

# Uniform equine injury reporting to start June 1

by Frank Angst

Thirty racetracks plan to provide uniform, on-track equine injury reporting beginning on June 1.

In a program developed by Mary Scollay D.V.M., association veterinarian at Calder Race Course and Gulfstream Park, participating track veterinarians will fill out standardized forms to identify each horse injury. Scollay has used a similar program in Florida and outlined the plan at the Welfare and Safety Racehorse Summit in October.

The pilot project hopes to identify the frequency, type, and outcome of racing injuries using a standardized format that will generate valid composite statistics, develop a centralized epidemiologic database that could be used to identify markers for horses at increased risk of injury; and to serve as a data source for research directed at improving safety and preventing injuries.

"Most tracks have been keeping much, if not all, of this information already," Scollay said. "The difference with this program is that by using standardized terminology, definitions, and reporting criteria we can all be on the same page. And that will permit constructive interactions."

While injured horses will not be identified, tracks will be able to compare their individual statistics to aggregate statistics through use of information provided on the standardized form. The form will readily allow the compilation of statistics, which could help in other areas of safety including track surface studies.

"There is no such thing as 'an acceptable rate of injury,' but until we are able to document injury rates, trends, and outcomes--and figure out where we are—it is hard to figure out how to get to where we want to be," Scollay said.

In addition to tracks starting the study on June 1, several others plan to participate if they can arrange personnel.

The Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit was coordinated and underwritten by the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation and The Jockey Club, and was hosted by the Keeneland Association.

Participating tracks, as of May 29: Downs at Albuquerque, Aqueduct, Arlington Park, Belmont Park, Beulah Park, Calder Race Course, Canterbury Park, Charles Town Races, Churchill Downs, Delaware Park, Ellis Park, Emerald Downs, Fonner Park, Gulfstream Park, Hastings Park, Hawthorne Racecourse, Hollywood Park, Hoosier Park, Indiana Downs, Keeneland Race Course, Lone Star Park, Meadowlands, Monmouth Park, Penn National Race Course, Philadelphia Park, Prairie Meadows Racetrack, Saratoga Race Course, Suffolk Downs, Turfway Park, and Yavapai Downs.

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