



BC THOROUGHBRED OWNERS & BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

"One Voice for Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders in British Columbia"

NEWSLETTER

By Mike Heads

We are 'off and racing' and with the first Friday card successfully filling tonight it will be everyone's first chance to see the excellent work of the B.C. Lottery Corp. and their aggressive marketing campaign to draw new faces to Hastings. There have been numerous prime-time radio promos on the top rated Pratt/Taylor sports show on the Team 1040 as well as ads in both local newspapers and Hastings is providing a vast array of entertainment to insure a positive experience for all Friday night guests.

We did lose a bit of momentum last Friday with the cancellation of the April 29th card, but it did prove necessary as we were barely able to fill 16 races for Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1. It would have been nearly impossible to fill both Saturday and Sunday if we had tried to gather together a card for Friday. The tough weather this spring has really set a lot of the barns behind schedule and if we can get a decent break in the weather, the 3-day a week cards shouldn't be a problem to fill with nice size fields which are needed to get the handle back up near the projected totals for 2011. We are hoping that was the last week with these concerns at the entry box.

After the first three weekends the on-track handle is down but an interesting note that 6 of our top 15 handles last year were in May, so this is the time to get some momentum back. With better weather, bigger fields and the upcoming Kentucky Derby this Saturday both attendance and handle will certainly be on the rise.

The transfer of the Horsemen's Bookkeeper from GCGC to BCTOBA has gone smoothly and seamlessly. BCTOBA continues to work with New Stride, the B.C. Interior Horse Racing Association and are also partnering with the CTHS in conducting owner/breeder seminars designed to create interest and educate potential new owners and breeders in our province. These seminars will start next month at sites near Kelowna, Kamloops and Vancouver.

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There is no better time than now to be a horse owner in British Columbia with purses up an impressive \$3 million over last year. There are also strong incentives to own and breed B.C. bred with a 25 % owner bonus paid immediately on horse earnings and a 25% hike for B.C. breeders in available money which is paid at the end of the year.

Everyone is trying to remain positive during these tumultuous times as is BCTOBA. We are an association that knows this sport and its many challenges and we are trying different strategies to enhance and enlighten new customers, breeders and owners while still entertaining the loyal followers that we are fortunate to have. GCGC/Hastings has gone to great lengths to change things for the better as well including the new iPhone app with gives everyone the opportunity to have Hastings Racecourse at their fingertips, which in this era is an extremely important asset to have.

For those who wish to join BCTOBA please go to our BCTOBA.com website for application forms. Also the forms for voluntarily donations to the New Stride Thoroughbred Adoption Agency and the B.C. Interior Horse Racing Association are available on our website and can be submitted to the Horsemens' Bookkeeper.

Good luck to all and good racing.