



The Horsemen's Newsletter

April 2010

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Rosecroft's future existence more doubtful than ever

The Maryland Racing Commission conducted a hearing on April 13 to determine whether Rosecroft Raceway, the bankrupt harness track in Oxon Hill, would be allowed to retain its operating license.

Ultimately, the Commission voted 5-1 (with Chairman John Franzone casting the dissenting vote) to allow Rosecroft to stay open until July 1.

A \$350,000 loan from prospective buyer Mark Vogel, and \$150,000 from Cloverleaf Standardbred Owners Association, reportedly will be used to keep the track afloat until then. Mr. Vogel's desire to own Rosecroft appears based on his vision of its future as a casino.

Rosecroft's current owner, Cloverleaf Enterprises Inc., pursued legislation in the 2010 General Assembly to introduce table games (see *Thoughts and comment on page 4*). CEI president Kelly Rogers had warned that Rosecroft would be forced to close this month if the legislation did not pass.

Rosecroft has not conducted a regular live racing program in nearly two years, and exists as a simulcast facility.

Mr. Franzone expressed serious concerns as to Rosecroft's financial viability, and questioned the rationale for granting a race track operating license for a facility that appears to have little, if any, impetus toward live racing.

Reminder: MRC badges must be worn at Pimlico

Starting May 1, Maryland Racing Commission badges must be worn on the outside of clothing at all times on the Pimlico backstretch.

Arundel Mills casino is off the drawing board—at least for now

The Cordish Co.'s proposed casino near Arundel Mills mall is now officially on hold, pending the outcome of an Anne Arundel County referendum in the November election.

On April 1, the Anne Arundel County Board of Elections announced that 22,967 signatures of those opposing the mall slots site are valid, and authorized a referendum that will allow county voters to decide for or against the mall casino in the November election.

Within a few hours of the Elections Board's decision, Anne Arundel County Executive John R. Leopold ordered county officials to cease their review of Cordish's plans, bringing progress on the Arundel Mills casino to a standstill.

Developer David L. Cordish is attempting to revive his bid. He has filed a lawsuit claiming that fraud was involved in the gathering of the signatures. That case will go to court next month, and if Cordish is successful the referendum could be called off.

However, if the referendum is held and it goes against the Cordish site, the slots commission will reopen bidding for the Anne Arundel license; zoning will also have to be secured for another site.

"The MTHA's position remains the same as it has always been—that is, slots belong at the race track," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "While

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Maryland's first two slots sites to open this fall

Maryland's first two slots facilities are on track to begin doing business this coming fall.

Penn National Gaming (PNG) expects to have its site in Cecil County up and running in mid to late October, according to the company's director of public affairs, Karen Bailey.

"The building is enclosed and the roof is on; the floors are poured and the drywall is finished," said Ms. Bailey in mid-April.

Encompassing about 65,000 square feet, the Penn National casino will open with 1,500 slot machines, a buffet restaurant and additional food stations. It will feature an art deco design similar to PNG's Hollywood Casino at Penn National.

The Penn National site is located near

the I-95 Perryville exit, at the intersection of I-95 and Rte. 222. Plans call for it to serve as the anchor to a mixed-use development to be built by Stewart Associates.

The announced target date for the Worcester County site, at Ocean Downs harness track near Ocean City, remains late November or early December. But it possibly could open sooner, said Joe Cavilla, who will manage the 25,000 square-foot casino for owner Bill Rickman Jr.

Ocean Downs will house 800 slot machines initially. Its casino will be located in the former grandstand, which is undergoing a complete remodeling. The existing clubhouse will continue as a racing/simulcast facility at least in the early phase, said Mr. Cavilla.



Board actions

Meeting held April 8 at Laurel

Members present: Richard J. Hoffberger, President; John V. Alecci, Howard M. Bender, Dale Capuano, Phillip L. Capuano, William T. Fitzgibbons, Sr., Linda S. Gaudet, Arnold A. Heft, Timothy L. Keefe, Lawrence E. Murray, John J. Robb, Katharine M. Voss

Members absent: H. Neil Glasser, Christopher W. Grove, Richard J. Meyer

Drug and Alcohol Program

By unanimous vote, the board agreed to continue its support of the Drug and Alcohol Program at the same level as in previous years.

AHC membership

The board agreed by majority vote to renew the MTHA's membership in the American Horse Council (AHC), for an increased fee. The vote was 10 for and 1 against, with Mr. Alecci casting the opposing vote.

The AHC is the major organization providing representation for the Thoroughbred industry in the U.S. Congress.

Simulcasting extension

The board agreed, by unanimous vote, to approve simulcasting through December 31, 2010.

2010 Budget

The MTHA's 2010 budget was presented and approved.

Financial report

The MTHA's financial report for the period January 1 through December 31, 2009 was reviewed and unanimously approved as presented.

Arundel, from page 1

no one wanted another delay, the industry will be in a much better position going forward if Laurel Park can take advantage of the renewed opportunity to secure slots.

"Slots at either Arundel Mills or Laurel will generate revenue that boosts purses, but the track operator would struggle financially without slots and with competition from a nearby casino. This could create a situation where the track is worth more for development than as a race track. Ultimately, that could mean we'd have no place to race for those higher purses. The current scenario gives us a chance to have a successful racing program over the long term."



JIM MCCUE

Lang's ashes spread at Pimlico

During a special ceremony on opening day at Pimlico, April 17, former general manager Chick Lang's ashes were spread in the Preakness winner's circle.

Family members, from left, are wife Nancy, grandson Bart, daughter Debi and grandchildren Tiffany, Devon, Jamie, Liz and J.T.

Bonus among highlights of this year's Preakness week

As announced in last month's newsletter, a special purse bonus will be in effect at Pimlico on Black-Eyed Susan Stakes Day (May 14) and Preakness Day (May 15).

The bonus will apply to all dirt races, with the exception of stakes, in which more than eight betting interests start.

A 10 percent bonus will be applied to the total purse if nine betting interests start, 20 percent if 10 betting interests start, 30 percent if 11 betting interests start, and 40 percent if 12 betting interests start. The bonus is capped at 40 percent.

Post times

First post on Black Eyed Susan Day is 12:15 p.m.

On Preakness Day, horses go to post for the first race at 10:45 a.m.

Pimlico reaching out to fans with online chats

Historic Pimlico Race Course is making use of modern technology this spring with a new program offering interactive online chats between racing fans and experts.

The Maryland Jockey Club has joined with www.HorsePlayerNOW.com to provide the chats for the first 17 days of the meeting, through Preakness Day, May 15.

"Horse Player NOW has had success in boosting the handle at Churchill Downs during its 2009 fall meet and is currently working with XpressBet for high-profile stands at Santa Anita, Gulfstream and Keeneland," said MJC president Tom Chuckas. "This partnership

will prove beneficial to the track brand as well as the bottom line, which is increased wagering."

Horse Player NOW is capable of accommodating tens of thousands of participants simultaneously. The race-day chats may be accessed at www.pimlico.com. They begin 30 minutes before the first race. Discussions continue until the final race of the day.

Handicapping information and advice comes from Horse Player NOW's Jeremy Plonk, Joe Kristufek, Brian Spencer, Brian Nadeau and Bob Neumeier. Additional analysis is provided by Pimlico announcer Dave Rodman and track handicapper Frank Carulli.

Medication rulings now available for viewing on RMTc Web site

The Racing Medication and Testing Consortium (RMTc) has begun posting recent medication rulings on its Web site at www.rmtcnet.com.

Information is gathered from racing commissions throughout the country, and includes names of the trainer and horse, the state where the violation occurred, the penalty, and a description of the medication that was involved.

"Racing fans and participants have voiced their desire for transparency and

easy-to-access data on drug-related rulings," said RMTc executive director Dr. Scot Waterman. "To our knowledge, this is the only database in existence that allows viewers to see not only the infractions but also a description of the possible uses and effects of the drug in the horse. We hope that this will begin the process of better clarifying the difference between medication management mistakes and more serious drug violations."



Colors and papers must be picked up before end of Pimlico meet

Horsemen are reminded to pick up racing silks and Jockey Club registration papers before the end of the Pimlico meet.

These items will not be available for pick-up during Maryland's live racing break, which begins on Pimlico's closing day, May 22, and extends until August.

Colors and papers will not be shipped to Colonial Downs.

Committee bulletins

Health and welfare

The MTHA, in conjunction with the Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund, will sponsor Health Fairs this summer at Bowie and Laurel, reported MTHA Health and Welfare Committee chairman Rich Meyer.

IN MEMORIAM

Joe Lishia, the jockeys' room food concessionaire from the late 1970s until his retirement in 1994, died on April 2 at the age of 83. Mr. Lishia's son Scott is the Maryland Jockey Club's director of guest services; Scott Lishia's wife, Rosemary Lishia, serves as the MJC's senior accountant/racing.

Robert E. DeWald, 68, who served as assistant to his late father, trainer Charles DeWald, died on March 16.

The Horsemen's Newsletter

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reports on issues and events of interest to owners and trainers in Maryland.
Your suggestions are welcome.

Hoofprints

Preakness infield festivities

The Maryland Jockey Club has planned a variety of activities for the Preakness Day infield crowd, including performances by Grammy Award winner Zac Brown Band and platinum-selling musical group O.A.R.

No beverages of any kind (cans or bottles), including alcohol, soft drinks and water, may be brought into the infield. Water bottles will be available for \$1, and the track will sell souvenir mugs with unlimited refills of beer for \$20.

For details visit www.preakness.com.

Fasig-Tipton Midlantic 2-year-olds in training sale

Fasig-Tipton has catalogued 405 en-

tries for its May 17 sale of 2-year-olds in training at Timonium.

The sale has been shortened from two days to one, but undertack previews at Timonium will be held over two days—May 12 and 13, beginning at 10 a.m. each day.

AHC's National Issues Forum

The American Horse Council's 2010 National Issues Forum has as its theme "Emerging Diseases: a Challenge to the Industry." Co-hosted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the forum will take place June 21 and 22 in Washington, D.C., as part of the AHC's annual meeting.

For more information call (202) 296-4031 or visit www.horsecouncil.org.

Recreation report

From Dan Mangum, MTHA Recreation Director. For information or to sign up for programs, call Dan at (410) 802-5798.

Orioles tickets

Winners for the first two dates of the Orioles ticket giveaway were Willie Key and Skeets Holland (both from Bowie).

The next drawing will be held on Saturday, May 8.

Gate schooling schedule

during Pimlico meet

*At Bowie, Laurel, Pimlico:
Wednesdays through Saturdays*

Sign up in the track kitchens or call Dan for more information.

Baysox tickets

Bowie BaySox tickets are here and going fast. Remember—it's first come, first served. Make sure to sign up in the track kitchens or call Dan directly.

Softball

Efforts are underway to organize a pick-up softball game at Laurel. If you are interested, call Dan. Players are needed.

Donations

The following generous people recently donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch: Gene Gilhooly, Sylvia and Arnold Heft, Arlene and Herb Kushner, Diane Mukherjee, Diana Sansosti, Russell C. Schalk Jr. and Joey Smith.

Horsemen's calendar

RACING

Pimlico Now through May 22
Fair Hill May 29
Colonial Downs May 29-July 21
Laurel Park Summer/fall dates TBA
Timonium TBA

**JIM MCKAY MARYLAND MILLION DAY
OCT. 2 AT LAUREL PARK**

**FASIG-TIPTON MIDLANTIC AUCTIONS
AT TIMONIUM (410) 392-5555**

Two-Year-Olds in Training May 17
Eastern Fall Yearlings Oct. 4, 5

OUT-OF-STATE AUCTIONS

Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July Selected Yearlings Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. July 13, 14
Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Selected Yearlings Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (516) 328-1800. Aug. 2, 3
Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Selected/Open Yearlings Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. Aug. 24-27
Keeneland September Yearlings Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. ... Sept. 13-26
Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall Yearlings Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. ... Oct. 25-27



FINAL CALL for Pension Plan registration

Attention All Backstretch Employees (Assistant Trainers, Exercise Persons, Grooms, Hotwalkers, Stable Foremen, Trainers, etc.)

Pension Plan Registration for the year ended 2009 is continuing at the following times and locations.

Bring your Maryland Racing Commission Badge and W-2, 1099, or tax return for 2009.

For more information call the MTHA office at (410) 265-6842.

Failure to register will result in the loss of your 2009 benefit

April 26 through April 30

Laurel Track Kitchen,
9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

May 3 through May 7

Pimlico MTHA Office,
10 a.m. to noon

Susan G. Komen fundraiser at Mt. Washington Tavern

On Wednesday, May 12, following the draw for the Preakness, the Maryland Jockey Club will sponsor a fundraiser at the Mt. Washington Tavern for Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

Many horsemen are expected to gather for this event, which will feature guest bartenders, a silent auction and raffle.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure is the world's largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors. Its funds go to promote breast cancer awareness and research.



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April 2010

Thoughts and comment

No news is good news, as the saying goes. For Thoroughbred horsemen, that surely rings true regarding the 2010 legislative session.

The state legislature adjourned for the year on April 12 without passing any racing-related bills. Considering that several of the bills brought before lawmakers this session would have had a long-term negative effect on the Thoroughbred industry, horsemen should be pleased with the outcome.

Bills were introduced to negatively alter the formula for allocation of slots revenue to purses and breeders' funds, and to eliminate it completely.

Another bill sought to tweak the dis-

tribution of slots revenue in favor of the harness industry. Efforts also were made to dismantle the Maryland Racing Commission.

Perhaps the most debatable came in the form of a bill that would have opened the door to casino-type gaming at Rosecroft. It passed the Senate and died in a House committee. The time undoubtedly will come when the legislature is again asked to approve casino-type gaming. However, it makes far better sense to consider it for all of Maryland's gambling locations and not just Rosecroft.

*/Arnold A. Heft, MTHA Director,
Legislative Committee Chairman*

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