



News from Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association

March 2015

Ohioans Dedicated to Their Sport, Regardless of Weather

Regina Mayhugh

Unlike many sports, harness racing operates year-round and horsemen see a variety of weather conditions when racing and training. In Ohio the weather can be comfortable, extremely hot and humid or bitterly cold. Regardless of the weather, Ohio horsemen are dedicated to come to the track rain or shine, ready to give their fans a great show.

The weather over the past few months in Ohio has proven to be challenging as Ohioans battle the frigid temperatures and the snowfall. Northfield Park and Miami Valley both have a full schedule of winter racing.

The weather is harder on the horsemen than it is on the horses, so one may wonder why not wait for improved temperatures as spring stalks us. For some, it is their career and racing year round is required because that is their paycheck. They do it because it is just part of the business. Some horsemen keep their horses going in the winter to keep them in condition so they are ready in the spring. Many are training youngsters in the winter for summer races. Then there are those who are so passionate about what they do, they winter race and train just because they have that passion.

Horses seem to do well, regardless of the weather, as long as they are well taken care of and kept healthy. Many trainers change up their feeding routines during the winter months. Keeping them well stocked with hay, grain, vitamins and of course water are key ingredients to keeping horses healthy in the winter. Some stables feed three times a day to help them better maintain the amount of calories and fat that is burned during extreme exercise. Keeping them with plenty of water, especially when buckets are frozen, is important for maintaining hydration and to regulate their body temperature. Increased water is also necessary with the increased amount of grain and hay to prevent colic and impaction.

Hoof care is important during the winter as well. The track surface is different in the winter so it is important to watch their hooves and make sure they are in good condition to prevent lameness and to be sure they are well shod for the elements.



Photo by Conrad Photo

Tracy Reed, groom for Dean Glispie's Stable, races at Miami Valley. "We race a lot in the winter and it is a challenge at times. It's not easy to stay warm, but we wear lots of layers. All of the horses have winter blankets and get a lot of extra straw in their stalls to keep them warm. We try to keep them happy and healthy so that they feel up to racing," says Reed.

How do horsemen maintain through the harsh months while in the elements, besides wearing layers, layers and more layers? Some utilize hand and foot warmers. Besides keeping the horses healthy, it is also important to keep themselves healthy.

Aaron Merriman, who drives frequently at Northfield Park in the winter, is used to driving horses in the cold. "I like winter racing. I think the horses do too." Merriman says he feels that technology has come far in creating cold weather gear that is comfortable and thin to wear under racing colors. "Your adrenaline during the race usually keeps you pretty warm," states Merriman. "I handle the cold way better now than earlier in my career. When I first started, I only had a set of long sleeve summer colors, so they were my 'all-terrain' colors. Needless to say I bundled up tight underneath. I looked like the kid in the Christmas Story movie!"

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Gaming & Racing,
Hollywood at
Dayton Raceway, Scioto
Downs
(614) 354-1601

2015 Racing Dates

Northfield Park
Jan. 1-Dec. 30
(214 Live Days)

Miami Valley Gaming
Jan. 2-May 3
(89 live days)

Scioto Downs
May 5-Sept. 12
(95 live days)

Hollywood at
Dayton Raceway
Sept. 14-Dec. 30
(75 live days)

Important Dates

OSRC Monthly Meeting
March 30 - 3:00 PM
Rife Center
77 S. High St., 31st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

OHHA Board Meeting
April 21 - 11:30 AM
Hilton Garden Inn
3232 Olentangy River Rd
Columbus, OH 43202

*Photos on front by
Conrad Photo*

Executive Director's Report

Renée Mancino



Lamenting conflicting reports this year between Punxsutawney Phil who predicted six more weeks of winter, and Buckeye Chuck who conversely did not see his shadow, which predicts an early spring, as we move into the month of March I am fairly certain that our members are ready to also move into spring following the idiom that if March, "comes in like a lion," that it quickly turns favorable and, "goes out like a lamb".

With weather on our minds, I would like to provide some detail as to whether there is an official policy or there are expressly defined parameters for adverse weather racing and weather related cancellations.

Officially there is no official policy for weather related cancellations. There is no formal State Racing Commission rule or statutory provision that provides a detailed explanation or definition as-to what would constitute an, "emergency day" necessitating the cancellation of a race, races, or a full race card for inclement weather or emergencies. Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.) § 3769-2-13. There is also no formal provision for assessment or protocol contained in any of the Racetrack Agreements with the Permit Holders. There are simply no hard and set guidelines for weather related cancellations.

Historically the Presiding Judge, Permit Holder, and OHHA have used common sense, their best judgment, conferred, and made a decision. In making that decision by rule, the decision by this committee of three to race must be unanimous. O.A.C. § 3769-14-41(A). One party to this committee of three can mandate cancellation.

In convening to make that decision at the racetracks, on the OHHA's side that mandates quick action by the Track Representative. They coordinate this process and act as an intermediary by conferring with the Track Director, Track Committee, and Horsemen, that decision is then brought to the Executive Director. All Parties work together in making

a final decision that the Executive Director then takes back to the Permit Holder and Presiding Judge.

On the racetrack permit holder's side of the equation, if the cancellation is weather related and requires an assessment of the racing surface, it is mandatory that the Judges and the Permit Holder make a, "boots on the ground", physical inspection of the racing surface. O.A.C. § 3769-14-41 (A), drivers, the Committee, Track Director, and the Track Representative do the same.

For temperature related issues, again there is no official definition in place. During our recent run of record-breaking lows during January and February, state veterinarians and nearby racing commissions and associations have been consulted as-to the danger to horses of racing in extreme conditions.

It is the opinion of several veterinarians including, Dr. Rick Sams (LCG Group) and Dr. Mary Scollay (Kentucky Horse Racing Commission), that there is no published research that speaks directly to horses' tolerance to extreme environmental conditions. And pretty overwhelmingly the concern in performance equines is more with extreme heat and humidity than cold.

Uniformly however, the accepted standard is that our human tolerances for heat or cold are much lower than those of our equine companions in racing. The reason often cited is the fact that a horse's nasal passages have a large surface area of mucous membranes and the pharynx/larynx pathway is lengthy.

That enables them to handle air more efficiently as compared to humans. In the case of extreme cold, that anatomical makeup enables them to effectively warm and humidify cold air before it reaches the sensitive lower airways. With that in mind horses will have a much higher tolerance level and are more suited to survive in extreme cold.

Therefore, in hot or cold when the risk assessment is performed with human health and safety in mind, the horse is adequately

protected.

As a general rule the OHHA policy is to evaluate cancellations on a case-by-case basis. The rule of thumb being used for cold is -25°F temperature and wind chill combined. Consecutive days below this level are a consideration as well as cumulative or forecasted snowfall in conjunction with temperature.

For heat it is a combination of the air temperature and relative humidity, the "heat index", with a 130°F benchmark. When that combined total is >130°F there is an extreme danger to humans of heat stroke or sunstroke.

In all cases once the threat of harm is imminent to human or equine participants, the process outlined above is immediately used to decide upon cancelling race days in advance, or races before or during a race card. Above all and in all cases equine and human safety is of imminent concern and the evaluation occurs from that perspective.

So here is to being weeks away from spring and hoping we soon see March go, "out like a lamb". Stay safe, take adequate precautions to protect yourselves and your horses, and know that we are closely monitoring all cases and handling cancellations when these temperature extremes occur.



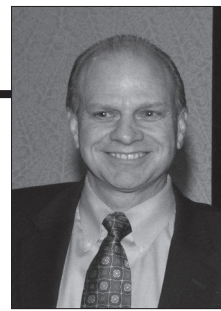
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Updates From Your President

Kevin Greenfield

I have received a formal marketing proposal from the Richards Group, Cleveland, Ohio, to do a comprehensive 4 phase marketing plan for OHHA. The Plan will be discussed with the Chairman of the Ohio State Racing Commission for approval and implementation.

We also had a meeting involving several breeders in the state at Delaware on February 19th, in which several new ideas and suggestions for implementation of Breeder's awards and bonus programs were discussed. I shall be working to organize those ideas into a draft of proposed legislation to be discussed and finalized at subsequent breeder's meetings with the hope that we can get something in place by 2016.



OHHA Board of Directors

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Steve Bateson

Breeders

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Kevin Greenfield
Randy Haines
Joe McLead
John Poppe
Ayers Ratliff
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Owners by District

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Track Directors

Miami Valley- Dan Noble
Northfield Park- Scott Cox
Hollywood at Dayton-
Mark Headworth
Scioto Downs- Hugh
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Peters and Brown Selected as Ohio Fair Conference Regional Coordinators

Regina Mayhugh, *OFRC Administrator*



The Ohio Fair Racing Conference (OFRC) has selected Bill Peters and Todd Brown as the OFRC Regional Coordinators. The regional coordinators will be the primary contact with the individual fairs in the Ohio Fair Racing Conference. They will work closely with the OHHA, USTA, OSRC, and OFMA to present harness racing at Ohio County and Independent Fairs. They will be taking entries for the fairs and assisting the fairs in various areas of running their race programs per the fairs' requests. The coordinators will also participate in outreach events to promote Harness Racing in Ohio.

Bill Peters, from Edgerton, Ohio, has been involved in harness racing for over 50 years. He has been an active member and served as various association officers for the Hicksville Horsemen's Association and Defiance County Area Horsemen Association. Peters has been a race announcer for harness races for forty-eight years. Before becoming the Interim Regional Coordinator in 2014, Peters had been the circuit secretary for thirteen years for Northwestern Colt Racing Association. "I am most looking forward to this fair season to see how many more two year olds we have racing than last year," states Peters.

OFRC welcomes a new face to the conference as Todd Brown, from Canfield, Ohio, will also be a Regional Coordinator and working with half of this year's twenty fairs in the conference with Peters. Brown has extensive experience in harness racing. Brown has also worked with various fairs across the state. Brown also has experience with online entries and e-track as he is a Computrak account representative. Todd is looking forward to his new role this summer, "With over 30 years of experience in training horses with my father (Gene Brown) in Northeast Ohio I am excited about renewing relationships of old friends. My goal will be to try to help make racing horses at the fairs as seamless as possible."

Ohioans Dedicated *Continued from Cover*

Track maintenance is crucial during the winter months. With the cold temperatures, tracks will both freeze and thaw. How the horse handles the track condition is important. Merriman says, "The horses' shoes make so much of a difference. There's snow and ice mixed up on the racing surface and you really need borium and to have the horses properly equipped." He also states that a horse will get tired on both a frozen and thawing track, "so you want to try to trip them up and conserve energy for late in the mile."

As the tracks begin to thaw, soon spring will be back to Ohio and that means fair racing is just around the corner! Let's hope the extreme cold that Ohio has had does not turn into extreme heat. Regardless of the weather outcome, Ohioans are ready to hit the tracks and the upcoming fairs to show off the fruits of their hard winter labor proving that even through harsh winters, Ohio horses and horsemen are tough and Ohio is where the excitement and action is year round.

Miami Valley's Second Season Producing Strong Numbers

Gregg Keidel

Miami Valley Raceway is approximately half way through its sophomore season and all indicators point to a very successful second year. Average daily handle is up over 22% thus far, over \$3.5 million in purse money has been dispersed through the first 40 days, and three new track speed records have already been established with the warmer weather months still to come. In addition, the heat and added hot water capacity in the paddock have been big improvements over the inaugural season.

The Saturday, February 21 handle of \$308,977 was the best yet. The average daily total amount of purses through February 28 has been \$88,805.

Twilight Bonfire tied the overall track record on January 31, speeding a mile in 1:51.1 for driver Dan Noble, trainer Danny Collins and owner Robert Key. It equaled the clocking of Justified last April 26 during the final days of the track's first meet. Gold Rocks set a new four-year-old standard of 1:51.4 for driver Randy Tharps, trainer Virgil Morgan Jr. and owners Stephen Herrick, Sharon Colston and Bruce Soulsby on February 21. Another speed standard was tied when Daniel Mitchell's Betterluvnexttime equaled Holiday Shopper's 1:52.1 Miami Valley record for five-year-old and up pacing mares. Josh Sutton was in the bike for trainer Virgil Morgan Jr.

Another indication of the enthusiasm over the current meet is the level of claiming activity. A total of 92 successful claims have been recorded during the first 36 nights of racing.

Miami Valley sports a deep and talented driver's colony. As of this writing, Dan Noble and Josh Sutton are deadlocked at the top of the standings with 66 victories apiece, followed by defending champ Kayne Kauffman with 56. All three are already approaching \$400,000 in total earnings for their mounts and Noble and Sutton rank in the top ten in 2015 wins and earnings nationally. The remainders of the top ten are Tyler Smith, Chris Page, Kyle Ater, Jeremy Smith, Randy Tharps, Jeff Nisonger, Greg Grismore and Brad Hanners.

On the training side, Virgil Morgan Jr. has a comfortable lead with 35 wins, almost double the amount for Jeff Brewer, Chris Short and Dan Ater, who are battling for the second spot. Rounding out the top ten in the trainer standings are Jim Arledge Jr., Kayne Kauffman, George Anthrop, Deborah Swartz, Terry Deters, Jim Pollock Jr. and Jeff Nisonger.

Morgan's stable earnings of \$213,520 currently tops the list, but a total of 13 trainers have earned over \$50,000 through 36 nights while 35 conditioners have earned over \$25,000.

Through the first 444 races of the current Miami Valley meet the average field size is 8.4 (after scratches). Winningest post position is No. 5 which has produced the winner 19.4% of the time. The percentage of winning favorites has been a respectable 38.29% with 72.52% of the betting favorites hitting the board.

With the positive momentum at Miami Valley Raceway the second half of the meet should be both exciting and rewarding for the horsemen currently calling it home. The recently introduced 'Legends Late Closing Series' will keep March and early April interesting, followed by the James K. Hackett Memorials for three-year-old Ohio-sired pacers, the first leg of all the Ohio Sires Stakes for sophomores, and a pair of \$100,000 (est.) Grand Circuit stakes for older trotting and pacing mares on closing day, May 3.



Photos by Conrad Photo

ATTENTION: Farm Workers, Trainers, Drivers & Grooms

**Signups for the Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement Plan are ongoing.
You must opt-in, if you are not already an active participant, before June 1, 2015.**

** You may sign up via your OHHA track representative at the racetrack and you must be a permanent Ohio resident to be eligible.**

Ohio Fairs Updates

USTA Matching Funds Grant Program

Application Deadline Proposals must be postmarked on or before **May 1, 2015**

Ohio Ladies Pace

Fairs currently participating in 2015 include Paulding, Madison, Preble, Mercer, Allen, Hancock, Wyandot, Putnam, Ottawa, Auglaize, Darke, Van Wert, Hardin and Delaware. For more information contact Emily Hay (419) 733 5402 or purple_10_25@yahoo.com, Bill Peters (419) 298-7408, Tim Harless (937) 564-3393 or Annie & Ray Lufkin (937) 214 -5177.

Third Annual Mercer County Field Trip Day

Mercer County Fair will be holding a field trip day for special needs children and adults in April. Contact Mercer County Fair Office 419 586 3239 or Emily Hay (419) 733 5402 for more information.

Special Recognitions

Jeremy Smith wins 1000th win at Miami Valley with Eternalexpectation in 1:58.2 on February 12.

Mark Headworth wins 3000th win at Northfield Park with AJ Cress on February 27.

Congratulations to both Jeremy and Mark!

Upcoming Events

Equine Affair will be April 9-12, at the Voinovich Center at the Ohio State Fairgrounds. OHHA will be sharing booth space with the USTA and New Vocations.

Calling all volunteers! If you would like to volunteer some time to work in the booth, contact Regina Mayhugh by calling 614-221-3650 or send an email to rmayhugh@ohha.com.

Award Banquet Video

Video of 2015 OHHA Awards Banquet is available for purchase for \$10 plus shipping by contacting the OHHA office.

Thank You to our 2015 P.A.C.E.R. Contributors

Fair Circuit Champion Level (Up To \$199)

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Ryan Stahl
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Pacesetter Level (\$1000 & More)

Dr. John Mossbarger

P.A.C.E.R.: Ohio horse racing received great support from Governor Kasich and Ohio legislators with the enactment of House Bill #386 (HB386). We must support those legislators who support us.

Donate by sending a personal check or money order (*corporate checks are not acceptable for PAC donations*) to:

P.A.C.E.R
850 Michigan Ave, Suite 100
Columbus, OH 43215-1920

Include employer information and type of business.

All P.A.C.E.R. donations go to a candidate's campaign funds.

The OHHA offices receive calls every week from state legislators asking for campaign donations as they attempt to raise campaign financing throughout the year.

A special Thank You to those who donate!

Keep up to date with news on the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association website at <http://www.ohha.com>

Corrections to February 2015 issue of Buckeye Harness Horseman Magazine: Dancin Yankee, photo and name error on page 31. Also on page 23- Bell Flower was trained and driven by Fred Huff, Jr. at the Pickaway County Fair. Apologizes to the connections of both horses. The online version of the magazine has been updated.



Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
850 Michigan Avenue, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43215-1920



Youth Corner

Scholarship Opportunities

HARNESS HORSE YOUTH FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Curt Greene Memorial Scholarship

\$2,500 Deadline 4/30

<http://www.hhyf.org/scholarships.asp>

For Those pursuing a racing-related career.

Sweet Karen Alumni Scholarship

Variable Award Deadline 4/30

<http://www.hhyf.org/scholarships.asp>

For students who have participated in an HHYF Summer Camp or Family weekend.

COLLEGE/PROGRAM SPECIFIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Racing Officials Accreditation Scholarship

(Sponsored by Racing Officials Accred. Program)

\$500 2 Awarded Deadline 9/30

Must have attended a racetrack industry program and plan to attend ROA Program

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Jerome Hauck Scholarship

\$4,000- Sponsored by Harness Horseman

International Deadline 5/1

Contact: Donna Hartmann (609) 747-1000, or dhartmannhhi@verizon.net

Children of full-time groom or of an HHI member.

Christian Harness Horsemen's Association Scholarships

\$5,000 Total- Sponsored by Christian Harness

Horsemen's Association Deadline 4/30

www.chha.net/

Harness Tracks Of America Scholarship

\$5,000 Each- 5 per year Deadline 6/20

www.harnesstracks.com/scholarships.htm

Must be active in harness racing in some form

Keep up to date on youth opportunities on the OHHA website <http://www.ohha.com/#!ohio-youth/czyv>