

To Our Members,

We would like to clear up some of the misinformation that has been circulating about the recent cancellations at Batavia Downs and to advise you of certain situations that have occurred since the new WROTB management came on in January. Prior to the start of the winter meet, track superintendent Aaron Galanti died unexpectedly. Then, Kim Crawford came down with pneumonia and left Batavia Downs. What began as a minor misunderstanding ended in his resignation. Consequently, Batavia Downs began the winter meet with no track superintendent. Add to that the difficult weather conditions we have experienced this winter and the result has been the cancellation of 4 ½ days of racing out of this 15-day winter meet. We want to thank you all for doing everything possible to race in every circumstance. Track conditions have made racing impossible.

Additionally, our prior agreement with WROTB to pay cancellation stipends of \$550.00 per horse to those affected by the cancellations was not honored by the track's new management. This has been done in the past by an agreement between WNYHHA and the racetracks. We have tried repeatedly to schedule a meeting on this issue. Until recently, it has not been done.

We would like to address some of the questions and keep all of you fully informed of the facts. So please be aware of the following:

1-WROTB management wants to race every single race day and their track people, rightly or wrongly, always believe the track is good enough to race.

2-Cancellation decisions are made jointly by WNYHHA, management and the judges. We talk to as many drivers and trainers as possible in making our decision. Generally, if it is our position the track is unsafe, the judges will agree and the races will be canceled.

3-On all the occasions this winter, the consensus among horse people was that the track was unsafe to race on. Management disagreed each time. Races were canceled nonetheless.

4-Following the cancellations, we requested management pay the usual cancellation stipend from the purse account. Management disagreed, as they believed the track was suitable for racing and we should have raced. We

requested a meeting. Unfortunately, none was scheduled.

5-Our relationship with management is governed by contract. Racetrack management and WNYHHA have joint control over the purse account. We do not control it alone. Simply put, management does not have to agree to this stipend and we cannot make payments from the purse account without their consent.

6-Our contract does provide cancellations, (up to two) be rescheduled. If management will not agree to pay the cancellation stipends as requested, then the days will have to be added at some point pursuant to the contract.

We understand everyone's frustration and will continue to work to solve the problem. We have spoken to management several times, most recently this week, and have been assured we will have a meeting with the entire management team next week. We are confident we will be able to rectify this situation and we ask that you continue to be patient while we negotiate a resolution.

A couple of other things: The racetrack was very frozen at Buffalo Raceway this winter due to the severe weather. The track crew worked very hard to remove the ice and snow and we are now faced with problems related to the thawing of the racetrack. The track crew continues to work to get the track race-ready. Everything possible has been done to open on schedule this Saturday, however, that is in doubt due to the weather circumstances. We ask that you continue to give the track crew every consideration as they work to get the track in racing condition.

Also, at Buffalo Raceway this year we have formed a track committee to better address problems that may come up with respect to the racetrack. Members of the track committee are Kevin Cummings, Shawn McDonough, David Russo, Darrin Monti, Jimmy McNeight Jr. and Mike Torcello. They will meet every week and as necessary to deal with any racetrack problems that arise. You can see any of them with any issues or concerns.

Finally, the future of winter racing is obviously in jeopardy after the difficulties of this winter. We will be addressing this issue as soon as possible and we will keep you advised. We wish you all the best for the remainder of the winter.

Sincerely,

Bruce
Michael