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Horsemen to discuss several timely issues

The National Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association's winter convention will feature panels dedicated to three issues important to horsemen.

On Monday, the National HBPA announced the issues and participating panelists for the convention scheduled for January 29 through February 2 at the Hollywood Beach Marriott in Hollywood, Florida. Topics include managing retired racehorses, medication testing and thresholds, and a comparison of synthetic and dirt surfaces.

On January 30, Remi Bellocq, chief executive officer of the National HBPA, will moderate a panel titled, "From the Backstretch to the Backyard: Practical Solutions on Managing the Retired Racehorse."

On January 31, Kent Stirling, executive director of the Florida HBPA and chairman of the National HBPA Medication Committee, will moderate a panel titled "What's on the Horizon in Medication Testing and Thresholds."

On February 1, Mick Peterson, a track surface expert and professor in the college of engineering at the University of Maine, will moderate a panel titled "Synthetic vs. Dirt—A Track Superintendent's Viewpoint."

The National HBPA executive committee and board also will discuss the current economic downturn, immigration issues, the Thoroughbred Horsemen's Group, safety and welfare issues, and model rules.

"We are thankful to the Florida HBPA for hosting our 2009 NHBPA Winter Convention," said National HBPA Chairman Joe Santanna. "We especially recognize FHBPA President Sam Gordon for his determination in making it possible for our members to return to south Florida. Thanks also to the FHBPA board of directors, Executive Director Kent Stirling, its member horsemen and horsewomen, and Gulfstream Park."

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