

The Michigan Harness Horsemen Association (MHHA) is Michigan's only recognized standardbred horsemen organization; active since 1947, the MHHA serves to support and protect Michigan's standardbred owners, breeders, trainers and drivers. Our organization serves a wide variety of functions to ensure the financial interests of Michigan's standardbred industry. We supply horses to Michigan's remaining parimutuel racetrack, Northville Downs and 11 county fairs throughout the state during the summer stakes season. We represent the Standardbred industry with state administrative, budgetary and legislative matters of concern regarding the horse racing industry and actively seek change when needed to ensure policies promote live racing opportunities for our horsemen.

2021 was a welcomed relief from the turbulent 2020, which saw many of our racing



opportunities cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Michigan's racing season is broken up into a parimutuel season with a Spring and Fall meet at Northville Downs and a summer staking program from July through September at various county fairs across the State. April 2<sup>nd</sup> saw the return of live racing to Northville Downs for the start of our 30 day spring meet, over 250

horses raced at the metro-Detroit half mile track for average daily purses of \$62,000 per night. The spring meet closed out on June 28<sup>th</sup> with the finals of several mini-series events going for \$130,000 in purses. Fall brought the return of racing to Northville Downs from September to mid-December with average purses of \$64,000. A total of 52 live pari-mutuel races were completed and we are looking forward to our 62 day meet starting in March 2022.

Our summer staking program for 2 and 3 year old Michigan sired and Michigan bred horses was met with great support with a total of 133 horses racing at over 11 county fairs throughout the state. Despite a few weather cancellations the season was quite successful with the 8 week program offering total purses of \$480,000. This summer program continues to be an important part of Michigan's standardbred breeding industry

as Michigan Sired horses that win events received 10% breeders awards based on the total amount of the purse. Two key events were reserved only for Michigan sired 2 and 3 year olds – the Great Lakes Stakes 20,000 purse and the Michigan Sire Stakes 50,000 purse. Due to the increase in purses for these two events, we have seen an increased interest in the number of mares bred to



Michigan stallions. New in 2021 the MHHA hired Trot and Pace Marketing to record our colt stakes programs, you can view Michigan's fair races replays at <http://trotandpacemarketing.com/racing.php>

Additionally new to Michigan's racing industry in 2021 was the authorization of third party facilitator licensing which allows for mobile and internet wagering on horse racing through advanced deposit wagering companies or ADW. The MHHA was pleased to be a part of the negotiating contracts NYRA, TVG, TwinSpires and XpressBet. Through these online providers we have seen increased to our Agricultural Equine Industry Development Fund which funds our summer programs, breeder's awards and sire stakes.

We continue to make progress on several legislative initiatives that would authorize new revenue-generating tools at racetracks, increase breeders awards, raise the caps on fair overnight purses, and increase funding to the Agricultural Equine Industry Development Fund. We know these legislative initials are critical to the continued racing legacy for Michigan's Standardbred industry, encourage new investments in Michigan's Standardbred industry and provide a path to opening a thoroughbred racetrack as well as additional Standardbred track. More information about the legislative initiatives, SB 396/SB397, HB 4823, HB 4824, HB 4599 and HB 4600 can be found on our website at [www.mhha.com](http://www.mhha.com)

We look forward to all 2022 has to offer, in December we signed a 10 year contract with Northville Downs to ensure Standardbred racing has a home in the metro-Detroit area and provide confidence to Northville Downs that the MHHA is a long term partner as they continue to search for new site locations. Northville Downs, located at 301 South Center St in Northville, Michigan plans to continue to hold live harness racing at its current location until a time when a new location has been identified and construction takes place. We will be racing for 62 days in 2022 at Northville Downs starting Friday, March 11, 2022, through Saturday, June 25, 2022, resuming Friday, September 9,

2022, through Saturday, December 17, 2022. Our summer 2022 county fair program will start in early July and continue through September, we are working with our fairs to finalize our schedule and more information will be posted on our website and Facebook page when available. We hope to see everyone out at the races in 2022.