



Immediate Release -- Contact:

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To: Industry-Wide Stakeholders of Thoroughbred Racing
From: Thoroughbred Racing Fan Association, Inc. (ThoroFan)
Subject: Support for Jockey Club's --- *Vision 2025 To Prosper, Horse Racing Needs Comprehensive Reform*

The equine fatalities that have beset Santa Anita Race Track in recent months have Thoroughbred racing fans, some 25 million strong, feeling like public sentiment has turned on them. The events brought anti-horse racing groups and animal activists out in force. They ask, "How could we love a sport that is so cruel to their athletes? That question is a reasonable one and one that deserves an honest answer.

ThoroFan, a national, non-profit (501(c)(3)) Thoroughbred Racing Fan Association, Inc., believes all stakeholders in racing need to work together on the critical issues plaguing our sport. As a fan-based organization, we endorse and support the Jockey Club's recommendations in their White Paper --- *Vision 2025 To Prosper, Horse Racing Needs Comprehensive Reform*. The Jockey Club leads their recommendation list with the need for an **Independent Central Rule Making Authority**. ThoroFan is 100% behind this recommendation.

First, highly competitive sports, by their nature, are filled with risks. The current controversy over brain injuries in football supports this point. In 2018, the NFL documented 214 concussions sustained in games and practices. Injury-reserve-lists in most major, professional sports asserts this fact. According to the website Roster Resource, major league baseball players were placed on the Disabled [injury] List over 600 times in 2017. Shouldn't fans of all sports be concerned with these statistics? Should these sports be suspended until a root-cause for these injuries is found and a solution is implemented? If it is the right approach for racing, why not for other sports?

Getting to the bottom of equine injuries and fatalities in racing requires a multi-dimensional approach that must use data and not emotions to find answers. Data will likely show that there are many contributing factors, including medication use, actions to win at any cost, and profit-driven breeding without regard for quality. A heavy focus on wagering to fund racing operations just exacerbates these factors. Tim Ritvo, Stronach Group COO, warned us clearly in the April 2nd New Times article when he said, ***“Maybe we are where we are because racing has become too much of a business and not enough of a sport.”***

Until individual racing entities agree to cede regulatory oversight to a national entity, Thoroughbred racing will be forced to chase one problem after another, across some 38 jurisdictions of racing in the United States. Each entity will be driven by self-preservation to defend every situation without the ability and support to fix it.

Although legislation may be used to compel the creation of a central authority, ThoroFan believes racing industry and its fans should not just acknowledge the critical issues, but also move swiftly to resolve them collaboratively. Therefore, we back the Jockey Club’s efforts and pledge our support and assistance to them in implementing their recommendations.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Amo".

Michael Amo
Chairman of the Board of Directors
ThoroFan