

ONTARIO RACING PROGRAM



YOUR QUESTIONS

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*Dear Monitoring Group:
The Program has reduced
the number of days. How
can that possibly be good
for racing? How can I
make a living if there is
less racing?*

*Dear Monitoring Group:
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Good points. But please don't assume 'fewer days' automatically means 'reduced opportunities.' Under the old program, there were sometimes five tracks racing on the same day, all trying to grab the same audience. The idea is to create more competitive racing, so that you can have a better opportunity to earn than before. That's the rationale behind the effort to harmonize schedules and manage horse supply with full fields.

Even fewer days can be a positive, if it succeeds in stabilizing the industry, creating better racing opportunities, and renewing customer interest in the product. And if customer demand rises, days could increase.

What is the Ontario Racing Program?

The Program is the outcome of a year long consultation with the racing community. All racetracks, horsepeople associations and a variety of stakeholders met to develop a program to benefit the entire industry.

Ontario's racing industry has taken action, so as to avoid the negative trends happening in other jurisdictions.



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*Dear Monitoring Group:
I hear this Program is
going to take away my
purse money. How is
that fair?*

First, we'd like to point out that, looking at the whole province, basically the same amount of purse money will be distributed. Changes have been made so that the entire industry across Ontario will benefit. That means shifting away from traditional thinking – from a purely local perspective to one that is regional and provincial in scope. One of the goals of the Program is to allow for more balanced, competitive racing conditions – that means you could have a better chance to earn purse money in your class of racing – whether it be Grassroots or Signature.

It's about the
'location' of the
horse — not
about the
'ownership' of
the horse.

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*Dear Monitoring Group:
There's been a lot of
talk about Canadian
preference. Why was
this added? It seems to
penalize folks from
outside of Canada that
we rely on to keep the
industry healthy.*

On industry web sites, some folks seem to think this means Canadian 'owned' would get preference. It's not about the 'ownership' of the horse – it's about the 'location' of the horse.

This means, if the owner of a horse from outside of Canada (even if it was Ontario Sired) wishes to enter an Ontario race, the horse needs to be "in Canada" on the day of the draw, and remain there until the race is completed.

It is not that restrictive (although some would suggest it should be more so). We're not putting up a brick wall at the border – just a requirement that the local Ontario economy should benefit from that entry. So under this condition, when a trainer declares the horse to be a "Canadian preference" when entering, on the day of the draw, that horse needs to be in the country by 11:59 p.m. If the average draw is three or four days before the race, that means local stables, grooms and suppliers will benefit. That's good for the Ontario Racing Program, and a reasonable price to be paid by the owners of a horse normally stabled outside of Canada.

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*Dear Monitoring Group:
When will we know if
all this is working or
not? What if this
doesn't work?*

Remember this is about improving racing. That is why we will be monitoring the Program closely over the next few months. Within 4 to 6 months, we should have specific results and indicators on how the Program is working. If the results don't hold up, the changes will be reworked, modified or removed. Your opinion counts. See how things go, then contact us with your input.

Do you have
questions about
the Program?

The Implementation and Monitoring Group includes: Wendy Hooegeveen, Bill Fines, Kerry Wright, Mike Wilson, Rob McKay, Ryan Dupuis and industry experts as required.

We want to hear
from you!

Please send your
questions to:

inquiry@ontarioracing.commission.ca

Or call 416-213-0520

You may be featured in the next
"YOUR QUESTIONS"