



THOROUGHBRED OWNER OCTOBER 13-16 2014 CONFERENCE

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Contact: Bob Curran Jr.
(212) 521-5326

Participants and Sponsors Share High Praise for Inaugural Thoroughbred Owner Conference

Approximately 300 people, including 120 longtime owners and 100 new or prospective owners, attended the inaugural Thoroughbred Owner Conference hosted by OwnerView October 13 – 16 in Lexington, Ky., and the event drew widespread praise from both participants and sponsors.

The conference was sponsored jointly by the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club, the Keeneland Association, The New York Racing Association Inc., and the Stronach Group.

Tom Durkin, the recently retired announcer, served as master of ceremonies for the conference.

“This conference successfully presented the excitement and professionalism of Thoroughbred racing to existing and prospective owners in a way that’s never been done before,” Keeneland President and CEO Bill Thomason said. “There were a number of unique aspects — a high level of participation by industry leaders set in a unique environment and capped by an afternoon of live racing — that enhanced the experience for all its participants.”

“At the New York Racing Association, we are committed to providing an enhanced experience for our owners — as well as for the teams that they manage,” said Christopher Kay, chief executive officer and president of the New York Racing Association. “The important collaboration between the New York Racing Association and amongst other industry leaders at this week’s conference will ultimately generate benefits, which will further support our shared efforts to grow our sport and attract a new generation of fans.”

“This was absolutely a worthwhile endeavor and a lot of good information was exchanged,” said Mike Rogers, president of The Stronach Group’s Racing and Gaming Division. “There was good interaction among the participants and everyone I talked to said it was a good experience.”

“At Del Mar, we are always looking for ways to enhance the owner experience,” said Joe Harper, president and CEO of Del Mar Thoroughbred Club. “Sponsoring and participating in this conference gave us the opportunity to share some of our practices and at the same time learn more about what others are doing to recruit and retain Thoroughbred owners. Bill Thomason and his staff at Keeneland did a superb job in hosting the event.”

“One participant told me that he had been coming to Keeneland for 62 years and that listening to Tuesday’s speakers and panelists provided him with one of the most memorable days he’s ever spent here,” said Gary Falter, vice president of operations for OwnerView.

Tuesday's panels included discussions about treating owners properly at racetracks, advice on entering the business from successful owners, and what makes a good owner/trainer relationship. There were also panels devoted to finding the best equine athletes at auction and owner relationships with jockeys.

The afternoon culminated with a keynote address by legendary golfer and longtime Thoroughbred owner Gary Player followed by a reception at Keeneland that was hosted by Starlight Racing, Stonestreet Farm, Breeders' Cup, the National Thoroughbred Racing Association, Daily Racing Form, and Bessemer Trust.

Panels on Wednesday focused on care of the Thoroughbred, young owners' thoughts on the future of racing, and information resources for new and existing owners.

"Thoroughbred ownership has been a tremendous experience for both me and my family," said TOBA Chairman Pete Willmott, who opened Wednesday morning's session. "While you have to be prepared for setbacks, in balance, it is a great adventure."

The closing address was given by Ogden Mills Phipps, chairman of The Jockey Club.

The panels were followed with afternoon racing at Keeneland.

"Those of you who have enjoyed visits to the winner's circle certainly treasure those memories," Phipps said. "Those of you who are new to the sport or considering Thoroughbred ownership will experience a unique thrill, a thrill that is hard to describe...I hope you get as much pleasure out of racing as I have and still do."

OwnerView is a website and information resource developed by The Jockey Club and the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association to assist both current and prospective Thoroughbred owners by providing accurate information on trainers, public racing syndicates, the process of purchasing and owning a Thoroughbred, racehorse retirement, and owner licensing.

The need for a central resource to encourage Thoroughbred ownership was identified in the comprehensive economic study of the sport that was commissioned by The Jockey Club and conducted by McKinsey & Company in 2011. The OwnerView site was launched in May 2012. Additional information about OwnerView is available at ownerview.com.

A replay of the conference will be available at ownerview.com within the next few days. The complete list of panels and speakers is also available at ownerview.com.