



The Horsemen's f Newsletter

March 2019

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Lucrative Starter Series Well-Received by Horsemen

Thirteen trainers will share in \$40,000 as a result of their horses' performances in the new Maryland Jockey Club Starter Series that ran from December through February at Laurel Park.

"They really enjoyed the series," Maryland Jockey Club Racing Secretary Chris Merz said. "It was received really well, and when I called the horsemen to tell them they won bonus money, they said they'd like to see more of this. It was nice to see the little guys win."

The series featured four divisions: 3-year-olds and up sprint, 3-year-olds and up long, fillies and mares sprint, and fillies and mares long. The distances were 5 furlongs, 5½ furlongs and 6 furlongs; and 1 mile, 1¼ miles and 1½ miles.

Points were awarded in each race as follows: 4 points for a first-place finish, 3 for second, 2 for third and 1 for fourth. The trainers of horses with the most points (top three per division) earned \$5,000, \$3,000 and \$2,000, respectively; bonuses for the 3-year-olds and up long division will be divvied up evenly due to a four-way dead-heat.

The top horses and trainers for each division are as follows:

3-YEAR-OLDS AND UP SPRINT

Chief of Staff (6 points), trained by Hugh McMahon

Tradfest (5 points), trained by Janet Polachek

Sir Orinoco (4 points), trained by Emanuel Geralis

3-YEAR-OLDS AND UP LONG

Joy Drive (5 points), trained by Dove Houghton

Whirlin Curlin (5 points), trained by Rodolfo Sanchez-Salomon

Scholarship Program Is Back And Better Than Ever

Maryland racing stakeholders for months have been working to bring back the scholarship program for students of those who work in the horse industry, and it appears the program will be more extensive than it has ever been in the past.

The Maryland Jockey Club, MTHA, Maryland Horse Breeders Association and Maryland Racing Media Association have each agreed to contribute initial seed money required to relaunch the program beginning this spring.

Additionally Maryland State Fair has also agreed to provide support to the revamped initiative.

Other industry stakeholders will be asked to participate as well, so it's likely that more than \$50,000 will be available for the relaunch of the program.

The MTHA Board of Directors at its Feb. 19 meeting approved its share of the scholarship fund.

"We wanted to build on the spirit of cooperation that currently exists and make this an industry-wide effort much like the very successful Beyond The Wire program," Executive Director David Richardson said. "We should have a nice pot of money to start with."

Scholarship recipients will be selected by a committee made up of representatives from each contributing organization. The application process this year will shift from a paper-based system through US Mail to online through a new Maryland Thoroughbred Industry Scholarship Fund website: www.mdthoroughbred

scholarship.com. The website is updated with specific requirements of the program. The deadline for applications is July 15.

Organizers are planning to present the scholarships during a live racing event, most likely Maryland Pride Day at Laurel Park on Aug. 17, the final weekend before racing shifts to the Maryland State Fair at Timonium.



mdthoroughbreds Scholarship.com

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Match Series Opener Part Of Big Day At Laurel Park

After closing the MATCH Series in September 2018 in style, Laurel Park this year will host the first round of stakes in the series on April 20.

Under a new format, five racetracks will host one day of MATCH stakes, one in each of the four divisions for 2019. After Laurel, the series moves to Penn National June 1, followed by Delaware Park July 13, Parx Racing Sept. 2 and Monmouth Park Sept. 28.

The April 20 program at Laurel,

which plans a big day, will offer seven stakes in total including the \$125,000 Federico

Tesio and \$125,000 Weber City Miss, which provide the winner an automatic spot in the Preakness Stakes and Black-Eyed Susan Stakes, respectively, at Pimlico Race Course in May.

The MATCH Series stakes, each worth \$100,000, are the Frank Whiteley Jr. (3-Year-Olds and Up Sprint—Dirt Di-

vision), Primonetta (Fillies and Mares Sprint—Dirt Division), King T. Leatherbury (3-Year-Olds and Up Sprint—Turf Division), and Dahlia Stakes (Fillies and Mares Long—Turf Division). Horsemen should take note that nominations for all the stakes on April 20 close April 11.

There is no special nomination required to qualify for MATCH Series events. Nominations to each of the stakes

are made in accordance with the procedures established by each host track.

When the series returned last year after 16 years on the shelf,

Maryland-based horses swept the five divisions. One was based at Laurel, two at Pimlico and two at Fair Hill Training Center.

The new format is designed to generate more interest in the series and encourage participation by horsemen through a more structured format.



Trainer Advisory:



Maryland trainers are advised of the risks of allowing other individuals, such as grooms or hot walkers, to race horses in their name.

If they do so, trainers are putting themselves at risk. For example, they are still responsible for workers' compensation claims should an injury occur, and should someone administer an illegal substance to the horse, they are responsible.

The MTHA suggests that if a trainer doesn't want to continue racing a horse under his or her name, the horse can be retired safely through Maryland's Beyond The Wire program or another reputable aftercare organization. When a horse is retired in poor condition, it makes it harder to find a second career for the horse.

Frederick OTB Opening Close

A long-awaited off-track betting facility in Frederick is nearing completion and could open by March 30, the date of the Florida Derby at Gulfstream Park.

Maryland Jockey Club President Sal Sinatra said the wagering outlet at the Clarion Inn and Conference Center on Holiday Drive, just off of Interstate 270, "should be a decent-sized OTB for us" based on business at the old Cracked Claw restaurant, which was located several miles south in Urbana. Based on an average of three days of live racing

a week at Laurel, pari-mutuel handle on the live product is estimated at about \$10 million a year.

Sinatra said the hotel has a good convention business, which makes it even more attractive. It will be the MJC's first OTB parlor in a hotel.

Sinatra also told the MTHA Board of Directors that there are still plans for an OTB outlet in Silver Spring near the northern tip of Washington, D.C., but plans have been delayed by zoning issues.

2019 Stakes Schedule

3-Year-Old & Up Sprint Dirt Division

4/20/19	\$100,000 Frank Whiteley, Jr. Stakes 6 Furlongs, Laurel Park
6/1/19	\$100,000 Chocolatetown Sprint Stakes 6 Furlongs, Penn National
7/13/19	\$100,000 Hockessin Stakes 6 Furlongs, Delaware Park
9/2/19	\$100,000 Bensalem Stakes 6 Furlongs, Parx
9/28/19	\$100,000 Mr. Prospector Stakes 6 Furlongs, Monmouth Park

3-Year-Old & Up Sprint Turf Division

4/20/19	\$100,000 Leatherbury Stakes 5 ½ Furlongs, Laurel Park
6/1/19	\$100,000 PA Governor's Cup 5 Furlongs, Penn National
7/13/19	\$100,000 Glasgow Stakes 7 ½ Furlongs, Delaware Park
9/2/19	\$100,000 Neshaminy Stakes 7 ½ Furlongs, Parx
9/28/19	\$100,000 Rainbow Heir Stakes 5 ½ Furlongs, Monmouth Park

3-Year-Old & Up F&M Sprint Dirt Division

4/20/19	\$100,000 Primonetta Stakes 6 Furlongs, Laurel Park
6/1/19	\$100,000 Penn Ladies Dash 6 Furlongs, Penn National
7/13/19	\$100,000 Dashing Beauty Stakes 6 Furlongs, Delaware Park
9/2/19	\$100,000 Roamin Rachael Stakes 6 Furlongs, Parx
9/28/19	\$100,000 Regret Stakes 6 Furlongs, Monmouth Park

3-Year-Old & Up F&M Long Turf Division

4/20/19	\$100,000 Dahlia Stakes 1 Mile, Laurel Park
6/1/19	\$100,000 Susquehanna Stakes 1 ¼ Miles, Penn National
7/13/19	\$100,000 Just A Kiss Stakes 1 ¼ Miles, Delaware Park
9/2/19	\$100,000 DeBunda - President's Cup 1 ¼ Miles, Parx
9/28/19	\$100,000 Violet Stakes 1 ¼ Miles, Monmouth Park

www.matchseries.com



Pension Plan Registration for the plan year 2018 will take place at the following times and locations. Bring your MRC Badge and W-2, 1099, or tax return for 2018. For more information call the MTHA office at (410) 902-6842.

April 22 through April 26

Laurel Track Kitchen,
9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

April 29 through May 3

Laurel Track Kitchen,
9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

May 6 through May 10

Pimlico MTHA Office,
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Failure to register will result in the loss of your 2018 benefit.

Legislation Would Make Bowie Eligible For RFRA

Multiple bills that would alter current language regarding the Racetrack Facilities Renewal Account are under consideration by the Maryland General Assembly, which is at the midway point of its 2019 session.

The current statute provides funding – 1 percent of video lottery terminal proceeds – for Laurel Park, Pimlico Race Course and two harness tracks under a matching arrangement. The Bowie Training Center and Maryland State Fair at Timonium would become eligible under the various bills.

There are two bills in the House of Delegates – one simply adds Bowie and Timonium as eligible for RFRA funds, while the other adds the Maryland Economic Development Corp. as a vehicle to float bonds for redevelopment of Bowie and capital improvement projects at Lau-

rel. The other tracks are listed as RFRA-eligible facilities, but Pimlico, Timonium and the harness tracks would not be in the mix for MEDC bonds.

The Maryland Jockey Club has repeatedly said it plans to redevelop Bowie as a quality training center given the fact because training will end at Pimlico even if the home of the Preakness is rebuilt per a Maryland Stadium Authority study. RFRA is expected to accrue about \$11 million this year, while the Bowie project could cost roughly \$40 million.

Regarding Pimlico, legislation authorizing creation of a working group to devise a financing plan for the facility was set for hearings in the House and Senate in early March. The bills were introduced on behalf of the Baltimore City Administration.



MTHA has secured D.C. United season tickets for distribution to backstretch workers.

Sign-up for ticket raffles in Laurel Park's track kitchen or by calling: (410) 802-5798



Starter Series

Birdie's Honor (5 points), trained by Marilyn McMullen

Datt Melody (5 points), trained by Michael Gorham

FILLIES AND MARES SPRINT

S W Briar Rose (11 points), trained by George Albright

Miss Jak (9 points), trained by Claudio Gonzalez

Polite Pearl (4 points), trained by Wayne Cole

FILLIES AND MARES LONG

Sarah's Treasure (11 points), trained by Robin Graham

So Innocent (6 points), trained by Charles "Snake" Frock

Bodega Bay (5 points), Anthony Farrior

Sarah's Treasure, owned by Steve Walsh, raced in all three of her series legs and came away with two wins and a second. The same was the case with S W Briar Rose, who is owned by Springwater Farm and Jay Miller.

The base purses – not including Maryland bonus money – were \$35,000 for the first leg of each division, \$45,000 for the second and \$55,000 for the third. Sarah's Treasure, a Maryland-bred, earned \$78,975 during the series, while S W Briar Rose, a Maryland-bred based at Hollywood Casino at Penn National Race Course, collected \$74,295 in her three series starts.

The \$55,000 races in the final round of the starter series Feb. 18 attracted fields of 9, 13, 9 and 11 for an average field size of 10.5. According to MJC statistics, the 3-year-olds and up sprint division averaged 9 horses per race with total pari-mutuel handle of \$960,000; the 3-year-olds and up long division averaged 10 horses per race with total handle of \$819,000; the fillies and mares short division had average field size of 7 with total wagering of \$623,000; and the fillies and mares long division averaged 7.3 starters per race with total handle of \$714,000.

Merz said the feedback was positive enough to lead the MJC to propose a similar starter series on the turf with legs in June, July and August at Laurel.

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*Don't
Forget
About
Uncle
Sam*



Tax time is here. The MTHA will assist backstretch workers and trainers to prepare and file their state and federal tax returns.

An appointment is required. Stop in the MTHA racetrack office during live racing from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. or call 410-902-6843 to schedule.



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March 2019

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