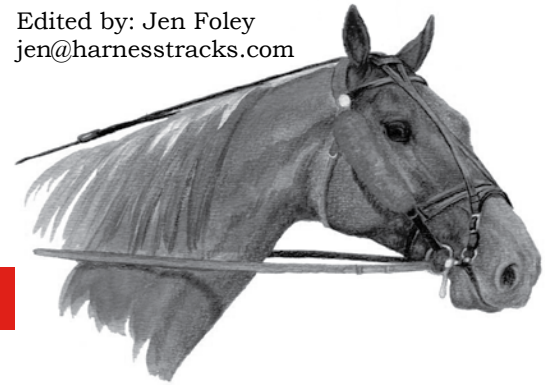


HARNESS TRACKS OF AMERICA

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Promotions at HTA Tracks



WEEK OF MARCH 31, 2008

Churchill Downs and Santa Anita are not HTA members, but promotions that attract attention warrant attention here.

CHURCHILL DOWNS SEEKS CHIEF PARTY OFFICER TO LEAD KY DERBY INFIELD



Churchill Downs is searching for a Chief Party Officer and Infield Board of Directors to lead the sea of people that make up the infield on Kentucky Derby Day. They will be the governing body of the “of the people, by the people” atmosphere and the Board of Directors, lead by the CPO, will guide the wild and untamed party in the infield.

“We’re looking for the most die-hard, outstanding partiers who make the Kentucky Derby infield an annual pilgrimage,” said Brent Alexander, senior director of marketing for Churchill Downs. “The Kentucky Derby is one of the biggest social events of the year, and one of the best parties in the world. As such, the infield needs a leader worthy of that honor and who can truly represent what the Kentucky Derby infield experience is all about. We’re excited about presenting this opportunity to our fans who make the infield party an annual can’t-miss event. We feel confident they’re up to this challenge and we hope they apply for the job.”

The eight Board Members will be chosen based upon their “job interview” video they submit on www.youtube.com. The CPO and the Board Members will gain access to the Board Room which will be set up in the middle of the infield, elevating their position to watch over “The People’s Party.” Their meetings will consist of delegating whose turn it is to grab their fellow Board Members a beer out of it’s ice cold tub, while sharing their most memorable moments of the infield. They will enjoy complimentary food and beverages, and have the opportunity to find the select few from the crowd to experience being a member of the Infield Board. Horse racing is truly the Sport of Kings, and the CPO and Board Members will reign for one year as the “royalty of the Infield.” The CPO will be paraded throughout the infield, walk the Red Carpet with the other celebrities, and make numerous radio and television appearances (local and possibly national), acting as the single face that infield revelers can view as their leader.



Chief Party Officer

For details and full contest rules, Churchill offered coverage on its Web site at www.kentuckyderby.com/2008/experience/infield/cpo-contest

HORSESHOE WORTH \$1 MIL AT SANTA ANITA

Horse racing's newest millionaire was crowned March 15 at Santa Anita and the lucky winner didn't even run in a race. John Placzankis, 41, of Rancho Cucamonga, tossed a perfect ringer and won first prize of \$1 million in Santa Anita's annual "St. Patrick's Day Horseshoe Pitch" contest following the seventh race.



John Placzankis turns his horseshoe into \$1,000,000 as he nails a ringer to win the St. Pat's Pitch. Benoit Photo.

Placzankis, who remained unflappable in the immediate aftermath of his million-dollar toss, did exclaim to the on-track crowd of 15,660, "The drinks are on me!" when interviewed on live television.

He attended as part of a group sponsored by Old Dominion Freight Line and was one of five contestants whose names were drawn as finalists. "I barely got the entry in on time," said Placzankis, a native of New Rochelle, New York, who moved to California eight years ago.

"I'm a big Duke (basketball) fan and I lost money on them today. I was watching the game and I wasn't thinking about the contest. In fact, my sales rep (Randy McNally, with Old Dominion) found somebody who told us where to go.

"I was just trying to relax," he said. "I'm pretty calm and I was actually just trying to throw it like a softball ... and I didn't want to go over the line." As for pitching horseshoes, Placzankis said, "I probably hadn't done it in like 30 years."

Placzankis, who is single, manages a warehouse for Hankook Tires in Rancho Cucamonga. His family remains in New York. "I'll pay some bills and take care of my nieces and nephews ... I'm also going to take care of my mom back home."

BUFFALO HOSTS HANDICAPPING CONTEST

Buffalo Raceway is hosting the 2008 Harness Handicapping Contest, every Saturday in April. The top 5 finishers each week will compete in the Buffalo Raceway Harness Handicapping Contest Final on Saturday, May 10.



The Grand Prize Winner will get bragging rights for the year and receive an all expense paid trip to compete in the National Harness Handicapping Championship at the Meadowlands Racetrack, including transportation, hotel, entry fee and spending cash. Second, third, fourth and fifth place finishers will receive cash prizes.



The National Harness Handicapping Championship will bring together the top handicappers from across the country to compete for the \$50,000 Grand Prize. Players may earn their way into the June championship through participation in a qualifying tournament at an NHHC partner outlet or by direct buy-in. Last year Ken Fierle, represented Buffalo Raceway and finished 5th at the NHHC.