

VLT REVENUE UP FOR GRABS

—HOPE YOU DID YOUR PART...

The Province of Ontario decided that slot revenue, in the not too distant future, will no longer be available to enhance purses – thus, for all practical purposes, signaling the end of harness racing as we know it in that Province earlier this year; the Pennsylvania Legislature had decided on a similar path, but after much negotiations, settled on just a reduction of approximately \$5 million in purses from slots. Though with some \$80 million in purses this seems like a paltry sum, horsemen in Pennsylvania did not take such threatened action lightly. The Pennsylvania horsemen, to their credit, worked hard to preserve the vast majority of their revenue stream. Every time there is a significant budget gap or any excuse for that matter, State Legislature will be looking in the pockets of the horsemen in that state until there is nothing left to take, and in some venues directed there by track owners looking to get out of the horse business.

New Jersey Casinos, albeit unwillingly, supported racing for years with supplemental payments, keeping New Jersey the premier harness racing state, and the Meadowlands the Mecca of harness racing, until their bottom line turned bright red, and Governor Christie allowed them to turn off the spigot. As a result, Monmouth Park and The Meadowlands almost shut their doors for good, and the future of racing in the state is still in doubt with present owners undoubtedly betting on the outcome that one day gaming will be permitted at those two venues, and their investments will yield dividends. Monmouth is already seeking sports betting and Chris Christie appears willing to challenge the federal prohibition imposed on such wagering.

We cannot allow anything like this to take place in New York. Our state has seen a renaissance in harness racing with Yonkers the most shining example. Purses at Yonkers are up to levels that are now the envy of many jurisdictions. This increase fuels the job laden NYS agriculture and horse racing industry.

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VLT REVENUE – UP FOR GRABS – Hope you did your part...

Breeding and racing in New York has become more desirable than ever. The renaissance in New York harness racing with the advent of VLTs is just now being felt on the thoroughbred side, with the opening of Aqueduct. Unfortunately, some of the adverse press surrounding Derby and Preakness winner – “I’ll Have Another”, and an unexplained spike in catastrophic Thoroughbred breakdowns, has brought unwanted attention to the sport. As a result, other entities representing higher education, senior citizens groups and government itself, feel that our purse money could be put to better use and these groups could care less about the consequences to New York’s economy and much less to our industry. Sadly, competition for our purses, comes not only from those outside entities, but from within as well, as the New York Gaming Association (NYGA), consisting of the nine race tracks with VLT revenue, vying for table games and seeks to cut the horsemen out of any additional revenue those games may bring. Instead of inviting us to join in the quest for more, they rather seek to cut us out of the revenue from table games and slot machines, and instead ask us to rely on the trickle down, they insist as table games will attract more patrons, which will purportedly result in more VLT play. Nothing could be further from the truth, and the expansion of gaming without guarantees for us, could result in significantly lower purses. Most members of NYGA have no interest in growing our sport, and would prefer to see the end of racing in this state. Many track operators see racing as nothing more than a necessary evil, and a drain on their bottom line, doing little or nothing to promote it. One need only compare the plushness of the VLT part of these facilities, with the Spartan racing portion of many of the venues. If you visited or raced at any of these entities, you know full well that what is said is sadly true. Thus to protect what we have worked so hard to achieve – the SOA of New York along with our sister organizations, have joined with our fellow horsemen on the thoroughbred side, along with The Farm Bureau, to form The New York Horse Racing and

Agriculture Industry Alliance, consisting of the following:

- Blue Chip Farms LLC
- Cameo Hills Farm
- Empire State Harness Horsemen’s Alliance
- Finger Lakes T- Bred Horsemen’s Association
- Harness Horse Association of Central New York
- Harness Horse Breeders of New York State
- Monticello Harness Horsemen’s Association
- New York Farm Bureau
- New York Thoroughbred Breeders
- New York Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association
- Saratoga Harness Horseperson’s Association
- Standardbred Owners Association of New York
- Western New York Harness Horsemen’s Association
- Winbak Farms

After numerous meetings in Albany and Saratoga, it was decided that the number one priority of this newly formed organization, and its first step, was to educate both the Governor and the Legislature as to the importance of the racing industry to New York State, especially the jobs involved in this labor intensive industry; the green space preserved and the total economic impact to the state. The Alliance needs to convince government that any change in/or tampering with the present law, guaranteed percentages and fixed race dates, will result in a monumental loss of jobs. The Alliance doesn’t buy into the trickle down benefit that the horsemen are told they would get from Racino operators and full table games, while those operators retain 100% of that from the new table games. Here two things need to be noted. First, that Pennsylvania may be the only state where horsemen do not share in table game revenue and, second, that the 31% growth in table games should help all horsemen better understand why the same result is sought in New York State.

So what are we doing, well most of you should have already received, and hopefully returned the Alliance survey; and if you have, thanks for doing your part. The results of this survey will be presented to both the Governor and the Legislature, as our initial step toward preserving agriculture and racing in this state, which industries are all purse driven.

HATS OFF TO YONKERS

Not to be out done by Churchill Downs on Derby Day, Yonkers Raceway staged its own Derby Hat Contest to celebrate the 138th Kentucky Derby. There were win, place and show prizes of \$300, \$250 and \$100 for the most fashionable and most creative hats. Judges included April Pesick, Assistant Publicist for Yonkers Raceway, Senator Andrea Stewart Cousins, Assembly Member Shelley Mayer, Yonkers City Council President Chuck Lesnick, WHUD Host of the Mike & Kacey Morning Show, Mike Bennett, and our own Joe Faraldo, who loved the event. (see photo insert) "It's great to see a track operator promoting racing", said Joe. Along those lines, Yonkers has produced a commercial dedicated "exclusively" to promoting harness racing. Its initial airing took place on April 8th on ESPN's Sunday Night Baseball seasonal debut. Again, this commercial was solely about harness racing on ESPN at Prime Time. If you have not seen it, you are missing something very special done with the cooperation of drivers Jordan Stratton, Jason Bartlett and Shaun Vallee. In our view, and especially in light of statements from some quarters, that Racino operators should not be expected to promote or market our sport, the effort by Yonkers Management to market harness racing and enhance awareness of our sport deserves recognition from us. Faraldo said, "That while Yonkers' Management might not bring attention to its efforts, the SOA of New York recognizes that Yonkers hit a grand slam, putting this commercial before the general public rather than just the racing public generally played to. We are glad to see that unlike some track operators, Yonkers Management, led by Tim Rooney, has not forgotten what secured them Racino status – Racing." Thanks.

PLAYER REWARD – A LITTLE MORE THAN A CLICK AWAY

This year, Joe Faraldo appointed a brand new committee, to explore and implement a meaningful Player Rewards Program, to augment Yonkers soon to be released, Advance Deposit Wagering Site (ADW). The committee comprised of Irv Atherton, Chairman, Phil Bogner, Ted Derian, Mike Forte and Ed Fucci have already put together a comprehensive list of rewards that are being offered by competing ADWs; as well as a "wish list" of what should be offered to attract and keep new

customers, once our ADW is underway. Among some of the suggestions and recommendations are, signup and referral bonuses, more exotic wagers with guaranteed minimum and carryovers, portable tellers, and lastly, a live TV show. The SOA of New York is presently discussing all of their suggestions with Yonkers Management, and we will keep you posted when some of the anticipated Empire City Bets – ADW system and perks, are close to implementation.

SOA & IMUS

SOA OF NEW YORK SEARCHES FOR CHARITY TO PARTNER WITH GOING FORWARD

Over the year, the SOA of New York has made significant contributions to many worthwhile charities, especially the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. Just recently, the SOA of NY contributed \$5,917.00 to Horsability, to enable the Westbury Facility to purchase its first two man specially designed wheel chair/driving cart and modified harness. Horsability was founded in 1993 and offers a variety of Therapeutic Riding and Hippotherapy programs for people with special needs. Most recently, the organization started a driving program that will cater chiefly to military veterans, and will offer both emotional and physical support to veterans, as they transition from combat to civilian life. Trainer, Robbie Siegelman, has become significantly involved in the program, which presently moved to a facility at SUNY College at Old Westbury, just a stone throw away from Robbie's home. Board member, Ed Fucci, (Hands off my Cookies) was the "driving" force that convinced the Board of Directors to support this effort.

SOA of New York, through the efforts of President, Joe Faraldo, Executive Director, George Casale and Board Member, Sandra Kaufman have been meeting with members of the Westchester Food Bank, to discuss using our driver colony to assist in packing and distributing food to the poor and needy of Westchester County. All of those charities are wonderful in what they do, but the problem is, there is only limited monies available. SOA Director, Jordan Stratton believes, "We should identify a single charity to partner with, where we can really make an impact, and maybe getting something in return for our efforts".

Stratton noted that the industry suffers from a lack of public press, and "When we got any press, it's usually negative, especially with respect to medication and performance enhancing drugs; and perhaps, if we partner with just one charity, we can offset some of the negativity, I think it might be win/win and I certainly like to win."

The SOA has reached out to Don Imus, to see if this radio talk show host has any interest in the SOA working with his New Mexico Ranch for Kids with Cancer. Don has taken great pains and devoted himself personally to a model program to help kids. "Whether we can help in some small way would be something our driving colony wishes the SOA of NY to attempt to make a reality", said Joe Faraldo, President.

It's Not Just about Lou Pena - IT'S ABOUT ALL OF US

Irrespective of personal feelings, suspicion or innuendo concerning the individual, the summary suspension of Lou Pena by the New York State Racing and Wagering Board should be extremely concerning to all who make a livelihood in the sport.

While the Board has conjured up over 1,700 so-called "drug" violations as a basis for the suspension imposed without a pre-suspension hearing, consider the following:

- 1) Not even one of the violations alleged involve a medication overage or positive.
- 2) Not even one of the substances administered that form the basis of the hundreds of so-called "drug" violations are anything other than legitimate therapeutic medication.
- 3) The Racing Board's self-styled "groundbreaking" investigation constitutes nothing more than the collection of veterinary records, most done in a legally suspect way, and the unilateral conclusion that the legitimate therapeutic medication administrations that in no instance resulted in an impermissible overage were given within the parameters of withdrawal guidelines.

As everybody in the sport is aware, these guidelines were requested by veterinarians and horsemen as a means of guidance so as to avoid post-race overages. What was meant to act as a shield for horsemen to prevent violations has now, ironically, been used as a sword against horsemen by serving as the basis for violations in and of themselves. It is the perversion of the regulatory scheme by the Racing Board that is the only violation presented here.

Consider the trainer with a positive for a medication overage, the suggested withdrawal time for which is 48 hours. If the horseman conclusively proves via records and his veterinarian's truthful testimony that the medication was, in fact, administered 49 hours from the race, will the Racing Board dismiss the charges? The answer is clearly "Of Course Not"; the violation will stand. Why? Because a positive is a positive, and if the horse raced with a medication overage, it gave that entrant an unfair advantage. Taking this to its logical conclusion, there can be no sustainable violation when an entrant does NOT come up positive for an overage, irrespective of when the horse was treated, because neither the betting public nor the other race participants were in any way cheated by a horse who tested clean.

Love Lou Pena; despise Lou Pena, but remember... it's not just about Lou Pena. Win a lot; breed jealousy, have racing commission investigators sit outside your barn all day looking for something; be subjected to 58 horses being tested Out of Competition with nothing found; have investigators follow your shippers to the racetrack's door; have all samples tested and frozen; have them take manure samples from your trailers for analysis, etc all done to Pena. Find nothing, become frustrated and ask the trainer to provide and get records like those possessed by everyone following NJ permissible medication guidelines...and you, too, may be the subject of a witch hunt created out of whole cloth and be charged with hundreds of violations. Your name can be easily substituted for Pena's.

The sport is tarnished by anyone and everyone who tampers with it, including regulators who violate someone, anyone based on conduct that until that day was innocuous. When regulators' actions are based on allowing people to medicate therapeutics between races pursuant to followed guidelines and then penalize for doing so - something is wrong, very, very wrong. Without the positives? No harm, no foul we were told.

The regulator to be respected, must do its job and that job is to find out what substances are being illegally used to effect the speed and outcome of a horse race, develop an appropriate test and penalize the offender. That's truthfully how you level the playing field. What is happening now is the regulator's abuse of power which doesn't honestly do the industry any good. Sorry, no applause from here for a job well done.

MILESTONES RECOGNIZED BY SOA OF NEW YORK

SOA HONORS A SELECT FEW DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE RACING YEAR

Early in the year (January 10th, 2012), SOA Director, Mike Forte drove his 3,000th career win at Monticello Raceway, placing him in a very elite group of drivers to reach that milestone. Also in January, George Brennan and Lou Pena were recognized by the SOA of New York, as the leading driver and trainer respectively, at Yonkers Raceway for 2011. Lou and George proved an admirable force. Over the course of the year, George won 753 races with purse earnings in excess of \$14,500,000, while Lou won 513 races with purses totaling more than \$7,000,000.

February saw another SOA Director, reach a milestone, when the handsome, talented, and youngest USTA Director, Jordan Stratton achieved his 2,000 career win on a cold Saturday evening.

It is no secret that the Yonkers track surface is the best in the country, and maybe the world, and that this is especially impressive considering the fact that we race practically the entire year, and the track doubles as a training track during morning hours. That is quite an accomplishment and directly attributable to Master Trackman, Ed Ryan. As Joe Faraldo said, "2006 was a monumental year for Yonkers Raceway, for two very important reasons; first, because it was the advent of VLTs at the racetrack, with its unprecedented stream of income, and the other, was the arrival of Master Racing Surface Conditioner, Ed Ryan – "The Magician". This June, Ed Ryan celebrated 50 years of employment in the industry. Ed began his career sitting behind a tractor at Monmouth Park. After those very humble beginnings, he eventually went on to become the VP and GM of Freehold Raceway, and President and General Manager of Ohio's Scioto Downs. Today, Ed Ryan, with his able assistant Bob Young, plies his trade as the Director of Racing Operations here at the Hilltop Oval, and we are fortunate to have him. Ed has built tracks in the U.S. and Europe, and can transform the

roughest road into a racing surface. His expertise with respect to track surfaces and conditioning is second to none. The SOA of New York in conjunction with Yonkers Management was proud to acknowledge Mr. Ryan's dedication to our sport with his family in attendance.

Mark Ford is another horseman, who started from very humble beginnings. Rather than pursue a career in agriculture, Mark was attracted to racing and initially honed his skills under the tutelage of the legendary, Clint Galbraith. Now known for conditioning millionaires, Mark came to New York without a quarter, living in a dorm room in "Upper I" where he labored intensely to join the sports most successful horsemen. In June of this year, Mark celebrated his 3,000 win as well as his exceeding \$50 Million dollars in career earnings. Perhaps the best known of Mark's steeds, is the old war horse – "Gallo Blue Chip". Over the last few years, Mark has built one of the most impressive training centers in the state – Mark Ford Training Center in Orange County.

Last, but not least, is another Mark - Mark MacDonald, former Canadian Driving Champion, who at the age of 33, reached 5,000 victory milestone. Mark rounds out a driving colony laden with very talented and fierce competitors. Mark got launched in New York by Mark Ford, and has been on the rise since. MacDonald has suffered some very serious injuries in the past, and both his recovery and dominance in New York, are a testament to his guts. As Jim Whelan of HHA said when Mark first arrived, "New York is getting a savvy, intelligent, affable horseman, who can drive with the best of 'em."

The SOA of New York congratulates each and every one of these individuals, and hopes you enjoy the photographs of those memorable events.

2012-2013 SOA/YONKERS RACEWAY SCHOLARSHIP

Winners - Olivia Amitrano and Kristen Coyne, both were present with their families on July 17th, 2012 in the Winners Circle to accept their awards and then be treated to dinner compliments of Yonkers and the SOA. Olivia, winner of the top award of \$5,000 is currently enrolled at Fordham University, where she is majoring in psychology and is planning to enter the health care industry. Kristen, winner of the second place \$3,000 award is a student at Rowan University, majoring in history and education, and plans to one day teach children with special needs. Bob MacDougall, Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, could not be present for the awards ceremony, but previously commented that the "Scholarship records of both winners, along with their participation in extracurricular activities were excellent, and should serve as examples for all high school and college students to follow. The Committee wishes all of the applicants the very best as they continue on with their education."

SOA SEEKING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director, George Casale, has decided to retire as soon as a suitable candidate is found. George will be assisting Personnel Committee Chairman, Peter J. Venaglia, committee members Irv Atherton, Chris Wittstruck and Bob MacDougall, in their search for a new Executive Director. Anyone having an interest in the position, should forward his or her resume to the attention of the Personnel Committee Chair at SOA of New York, 733 Yonkers Ave, Suite 102, Yonkers, New York 10704, as soon as possible.

AUSSIE BETTING ON YONKERS – NEW ZEALAND AND MEGA POOLS ON THE HORIZON

Yonkers is now simulcasting to Australia and talks have already commenced with Australia regarding co-mingling, and "if we can eventually secure co-mingled pools, our business is certain to grow," remarked Board member, Chris Wittstruck who was instrumental in getting this process underway. After more than a year and a half of email exchanges and face to face contractual meetings, our races are now being simulcast to Australia. Back in 2010, Chris Wittstruck and Joe Faraldo hosted a dinner with Andrew Kelly, Chief Executive Officer of Harness Racing Australia, where the idea was initially floated, concerning the possibility of simulcasting the Yonkers signal to Australia. Initially, Sky Racing Inc., the entity that would ultimately take our signal, had their reservations. Sky was taking the Meadowlands signal back in 2011 on a trial basis, and they wanted to see how that experiment played out before taking another US harness signal. New Zealand is on the horizon.

We would like to thank all, including Bob Galterio and Tim Rooney, and hope to add other countries besides New Zealand, and some on the European continent, to our simulcast list, with co-mingled pools.

We never lose sight of the fact, that our future depends, in large measure, in growing our handle; and that in part means sending our signal abroad, and searching out new venues. Of course, that is only half the battle, the other half is convincing a new market's customers to bet on our product; to that end, the SOA of New York rustled up Yonkers PR man, Frank Drucker, to interview members of our driver colony to tape for broadcast purposes, so as to get the Aussies accustomed to the fast paced half mile racing in New York. Participating in the interviews were Hall of Famer, Cat Manzi, Leading Yonkers Driver, George Brennan, American- based Aussie, Noah Daley, and Kiwi, Richard 'Nifty' Norman, two-time Canadian Driving Champion, Mark MacDonald, Thurman Munson Award Winne, Jason Bartlett, SOA Director and USTA Director, and former racing star award winner, Jordan Stratton, plus the very talented driver/trainer duo of Larry Stalbaum and Pat Lachance.

DIRECTOR ATTENDANCE AT SOA OF NY BOARD MEETINGS

	3/11	6/11	9/11	12/11	3/12	6/12		3/11	6/11	9/11	12/11	3/12	6/12
Atherton, I	A	P	P	P	A	P	MacDougall, R.	P	P	P	P	P	P
Brennan, J.	P	P	P	P	P	P	Noga, S.	A	P	*	P	P	P
Faraldo, J.	P	P	P	P	P	P	Schnittker, R.	A	*	*	P	P	A
Forte, M.	P	A	P	P	A	P	Stratton, J.	-	-	-	P	P	P
Fucci, E.	-	-	-	P	P	P	Venaglia, P.	P	P	P	P	P	A
Gargiulo, H.	P	P	P	P	A	P	Wittstruck, C.	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kaufman, S.	P	P	P	P	P	P	Younger, P.	P	P	P	P	P	P
Kimelman, M.	A	*	*	P	P	A							

P= Present A= Absent *=Excused Absence



The 2012-2013 SOA/Yonkers Raceway Scholarship First Place award winner, Olivia Amitrano, flanked by Ed Ryan, Joe Faraldo, Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Amitrano and friend. *Photo by: Tom Berg*



The 2012-2013 SOA/Yonkers Scholarship second place award winner, Kristen Coyne, shown with Ed Ryan, Joe Faraldo, and Mr. and Mrs. Ron Coyne. *Photo by: Tom Berg*

SOA PHOTO GALLERY

June 16, 2012 Joe Faraldo recognizes Yonkers Raceway Track Manager, Ed Ryan's lifetime achievement, surrounded by Mr. Ryan's family and SOA Directors. *Photo by Justin Grasso*



Frank Drucker and SOA Director, Peter Venaglia, volunteering services for Saturday night's racing programs. *Photo by Tom Berg*



January 18, 2012 Chris Wittstruck at Nassau OTB distributing Yonkers Raceway calendars, on his left is Noel Michaels and right is Steve Phillips, Handicapping Experts.



Derby Hat Contest - May 5, 2012 Winners and Judge. *Photo by Sean Hamrock*

SOA PHOTO GALLERY



January 10, 2012 Mike Forte achieved the 3,000 career win as a driver, he was presented with a plaque by SOA President, Joe Faraldo on this milestone achievement. *Photo by Tom Berg*



On February 25, 2012, Jordan Stratton receives an award plaque for his 2,000 career win from SOA President, Joe Faraldo. *Photo by Tom Berg*



Leading Trainer for 2011, Lou Pena and Leading Driver for 2011 George Brennan receive plaques from SOA President, Joe Faraldo and SOA Director, Chris Wittstruck for their achievements. *Photo by Tom Berg*



Mark MacDonald receives recognition for career win 5,000. *Photo by: Tom Berg*



Mark Ford is honored by SOA of New York, for achieving 3,000 wins, as well as \$50M in harness racing career earnings, plaque presentation made by SOA President, Joe Faraldo. *Photo by Tom Berg*