



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Barrel Racing

Pompano Beach, FL (October 8, 2011) – FSBOA wishes to inform its members of an attempt to use a quarter horse permit/license application to replace the Florida statute required live quarter horse race days with a limited number of barrel racing rodeo events on which pari-mutuel wagering is planned. This effort is, we believe, an attempt to obtain a card room and perhaps eventually a casino without the capital investment required to build a racetrack and related facilities. Equibase, the Trackmaster equivalent for race charting and pari-mutuel program past performance lines, does not chart barrel races which are a timed rodeo event, not horse racing. Further, barrel racing horses are not breed specific although quarter horses are the prevalent breed used for those events. The Gretna Racing LLC sponsoring organization is 70% owned by an out-of-state Native American Indian group and 30% by certain Florida business and lobbying interests. This organization has formed its own horsemen's association, thereby avoiding contractual negotiations with the only state recognized quarter horse association. The "prize money" advertised for the barrel racing events is considerably less than that offered at the Hialeah Park quarter horse races during the past two years, such races that were conducted in compliance with state law.

Below is a new release issued by the FQHRA. Please review and consider contacting your state representatives on this matter. It is an ethical issue and much more, as it threatens the racing equine and breeding industry in Florida and sets a dangerous precedent for the racing equine industry in the United States. As you know the racing equine industry is a powerful economic engine that drives employment, purchases of feed, pharmaceuticals, veterinary and other services while also preserving tax generating green space and tax revenues on wagering to the state.

Pari-mutuel barrel racing: Where'd they get *that* crazy idea???



October 6, 2011

Perhaps Wyoming Downs's unproductive experiment with pari-mutuel team roping, which *replaced racing* in 2010, has inspired another industry-killing initiative, this time in Florida.

A Gretna, Florida, Quarter Horse permit-holder has asked the Florida Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering (FDPMW) for permission to hold barrel racing starting in December 2011. The events themselves would not be open to pari-mutuel wagering, but the license would allow the permit-holder's facility to operate a poker room.

Many observers believe the application Gretna Racing filed on September 30 could change the definition of what activities are permissible under a Quarter Horse permit or any other pari-mutuel permit in Florida. Currently, any Florida pari-mutuel permit-holder that conducts at least the minimum number of required performances a year can operate a year-round poker room.

The controversy surrounding the application recalls some of the arguments brought forward by Wyoming horsemen in December 2009, when Eric Spector of Wyoming Entertainment proposed conducting a pari-mutuel roping event at his facility so his company could continue to run simulcast operations throughout the state. The minutes from his conference call with members of the Wyoming Pari-Mutuel Commission (December 18, 2009) captured Spector's reaction when asked if the event would be held instead of horseracing.

"President Linford (of the Wyoming commission) posed the question as to whether or not this event would replace live horseracing, and Mr. Spector's response was that it would not, that their plan is to continue to race at Wyoming Downs in 2010."

As Intermountain West horsemen know, that was not to be. *TRJ* hopes that Florida horsemen reach a better agreement to protect their industry.

The Florida Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (FHPBA) and the Florida Quarter Horse Racing Association (FQHRA) have contacted the FDPMW, asking that they not approve the Gretna Racing Association application for barrel racing by Gretna Racing LLC based on their views that Florida laws on Quarter Horse racing limit that sport to conventional Quarter Horse races. Barrel racing is held as a non pari-mutuel event at numerous sites in northwestern Florida and other parts of the state.

In a September 18 letter to the FDPMPW, FHBPA executive director Kent Stirling expressed his organization's concern that granting Gretna Racing's request "would open the door to other pari-mutuel licensees that currently operate live horse racing to do the same with their Quarter Horse licenses. We remind you that Gulfstream Park, Pompano Park, Tampa Bay Downs, Hialeah Park, and the Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association all have Quarter Horse licenses."

Stirling said the FHBPA is hoping to prevent any future efforts by tracks to substitute low-cost barrel racing for conventional race meets while keeping poker rooms and, in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, casinos.

The horsemen's group is hoping the application will clarify the interpretation of definitions of horseracing and Quarter Horse racing in Florida pari-mutuel laws in determining whether Gretna Racing's intended use of Quarter Horses makes barrel racing an eligible event. Current laws require a Quarter Horse meet to conduct at least half its races as Quarter Horse races. Other races in mixed meets under a Quarter Horse permit can include Thoroughbreds and other designated breeds.

Steven Fisch, DVM, president of the FQHRA, sees Gretna's planned barrel racing meet as "an attempt to skirt the rules and have poker." The FQHRA's action follows its unsuccessful attempt to negotiate a purse agreement with Gretna Racing.

The Florida Standardbred Breeders and Owners Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization responsible for promoting the standardbred horse-breeding and racing industry in Florida. The FSBOA maintains a registry of Florida-bred standardbred horses, manages various Florida-bred stakes events and an annual fall sale featuring FL-bred yearlings. The FSBOA website contains information about stallions standing in Florida, special standardbred events taking place throughout the year, and stake race information (including payment schedules, eligibilities, purses, and results). This website also will publish advertisements relating to standardbred services and articles offered for sale.