

Promotions at HTA Tracks



WEEK OF JULY 9, 2007

FIRST-EVER PRO-AM DRIVER'S CHALLENGE



Northfield Park and Cal-Expo have run the first two legs of the inaugural Northfield vs. Cal-Expo Pro-Am Driver's Challenge, a first-of-its-kind team competition featuring top professional and amateur drivers in the same races at both venues. Northfield hosted the first leg of the series on Friday, June 15 and Saturday, June 16 when a team of two California professionals joined with two west coast amateurs against a squad of two pros and two amateurs from Ohio in two races on each night. The second leg took place on Thursday, July 12 and Friday, July 13 at Cal-Expo. A scoring system has been devised to determine the overall winning team over the four nights of racing.

Cal-Expo is represented by professionals Rick Kuebler, a winner of over 4,000 races, and Rocky Stidham, a native Ohioan who relocated to the "left coast" several years ago. They are joined by prominent California amateur drivers Alan Kirschenbaum, a television executive producer, and David Siegel, the president of TrackMaster.

During the second leg of the challenge, Team Northfield was comprised of professional reinsmen John D. Wengerd and Aaron Merriman, and amateurs Gregg Keidel and Bob Troyer, who have both fared well in recent years in the national Billings series. The first leg of the Challenge was dominated by the Northfield Park Pro-Am team of Brett Miller, Aaron Merriman, Gregg Kiedel and Bob Troyer, who redefined home team advantage by jumping out to a commanding 101 to 67 lead.

Keidel, Director of Racing in Cleveland, said "Cal-Expo has assembled an outstanding team and we can't take them lightly. I think this series not only showcases a pair of outstanding professionals from each state, but could also add credence to the growing amateur driving movement in harness racing."

Before the event began, David Siegel, the president of the California Amateur Driving Club, said "We look forward to racing against nationally recognized drivers like Brett and Aaron, as well as top Billings competitors like Gregg and Bob. With year around racing at both venues, I think its great to vary the programs with innovative concepts like this one."

Sacramento Harness Association General Manager Dick Feinberg echoed those sentiments, saying "I am pleased that my predecessor (Chris Schick) embraced this new concept and accepted the Challenge. We are hoping that these races will provide for great viewing and strong wagering opportunities for our patrons, as well as introduce Cal-Expo racing to some new fans out East."



PACERS AND BEER HEADLINED OPENING WEEKEND AT HAWTHORNE RACECOURSE

Hawthorne Race Course's lucrative stakes program kicked off on Saturday June 23 with the inaugural running of The Chicago and The Lady Chicago, two stake events for three year old pacing colts and fillies respectively. The purse for both feature races were \$60,000.

Hawthorne's Racing Secretary, Billy Perkins, was pleased with the number of nominations for both events, and hoped that the two races might have

a promising future. "We drew 46 for The Chicago and 32 for the Lady Chicago, not bad for a debut stakes race.

In addition to the racing action, Hawthorne sponsored a Brew Fest with \$1.00 beer tasters, cruizin' cooler races, and Saturday sweepstakes where guests could enter to win tickets to the sold-out Police concert at Wrigley Field and other great prizes.

WOODBINE HOMEWORK CLUB LAUNCHED

Woodbine Entertainment Group launched a new community partnership on Monday, June 25, creating a safe after-school environment for children to continue their studies and be provided much needed assistance with their homework.



The Woodbine Homework Club was initiated by Toronto Police Service 23 Division and Woodbine Entertainment Group with the strong support of Ontario Property Management Group providing the space at Maurice Coulter Housing Co-operative. Microsoft Canada as well as other suppliers and businesses have also contributed to the project.