



40th ANNUAL
GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM ON RACING & GAMING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2013

**Muckraking Journalism as a Positive Force – The
Second Annual Presentation of the
Stan Bergstein Writing Award**

MODERATOR:

Jeff Lowe, Media, Team Valor

SPEAKERS:

Barry Irwin, President, Team Valor

Ray Paulick, Publisher, Paulick Report

Mr. Doug Reed: I imagine a few people are still at lunch or I understand it warmed up a little bit outside and that may tempt some of the golfers. As usual I'm sure people will drift in, but we're gonna go ahead and get started and I'll do my usual thank you to the sponsors. The beverage break following this is sponsored by Del Mar Thoroughbred Club.

We have a unique event that just occurred, the mentor lunch, where students get to choose a mentor in the industry and have lunch while they're here. That's sponsored by the American Quarter Horse Association and the Jockey Club. That's a special event for the students.

Many of you that have been coming here for years know how involved Stan Bergstein was with our program. I'm very honored that this next session here is taking place here at the symposium.

This is the second annual presentation of the Stan Bergstein Writing Award. I think that's very fitting and I know Stan's somewhere there and hopefully watching and appreciating.

I'd like to introduce the moderator of this session, Jeff Lowe is the media guy for Team Valor International. He joined Team Valor in 2011 after a nine year stint, excuse me, with the *Thoroughbred Times*. Kind of interesting harness angle with Stan Bergstein again.

His father was general manager of the Delaware County Fair which is home of the Little Brown Jug, the derby for the pacers so to speak. We're pleased to have Jeff here and Jeff will introduce the rest of the panel.

Please welcome Jeff.

[Applause]

Mr. Jeff Lowe: Thanks a lot. I really appreciate the chance for us to be here. Barry Irwin, Ray Paulick and I think we're all more writers than speakers. Hopefully we don't send you running out of here.

I know this is kind of a broad mix of people so I thought I would give some context to who we are and what we are doing here at the symposium.

You probably — when you think of Team Valor you think of Barry Irwin or maybe Animal Kingdom who won the Kentucky Derby and this past March won the \$10 million dollar Dubai World Cup for our stable.

He's now a stud in Australia and Kentucky. By the way he's on the cover of the *Blood Horse Magazine* this week. We're still very proud of him.

Team Valor managed by Barry Irwin has been forming racehorse partnerships since 1987 and Animal Kingdom is one of 25 grade one winners for our stable. Animal Kingdom had 20 individual partners.

We are based in Kentucky and Maryland but international is in the name for a good reason.

As we have horses in training right now in Australia, England, Ireland, France, Germany and South Africa in addition to a roster of about 40 horses in the United States.

The difference between racing in the US compared to other parts of the world is part of the perspective that you'll hear from Barry Irwin here in a few minutes.

This is the second year of the Stan Bergstein Writing Award which Barry instituted just a few weeks after Mr. Bergsten passed away.

We were looking forward to hearing from Stan's son, Al, today and you'll see him in the program. Unfortunately Al fell ill this week and was not able to travel.

His father was someone Barry and I held in high esteem for his passion for racing both Standard breeds and Thoroughbreds and his unwavering push for both breeds to address the scourge of performance enhancing drugs.

Barry and I are both kind of reformed turf writers, so we had a particular interest and respect for his work in *Daily Racing Form* and other publications which he continued up until the last few months of his life.

His pretty amazing legacy if you go back through just the Racing Form. If you do a search for Stan's work, pretty remarkable.

Mr. Bergsten also was a big supporter of the Race Track Industry Program and as Doug said he mentored many students over the course of some 40 years.

Especially after he moved here to Tucson, so with that tie we are very pleased to bring our program here to the symposium this year and we are very grateful for Doug Reed and his staff and for the way they've accommodated us.

Without further ado, I'd like to introduce Mr. Barry Irwin.

[Applause]

Mr. Barry Irwin: I take it this thing — does it work? Can you hear me out there? Oops I can hear myself now, okay.

I'd like to thank Doug for allowing us to come here. Hopefully we can make this an annual event here in Arizona. This is the first time I've been back to Tucson since about 197-, probably 6 or 7.

The Race Track Industry Program was just a couple of years old at that point. It started in 1974 and my boss, his former boss as well, had me come out here and I spent a couple of days with Jack Goodman who was a fascinating character and I had dinner at his house.

He showed me around the school. It was very interesting.

It was one of two interesting things I saw here in Arizona. As impressive a guy as Mr. Goodman is, he won the Grand National, I mean that's pretty amazing.

Here in Tucson a guy that won the Grand National at Liverpool, England. I also got to see the fabled Pat Caudill, do you remember Pat?

Pat was the teletype operator and chart taker for *Daily Racing Form*. You remember him?

His name was Melon Head. He had a head shaped like a watermelon. I'd heard all about but I'd never seen it. I'd kill two birds with one stone.

As Jeff alluded to I am more of a writer than a speaker. If I was a speaker, I'd of wound up being a comedian somewhere because that's what I really wanted to be, but I'm not that great in front of people.

However I can write and I've written down some stuff that I hope you'll find interesting.

American journalism has strong roots in fomenting change by shining a light on dark practices.

A couple of weeks ago I saw Doris Kearns Goodwin interviewed on Meet the Press.

I was reminded what a proud role newspapers have played using muckraking tactics at the turn of the 20th Century.

Goodwin, the historian and author has a new book out this year. It is titled *The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and the Golden Age of Journalism*.

Roosevelt was President of the United States at the turn of the 20th Century. The mid-19th Century phenomenon of the industrial revolution eventually gave birth to the excesses of the gilded age in the latter part of that century.

The parallels between that era and today are startling. The President then as now was a two-term head of state.

Only three Presidents have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize while still in office. Both the President then and the one now comprise two of the three.

On a social level the gap between rich and poor widened then as it is now. To top it off Teddy Roosevelt was stuck with a do nothing conservative republican congress bent on maintaining the status quo.

Before Roosevelt took office the Federal Government had never been deeply involved in the everyday lives of American citizens, but he changed all that.

Then as now there is a lot of job moaning about how much government involvement is appropriate.

One of Roosevelt's most important policy decisions was to create regulations for business.

Like the President today Roosevelt felt business was taking improper advantage of US citizens, sound familiar yet?

Like no President before him Teddy Roosevelt counted and joined forces with the press to crusade for change.

He got in bed with the press to spark change and that was in the days before TempurPedic.

[Laughter]

Such was Roosevelt's zeal to curry favor with the press that he routinely invited reporters to interview him while he received his daily shave in the White House.

It was Teddy Roosevelt who coined the phrase the bully pulpit.

Roosevelt's usage of the word bully was not used to indicate that he was going to behave like a bully. He used bully more like the popular phrase of the time "bully for you."

Bully in that era meant something good, wonderful and positive. Roosevelt used the bully pulpit to foster his ideas for change.

Roosevelt would call for action and the journalists would respond and vice versa. They played and fed off of each other's energies.

Muckraking journalism in this era saw their role as one of stirring the pot.

They sought to give the president something to start conversations about in order to eventually goad congress into taking action.

Author Goodwin showed that it was Teddy Roosevelt who spurred the golden age of muckraking journalism in America.

From an historical perspective muckraking journalism since World War 2 and horse racing is something that has only occasionally been seen.

Once in a while something that required turf writers to step aside from their free lunches and booze in the press box.

In the 1960's a veterinarian drugged Dancers image which had to be covered because he was disqualified in the Kentucky Derby.

In the 1970's there was this Cinzano — Lebon Ringer Scandal in New York. It had to be covered because it involved a veterinarian cashing a big bet in broad daylight at Belmont Park.

It wasn't until 1978 when *Sports Illustrated* ran an in-depth story on a fringe Mafioso named Tony Ciulla that an investigative story about the underbelly of horse racing actually surfaced.

The revelations were eye opening. They confirmed the worst fears of even the most jaded horse players.

I had quit my job as Southern California columnist for *Daily Racing Form* just a few weeks before the Ciulla piece appeared.

I resigned because if I was going to work for a newspaper I wanted to write and investigate like a reporter in the real world.

I didn't want to work at a house organ for the racing industry that called itself a newspaper instead of acting like one.

Thank God *Daily Racing Form* has changed today.

A few months after I left the *Form* I wrote a lengthy piece in a magazine called *New West* it was a general circulation publication.

In it I said that if turf writers had done their job like riders in other major sports like baseball and football guys like Ciulla would not be able to thrive.

To illustrate my point I cited examples, things that took place on a daily basis and were against the rules, but that turf writers chose to ignore.

I wrote that giants of the game like Charlie Whittingham and Bill Shoemaker did not let their horses run until they wanted them to win.

Everybody at the track knew this to be the case, but nobody wrote about it so the practice persisted for years.

I may have been the first sports writer in America to point out that athletes traded betting information for drugs.

Instead of creating a national discourse about what could be done to get turf writers and publications to pay attention.

The focus instead was on the shady practices I had revealed.

The great jockey and Kentucky Derby winning trainer Johnny Longden tried to get the HBPA to push for revocation of my license as a race horse owner.

After all I had committed the unpardonable sin of biting the hand that fed me.

I had to go on Los Angeles sports talk radio to defend myself, it was a mess.

There seemed to be no appetite for constructive criticism. Racing wanted to remain an insider's game.

When spectacular bids jockey Ronnie Franklin got arrested in the parking lot of Disneyland with a bag full of cocaine it silenced a lot of my critics.

In subsequent years Charlie Whittingham trained horses for me and Bill Shoemaker rode them.

Both knew what I had written about them was true and they never held it against me.

I was told they actually respected me for it because nobody else every piped up.

In that era guys that wanted to take an edge hid workouts in the morning and held horses in the afternoon.

Penny ante stuff done to cash a bet.

Today the game's most successful cheaters don't fool around trying to cash a bet or beat the bookies.

Today they use drugs developed for human beings to win lucrative prize money and sell their juiced horses for millions of dollars.

Because of this modern day approach in which illegal drug use is so widespread these cheaters have jeopardized our sport's very existence.

Today right now I do think there's an appetite among turf writers to do investigative pieces.

After all this is what the press is supposed to do.

It is the quintessential reason that the Stanley Bergstein Writing Award was established.

In journalism we often hear a writer say, "Hey I'm only the messenger, don't shoot the messenger."

We started the Bergstein Writing Award not to shoot the messenger or to provide him with a soft landing when things got a little rough.

We created the award to praise, encourage, incentivize and celebrate turf writers.

We felt encouragement was sorely needed because of the sorry state of the turf writing profession.

The current state of racing journalism is best characterized by a shrinking to a downright disappearance of copy inches.

Almost extinct is the full time turf writer for a daily newspaper.

Magazines everywhere are contracting or folding.

Any fan that reads the sports sections knows there are problems with cheating and drugs.

One of the few modern day muckrakers both in flat and harness racing was Stan Bergstein.

I get a little choked up on Stan sometimes.

Stan wrote some sensational pieces in *Daily Racing Form*.

Stories that showed insight and courage and he was like his predecessors in the genre a relentless crusader.

When Bergstein passed on I was profoundly affected. My immediate thought was who in the hell is going to carry on this man's work?

Neither Team Valor International or Barry Irwin is going to take credit for sparking an increase in this type of journalism.

It must be said that during the past 12 months we have seen some truly amazing endeavors by turf writers.

Some of these pieces were nominated for the Stanley Bergstein Writing Award this year. Since nominations for the award closed last month we already have two more stories to nominate for next year. More about those in the coming weeks.

We've come a long way.

It was not too long ago that the existence of illegal drugs was poo-poo'd by the racing establishment.

They said it was urban myth, not anymore.

Now the establishment itself is trying to clean up the cesspool.

America has a proud tradition of investigative journalism. I reckon we need more of it in our sports and we want to honor it so that we can encourage more of it.

Mr. Jeff Lowe: You'll see in your programs that Ray is also a finalist in three different stories this year and we wanted to make sure that he was here no matter whether he won.

At this moment he doesn't know the result, but especially this year I guess more than anything it's just been the circumstances that he's uncovered.

He's really embodied what Barry has been talking about with really holding these people to the fire.

Ray's just on a day to day basis has really just been an exemplar of turf writing with a serious edge to it. Here's Ray.

Mr. Ray Paulick: Thanks Jeff. Thanks Barry and thanks for creating the Bergstein award in Stan's honor.

I didn't know Stan that well but I remember the last time I saw him was at the Red Mile during the art show — the scholarship show they did.

We sat down and had lunch and what we talked about was cheating. It was still on his mind.

Thank you for carrying on his name in this way.

Anyone who's watched *60 Minutes* over the years understands the power of investigative reporting.

If you were involved in some sort of a scam or some wrongdoing, the last person you wanted to see walking into your business was Mike Wallace and a camera crew.

60 Minutes doesn't have a monopoly on this type of journalism.

Back in 1978 when I was an editorial assistant at the field newspaper syndicate in Chicago which was then part of *The Sun Times* and *Daily News* family.

The Sun Times pulled off one of the great undercover sting operations of all time.

Here's what happened. There was an enterprising reporter named Pam Zekman who I think currently is still in Chicago working for a TV station now.

She'd previously worked across the street from *The Sun Times* at *The Chicago Tribune*. While she was a reporter with the *Trib* she heard from a lot of sources who ran small businesses, mostly bars and restaurants about corruption by government workers, imagine that corruption in Chicago.

The problem is whenever Pam pushed her sources to name names they would pull back fearful of retribution from these government workers who could put them out of business.

She went to her bosses at *The Tribune* and said I would like to buy a bar and find out firsthand how deep this corruption runs.

That's right a bar.

The Tribune a conservative paper didn't wanna go there.

Pam quit *The Trib* and moved over to *The Sun Times* where she made the same pitch.

Jim Hoge, *The Sun Times* chief editor, liked the idea so working in conjunction with a watch dog organization called the Better Government Association.

The Sun Times actually went out and bought a bar.

It was a rundown seedy place. There were exposed electrical wires, bad plumbing, a colony of roaches and rats in the basement.

To get licensed and to operate the bar would need to get approval from a long list of city and state inspectors.

They did some remodeling to the place which they named The Mirage Tavern.

I don't know if you remember the story, but it was aptly named.

Behind the bar for example they built a hideaway with a small hole in the wall so a *Sun Times* photographer would have the opportunity to take pictures of anything that went on inside.

They left all the problems in place that city and state inspectors should of required that they fix.

Pam and some of the other *Sun Times* reporters, we went to bartending school and they worked with the Better Government Association people.

Found out very quickly that business by bribe was a common practice in Chicago.

With the help of a man who introduced himself to them as Mr. Fix It they learned that envelopes filled with as little as \$10 a week could convince fire, plumbing and building inspectors along with liquor and food license officials to look the other way when there were problems.

This was all documented in a 25 part series that absolutely gripped Chicago during the winter of 1978.

The Mirage Tavern investigative series sold a lot of newspapers and it nearly won *The Sun Times* a Pulitzer Prize, that honor was taken away over concerns that the reporters entrapped the government officials.

Something that Jim Hoge, the editor at the time, vehemently denied 35 years later saying lawyers gave very specific advice to the reporters on how to avoid entrapping suspects.

"I don't think the reporters ever crossed that ethical line." he said years later.

The bottom line wasn't selling papers though or winning awards, it was changing a corrupt way of doing business.

That series led to significant changes in Chicago, the state of Illinois and throughout the country.

Since *60 Minutes* brought their cameras and did a story on The Mirage Tavern and Mr. Fix it people were suspended, fired, many were indicted and oversight was revised.

The state tax bureau even set up something called the Mirage Audit Unit to catch cash based businesses that were cheating on taxes.

Sadly those of us familiar with Illinois politics know it didn't really end corruption. For the last seven governors there have gone to jail.

Can you imagine setting up a similar sting in horse racing?

Would the Mirage Racing Stable be able to bust some of the people peddling performance enhancing substances on the back stretches?

Would the Mirage blood stock agency catch trainers demanding kickbacks on horses they buy for their clients?

Let's look at horse racing, some events that have changed the way the business operates.

In 1999 there was a horse called Behrens who came into the Breeders' Cup Classic as the favorite. After four wins and four seconds in eight starts, the previous year he didn't win a single race.

Now the late 1990's was for horse racing the equivalent of the steroids era in baseball.

Except in horse racing it was milkshakes, a proven way of enhancing performance and there was no testing being done to see if trainers were manipulating the total carbon dioxide level of horses.

The higher the TC02 level, the less amount of fatigue a horse would feel. This was going on at the time and it was not isolated to a few trainers.

When they started doing testing for milkshakes, I know in California they did a surprise test before they launched their program and I think something like 25 percent of the horses tested were above the legal threshold.

Behrens was stabled at a private training center 90 minutes north of Gulfstream Park where the 1999 Breeders' Cup was held.

His trainer, Jim Bond, had the luxury of shipping him in on the afternoon of the event.

Another trainer, Michael Dickenson, had a long shot in the Classic but he didn't like the fact that the Breeders' Cup Classic favorite was under no surveillance or security up until a few hours before the race.

On his own Dickenson hired a couple of private investigators to do what Breeders' Cup was not doing, watch over the horses.

The first investigator monitored every move Behrens made at Payson Park training center that morning until it was time to get on a horse van for Gulfstream.

He then followed the van all the way to the track very closely, too closely said trainer Bond who would later say the guy tried to run him off the road.

The second investor holding a video camera stood near the Gulfstream park stall of another horse in the Classic.

Now this wasn't investigative reporting, the truth is in 1999 as Barry said no racing reporters myself included seemed the least bit concerned that there might be cheating going on.

Dickenson took things into his own hands.

Behrens finished seventh in the Classic, by far his worst race of the year.

Though we have no way of knowing if it was because his previous performances may have been enhanced.

Dickenson's horse incidentally finished last.

The most important thing to come out of this was the fact that the Breeders' Cup adopted new rules the following year requiring horses be on the grounds at least 24 hours before their race.

That requirement has since been extended to 72 hours and Breeders' Cup security is now the gold standard for American racing.

Again the end result of this was changing how business was conducted.

Fast forward to 2012 and the controversial series in *The New York Times*, *Death and Disarray at America's Race Tracks* written by Eclipse Award winning racing rider Joe Drape and Walt Bogdanich a former *60 Minutes* producer who'd won three Pulitzer Prizes.

The series won Inaugural Stan Bergstein Award and richly deserved.

Drape had done some reporting on medication issues and really I think deserves credit for being the first racing rider to begin seriously examining some of the industry's problems involving doping.

Bogdanich called Drape's previous work sniper shots and said, "We need an atomic bomb."

He helped do the architecture on how to gather and compile the data that went into that series.

When the first part was published in March of last year the initial reaction was how dare they.

There were knee jerk stories in trade publications and blogs trying to pick apart some of the numbers compiled for the series.

When you start arguing whether it's 24 horses a week that are dying at our race tracks or it's 15 or 18 or 20, well that's not a winning argument.

The front page series touched a nerve and not just with people who consider themselves racing fans.

It injected into the mainstream consciousness of America some of the wrong doing within our industry.

For change to happen you first have to make the public aware.

What happened next was reform.

In New Mexico which got much of the focus of part one of that series, there was a shakeup at the racing commission.

Tougher rules were adopted, the state legislature authorized more money be spent on security and drug testing.

Make no mistake there was a serious problem.

Let me remind you that in May of 2012, two months after the story ran Ruidoso Downs in New Mexico held futurity trials.

Of the 25 races run eight of the winners, eight of them tested positive for Demorphin, also known as Frog Juice.

One of the most dangerous drugs you can give to a horse.

That is an epidemic of cheating.

The trainers that were nailed got stiff penalties.

One was suspended 21 years, another AQHA champion trainer, John Bassett, got ten years.

This would not have happened were it not for *The New York Times* series.

In New York Governor Andrew Cuomo had already called for a task force to look into why so many horses were dying at Aqueduct in the winter of 2012.

In light of *The New York Times* articles that task force could not afford to brush the details under the rug.

It's report later that year was stunning in revealing and detailing how pervasive so-called therapeutic medications had become.

New York regulators heeded the call to tighten restrictions on these drugs and now the rest of the mid-Atlantic and much of the rest of the country are getting on board.

As NYRA CEO Chris Kay said yesterday, "The number of horse fatalities at NYRA tracks has declined dramatically."

That is the positive force of investigative journalism.

Today we are seeing Federal indictments in Pennsylvania where trainers were lead out in handcuffs.

The legislature there may disband the racing commission entirely and form a new regulatory body or turn it over to the gaming commission that regulates the casino industry.

I'm getting reports of investigation being conducted now by the criminal division of the Food and Drug Administration and local authorities at a Midwestern harness track that involves wire taps, illegal drugging and a betting ring.

Florida's Division of Pari-mutuel wagering is under the microscope by state politicians.

All of this is happening I think in the wake of critical investigative reporting that is probably spurred some of it on.

I don't think I can emphasize that enough.

The reason for this reporting is to change the culture when it needs change. Sometimes you don't know if reporting on an issue has made a difference.

Let's look at the Bob Baffert situation in California.

From November 2011 until March of 2013 at least seven horses in his barn at Hollywood Park died from some internal issue.

Not a broken leg but heart attacks, internal hemorrhage, whatever.

Three publications that became aware of these extraordinary numbers, the *New York Times*, *The Blood Horse* and *The Paulick Report* filed open records requests exam necropsy reports of the deaths.

All three publications published a story on April 10th of this year coinciding with the California Horse Racing Board Meeting where sudden deaths were discussed.

Since those reports were published Baffert hasn't lost a single horse to sudden death.

Seven deaths in 16 months before stories were published, zero deaths in the eight months since then.

Is that a coincidence?

I don't think we'll ever know, but I do think without the pressure from the media the CHRFB which in April was denying that a problem even existed would not have conducted as thorough as an investigation as it did.

Those of us who do this aren't in it to cause trouble or to win awards or to make friends in the industry. We're just trying to make change. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mr. Jeff Lowe: Ray wrote a story or actually two stories on this subject.

One was about postmortem examinations in California and another was a follow up story this summer on the investigation in California into Bob Baffert's sudden deaths that was nominated for our award.

We had six stories from *Thoroughbred Daily News* that were all part of a series called a Painful Truth that we nominated the entire series. We felt that was warranted.

We wrestled a little bit about how to treat those individual stories. Whether we should look at them as one entity and considering we gave the award last year to one particular story from the *New York Times* series.

We felt that it was best to treat them all individually.

Then we have a story that was nominated by Frank Angst at *The Blood Horse*.

An investigation into a horse death in West Virginia.

Then three from Ray.

I'm gonna go through my PowerPoint real quick because we need to make sure we're out of here on time. I'll show you some of the judges responses.

We had four judges, sorry I've found the end of this.

The four judges were Ray Kerrison who is a columnist at *The New York Post* and

Ray had this response to Ray Paulick's story the vet said Cibelli told him keep me out of it and Ray said he's shown a bright light on four dark corners. The trainers larceny, the vet's illegal actions, the track's clear reluctance to move against Cibelli but not the vet and regulatory bodies unbelievable inertia in investigating the offense and opposing sanctions.

Paulick forced their hands but the case vividly illustrates the industries incomprehensible reluctance to prosecute and punish wrongdoers.

Bill Plaschke is a columnist for *The Los Angeles Times* and a regular analyst and pundit on ESPN also reacted to that story with this chilling account of the drugging of a horse and the subsequent deception by his trainer.

Jeff Siegel who's an analyst at HRTV and former co-owner of Team Valor.

He said of the *Thoroughbred Daily News* series that any one of the six installments In a Painful Truth would be worthy of this award.

The entire series was truly enlightening and I'm happy it was brought to my attention.

Then Billy Reed who is formerly of *Sports Illustrated* and *Louisville Courier-Journal, Lexington Herald-Leader* also in reference to the *Thoroughbred Daily News* series said it is the most comprehensive and well documented report on the drug problem in racing that I've ever seen.

It's a service to the industry and the public.

This award we have a trophy that was done by the same equine sculptor that made the Zenyatta trophy or I'm sorry the Zenyatta sculpture that's at Santa Anita Park. It's a \$25,000 prize.

Barry will give you the result.

Mr. Barry Irwin: Before I give the result just keep that person out there in the back until I give you the high sign.

When I came up with the idea for this award and I mentioned it to Jeff I said why don't we go to the turf writers.

This is a natural for the turf writers.

It'll incentivize their group. They can get behind it.

We can have the award presented at the turf writers annual dinner.

I was shocked and I think Jeff was pretty much too when they decided that they didn't wanna have any part of this.

Because they were wondering what my personal motivation was, number one.

Number two, they didn't seem to think that investigative journalism was important.

One guy who will remain nameless, except when Jeff and I are talking in private, took offense with the fact that the award was named after Stan Bergstein because he was a Harness writer and he wasn't a Thoroughbred writer, blah, blah, blah.

Anyway I think if you see the quality of the judges that we've brought to this endeavor and some of the stories that are honored I think that when they look back on this they're gonna be sad that they decided against doing it.

Anyway this is one of these deals where when you see an award show and you see one of the guys that winds up winning it performing.

You figure ha that's why they brought that guy out here.

You know what that wasn't how we planned it.

Ray Paulick is our winner.

Mr. Ray Paulick: Oh wow.

[Applause]

Mr. Barry Irwin: Ray got it for the story on Jane Cibelli at Tampa Bay Downs.

Mr. Ray Paulick: Thanks Barry.

Mr. Barry Irwin: Okay.

Mr. Ray Paulick: Well like I said I don't do this to win awards and I don't enter competitions.

This was nominated I think by the Team Valor people.

I would like to congratulate Frank Angst who I thought wrote a brilliant piece about West Virginia the death of a race horse there and the people that put together the *Thoroughbred Daily News* series.

It was an eye opening series as I think Billy or one of the other judges said.

It was just great to see other people out there doing this kind of journalism.

I congratulate them and I thank Barry and everybody associated with the Team Valor for the award very much.

Thank you.

[Applause]

Mr. Barry Irwin: As Jeff alluded day in and day out Ray is getting the job done.

He doesn't work for a newspaper.

He's not the editor of the *Blood Horse* like he used to be.

He's not working for the *Racing Form*.

He's taken advantage of the internet and his blog started out.

He was kind of fumbling a little bit and he finally figured out how he wanted to do it and it is an absolute must read for everybody in the Thoroughbred industry on a daily basis.

Mr. Jeff Lowe: Thank you y'all for being here.

We wanna make sure you get out to your next session.

It's a real pleasure, thanks.

[Applause]

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