



CHARLES TOWN RACES & SLOTS

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Press Room

Racing Seminar

Wednesday January 21, 2004 Charles Town Races & Slots hosted two of last years most influential national headliners as they sponsored a racing seminar detailing their dramatic accomplishments.

Barclay Tagg and Scott Lake ventured to West Virginia to give their prospective on the "Road to the Triple Crown" and "Basics of Winning 101" respectively.

Tagg and his charge, Funny Cide, ran a neck and neck duel throughout the year with the blockbuster movie Seabiscuit as those two vied for the number one story in racing.

Lake led the nation in wins as he manipulated his expansive operation spanning the east coast.

Joining the seminar was Charles Town regular [Ronney Brown](#) who has set atop of the local trainer standings for three years in a row.

The seminars goal was to use these celebrities as an enticement to inspire and educate fans into the world of thoroughbred racing. Hopefully average race goers were given the opportunity to see up close and personal, figures, which were portrayed in mass media break down the walls and realize that racing belongs to everyone.

A generous turnout was afforded the typical candid style of Barclay Tagg. His low key and down to earth manner had fans reveling in his response to their questions.

Fresh from his headquarters in Florida and sporting a striking tan Tagg looked like a spokesperson for the division of tourism. He is a class act and a true gentleman. His vivid recounting of the Kentucky Derby had everyone feeling as if they were partners in the Sackatoga Stable.

Scott Lake predominantly a claiming trainer who last year won over four hundred and fifty races provided an interesting contrast to Mr. Tagg who prefers to develop young stock. Scott did an excellent job fending some tough queries about medication, year round racing and the future of the sport. An eclipse award nominee in 2000 and 2001 Lake was extremely articulate and humble about his vast empire.

The gentle giant, [Ronney Brown](#) offered insight into the resurgence of Charles Town since the advent of slots. Ronney thanked his dad for introducing him to the racing business and credits him for his current prosperity.

The temperature outside was twenty degrees but the seminar and those who attended will have warm recollections of an evening spent with good food and friends.

New Faces

The local chapter of the H.B.P.A. will move into the New Year with a change at the helm. Ann Hilton captured the popular vote for the horsemen's organization. Ms. Hilton is no neophyte to the local racing scene as she has spent the better part of the last four decades either as an owner, trainer or breeder.

Ann said she enjoys all aspects of the industry but lately has divested herself

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from the breeding side of the game to focus on her training chores.

Ms. Hilton's credentials include 21 years of marriage to local training legend Robert Hilton, a brief stint in the secretaries' office and a member of the H.B.P.A. Board of Directors in the 1980's. As an H.B.P.A. director Ann was instrumental in the creation of the counseling and scholarship programs. She is well known as the architect of Charles Town's Wall of History and spent countless hours of her personal time to restore, catalogue and erect one of racings premier visitor highlights. Ann's mission statement is to find a way where all horsemen's needs are equally addressed and that an atmosphere of cooperation and unanimity is fostered.

Simply put" United We Stand, Divided We Fall".
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Throughout its extensive history Charles Town has been fortunate to be considered a great emancipator for women's rights. From Sylvia Bishop to Barbara Jo Rubin the opposite sex has always been afforded the chance to showcase their talents. Young ladies have gravitated to the Jefferson County oval in an attempt to prove their worthiness against their male counterparts and this year is no exception.

Newcomer Leigh Offutt is our female fresh face for 2004. At 5'8" Leigh is tall for her profession but her slight frame maintains the weight necessary for her apprentice status.

Born and raised in Annapolis, Maryland, Leigh's early indoctrination with horses occurred at age twelve when her father and she began riding fox hunters. During high school and college Leigh gained valuable experience galloping horses at Laurel Park for trainers, Graham Motion and Barclay Tagg. Lately the twenty three year old has concentrated her efforts here and has been aided significantly by horsemen Jeff Runco and Charles Schneider. Leigh is grateful to the jockeys in Maryland and West Virginia for imparting their wisdom and skills to her and excepting her into their inner circle.

Accomplishments

The 2003 results have been tabulated and for the third consecutive year trainer Ronney W. Brown has claimed the top spot in the standings. With his unprecedented three peats the soft spoken conditioner continues to assert his dominance over local rivals. Starting 750 horses for the year "R.B." graced the winners circle 139 times. The 42 year horseman hails from Frederick, Maryland and gives his father all the credit for his persistence and success in this his chosen profession.

Ronney would especially like to thank all of his owners who provided the tools necessary for him to continue his impressive streak.

Presently Ronney trains 55 horses at Charles Town and is aided by his lucky charm, fiancée, Susan Schreiber. In his spare time he peruses the condition book in an attempt to locate races for the thirty different owners he juggles. This should be enough validation to qualify for a degree in psychology. The demands from ever increasing competition of neighboring jurisdictions force Ronney's goal to remain the continual upgrading of his racing stock.

From a handicappers perspective I extend my congratulations to Mr. Brown. His horse's consistent and reliable form is no aberration. Dedication to detail and long hours of home work provides the bettor a realistic opportunity to appraise a horse's performance, thus resulting in positive dividends for the public.

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