 - Real Desire-Caribbean-Artiscape) O-Z Tam Stables LLC, Patrick D Lachance B-Perretti Farms T-Martin Lachance D-Billy Davis Jr, \$19,000 Lifetime Record: 55-13-4-7, \$350,004
To view replay click [here](#)

Yonkers Report

Saturday's Results:

5, YR, \$21,000, Pace, 3&4 YEAR OLD CLAIMING ALLOWANCE \$50,000 3 YO 50%, 4 YO 25%, F&M 20%, 27.1, 55.3, 1:23.3, 1:53.0, FT

We The People (h, 4, American Ideal--Art's Temptress, by Artsplace), \$200,000 2009 LEX-SEL O-J M F Racing LLC. B-Brittany Farms & Val D'Or Farms. T-Gilbert Garcia-Herrera. D-George Brennan, \$10,500, Lifetime Record: 43-13-8-4, \$133,900
To view replay click [here](#)

6, YR, \$24,000, Pace, NON-WINNERS OF \$25,000 IN LAST 6 STARTS, 28.3, 58.2, 1:26.4, 1:54.4, FT
River Shark (g, 6, Four Starzzz Shark--Riverview Diamond, by Life Sign), \$9,000 2007 LEX-SEL O-Mark S Ford & Vip Internet Stable LLC & Robert O Di Nozzi & Mo Co Inc. B-Save H Stewart & Myron Bell. T-Mark Ford. D-Mark Macdonald, \$12,000, Lifetime Record: 122-32-16-18, \$993,367
To view replay click [here](#)

7, YR, \$21,000, Pace, NON-WINNERS OF \$18,000 IN LAST 6 STARTS, 28.3, 58.0, 1:26.0, 1:54.4, FT
Rockstar Temper (g, 4, Rocknroll Hanover--Dragon Temper, by Dragon's Lair), \$8,000 2009 LEX-SEL O-Carl D Le Cause & August M Licameli. B-Brent S Tartar. T-Carl Le Cause. D-George Brennan, \$10,500, Lifetime Record: 55-11-7-7, \$172,608
To view replay click [here](#)

8, YR, \$28,000, Pace, WINNERS OVER \$25,000 IN LAST 6 STARTS, 27.3, 57.2, 1:25.2, 1:54.2, FT
Eighteen (h, 4, Cam's Card Shark--Dream Of Mimi, by Dream Away), \$27,000 2009 SHS-HBG O-James F Snyder. B-Winbak Farm. T-Mark Ford. D-Mark Macdonald, \$14,000, Lifetime Record: 64-12-9-9, \$333,544
To view replay click [here](#)

9, YR, \$21,000, Pace, CLAIMING ALLOWANCE \$50,000 3 YO 50%, 4 YO 25%, F&M 20%, 27.1, 57.2, 1:25.4, 1:54.1, FT
Report For Duty N (g, 10, Washington Vc--Aerospace, by Sokys Atom) O-Gilberto Garcia-Herrera & Michi Yvette Abday & Barbara D & Donald G Arnstine. B-B D West, NZ. T-Gilbert Garcia-Herrera. D-George Brennan, \$10,500, Lifetime Record: 129-38-14-17, \$696,667
To view replay click [here](#)

10, YR, \$21,000, Pace, NON-WINNERS OF \$18,000 IN LAST 6 STARTS, 27.1, 55.4, 1:24.2, 1:54.0, FT
Code Word (h, 5, Western Terror--Numberone Treasure, by Northern Luck), \$110,000 2008 FOREST O-Burke Racing Stable LLC & Frank D Baldachino & Weaver Brussemi LLC & Lawrence R Karr. B-Kentuckiana Farms Gen Par. T-Ron Burke. D-Yannick Gingras, \$10,500, Lifetime Record: 95-19-17-15, \$670,546
To view replay click [here](#)

11, YR, \$21,000, Pace, NON-WINNERS OF \$18,000 IN LAST 6 STARTS, 27.4, 57.2, 1:25.4, 1:55.2, FT
Shadows Dream (g, 6, Dream Away--Dream Supreme, by Direct Scooter) O-Classico Stables LLC. B-Barbara S Natelson. T-Eric Mollor. D-Eric Goodell, \$10,500, Lifetime Record: 101-14-11-15, \$190,352
To view replay click [here](#)

12, YR, \$24,000, Pace, NON-WINNERS OF \$25,000 IN LAST 6 STARTS, 27.4, 57.2, 1:25.1, 1:54.3, FT
Southern Allie (g, 5, Allie's Western--Pershing Angela, by Pershing Square) O-Burke Racing Stable LLC & Weaver Brussemi LLC. B-John R Tignor. T-Ron Burke. D-Yannick Gingras, \$12,000, Lifetime Record: 97-32-12-10, \$549,540
To view replay click [here](#)

FEEDBACK...

we want to hear from you!

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