

KENT OAKES

North Wiltshire, Prince Edward Island

Nominated as: Track Director, Atlantic Region

My family has been involved in harness racing since the early 1960's, and I am proud that our third generation is now active in the industry. Anyone who knows me realizes I have a passion for harness racing in this region, and I have been very fortunate to be able to work professionally at that passion. I strongly believe that by working together we can build an Atlantic model of success.

In my capacity as an employee of the Province of Prince Edward Island I have been given the great opportunity to have worked in partnership with the provincial, regional, and national harness racing industry for over twenty years. Some of the committees and organizations I serve on the Board of include the Atlantic Harness Racing Development Council, Atlantic Breeders Crown Host Committee, Council of Atlantic Premiers Task Force on Harness Racing, P.E.I. Harness Racing Industry Association, Atlantic Classic Sale, Harness Racing P.E.I., P.E.I. Matinee Tracks Association, and the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame Nominating Committee.

My work profile also includes being Chief Executive Officer of the Prince Edward Island Lotteries Commission, and over the years I have been asked to serve on an interim basis as Director of Racing at the Maritime Provinces Harness Racing Commission, as well as Racing Manager at Red Shores Racetrack and Casino at Charlottetown Driving Park, and Red Shores Summerside Raceway. I was also very fortunate to have served as the Provincial Government Representative on the Planning and Construction committee for the redevelopment of the Charlottetown Driving Park.

I believe we have both challenges and opportunities on a regional and national basis, and I wish to bring my experience, skills, and background to the position of Track Director for the Atlantic Region of Standardbred Canada. My experience with racing and gaming will be an asset in exploring potential partnerships between these entities, and I feel we must work together as a region and country to expand our wagering base. Recently announced changes in the Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency mandate may permit enhanced revenue opportunities, however, I am concerned about their planned withdrawal of services for photo finish and video patrol, and its financial impact on our regions racetracks and horse industry.

Going forward Standardbred Canada must also develop a national consensus on a variety of issues, and ensure that they operate in a business manner reflective of the resource base of their membership. As the National industry body, Standardbred Canada must be a strong voice reflective of all regions and all members. I encourage everyone to participate in the upcoming elections, as an active engaged membership is critical to the well being of the organization.