



Shortage of live dates, regional competition challenge New Jersey

What is your opinion of the state of the Thoroughbred industry in New Jersey?

Unfortunately, the Thoroughbred industry in New Jersey is in a state of flux. Coming off the most successful year (2010) in Monmouth Park's history, the 2011 racing season has had its ups and downs, and I believe most breeders, owners, and trainers are taking a wait-and-see-approach toward the future.

With that being said, I think that the breeders of New Jersey-bred horses are being presented with a great opportunity to earn money due to the small size of our foal crop. The 2011 foal crop will be under 200 and, while I would love to see New Jersey produce 1,000 foals a year, the diminishing number of New Jersey-breds has provided breeders and owners a great chance to make a sizeable return on their investment. As an example, a New Jersey-bred that went through his conditions and also won a stakes race has earned over \$157,000 in purse money and breeder awards.

What are some of the promising trends in New Jersey and some of the trends that might be a cause for concern?

The most promising thing that has happened in New Jersey is that Monmouth Park will operate under private ownership, no longer being run by the state of New Jersey. The new owner, Morris Bailey, has some great ideas to improve Monmouth Park and make it an entertainment destination.

Mr. Bailey is also committed to opening two [off-track wagering outlets] in the next two years which will provide additional revenue to the New Jersey-bred incentive program and purse structure at Monmouth Park.

Describe your priorities moving forward.

The most important priority for the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey is to work with the governor and the Legislature to find additional revenue for our incentive program. With only 71 scheduled live racing days this year, it is increasingly difficult to fund the incentive program at the levels necessary to compete with our neighboring states that have additional revenue from other gaming sources.

Our main talking points when we discuss the future of the industry with the legislators are the

preservation of open space and the impact the equine industry has on the agricultural community. A study conducted by the Rutgers Equine Science Center shows that the equine industry has a \$1.1-billion annual economic impact to the state of New Jersey and accounts for 13,000 jobs and 176,000 total acres.

What are the biggest challenges you face?

The biggest challenges we face are competition from our neighboring states and the decreasing number of racing days in New Jersey. Being located in the Mid-Atlantic region, New Jersey is bordered by New York and Pennsylvania. Both of these states have two things New Jersey is missing, year-round racing and additional revenue from slot machines. While I think year-round racing would be unsuccessful in New Jersey, there has to be more than the current 71 days in order for the breeders and owners of New Jersey-bred horses to earn the money necessary to operate their farms.

How can Thoroughbred racing better market the sport regionally?

Both regionally and nationally, Thoroughbred racing needs to do a better job of introducing the sport to a younger demographic. You are starting to see many tracks increase their presence through social media via Facebook and Twitter, which is a good start, but an increased television presence on days other than the Triple Crown and Breeders' Cup would attract a broader audience as well.

How has expanded gaming in neighboring states affected your state?

Expanded gaming in neighboring states has affected the New Jersey Thoroughbred industry in a negative way. Increased competition from neighboring states that have been awarded the rights to place video-lottery terminals and/or slot machines at their racetracks has caused the breeders and owners of New Jersey-bred horses to look elsewhere.

Breeders will make decisions on where to foal their horses based in part on the monetary incentives that each state-bred program has to offer. At present, New Jersey is well below our neighboring states in terms of money provided through our incentive program.

Michael Campbell



Michael Campbell is the executive director of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey.

A 1998 Clemson University graduate, Campbell attended the Race Track Industry Program at the University of Arizona after deciding he wanted to pursue a career in the Thoroughbred industry. He was named to his current position in 2002 and enjoys representing the breeders and owners involved with New Jersey-breds.

New Jersey glance

Foals in 2009: 252
Stallions in 2010: 20
Mares bred in 2010: 145
Thoroughbred racetracks:
Atlantic City Race course,
Monmouth Park, the Meadows (no Thoroughbred racing since 2009)
2010 New Jersey purses
Atlantic City Racecourse
6 live dates
\$125,099 average daily purse distribution
Monmouth Park
70 live dates
\$686,163 average daily purse distribution

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