



# The Horsemen's Newsletter



July 2018

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## MJC Now Recording Horse's Weights In Paddock

After a trial run a week earlier, Laurel Park on June 22 began officially recording the weight of each horse as it entered the paddock for the racing program.

Maryland Jockey Club President Sal Sinatra explained that grooms are now asked to go to the scale on the right when they enter the paddock and allow horses to stand on the scale for about four seconds. The weight is recorded and shown on the Laurel simulcast graphics before each race.

Sinatra said Equibase will begin publishing horses' weights in its past performances for Laurel races. Recording

of weights is a project of The Strohman Group, which owns Laurel.

The program has been in the works for months and, after the scale arrived, it needed to be calibrated. Sinatra said TSG executive P.J. Campo, on a trip to Japan, noticed the racetrack weighed all the horses and brought the suggestion back to company officials.

Sinatra said the weighing of horses is an attempt to provide more information to bettors. It can also be a way to track a horse's weight for a variety of purpose.

The objective is to encourage other tracks in the Mid-Atlantic region to begin weighing horses in the paddock to provide for consistency.

"At Laurel, we can have up to 20 horses shipping in who raced at other tracks, so I'm hopeful other tracks in the region jump in on this," Sinatra said.

Laurel Park		Race 7			
Odds		EX 88	DD 88	WEIGHT	
1	6	87	1059	1059	
2	35	1962	604	1020	
3	19	981	353	1137	
4	18	116	176	985	
5	21	981	92	1062	
6	SCR	Scr	117	-	
7	13	398	845	923	
8	16	-	Scr	1037	
9	6	127	117	985	
10	9-5	222	1037	-	
11	19	858	1122	-	
12	8	230	1088	-	
13	SCR	Scr	-	-	
14	SCR	Scr	-	-	
15	SCR	Scr	-	-	
16	5	477	777	-	



## Multi-Party Agreement Restores Maryland-Bred Stakes Program

The Maryland Racing Commission June 28 signed off on an agreement whereby the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, Maryland Jockey Club and Maryland Horse Breeders Association will authorize financial adjustments to the Maryland Thoroughbred Purse Account and Maryland-Bred Race Fund to share the cost of about \$1 million in Maryland-bred stakes annually to save the restricted stakes program.

The MHBA Board of Directors and the MRC's Maryland Race Fund Advisory Board recently voted to eliminate the entire Maryland-bred stakes program to maintain funding for 30% breeder bonuses in place since 2015.

MRC Executive Director Mike Hopkins said there is a major structural deficit in the Maryland Bred Race Fund, which led the two parties to enter discussions on how to resolve it. The agreement was ratified by the MRC, under which the Maryland-Bred Race Fund falls.

The spending agreement spans July 1 of this year through the end of 2020. The groups agreed to meet at least biannually to assess calculation of the program and make any necessary adjustments, Hopkins said.

David Hayden, a member of the MRC and chair of the advisory committee, said the MHBA will reduce bonuses from 30% to 15% on all open and restricted stakes and stallion-owner bonuses from 10% to 5% on all open and restricted stakes. In addition, a 20% Maryland-sired maiden bonus will be eliminated.

The MTHA, which has contributed more than \$11 million since 2014 from the Thoroughbred purse account to support Maryland-Bred enhancements in the form of owners' bonuses and restricted allowance races, will reallocate funds from some of the restricted allowance races, each of which carries a purse of \$35,000.

*Continues page 3*

# MATCH Series Revival Going Strong



Horses based or bred in Maryland have put in strong showings during the first two rounds in the five divisions that make up the 2018 MATCH Series.

As of July 1, the overall leader by points with 17 was Adam Staple and Jalin Stable's 8-year-old Pennsylvania-bred gelding Page McKenney, who is trained at Pimlico Race Course by Mary Eppler. Oak Bluffs, an 8-year-old New Jersey-bred gelding owned and trained by Eppler, was second with 15 points.

Maryland-bred Lewisfield, who was bred and is owned by Linda Zang of Maryland and trained by Jeff Runco, was third with 12 points. They all have one thing in common: Each raced in the first two stakes in their respective division and also top the standings in their respective "state-bred" division, separate bonuses for which will be paid to breeders and certifiers from participating organizations.

July marks an important point in the four-month-long series, because in order for a horse and its connections to qualify for a share of the \$450,000 in bonus money, it must participate in at least three MATCH Series events. Bonus points are then awarded for horses that participate in four or all five races in each division.

Page McKenney won the grade III, \$100,000

Salvator Mile at Monmouth Park May 26 and returned to the New Jersey track June 30 to finish second in the grade III, \$100,000 Philip H. Iselin Stakes; Oak Bluffs finished third in the \$100,000 Jim McKay Turf Sprint May 18 and then won the \$150,000 Pennsylvania Governor's Cup June 2; and Lewisfield finished third and second, respectively, in the grade III, \$150,000 Maryland Sprint Stakes May 19 and the \$75,000 Mr. Prospector Stakes June 17.

Page McKenney competes in the 3-Year-Olds and Up Long—Dirt Division, Oak Bluffs in the 3-Year-Olds and Up Sprint—Turf Division and Lewisfield in the 3-Year-Olds and Up Sprint—Dirt Division.

Horses in each MATCH Series race earn points accordingly: 10 for first, 7 for second, 5 for third, 3 for fourth, 2 for fifth, and 1 for sixth through last. Bonus points, which are awarded regardless of finish position, are 5 for a fourth start in a series race and 7 for a fifth start.

The owners and trainers of the top three horses (by points) in each of the five divisions will earn bonus money. For owners: \$20,000, \$15,000 and \$10,000. For trainers: \$15,000, \$10,000 and \$5,000. The owner and trainer of the overall top points-earning horse will get \$50,000 and \$20,000, respectively.

## Medstar Doctor's Schedule



2017 Doctor's Schedules

Dr. Ryan Dr. Glaser  
Dr. Dawson Dr. Pothast  
Dr. Mayer

July 2018							August 2018						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	



## Rec Report

### Golf Tournament

MTHA will be hosting a Golf Tournament on Monday, Sept. 17 at 1 p.m. at Compass Pointe Golf Course in Pasadena. It will be \$65 dollars per person. Please contact Marty Leonard at 203-733-1367 if you are interested in playing.

### Softball

On Tuesday, June 5 horsemen came up from Charles Town to play the Maryland Horsemen in a best of three softball series. Charles Town won the first game 9-1, but Maryland came back and won the last two games 10-9 and 14-1 to win. Maryland will be traveling down to Charles Town in a couple weeks to play again.

Softball is currently be played on Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. The field is located on Rt. 198 at the driving range directly across from the Laurel Park entrance.

### Soccer

Soccer will be starting very soon. Please get your rosters in immediately to Marty Leonard, he can be reached at 203-733-1367.

### Poker

Poker has been moved to Wednesdays. It will be played the first Wednesday of every month starting at 12:30 p.m. in the Rec Room.

### Free Day Trips

The trip for Annapolis will be rescheduled for September because of rain. The exact day and time will be posted soon.

The July 19 trip to St. Michaels is still on as planned. The van will be leaving the security gate at 10:45 a.m. and returning by 5 p.m.

Call Dan Mangum at (410) 802-5798 for info and to sign up.

The MTHA Express Van Service is helping many backstretch workers with many of the personal activities they need to get done such as doctor appointments, dental appointments, shopping, pharmacy social security, and social services visits, etc.

### Baseball Tickets

The winners for this month's Orioles Drawing were as follows: 7/26 vs Rays—Robbie Bailes; 7/28 vs Rays—Whitney Verbal; 8/10 vs Red Sox—Kyleigh McQuade; 8/14 vs Mets—Lou Garner; 8/25 vs Yankees—Manuel Gallegos.

The next drawings will be held at the Laurel Kitchen on Saturday, Aug. 18 from 9 a.m. to noon.

The Baysox Tickets are still available for August and September dates, please sign up in the track kitchens or call Dan at 410-802-5798

# Groom Elite Basic Grooming Class A Success Cultivating Workers

The first Groom Elite program in Maryland June 25-29 proved a success, as it helped fill six hot walker positions and one groom position.

About 20 people participated in the weeklong Basic Grooming 99 program, which is designed to introduce people to the basics of working with racehorses. The program instructor was Dr. Reid McLellan, who formed the program almost 20 years ago, with assistance from former Maryland-based trainer Chris Grove.

McClellan made all the students feel at home when the program began. After a brief introductory period, he went one by one and called each by name.

"I think it's important that I know your name," McLellan said.

The students spent roughly four hours a day together, so familiarity was important. Bobby Lillis, a former jockey who serves as MTHA Di-



rector of Assistance Programs, said he was impressed with the proceedings.

"Absolutely nothing was left out," Lillis said. "Everyone who participated was very interested and very engaged. A lot of questions were asked, and they were answered. I thought it was pretty elaborate."

Lillis said three days featured quite a bit of hands-on experience with the horses—10 horses that handle ponying at Laurel. Lillis said Doug Leatherman and Sharon Greenberg were very helpful in providing the ponies for the program; Lillis, McLellan and Grove taught the students how to handle the horses.

Groom Elite's debut in Maryland is part of the MTHA's effort to cultivate people who want to work with racehorses. The horsemen's group, along with many others around the country, continue to lobby for visa changes at the federal level, but there also are opportunities to appeal



## ► *Restricted Stakes, From Page 1*

The end result is each organization will contribute \$500,000 to support the stakes schedule.

MTHA general counsel Alan Foreman noted that the Maryland-Bred Race Fund Advisory Committee has representation from all elements of the industry except the horsemen's group. He suggested the committee be expanded to include a representative from the MTHA, a move that will require legislation. Until that is accomplished, he suggested that an MTHA representative be added to the committee in a non-voting capacity.

"Given the interrelationship now with all parties, it makes no sense not to have a representative of the MTHA on the Committee," Foreman said.

MRC Chairman Michael Algeo said the commission "will certainly take that into consideration." He agreed that an MTHA representative should participate in committee meetings and that the stakeholders meet more often to encourage dialogue and monitor the financial situation.

to locals with a general interest in horses.

A second program, the more advanced Groom Elite 101, is scheduled to begin Sept. 10 at Laurel.

McClellan explained the rules of racing to students as well as rules of conduct and "shedrow etiquette" to drive home the basic points required to work around racehorses.

"If you follow the rules, everything is good," he said. "Grooms are very important. You're the ones taking care of the horses that make up this industry, and we have to do what's right by the horses. By you taking care of these horses you are important to our industry."

"For trainers, you are their eyes, ears and nose. For the horses, you are their confidence-builder."



## beyond the wire

Owner Phyllis Soboczenski, who races under the name Philmor Racing Stable, contributed \$10,000 to Maryland's Beyond The Wire aftercare program after one of her horses required surgery. Soboczenski, who has horses with trainer Hugh McMahon, retired the horse through the Beyond The Wire program, which she believes serves an important purpose when it comes to racehorse health and welfare. "Mrs. Soboczenski's donation was extremely generous and will certainly help multiple horses," said Jessica Hammond, who administers Beyond The Wire. "It was really nice to have the program recognized and appreciated in that way."

## ***The Horsemen's Newsletter***

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**MTHA**

500 Redland Court – Suite 105,  
Owings Mills, Maryland 21117;  
(410) 902-6842; Fax: (410) 902-6841;  
E-mail: [info@mdhorsemen.com](mailto:info@mdhorsemen.com)  
Website: [www.mdhorsemen.com](http://www.mdhorsemen.com)



# MTHA Pickup Softball Games

The MTHA Recreation Program will be hosting pickup softball games for horsemen on Tuesday afternoons at 12:30pm.

Played on the softball fields at the Laurel Golf Center and Recreation Center across from Laurel Park on Route 198, everyone is welcome to join the fun.

Call MTHA Recreation Program administrator Marty Leonard at (203) 733-1367 for more information.



**MTHA**  
500 Redland Court, #105  
Owings Mills, Maryland 21117

**July 2018**

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## Backstretch Appreciation Day

Monday, September 10, 1-4pm • Tent Beside Laurel Park Grandstand • All Are Welcome



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