



Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit

Sponsored by the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation

3rd Welfare and Safety Summit Scheduled for June

A third Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit (WSS) has been scheduled for June 28 and 29, 2010, at Keeneland in Lexington, KY. Coordinated and underwritten by The Jockey Club and Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation and hosted by Keeneland Association, the summit is a two-day workshop designed to explore ways to enhance the safety and soundness of the Thoroughbred racehorse.

The summit will include approximately 60 invited participants representing a broad cross-section of industry leaders and stakeholders.

Monday's sessions will be open to the public and free of charge as will one session on Tuesday in the Keeneland Sales Pavilion. For those unable to attend, live video web streaming will be available on *keeneland.com*. The first day will be composed of an overview of the current WSS committees and their work over the past two years; an update from the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance, Racing Medication and Testing Consortium, The Jockey Club's Thoroughbred Safety Committee and the Equine Injury Database; and four panel discussions concerning Racing Surfaces, Racetrack Environment and Training Practices, Racing Equipment and Safety, and Transitioning Thoroughbred Racehorses to Second Careers.

On the second day of the summit, participants will break into work groups to determine objectives and develop action plans from the previous day's panels in addition to a work group on Education, Licensing and Continuing Education. The work group sessions will be closed to the public and will not be video streamed. After establishing goals and objectives for 2010, the summit will conclude with a panel discussion at 11 a.m. concerning implementation of safety and soundness recommendations. The Implementation Panel will also be available via live video web streaming and a media briefing will follow at 2 p.m.

"Previous summits have been the catalyst for a number of initiatives that have improved the safety and integrity of the sport, including the Equine Injury Database, and I expect the upcoming summit to yield additional measures that enhance the safety of horse and rider," said Ed Bowen, president, Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation. "We are particularly grateful to Keeneland

for hosting the summit once again and for video streaming the open sessions on its website so that anyone with an interest in equine safety can follow all of Monday's and part of Tuesday's proceedings."

The original Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit was held in October 2006 and resulted in the formation of committees in the following areas deemed critical to enhancing horse health and extending the careers of racehorses: On-Track Injury Reporting, Shoeing and Hoof Care, Education and Licensing, Racing Surfaces, and Durability. These committees were charged with researching and making recommendations on the action plans that evolved from the summit's strategic planning session.

A second summit was held in March 2008 to review recommendations from the original summit and explore new safety initiatives. Recommendations from the summits served as starting points when The Jockey Club's Thoroughbred Safety Committee began examining potential industry reforms following its formation in May 2008.

Among the major accomplishments that trace their roots to the Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit are the creation and launch of the Equine Injury Database, the first North American database of racing injuries; the creation and launch of a five-part Drug Testing Initiative aimed at developing laboratory and drug testing standards comparable to the World Anti-Doping Agency model; the creation and launch of the Racing Surfaces Testing Laboratory, which provides science-based testing of racing surfaces to enhance safety for horses and riders; the incorporation of proposed safety and welfare recommendations from the first two summits into the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance Code of Standards; the publication of stallion durability statistics; and creation of an educational hoof care DVD.

Visit grayson-jockeyclub.org for more details on the summit as they become available and for the strategic plan and recommendations that came out of the original summits, presentations, research articles, committee updates, and more.

Pre-Race Inspections: Why are they necessary?

A pre-race inspection is not an examination to diagnose problems and recommend subsequent treatment. Rather, it is a race-day assessment by the regulatory or state veterinarian of the overall racing condition of a horse.

Thorough pre-race inspections by a regulatory veterinarian are an important component of race-day safety and should be performed at every racetrack.

Not all jurisdictions have adopted the RCI model rule for performing pre-race inspections, and the quality and frequency of inspections performed can vary. However, the Welfare and Safety Summit applauds the efforts of the many jurisdictions that have embraced the importance of inspections for the improved safety and welfare of their horses.

To assist regulatory and state veterinarians with the exam process, InCompass offers a Pre-Race Veterinary Exam module for its RTO system that enables pre-race inspection information to be recorded in a central database and shared amongst regulatory veterinarians. When a horse ships in from another track, the InCompass system allows the regulatory veterinarian to access historical exam information and see what colleagues at other tracks have said about the horse, permitting a more thorough inspection.

We reached out to three veterinarians to answer a few questions concerning the importance of pre-race inspections to you, the horsemen.

Jennifer Durenberger, DVM

Dr. Durenberger has worked as an association and commission veterinarian at racetracks in New York, Minnesota, and California.

Keith Soring, DVM

Director of Racing
Iowa Racing & Gaming Commission

William E. Farmer, DVM

Racing Veterinarian, Kentucky Horse Racing
Commission

Note: The RMTc board of directors has revised its recommended threshold for phenylbutazone from 5 micrograms per milliliter to 2 micrograms per milliliter of plasma or serum. This action was based on the recommendation of its Scientific Advisory Committee, in

response to concerns expressed by the regulatory veterinary community regarding the effects of NSAID administration on pre-race examinations. Visit rmtcnet.com for more information.

What is the main purpose of pre-race inspections?

Dr. Jennifer Durenberger: The primary purpose of the pre-race inspection is to protect the safety and welfare of the horse. The byproduct of this is that, in doing so, we help to protect the interests of racing's other participants. This includes not only the riders, but the connections of all of the horses in the race as well as the betting public

Who is required to be present during an exam?

Dr. William Farmer: For our "track-based" horses, the groom and/or the assistant trainer is present. For "ship-in" horses either the groom or hot-walker is typically present. We do not examine any horse that is unattended, but we wait for someone to return.

Where do the exams take place?

Dr. Durenberger: This will depend on the racetrack and the jurisdiction. The usual location for the initial "complete" inspection is the trainer's barn or, if the horse has shipped in to the racetrack to race, the receiving barn. Pre-race inspection of the horses, though, continues in the paddock and post parade, right up until the moment the horses break from the gate.

Dr. Farmer: Physical palpation is done stall-side and the jogging portion of the exam is done either in the shed-row or outside the barn depending on individual circumstances.

Describe a typical exam.

Dr. Keith Soring: A typical exam consists of identifying the horse and palpating all four limbs for signs of edema, heat, or other abnormalities. Flexion tests of the front joints are also routinely performed. We may also make notes about any other physical abnormalities and compare findings from previous exams performed and even past performance records. In Iowa, all data is immediately entered into the InCompass pre-race exam module using handheld computers.

How do you scratch a horse from a race due to a pre-race exam?

Dr. Farmer: Once an issue has been identified the trainer is contacted and we try to explain our reasoning for the scratch recommendation. The veterinarian then contacts the racing stewards and informs them that the examined horse is not fit to race and recommends the scratch from that day's card. The racing stewards then officially scratch the horse.

Why should horsemen want thorough pre-race exams?

Dr. Durenberger: There are two answers to this question – one as it relates to their own horse, and one as it relates to the other horses on the card.

For their own horse – the inspecting veterinarian represents another set of professional eyes. A full-time regulatory veterinarian employed year-round may inspect up to 10,000 horses per year. We come to make associations between findings on the pre-race inspection and poor performance on the race-track that may not always be otherwise apparent.

For the other horses on the card – a pre-race inspection program provides an additional layer of protection for everyone involved in racing. Helping to enhance the quality of the racing program benefits all of racing's participants in the long term.

What restraints prevent or impede you from performing pre-race exams?

Dr. Soring: There have been no major restraints in our jurisdiction. Some new trainers unfamiliar with the exams occasionally do not have their horse's legs clean and free

from bandages or their help is not ready, but most get on board after a week or so. We have found that it is helpful to try to maintain a consistent time schedule so that trainers know when to expect us each morning. We also allow some leeway for ship-in trainers as long as they phone ahead and tell us when they will be arriving. The InCompass system allows the three examining vets to know immediately when a horse has been examined so that backtracking and searching for a horse that has moved is not necessary.

Are there different pre-race protocols for different racetracks, jurisdictions, or different types of races?

Dr. Durenberger: The short answer is yes, there are. But the end goal is the same. Regulatory veterinarians all have very different approaches based on our backgrounds and the unique challenges presented by the varying conditions in which we work from track to track. But although we may all take different roads to get there, our destination is the same.

Additional thoughts...

Dr. Soring: Pre-race exams are a valuable tool in protecting the welfare of the horse and rider and may in fact prevent some injuries as well as being able to monitor a horse's overall condition throughout a race meet.

Dr. Farmer: For the most part pre-race exams are very well received in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. As regulatory veterinarians our main priorities are to look out for and protect the health and welfare of the racehorse. Pre-race exams in the state of Kentucky have led to decreased post-parade scratches and decreased number of career ending injuries.

Help us Help Your Horses
From the Human Heart Comes a Healthier Horse

Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation has only one purpose. We raise and manage funds that are provided to researchers seeking solutions to the problems of all horses. We fund high-quality, research projects whose successful conclusion can affect a large number of horses.

Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation has addressed such subjects as

- Use of blood tests to pre-determine the onset of problems leading to fracture and joint injury
- Improved combating of deadly foal pneumonia
- Use of stem cells in cartilage repair
- Enhanced recovery from fractures
- Mare Reproductive Loss Syndrome
- DNA vaccination and gene sequencing, undertaken to solve problems such as laminitis, strangles, and herpes virus, that long have confounded scientists.

Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation Inc.
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Upcoming Events

American Horse Council's National Issues Forum

horsecouncil.org

June 20-22 in Washington, DC

Groom Elite

groomelite.com

Groom Elite 101

Canterbury Park

June 1-2

June 8-9

June 15-16

June 22-23

June 29-30

Charles Town

July 12-14

July 19-21

July 26-28

August 2-4

Churchill Downs

June 1-2

June 7-8

Colonial Downs

June 10-11

June 17-18

June 24-35

July 8-9

July 15-16

Indiana Downs

June 3-4

June 14-15

Philadelphia Park

July 14-15

July 21-22

July 28-29

August 4-6

August 11-13

Trainer Elite 301

Canterbury Park

July 1-3

HBPA Summer Convention

hbpa.org

July 21-25 in Minneapolis, MN

Jockey Club Round Table Conference

jockeyclub.com

August 22 in Saratoga Springs, NY

Track Superintendents' Field Day

ntra.com

June 13-15 at Belmont Park

Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association

toba.org

New Owners Seminar

June 11 in Arlington Heights, IL

July 24 in Shakopee, MN

August 5 in Saratoga Springs, NY

Pedigree & Confirmation Clinic

August 2 in Saratoga Springs, NY



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Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation

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