



The Horsemen's f Newsletter

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MTHA Prepares For Board Election

The Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association Board of Directors began preparations July 29 for the triennial board election scheduled for December 2026.

The Board unanimously authorized President Katharine M. Voss to identify five (5) MTHA members to serve on the Nominating Committee, subject to appointment by the Board in accordance with the Association's bylaws.

The Board expects to formally appoint the Nominating Committee in September. The Committee will consider all members eligible for election and, within 10 days of its appointment, submit a report to the Board recommending nominees. Work on candidate profiles for the election booklet will begin in early October after the nominees are finalized.

A special meeting of the membership will be held in October. At that meeting, the Nominating Committee's report will be announced, and additional nominations may be submitted from the floor or in writing in accordance with the requirements of the bylaws. The Board also will announce the approved election procedures.

The election booklet is scheduled to be finalized by November 17. Ballots and printed election booklets will be mailed December 1, and each ballot will include a QR code providing electronic access to the booklet. The mailing also will include the ballot and return envelopes required by the bylaws. Completed ballots must be received by the close of business on December 31.

IntelliScan, the independent third-party election services company that MTHA has

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TMJC, NBC REACH SIX-YEAR PREAKNESS MEDIA RIGHTS AGREEMENT

The Maryland Jockey Club has reached a new six-year media rights agreement with NBC Sports that will provide significantly expanded national exposure for the Preakness Stakes and Black-Eyed Susan Stakes beginning in 2027.

The agreement will keep the Preakness on NBC through 2032, aligning its expiration with NBC's current media rights agreement for the Kentucky Derby. It also provides Maryland racing with substantial revenue growth, greater exposure for the Black-Eyed Susan and an opportunity to transform Preakness weekend into an expanded four-day racing and entertainment festival.

Beginning in 2027, the Preakness will move one weekend later on the calendar and will be contested twenty-two days after the Kentucky Derby. The Black-Eyed Susan will move from Friday to Saturday, followed by the Preakness on Sunday.

Four of the six Preaknesses covered by the agreement will be conducted over Memorial Day weekend, creating additional opportunities to attract visitors to Baltimore and establish Preakness weekend as a major destination event.

The revised schedule will allow the Maryland Jockey Club to expand Preakness weekend to four days of racing, beginning Thursday and continuing through Sunday. Moving the Black-Eyed Susan and Preakness to Saturday and Sunday opens Friday for world-class racing, entertainment, hospitality and community programming, creating new opportunities to build momentum throughout the entire weekend.

NBC Sports conducted extensive research and audience analysis before finalizing the agreement and believes the Preakness can generate stronger television ratings in its new Sunday time slot. The additional week between the Kentucky Derby and Preakness is also expected to make participation more attractive to horsemen by providing horses with more recovery and preparation time between the first two races of the Triple Crown.

NBC provided significant additional annual rights fees as an incentive to move the Black-Eyed Susan and Preakness to Saturday and Sunday and was negotiated with the as-

Continued On Page 2 ➔



➔ Election, Continued

engaged to conduct the election, expects to announce the results by early January.

To be eligible to run for an owner-only seat, the owner-only candidate must hold an ownership interest in one or more horses that collectively have made at least five (5) starts at a Maryland track licensed to conduct Thoroughbred racing during the 365 days immediately preceding the close of nominations.

To be eligible to run for a trainer seat, the trainer candidate must satisfy at least one of the following requirements during that same 365-day period:

At least 50% of the candidate's starts were made at a Maryland track licensed to conduct Thoroughbred racing; or

The candidate accumulated at least thirty (30) starts at a Maryland track licensed to conduct Thoroughbred racing.

Laurel Park Purchase Advances Maryland Racing Long-Term Plan

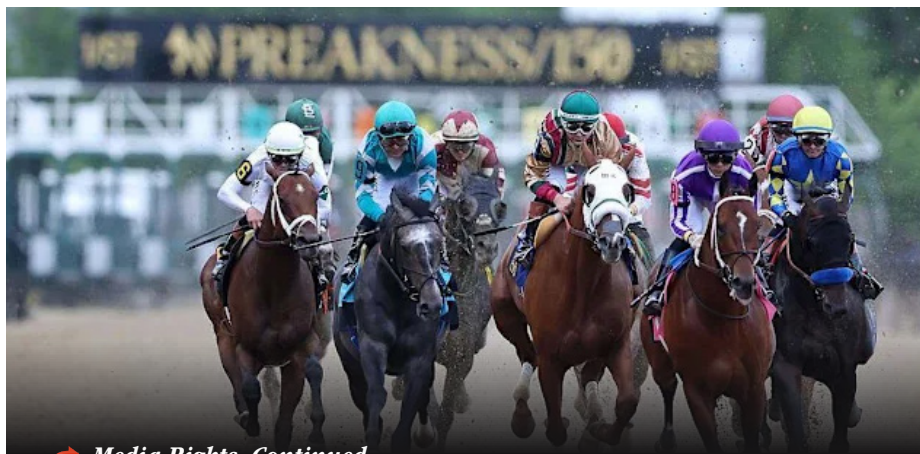
Maryland's plan to strengthen the state's Thoroughbred racing industry took another major step in early July when the Board of Public Works approved the Maryland Stadium Authority's \$48.5 million purchase of Laurel Park from 1/ST Racing.

The state plans to retain Laurel Park as a long-term training center, with the Stadium Authority overseeing redevelopment of the stable area and its approximately 1,200 stalls. The decision followed an evaluation that determined the previously proposed Shamrock Farm site was not the most practical or cost-effective option. Using Laurel's existing infrastructure is expected to save about \$50 million in construction costs while minimizing disruption for horsemen and the thousands of horses that train there.

Because the redeveloped Pimlico Race Course will have only ship-in barns, the MTHA emphasized that preserving Laurel as a training center will provide stability for owners, trainers, backstretch workers, breeders, and businesses that depend on Maryland racing.

Maryland Jockey Club President and General Manager Bill Knauf told the MTHA Board July 29 that construction of a new stakes barn at Pimlico was underway and that other barns had been completed. "The backstretch is looking pretty good," he said.

For the 2027 Preakness Stakes at Pimlico, Knauf said many of the temporary guest facilities will be located in the infield. A horsemen's hospitality structure is planned near the paddock and walking ring.



➔ Media Rights, Continued

sistance of experienced sports media advisors.

NBC remains the clear national leader in Thoroughbred racing coverage. Its portfolio includes the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes, Breeders' Cup World Championships, Royal Ascot and Pegasus World Cup.

The continued partnership is particularly valuable because NBC also broadcasts the Kentucky Derby.

"This agreement demonstrates the tremendous value of the Preakness and the confidence NBC has in the future of Maryland racing," MTHA Executive Director David Richardson said. "Having the same network televise the Kentucky Derby and Preakness is enormously beneficial. In many respects, NBC's entire Derby broadcast becomes a national commercial for the Preakness, allowing storylines and excitement to build continuously from Louisville to Baltimore. Combined with the additional week between the races, the return to a redeveloped Pimlico and an expanded four-day weekend, this creates an extraordinary opportunity to elevate the Preakness and Maryland racing."

The agreement also reflects the continuing evolution of sports media consumption. Coverage will extend beyond traditional network television through Peacock and digital television platforms such as YouTube TV, allowing the Preakness and Black-Eyed Susan to reach viewers across multiple platforms.

A major component of the agreement is NBC's enhanced commitment to the Black-Eyed Susan. Saturday's coverage will include at least four hours on Peacock, along with a dedicated one-hour broadcast on the national NBC network. The expanded exposure will strengthen the profile of the historic race for three-year-old fillies and support the Maryland Jockey Club's long-term goal of elevating the Black-Eyed Susan to Grade 1 status.

The new NBC agreement follows a transformational July for Maryland racing, during which the State of Maryland closed on the purchase of Laurel Park and acquired

the intellectual property rights associated with the Preakness Stakes and Black-Eyed Susan Stakes.

Laurel Park will remain a critical part of Maryland's racing infrastructure by serving as the state's principal Thoroughbred training facility. State ownership of the Preakness and Black-Eyed Susan intellectual property also ensures that two of Maryland's most historic and valuable sporting assets will remain under Maryland's control.

These accomplishments, together with the redevelopment of Pimlico Race Course and the new NBC agreement, are central components of a long-term plan to create a more stable and sustainable future for Maryland racing.

Governor Wes Moore's leadership has been instrumental in bringing the State, the Maryland Jockey Club, the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association and other industry stakeholders together behind that shared vision.

"Governor Moore has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to protecting the Preakness and building a sustainable future for Maryland's Thoroughbred industry," remarked MTHA President Katharine M. Voss. "The State's acquisition of Laurel Park and the Preakness intellectual property, the redevelopment of Pimlico and now this landmark agreement with NBC would not have been possible without his leadership. Together, these generational accomplishments provide the foundation for an expanded four-day Preakness festival, give Maryland ownership of its racing future and provide our horsemen, breeders and racing fans with renewed confidence in the road ahead."

The new media rights agreement arrives at a pivotal time for Maryland racing. The Preakness is scheduled to return to a completely redeveloped Pimlico Race Course in 2027, providing an opportunity to introduce the new facility to a national audience through an expanded weekend of racing and entertainment.

Acquisition Of Preakness Intellectual Property Finalized

The Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association (MTHA) applauds the State of Maryland's successful acquisition of the intellectual property rights to the Preakness Stakes, marking another historic milestone in securing the future of Maryland Thoroughbred racing.

With the completion of the \$85 million purchase today from 1/ST Racing, ownership of the Preakness Stakes name and related trademarks now officially resides with the State of Maryland, ensuring that the second jewel of the Triple Crown remains firmly rooted where it belongs for generations to come.

The acquisition follows the State's decision earlier this summer to exercise its right of first refusal after an outside offer was made to purchase the Preakness brand. Together with the State's acquisition of Laurel Park and the ongoing redevelopment of Pimlico Race Course, the transaction represents another major step in the transformation of Maryland's racing industry under the vision established through the Governor Wes Moore's office, the State legislature and the Maryland Jockey Club.

"This is an investment not only in one race, but in the future of Maryland Thoroughbred racing," said Governor Wes Moore. "The Preakness Stakes is a cornerstone of Maryland's history, culture, and economy, and our administration is committed to preserving Maryland's place as a leader in the Triple Crown for generations to come."

For Maryland's horsemen, breeders, owners, trainers, jockeys, and countless industry participants, the acquisition provides long-term certainty that the State's signature racing event will continue to serve as the centerpiece of Maryland racing while supporting thousands of jobs and generating significant economic activity.

The Maryland Jockey Club, established as the nonprofit operator of live Thoroughbred racing in Maryland, will continue working alongside the MTHA, the Maryland Horse Breeders Association, TMJC, MEDCO, state leaders, and the broader racing community to build a sustainable future for the sport.

"The completion of this acquisition reflects what can be accomplished when the State and industry stakeholders work together toward a common goal," said MTHA Executive Director David Richardson. "For decades, Maryland's horsemen have recognized the importance of preserving the Preakness and strengthening our racing industry. Today's announcement provides long-term security for one of the most recognizable brands in sports and creates a solid foundation as we continue rebuilding Maryland racing."

The purchase is being financed through bonds issued by the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO), with the Maryland Jockey Club making annual payments over the next 30 years.

The acquisition complements the State's ongoing investment in Maryland's racing infrastructure. Laurel Park will transition into the State's primary Thoroughbred training center, while construction continues on the new Pimlico Race Course. Together, these projects represent more than a half-billion-dollar investment in the future of Maryland racing.

The 2027 Preakness Stakes is expected to be conducted at the redeveloped Pimlico Race Course using temporary spectator facilities

while construction progresses, with the permanent venue anticipated to be completed in 2028.

Maryland Jockey Club President Bill Knauf emphasized the significance of bringing all of the State's premier racing assets together under public ownership.

"With all assets now residing with the State, we will work closely with the Maryland, Baltimore, and Park Heights business communities to showcase the Preakness on the national stage," Knauf said.

As Maryland continues this unprecedented transformation of its Thoroughbred industry, the acquisition of the Preakness intellectual property represents another critical step toward ensuring that one of the world's most celebrated horse races remains an enduring source of pride for Maryland while supporting a vibrant and sustainable racing industry for generations to come.



Bootstraps Scholarship Apps Open

Online applications are being accepted for the Ferris Allen Bootstraps Scholarship, which supports individuals working in Maryland's Thoroughbred racing community who want to further their education.

One recipient will receive a \$10,000 scholarship following a thorough review of the applications. The deadline to apply is September 15. Applications may be submitted at ferrisallenscholarship.com.

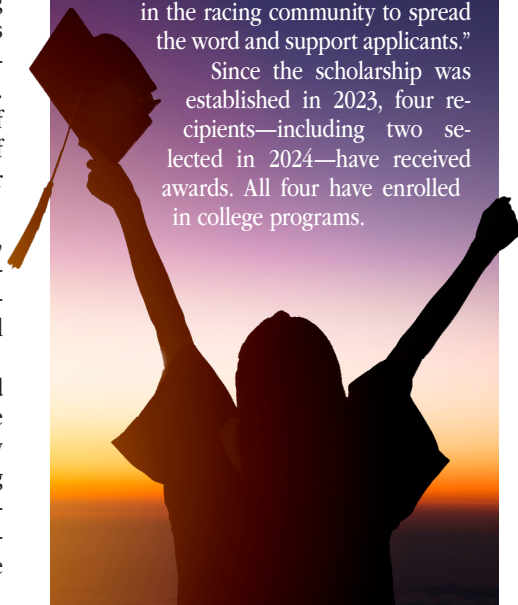
Eligible applicants must have worked on the backstretch at Laurel Park or Pimlico Race Course, or in a related support role within Maryland racing, during the past three years.

Applicants also must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a four-year college or university beginning in fall 2026 or shortly thereafter. The scholarship funds are intended to assist the recipient with college-related expenses.

The Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association established the scholarship program in 2023 with funding from longtime Laurel Park-based trainer Ferris Allen, who also serves on the MTHA Board of Directors.

"I believe our industry must do more to offer real and lasting educational support to members of our backstretch community," Allen said. "This program selects one exceptional candidate each year and provides meaningful financial assistance to help that individual pursue their goals and aspirations. We encourage everyone in the racing community to spread the word and support applicants."

Since the scholarship was established in 2023, four recipients—including two selected in 2024—have received awards. All four have enrolled in college programs.



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