



TOC

Thoroughbred Owners of California

Summer Newsletter

July 2020

Chairman's Letter



Nick Alexander, TOC Chair

A MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION AND HOPE

It's been a difficult year so far dealing with a global pandemic that has significantly altered the way we do business. I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of you in this wonderful sport of horse racing for all of the sacrifices you have made and continue to make.

Thank you to owners for standing with us to support the California Thoroughbred industry during the nearly two months that live racing was shut down in the state. Thank you for continuing to support California training facilities, trainers, and backstretch workers caring for your horses, even during the times you were unable to go to the track to see your horses. Thank you for your strong support of entries once racing resumed at Santa Anita and Golden Gate Fields. All you have done gives us great hope for the future of our industry in California. When we come through this, standing together, we will be stronger than ever.

Thank you to Santa Anita, Golden Gate Fields, Los Alamitos, Del Mar, and Pleasanton management for your tireless efforts to make the backstretch as safe as possible for our workers. Thank you for implementing exemplary safety protocols and working diligently with county and state agencies to bring back live racing. You continue to provide hope for our sport and a model for operating that will be implemented by Del Mar for their summer meet.

Thank you to our amazing TOC board of directors, who normally meet once a month but have been meeting weekly – and sometimes daily – for the past three months to assess, monitor, and develop recommendations for the California Thoroughbred industry during this extraordinary time of COVID-19. Throughout it all, we continue to be bullish on California racing. If you get a chance, please read the article in this issue that features three of our board members sharing their enthusiasm and optimism for the sport.

Finally, I want to thank TOC's hard working staff who have adapted to challenging workplace circumstances and continued to provide top level service and leadership for California Thoroughbred owners. Be assured that they will continue to work diligently on your behalf.

TOC BOARD ELECTION UPDATE

This year there were six TOC board seats open for election and six qualified candidates at the close of nominations. As a result, with six candidates for six seats, we followed previously established TOC procedure (and Section 7522 of the California Nonprofit Mutual Benefit Corporation Law) allowing the TOC Board to declare the six candidates that were nominated and qualified as having been elected without the vote of the full membership. This has the added benefit of saving the organization approximately \$16,000 in election expenses.

Of the newly elected directors, Gary Fenton, Mike Harrington, Terry Lovingier, Richard Rosenberg, and Bill Strauss will serve three-year terms, and Jeff Bloom will serve a one-year term. They join current TOC board members Allen Aldrich, Nick Alexander, Bob Baffert, Joe Ciaglia, Rick Gold, Bob Liewald, Ed Moger, Jack Owens, and Samantha Siegel in comprising our 2020-21 Board of Directors.

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Hope Springs Eternal for Horse Owners

By Mary Forney

If nothing else, the events of the past several months have shown that horse owners are a strong and resilient breed of people! We took some time to reflect with three very active TOC board members to get their thoughts on what horse racing means to them and how their love of the sport sustains them.



Jeff Bloom Celebrates a Win at Santa Anita

Jeff Bloom has been passionate about horse racing pretty much his entire life. His family had no connection with racing, but for something to do one summer his older brother took him to the races at Del Mar. “I was probably 12 at the time,” said Bloom. “We walked straight through the entrance to the paddock, and my jaw just dropped. I fell in love with it and literally decided at that moment that I wanted to be a jockey.”

Thirty-five years later, Bloom’s enthusiasm for horse racing has not waned. “There’s something so majestic about the Thoroughbred horse,” he said. “Their athleticism, their power, and their beauty are what draw me in and keep me in the game. More than anything else it starts and ends with the horse.”

Bloom’s goal to become a jockey was more than a childhood dream. With youthful perseverance, he took city buses to farms near Del Mar and begged to be allowed just to work around the horses. Eventually he went to live in a tack room at San Luis Rey Downs, where he trained to be a rider. He rode his first race at Del Mar at the age of 18. During his nine-year riding career, he raced at many of the major tracks throughout North America.

Bloom’s journey encompassed many different aspects of the industry including racing manager, marketing and media relations’ consultant, and broadcaster. After earning a finance degree from San Diego State University and working for a time in software technology, he took the plunge into horse ownership when West Point Thoroughbreds offered him a job setting up their west coast operations. After 8 years with West Point, he formed Bloom Racing Stable, LLC., a fully integrated horse racing company that has campaigned numerous stakes winners.

“There’s a saying once the bug bites you you’re forever bitten,” says Bloom. “I think an individual would be hard pressed not to fall in love with our wonderful sport if they experienced it from an owner’s perspective – if you could bottle up what it feels like to watch your horse cross the finish line first!” He concluded, “That trip from the stands to the winners circle, it’s like you’re walking on air. It’s an incredible experience.”



Richard Rosenberg (Yellow Cap) with Family and Friends at Del Mar

Richard Rosenberg was introduced to horse racing as a youngster growing up in the metropolitan New York area. Like so many racing fans, he was first taken to the track by a relative.

“As a young boy, I had an aunt in Long Island who used to take us to Yonkers to watch the harness races,” Rosenberg recalls. “She always had a winning ticket because she bet every horse in the race! She’s the one who got me hooked on racing.”

After his family moved to California, where he attended UCLA and began practicing law, he shifted his focus to Hollywood Park and night harness racing. His first entry into the horse business came when a friend convinced him to buy an interest in a Standardbred mare to race at Hollywood Park. He spent 15 years buying Standardbred yearlings at the Tattersalls sales in Lexington and racing them on both coasts. When harness racing ended at the Inglewood track in 1984, as the dirt track was reconfigured to 1-1/8 miles, he moved on to Thoroughbreds.

His first Thoroughbred trainer was the iconic Barry Abrams, and Rosenberg has raced and bred Thoroughbreds in California ever

since. Fortunately his wife, Cristina, also loves horse racing. Her late father was the president of the Jockey Club of Rio De Janeiro and owned a stud farm. Rosenberg reflected on what makes horseracing so special for him:

“I find that going to the backstretch and spending time in the mornings, it’s a whole different world,” Rosenberg said. “It can be in the middle of a city, but you’re all of a sudden back on the farm. Experiencing the camaraderie and watching the horses up close make it a real departure from the world we live in.”

He also echoed the sentiment we hear so often from racehorse owners: “There is nothing comparable to the thrill of winning a horse race. It doesn’t matter if you own 100, 20 or 10 percent of a racehorse, you get the same thrill.”



Samantha Siegel with Joe Talamo

For **Samantha Siegel**, horse racing has always been a part of life. Racing as Jay Em Ess Stable, she is an active owner and breeder whose family has been involved in California Thoroughbred racing for more than five decades. Her parents met on a blind date to the track, and by the time Samantha came along racing was a family passion. One of her earliest memories is of the racetrack.

“We were in New York when Forego was running,” she recalled. “We went to the paddock to see him, and somebody lifted me up so I could see better.” Siegel believes her experience is similar to that of many other horse players and owners. “It’s a generational thing,” she said. “People who have gone to the racetrack with their parents now bring their kids.”

It’s the social aspect of racing that especially appeals to Siegel. “I grew up going to the races with my family, but most of my friends I know from the racetrack,” she said. “We spend almost every Saturday together. It’s a great place for people to come, meet, hang out, and have fun.”

“You meet people from all different walks of life at the track,” she added. “It’s like a big melting pot. You never know who you’ll sit next to on a big day at the races. Lots of times they will become your lifelong friends.” It’s a connection she looks forward to resuming when spectators are once again allowed to attend the races in California.

When asked what has kept her in the business of horse ownership over the years, Siegel is quick to reply: “It’s the hope of finding a needle in a haystack. Horse racing is called the ‘sport of kings,’ but it’s an everyman sport. Everyone has the opportunity to find a diamond in the rough. It’s all about the people who get a group together and claim their first horse, and it wins a stakes race. A lot of my best horses have come from humble beginnings.”

“But mostly,” Siegel concluded, “it’s about hanging out with the people I enjoy spending time with. I tell everyone my religion is I go to the racetrack on Saturdays!”

TOC EVENT UPDATE

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, TOC will not be hosting any in-person events through September. Please see below for our upcoming webinars and tentatively scheduled in-person events.

Register for TOC events at www.toconline.com.

Southern California Annual Meeting

Webinar – Participate by phone and/or online.

Saturday, August 15, 2020
at 9:00 a.m.

Conformation Clinic (Tentative)

Golden Gate Fields & Santa Anita
Saturday, October 10, 2020
at 10:00 a.m.

Northern California Annual Meeting

Golden Gate Fields (Tentative)
Saturday, October 24, 2020
at 10:00 a.m.

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RACING OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND AT DEL MAR

By Josh Rubinstein, President & COO, Del Mar Thoroughbred Club

Del Mar will run its 81st summer race meeting Friday, July 10 through Labor Day Monday, September 7. And though we are all experiencing challenging times, Del Mar will offer nine weeks of world-class racing. Racing will be presented Fridays through Sundays and Labor Day Monday with 10 races offered on Fridays and Sundays and 11 on Saturdays. A total of 291 races are projected to be run this summer, compared with 297 last year.

Once again, Del Mar will present a strong stakes schedule with 38 options for black type, substantial purses, and racing prestige. Twenty-one carry Graded status – six Grade I, eleven Grade II and four Grade III. Topping the stakes program is the TVG Pacific Classic card on Saturday, August 22. Besides the \$500,000 Classic, which is open to 3-year-olds and up at a mile and a quarter, there are four other Graded events that afternoon: the Grade I, \$250,000 Del Mar Oaks; the Grade II, \$200,000 Del Mar Handicap; the Grade III, \$100,000 Torrey Pines Stakes, and the Grade III, \$100,000 Green Flash Handicap.

With the Kentucky Derby being run on Saturday, September 7, the \$100,000 Shared Belief Stakes for 3-year-olds has shifted from the end of August to August 1, while increasing the distance from a mile to a mile and one-sixteenth. So for the first time in Del Mar's history we are offering a Derby prep race with qualifying points (50-20-10-5) to the first four finishers.

The meet will finish strongly with two Grade I juvenile championship events – the \$250,000 Del Mar Debutante and the \$250,000 Del Mar Futurity – highlighting its four-day closing weekend with the latter occupying its traditional closing day setting on Labor Day Monday.

Del Mar's highly popular "Ship and Win" program returns for its 10th season, providing owners and trainers who import horses from out-of-state the chance to cash in on additional monies by racing here this summer. The program provides a \$2,000 check for any "S&W" qualifier in his/her first start, then adds a 20% bonus to any purse monies (first through fifth) earned in that start. Last summer, an additional \$544,244 in purses was paid out to "S&W" horses.

Interestingly, 70% of the "S&W" purses were earned by local connections who went out and got runners from other locations and brought them to Del Mar to race. An added attraction to the program this year is the rule tweak that says the 20% purse bonus applies for any additional starts at the session, a key clause in light of Del Mar's extended nine-weekend season.

Del Mar is very appreciative of the partnership we have with the TOC and its members. We wish you all the best and much racing luck this summer!

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REPORT

With the conclusion of the Golden Gate Fields Winter/Spring race meet, we would like to thank all owners that participated in the very successful meet. Despite challenges relating to the Covid-19 shutdown, owners continued to support the meet with large field sizes that resulted in strong handle and purse generation.

Congratulations to top owners in terms of wins: Tommy Town Thoroughbreds LLC (15), Ronald Charles and Samuel Gordon (14), and Johnny Taboada (10). And congratulations to Tommy Town Thoroughbreds LLC, the leading owner by earnings with \$382,360.

Next up is CARF with their six week summer meet at Pleasanton racetrack that runs June 19th thru July 26th running Friday-Sunday each week. Key days to mark on your calendar include the Oak Tree Sprint on July 4th, the Governor's Handicap on July 18th, and the Everett Nevin Stakes on July 25th.

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