



Impacts of Weather – Equine Health and Business Decisions





Welfare & Safety of the Racehorse Summit VIII



Michael Hopkins, Moderator

Executive Director

Maryland Racing Commission

IMPACT OF WEATHER ON RACE DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS

EQUINE HEALTH AND BUSINESS DECISIONS

PARTICIPANTS

- **MODERATOR**

- MICHAEL HOPKINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARYLAND RACING COMMISSION

- **PANELISTS**

- EDDIE ARROYO, CHIEF STATE STEWARD, ILLINOIS RACING BOARD
- LYNN HOVDA, CHIEF COMMISSION VETERINARIAN, MINNESOTA RACING COMMISSION
- JEFF JOHNSTON, JOCKEYS' GUILD REPRESENTATIVE
- SAL SINATRA, PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANGER, MARYLAND JOCKEY CLUB

OBJECTIVES

- DISCUSS HOW WEATHER AFFECTS THE SAFETY AND WELFARE OF PARTICIPANTS
 - HORSES, PONIES, JOCKEYS, GROOMS, PATRONS
- GAIN UNDERSTANDING INTO THE BUSINESS DECISIONS RELATING TO THE DELAY OR CANCELLATION OF THE RACE

EXTREME WEATHER

- AFFECTS EVERYONE
 - HORSES, PONIES, JOCKEYS, GROOMS, PATRONS
- EXTREME WEATHER
 - HOT OR COLD
 - SNOW OR ICE
 - WINDS – STRAIGHT LINE, TORNADO, HURRICANE
 - LIGHTNING AND TORRENTIAL RAINS, FLOODS
 - FIRES – DISCUSSED ELSEWHERE, BUT WHERE DO YOU PUT THE LOOSE HORSES?

TEMPERATURE RELATED

- WHEN IS IT TOO HOT? WHEN IS IT TOO COLD?
 - REGIONAL ISSUES – NORTH VERSUS SOUTH
- WHO DECIDES? IS THE VETERINARIAN INVOLVED IN THE DECISION?
- WHEN IS THAT DECISION MADE?
- WHAT SUPPLIES DO YOU NEED TO RACE SUCCESSFULLY?

ICE AND SNOW RELATED

- WHO CANCELS AND WHEN?
- REGIONAL ISSUES – BELMONT IN NEW YORK RACES THROUGH MOST EVERYTHING; OTHERS, IN PARTICULAR THE SOUTHERN TRACKS, DON'T
- IS ICE WORSE THAN SNOW?
- IS THE TRACK SUPERINTENDENT INVOLVED IN THE DECISION?

HIGH WINDS

- IS THERE A SPECIFIC MPH WHERE RACING IS DELAYED OR CANCELLED?
- DUST OR GRIT “STORMS”?
- JOCKEY AND HORSES ISSUES?
- SAFETY OF STARTING GATE — WILL IT SHAKE OR FALL OVER?

LIGHTNING, TORRENTIAL RAINS, FLOODING

- ARCI LIGHTNING RULE (8 MILES). DELAY OF 30 MINUTES
- WASHOUT OF TRACK
- FLOODING OR POOLED WATER ON THE TRACK

OTHER ISSUES RESULTING IN DELAYS

- MECHANICAL ISSUES
 - TRACTORS, STARTING GATE, HARROWS
- ELECTRICAL PROBLEMS
 - STARTING GATE, TOTE BOARD
 - GRANDSTANDS — PATRONS
- WATER FAILURE
 - LACK OF WATER FOR WATER TRUCKS
 - GRANDSTANDS — PATRONS

DELAY CONSIDERATIONS

- GENERAL
 - WHO DECIDES TO DELAY
 - LENGTH OF DELAY
 - DOES LASIX FACTOR IN
- PADDOCK – OVERGIRTHS OR SADDLES OFF OR ON?
- TRACK
 - LOOSE HORSES /VETERINARY ISSUES
 - HUMAN WANDERING ONTO TRACK SURFACE
 - WEIGHT ON OR OFF HORSES (HOW LONG UNTIL THIS OCCURS)

CANCELLATIONS

- WEATHER
- OTHERS
 - BOMB THREAT
 - ACTIVE SHOOTER ON SITE
 - FIRE
- EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS — EXECUTE WELL DEVELOPED PLAN
- CROWD CONTROL
- MEDIA RESPONSE

SPECIFIC NEEDS

- ON TRACK EMERGENCY WARNING SYSTEM
 - WHO ACTIVATES?
- WELL DEVELOPED PROTOCOLS AND PLANS THAT WORK
 - COMMITTEES – WHO PARTICIPATES?
- HUMAN AMBULANCE PERSONNEL
- HORSE AMBULANCE PERSONNEL

THANK YOU

