



Race Track Industry Program

**36th ANNUAL  
SYMPOSIUM ON RACING & GAMING  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2009**

**The Jockeys' Guild —  
Giving a Leg Up to the Industry**

**Moderator:**

**Corey Johnsen**, President, Kentucky Downs

**Speakers:**

**Robby Albarado**, Jockey

**G. R. Carter**, Jockey

**Ms. Wendy Davis:** You're in the panel session that is a part of the Jockeys' Guild meeting, and I have to say that we are really pleased to have the Jockeys' Guild as a part of the symposium on racing and gaming this year. I think it really adds a wonderful extra component to our conference, and I think the more areas of racing and the more different areas of interest that we can get together in one place — it's what we try to do. I just don't think it gets any better than this. So the panel is obviously the Jockeys' Guild, "Giving a Leg Up to the Industry," and the short description — panelists discuss what jockeys can do to promote the sport.

This morning, as the moderator of this panel session, we have Corey Johnsen, President of Kentucky Downs, and I don't think there's a better person to lead this panel session because Corey's theory about promoting the sport is getting people out to the races; having people enjoy the live product; and making sure that it's family friendly and fun and getting people out to see the horses and to see the riders. So this morning, we have Corey Johnsen, Robbie Albarado, and G.R. Carter to visit with you.

You'll see in your program that John Velazquez was scheduled to appear. Unfortunately, he is not able to attend, due to a serious illness in his family, so our thoughts are with John. So I want to go ahead and get this panel started and turn it over to Corey. Again, thank you. We appreciate everybody at the Guild for integrating your meetings with us. It's added a lot to our program. Thank you.

**Mr. Corey Johnsen:** Thank you Wendy. Good morning. It's an honor to share a panel with these two gentlemen. Robbie Albarado, the last couple of years, has been the second leading rider in North America. He rode the great Curlin; has ridden in Dubai, Japan, Hong Kong; and he's now playing to about a four handicap in his golf game.

G.R. Carter is one of the all-time great riders in the world of quarter horse racing. He's an eight-time AQHA titleholder. He's the all-time leading money earner. He's won 3,000 quarter horse races, and he's won the All-American Futurity twice. He's ridden in places like Enid, Oklahoma, Bandera, Texas and Eureka, Kansas — just kidding. He's ridden at some of the great quarter horse tracks in the country, and I make fun of maybe some of the — let's call it the bush tracks or the unrecognized tracks you've ridden at, but Robbie, you've probably ridden at a few yourself. Why don't you share some of your early experience when you were 10 and 11 riding in Louisiana?

**Mr. Robbie Albarado:** I've ridden quite a few match races — as a kid, that's how we started. Us Cajun guys in Louisiana, we start at these non-recognized race tracks, and I have ridden quarter horses in the past. So, I've done things he hasn't done. Rode both sides of it. So it's been great and thanks, Corey, for being here today.

**Mr. Carter:** I rode both sides, also — I just wasn't a very good thoroughbred rider.

**Mr. Johnsen:** G.R. Carter has a trademark and that is — I'll never forget back at Remington Park in 1990, we had a quarter horse meet, and I was working there and this jockey came back to the winner's circle. He won a big race, and all of a sudden he does a back flip off of his horse in the winner's circle. So that was pretty impressive. You're 41 now, how are the back flips going G.R.?

**Mr. Carter:** They're becoming fewer and farther between, but I can actually still do one when I'm real excited.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay. And Robbie, what do you do when you dismount a horse?

**Mr. Albarado:** Get off very slow.

**(Laughter)**

I had too many injuries.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay. Just too kind of illustrate where we are in this sport and what the jockeys can do for it, I think we all know prior to 2009, horse racing had some very tough times. We had some very difficult publicity things to deal with that we don't need to go through, but I think we all know

that they're there. Then in 2009, we had some really interesting stories; Mine That Bird, Rachel Alexandra, and then Zenyatta. With the first two, there was a common theme and that was Calvin Borel. Calvin, with his personality and his giving nature to the industry, did hundreds of interviews. I mean I think most of you know he was on Letterman. He made hundreds of appearances. Calvin and his agent, Jerry Hissam, were very dedicated to promoting thoroughbred racing.

As Wendy had mentioned, I'm the President of Kentucky Downs, which is a small track in kind of southwestern Kentucky, and we race four days a year. I was personally — I was present when we had a meet and greet with Calvin Borel and our fans, and we've probably heard many people, within our industry and outside our industry, talk about how it's dying. You know, this sport's done and if you had been present that day with me when Calvin Borel met over 200 fans; and had people from ages 8 to 80 telling him that this is the greatest day of my life to meet someone like you and get my picture taken; and watch Calvin "kind of work the crowd," you would understand that we are not in a dying sport. We're just in a sport that had some tough times, like many sports have gone through, and that we need to all rally together and use every resource we can to promote our sport and that's why we're here today.

I have a long background with promoting jockeys from really the first jockey challenge we did at Remington Park and G.R., I think — did you ride in that race? I think you did.

**Mr. Carter:** No, I actually didn't ride in the first couple.

**Mr. Johnsen:** In the first one? Okay.

**Mr. Carter:** Yeah.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Well, that's probably good because I learned a lot. The one thing I learned is you better have a good tie-breaker if you have — if you come down to the end and it's close, because during the first jockey championship for quarter horse riders at Remington Park, we had a jockey's wife who wanted to beat up our Marketing Director because she thought he did the point system wrong. So I learned how to — I learned a lot of lessons from that, but through the years, we had a female jockey championship at Remington Park. Then at Lone Star Park we had the All-Star Jockey Championship and raised over \$600,000.00 for the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund and had some great competition that I think benefitted the sport, not only at Lone Star Park and in Texas, but all over the country. We actually had the races televised on ESPN.

Talking about raising money for charity — these gentlemen and other guild members can be a tremendous vehicle, as evidenced by the Triple Crown the last two years. The jockeys, working together with some prominent horse

owners like Rich Santulli and Bill Casner, raised over \$1 million for charity. It wasn't just for the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund; it was giving back to the entire industry. The Jockey Club Foundation, the Grayson Foundation, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, BEST, Anna House and then the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund.

Robbie, I know you were part of that. Maybe you could talk a little bit about working together and raising money for the industry and how, basically, the riders are in favor of doing whatever they can to give back.

**Mr. Albarado:** Well, as for myself — on behalf of the whole colonies, I'm a big part of the colony in Kentucky and New Orleans and throughout the country, but mostly we try to put our face on everything we can to promote the racing and the sport of — not only Kentucky but across the country. We've done advertisements and through the Triple Crown races and throughout donations from that we — the proceeds we distribute out to different organizations, foundations or charities. We feel that by doing that, hopefully we get more sponsorships in the future, and we can work together with the owners and trainers. Mr. Bill Casner's been a big part. He's been instrumental in helping us — he's contributed quite a bit in helping us distribute to different organizations. We try to do the best we can in sharing the proceeds we get from these sponsors.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Robbie, since we're on the theme of giving back, could you please explain to the people your own personal charitable foundation and what it does?

**Mr. Albarado:** Sure, I established a foundation a couple years ago. It's Robbie Albarado Foundation. We assist the homeless, socially, economically disadvantaged in the Louisville area. We're going to try to branch it out in the future to get to different states and racing jurisdictions. We just added an extension to our mission. We're going to try to reach out to the children of the backside. Try to enhance their lives, and we give them a better way of living through, whether it is programs and learning programs, and we're going to go across the country with that eventually. You can go to the website. It's [robbiealbaradofoundation.org](http://robbiealbaradofoundation.org) and find out more about it.

**Mr. Johnsen:** It's not just on the race track. Don't you do some things like with golf tournaments and try to hone that golf game?

**Mr. Albarado:** Yeah we have golf tournaments to get money through — to distribute throughout the community of Louisville, and we've given to the Homeless Coalition of Louisville. We built a park for some kids around the Churchill Downs area. We've given to the Boys Haven of Kentucky. So we try to do as much as we can with the little bit we have, but it's growing big and fast and like I said, go to the website. You'll be interested.

**Mr. Johnsen:** There was also an event where there was a — at Keeneland, there was a karaoke event. Possibly you could describe that to the group because I think that's an event that could be done at many race tracks around the country.

**Mr. Albarado:** Yes, at Keeneland, Mr. Nick Nicholson, with the help of Mr. Nick, he put together a karaoke event with jockeys. We won it — I and Herbie Rivera, just because of Herbie, but it was a great thing. We generated, I think, \$50,000.00 for charity. It was a big event and hopefully we can do it in the future again and maybe Arlington Park, New York, hopefully it gets spread throughout the country, but it's a big fund-raising event and we had a lot of fun.

**Mr. Johnsen:** I believe that there's some things that the industry should — there's some basics that the industry should provide to participants like the jockeys, and those are a safe, consistent racing surface; a safe, secure place to ply their trade, meaning the jockeys quarters; and then also catastrophic injury insurance. Then last but not least, we all should do our part to support the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund. What you find from the jockeys is they're not looking for a handout on that. They're willing to get involved and raise money, and I think at the Keeneland event, there was \$40,000.00 raised for that. So there's ways that tracks, if they want to work together, can raise money, and we need to get the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund built up and make sure that it's properly endowed. G.R. do you have anything to add on the charitable part of your profession and your efforts?

**Mr. Carter:** Well, the — just a lot of the same things that Robbie said that we work with the track management. I've — as Scott Wells can attest to you at Remington Park, I've never turned them down on anything they've ever asked me to do in any way, shape or form. Ruidoso, we have a lot — we've had benefit ropings and things like that and, of course, golf tournaments and just — we try to help out any way we can, especially when the need with children and things like that are involved.

**Mr. Johnsen:** I'm going to kind of shift gears, although it's somewhat the same, because I think this can be a funding source for items like the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund, and that's sponsorships. One of the most complicated and difficult things that this industry needs to deal with is jockey sponsorships. It might be a sponsorship that comes from the track or comes from an organization, such as the American Quarter Horse Association; or actually comes from the jockey. G.R., I think there's a very interesting concept that the American Quarter Horse Association has with Wrangler Jeans and possibly you could explain that to the people.

**Mr. Carter:** Yeah, the AQHA has a, I guess, sponsorship deal with Wrangler, and it actually sponsors the whole entire quarter horse industry; which involves racing, showing the reigning, cutting, halter horse segments of that

industry. They have it cut up into three different teams where there's a participant on each team that comes from each one of those aspects of the industry. There's actually two race trainers on each team and one jockey on each team and you can — you compete throughout the year in your own forte. They keep a point system where you actually got guests competing against the other two jockeys; or the trainers competing against the other trainers; and then your team earns points and credits. Then they come up with the final total at the end of the year, and a lot of people follow at the end — at the world show each year, which is in Oklahoma City in November, we just recently here wrapped up.

They have some promotions and, since I actually live in Oklahoma City, I try to go partake in some of that stuff. They have a Team Wrangler Challenge where you end up competing in another event where you don't actually ever participate in. Last year they had me doing an event called the hunter hack, and I thought it was — maybe you had to go out in the woods or something — I'd never even heard of hunter hack, but it's an english event where you go over some jumps and kind of like a western pleasure class, and I had a really fun time doing it and it was a lot of fun. That's all part of the sponsorship that Wrangler has with AQHA, and it's kind of a fun thing.

**Mr. Johnsen:** The AQHA has done a very good job of taking these national sponsors — and they do have a lot of members — and then they make their sponsorship very diverse. When they get into racing, they bring in the jockeys, and you make special appearances and those kinds of things as well, right?

**Mr. Carter:** Yes, whenever — and I'd also receive some apparel, I believe, and I get a dozen jeans and a dozen shirts a year. They have the Wrangler logo on the collar and the Team Wrangler deal on the — and I wear those. Of course I don't ever actually wear them to ride in, but I do rope as a hobby, and I am contracted to wear that Wrangler apparel and promote it when I can.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Ongoing right now, I think the Jockeys' Guild is working with TOBA and other organizations to come up with a formula that's fair to all entities in terms of sponsorship. Robbie, just to kind of get your thoughts on it, I know that — especially when you ride in Triple Crown races, it can be very valuable, not only to you but the industry, to do some advertising, say on your jockey pants. Why don't you give us some of your thoughts on sponsorships and the potential that we have for that to benefit not only jockeys but our entire industry.

**Mr. Albarado:** I just think sponsorships, it invites all — whether it's a business or it's a company — it's Wrangler. It could be Nike, whoever it may be, I think it just — it's great for the sport to get people aware of our sport. How is the — it's still the best sport going. It's the sport of kings, and I feel like to restore the integrity of horse racing, I think sponsorships is a great

way to do that. I feel like, as jockeys, we can be the face of that. We are the ones who wear the pants; we're the ones out there actually physically on TV. So if we're the ones that can promote the sport through sponsorship, then that's what we're here for. We're very glad to do it and give back to the horse racing.

**Mr. Johnsen:** G.R., I know one idea you have is — or one question you have is where are the jockey cards; and why don't you give us kind of your thoughts on that?

**Mr. Carter:** The jockey cards was a really good tool to actually have something where, of course, everyone could sign. Of course there was kids collecting them and things like that, and we feel like it was a Jockeys' Guild program that whenever it went by the wayside, we actually feel like that it was something that the membership of the Jockeys' Guild could really see. It's something they could actually feel like they were getting as being a member of the guild, and we've suffered in recent years, of course, with the hard times the Guild's been through — of people not really having something they could really latch onto that made us feel like they were a part of us.

We're — have currently got some effort going to get the jockey card program back going. The guys that are not a member of the Guild are going to get left out, and I feel like it's going to make them want to be back and a part of the Guild, because they can actually see that they're getting some material benefit from it, and it is a really good program. Of course, and all of the appearances and things like that, autograph signing, that's where people would come with cards they had collected; or we offered some and gave away and it — they're just — they're really good for exposure.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Sounds like that's a good project for the NTRA, I would think, hopefully.

**Mr. Carter:** You'd think so.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Yeah. Robbie, your thoughts on the trading cards? Because if I remember correctly, at Lone Star Park when we had the All-Star Jockey Championship, we used to autograph a large number of those and not only use them with our sponsors and the fans but also use them to raise funds. If you remember, we'd have a live auction and we would auction off the—all the cards signed by the riders. What's your experience with the jockey cards?

**Mr. Albarado:** I think jockey cards are great. I still sign jockey cards from years ago, when I first started, when we first started jockey cards. So I think it's great not only for our younger crowd of — our younger public. We need those in horse racing, the younger kids, and if we can get them involved in the simplest way, we need more fans of racing and that's a great angle to do that. I was jokingly, early yesterday about we — talking about

jockey cards — I said, "I only won five of 'em, so if you're lucky to get one of the five, they're more valuable that way, I think." Jokingly I said that.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Yeah. Okay. Another thing that I have noticed where jockeys have been extremely helpful to the industry, and I'm going to point to Kentucky now, is in helping with the legislative process and through the political process. Unfortunately, our industry is tied to government and so when we want to make a change in our product mix or many other things, we have to actually go to the legislature and get their authorization or approval.

Well that sounds like it shouldn't be that big a deal but when you go to the legislature then politics come to bear and I want to commend the jockey colony in Kentucky because they've gotten very involved in the process as you know. There's an effort to gain VLT authorization at the state's tracks and we're working very hard as an industry to get that done — and that could add approximately \$100 million per year to the horse industry in Kentucky, if we're able to get VLTs or slot machines at the tracks and Robbie, possibly you could explain what you and your fellow riders have done to assist there.

**Mr. Albarado:** Well we try to go to all the political parties. Recently, we attended Mr. Jodie Haydon's party, political party, in Louisville. I think it was a great success because they don't get a chance to talk to us outside of the race track or on a personal level. I think it was great for — I even got Calvin Borel out there, believe it or not, and they really — he was a big hit. Like I'm going to echo what Corey said earlier about how Calvin's — everybody wants to speak to him. It was great for him to be there, but I feel like with us being involved in political issues it just gives us — shows our interest in the sport as jockeys. We need to get these VLTs in Kentucky because we're losing our horses to other states that have it, and the faster we get it the better we can be in Kentucky.

**Mr. Johnsen:** And if I'm not mistaken, didn't you write a few personal checks to candidates?

**Mr. Albarado:** Oh, absolutely.

**Mr. Johnsen:** That's the part that's probably the most difficult, sometimes, but one thing I would like to bring up when we talk about jockeys willing to promote the sport like any other athlete there in competitions. There needs to be some parameters and there needs to be a recognition by the industry that they do have very demanding schedules. If you remember, earlier I talked about Calvin Borel and one of the reasons Calvin was so effective is his agent, Jerry Hissam, took on the task of coordinating all the interviews. Frankly, he had to say no sometimes because, as I think everybody here knows, that the jockeys are, in my opinion, the hardest working athletes and probably have the most dangerous profession in sports.

It's not that you can just — they can always be there — they have professional and family commitments and maybe G.R., you and Robbie — I 'm not trying to be negative here — but people need to understand that in the morning you go out and work horses, and you have to be very — I mean that's your profession. That's why you're successful.

**Mr. Carter:** Yeah, there's times when you spread yourself so thin that you — that you actually feel like your riding might suffer because you lose that edge of being focused like you need to be to focus on doing exactly what you want to do and that's — and that is winning that race and getting the best out of that horse you're riding and whenever you have all those distractions, sometimes it can be tough.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Robbie, you want to add anything to that?

**Mr. Albarado:** Well, I work so many horses in the morning—

**(Laughter)**

Seeing all those jockeys are laughing — no.

**Mr. Johnsen:** It's an inside joke.

**Mr. Albarado:** No, it gets tough. We spend more time at the race track than we do our own homes and our own families. So it can get stressful sometimes but to be able to compete on the highest level. I think you have to have a lot of hard work and determination. A lot of us guys have a lot of discipline and focus, and it comes and affects you sometimes when you're riding in the afternoon. If you have to work so many horses in the morning, but its high risk — we have a high-risk job, but it's very rewarding sometimes.

**Mr. Johnsen:** What I'd like to do in a few minutes is open it up to questions from the audience, so think about it. If you are interested in asking these two a question, we'd sure like to hear it in a few minutes. Kind of last but not least, talk to us about jockey competitions and championships and how you — do you enjoy riding in those? Do you think they're good for the sport? Would you like to see more of those types of things?

**Mr. Albarado:** Corey's bringing that up because he had — he started the Best Jockey Challenge in Texas a few — quite a few years ago. It was — we all love doing it. It generated money for the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund, and it was a great competition and it — all of us that rode the race, we didn't care about the money that we earn — I mean the money that we got for doing it. We just wanted that trophy at the end. Unfortunately, I've ridden it five or six times and never got a trophy, so hopefully we can

continue that and get it back in the future. I think Corey will be instrumental in trying to get that organized somewhere. Some track. Somehow.

**Mr. Carter:** The first Jockey Championship that Corey actually produced was, I believe, at Remington Park and was a quarter horse competition in his Remington Park days. I've rode — I did not participate in the first one or two they had. I probably wasn't known or good enough back in those days. That was a long time ago, and I'm not that old; but I did participate in five or six of them and never, never even got close to winning. I wanted to win one, just like Robbie said, so bad.

The money didn't mean anything. It was just all about wanting to feel like you had won one of those competitions, and won that trophy, and the last one that I believe that the quarter horse industry actually had was the AQHA put one on at the end of '02, which would have been almost seven years ago at Sunland Park. I was lucky enough to actually win my first one and won a big bronze as a prize, and it's right in the center of my living room. I'm pretty proud of it.

But those things are really good vehicles to expose the jockeys to the fans. We have the autograph sessions. That's why the jockey cards come into play so well back then, and I still have people bring older cards to me to sign and stuff still today. Those things are a lot of fun, and they're really good exposure of the riders and to the fans.

**Mr. Johnsen:** I see in the audience Scott Wells who's the General Manager of Remington Park. I think there's a good chance that Mr. Wells will be wanting to do a Jockey Championship this year of some sort. We kind of got him on the — he isn't saying no. He's nodding, so I just want to —

**Mr. Carter:** That's great. I would love to see one come back for the quarter horse industry. They were a lot of fun to participate in and it seems like it's something that's kind of missed and that we haven't had in the last few years.

**Mr. Scott Wells:** What if we did a multiple distance challenge and had you and Robbie riding against each other?

**Mr. Carter:** Oh, I'd love it.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay, Scott just said, "What if we had a multiple distance challenge," and have G.R. and Robbie riding against each other. G.R.'d love it and then Robbie, what's your throw down?

**Mr. Albarado:** Well, I'd like to see three quarter horse races and three thoroughbred races.

**Mr. Carter:** We might have to run foot races, too, so I could get fit to ride the thoroughbred races.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Yeah.

**(Laughter)**

**Mr. Johnsen:** I believe very strongly in—that jockeys are an outstanding way to promote our sport. Robbie, you told me about, in Japan, about is it Yutaka Take — how they promote him and he's on billboards or —

**Mr. Albarado:** Yeah, he's like the Michael Jordan of Japan. Yutaka Take, yeah. Everything is surrounded around him, and he's a great ambassador for the sport in Japan. I think at some point, hopefully with the Jockeys' Guild and our fellow members of the Guild, we can try to bring that to our country here in the States.

**Mr. Johnsen:** You know, a lot of you may not realize, but we have a TV star in the audience. How many of you saw the series on Animal Planet called "*Jockeys*"? Anybody watch — quite a few hands there. So we have one of the stars from the show, Jon Court, and Jon if I could impose on you. Do you mind going to that mic and just tell us a little bit about the popularity — were you surprised by the popularity of that series?

**Mr. Jon Court:** Yeah, Corey, I was surprised and somewhat surprised and somewhat not so surprised, because we put a lot of work into it. We exposed ourselves, and we took it to the level of being real; not only on a professional level, but we took it behind the scenes where you could see what's happening in the jocks room and at our house with our families. So we wanted to bring some of a reality, and as I said, we put a lot of work and time and dedicated the effort to bring that reality as real as possible.

A lot of people thought it was actuality — and there is some footage that was actuality; like me getting pissed off, knocking the boots off — but I — that was — ended up being one of the scenes that was played quite regularly. But the thing about it is we brought some new audience and that was the biggest goal to achieve is start making some people out there, that would probably love to come to the races and be involved, and give them that personal touch. Not only with our lives, because people see that you're at home, and you're not just so much an animated character out there, and maybe it helps touch them to the point to where they won't be so harsh when you lose on a favorite, too.

In a sense we brought a lot of people we would like to thank to the racing industry with the show, but we did bring a lot of awareness about our industry and those involved. So it was fun but it got a little redundant from time to time.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Well the — for those of you that don't know the Animal Planet is a cable network and they did a — what have they done, about 14 different ones or 10 or 15, something like that, different episodes?

**Mr. Court:** Yeah, they've done — I think they did — let's see, I think it was actually 12 and then they did 13.

**Mr. Johnsen:** And will it continue, do you know, Jon?

**Mr. Court:** From the best of my knowledge, there may be some people looking into it, but that particular production's been shut down.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay, but it — I think what it did is it showed us that when we humanize our industry, I think it's very beneficial and if you looked at — the NTRA did some research and if you looked at public opinion, not only racing fans, but non-racing fans, about our sport after a couple of negative catastrophic injuries on the track — it was quite low, but if you have noticed, it's really come back up. It's actually increased public opinion about our sport in 2009 and I think a big reason for that were our stars and people like Calvin Borel and Robbie and G.R. promoting our sport, putting that human face on it because anybody that talks to any jockey or you do any kind of show, you're going to see their love of the sport and its participants and their horses and I think that could do nothing but benefit our sport.

What I'd like to do now is open it up for questions. If anybody has a question for G.R. or Robbie, this'd be a good time for that. I think you're supposed to say your name and —

**Male Voice:** This on? Good.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Yes.

**Mr. Gary Belecki:** Good morning. Gary Belecki from the cold Canadian north, Horse Racing Alberta up in Canada. The weather's still pretty good down here for the hosts, so — just a comment. First, I'd like to say what a pleasure it is to be with the jockeys as part of this meet and this organization and that's great to have you here. One thing I think that's often neglected and I think the folks could work on a lot is that is this is the age of physical fitness and you folks are gifted athletes and in tremendous shape and I think that that's one of the areas I'd like to see the jockeys work more on, particularly with fitness clubs and the young people of fitness it's everywhere around the world. I think you get great exposure there and work on that. So it took me a while to realize that you guys are in great shape. I had to go into a few jockeys' rooms a few times and just see the incredible condition you guys are in and how hard you work. So I suggest exposure there would be very good for you folks and when you talk about sponsorship, perhaps some health clubs would be quite happy to have you folks on board.

Secondly, in terms of the areas talked about — about new fans, the female aspect of jockeys and the growing female jockeys — we have a number of them in Canada that are quite popular and we bring the female audience to the race track so I'd like to see a little more exposure with your female jockeys to bring the female racing fan. So those are just general comments and keep up the good work because you've done a great turnaround since the difficulties you've had. It's a pleasure to be here with you guys. Thank you.

**Mr. Carter:** Thank you.

**Mr. Albarado:** Thank you.

**[Applause]**

**Mr. Johnsen:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Mike Campbell:** Hello. My name's Mike Campbell. I'm with — I'm president of the Illinois Thoroughbred Horseman's Association. I know Robbie quite well, and I know most of the riders in this room quite well. I'd like to point out to the attendees here that it was only 1969 when the mandatory ten percent came into effect. So that tells you, that means — the mandatory ten percent I'm talking about is that jockeys actually got ten percent across the board. Until then, it was actually deal by deal, if you can imagine that. So these guys have come a long way in a short time. They've had a tremendous setback with Dr. Gertmenian and the Jockeys' Guild and the dysfunctional attitude that took place for a short time. But I think they're back at it again and I think they're going to be renewed by their experience and I think they're going to benefit from past mistakes. Robbie, what I'd like to hear from you is I'd like to have you address the future of the Jockeys' Guild. Under ideal circumstances, how do you see the Guild developing over the next decade?

**Mr. Albarado:** Well, long term I see the Guild as one of the biggest organizations in the country, I believe. Short term, we had some minor setbacks recently with a few cases we had, and we got behind on finances. We had a couple situations where we had quite a few lawyer fees, and that's where we're trying to recover now. I feel in the — by the year 2010, we should be caught up in our finances and able to move forward. Then we could focus on what we were talking about today: being a face and pushing; promoting the industry as much as possible; and — my vision — our goal would be to have the entirety, 100 percent — if you're a jockey, you're in the Jockeys' Guild.

I feel like — I want jockeys to be — feel that proud to be part of a Jockeys' Guild. I mean right now, we don't have that. We don't have that now where jockeys talk about the Guild, and most of them are, "Oh, I don't wanna fool with the Guild." I feel like one day we're going to get to that point where

they'll be proud, and we get some retirement and just be — it's going to be something to be fun and be a part of and hopefully we can, like I said, hopefully we can be — whenever something needs promoted, we can go to the Jockeys' Guild and say, "They did that for us. They promoted that. They got this for us. This race track, you know this community."

**Mr. Carter:** You alluded to the fact that we first started getting the ten percent in 1969. Those are one of the types of things that the Jockeys' Guild negotiated on behalf of all jockeys. A lot of people don't know and realize and I've been told this by older members that we didn't — also with that same agreement, we also started getting paid by the horseman's bookkeeper for the first time ever. Before 1969, you had — each individual jockey had to go get his money — had to run the owner down or have his agent run the owner down or the trainer and it seemed like that they got beat out of their money a lot. A lot of those things like that is we need to be strong enough to where we can negotiate on behalf of all riders to accomplish things like that. There's so many things that most of the young riders today don't realize what the Jockeys' Guild has negotiated in the past. Every rider that walks on a race track is — they're realizing the benefits of the things that the Jockeys' Guild has accomplished for them as long as safety, the ways they get paid, things like that.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Well, in our sport and frankly, probably any industry, safety is number one and one of the great things that the guild did was a number of years ago, they did a study of injuries and they came to the race tracks and they said, "Look, here's our criteria on how you become as safe a race track as you can." They've shared those with us and now if a new race track is built or we have the national safety and accreditation program, you have to meet those criteria and you take those things for granted but that was done with a lot of study, being able to consult their members and members of race track management and make our industry safer. I think that's very important as well that the guild has accomplished. Other questions? Comments? Scott?

**Mr. Scott Wells:** Scott Wells, Remington Park. I have a comment and a question. First off, I want to comment on the fact that through my tenure as a general manager at two race tracks, Ruidoso Downs and now Remington Park, G.R. is absolutely right. He has never once turned us down on any publicity request and that has — some of those have come late at night and early in the morning. Here's a guy that works in the morning and often rides at night, and I cannot say enough about how good an ambassador for the sport that he has been and continues to be.

Something that we need to all look at as participants in the industry is that these jockeys have a tenure that is so important, because the best of our horses are only brief flashes in the pan to the public consciousness but you take the face of Robbie Albarado and Jon Court now and that — I thought the Animal Planet series was spectacular — started out a little weak and then

they really got into it, and I thought they did a sensational job. I know that a lot of new people were introduced to what many of us take for granted as to the dangers and the excitement inherent in our sport.

My question is — the animal welfare issue is a huge issue right now, and there have been instances that have been pointed out here. The use of the whip has been criticized and you can understand — those of us who know horses and horse racing well — we have a little bit different feeling about the use of the whip. There have been some modifications to the whip utilized in some states, and I would be very interested in hearing your reaction to those — what is apparently a less severe whip.

**Mr. Albarado:** Well, they — last year we started with the — we had plenty — we experimented with different — it's now just the whip, it's the popper on the end of the whip. We had Pro Cushion. Different types of them, so we experimented last year with Keeneland. I think it was the first place we started it. We started riding a couple races with it. Some guys were opposed to it, but like everything, you get used to it. Whether it makes a difference in a horse race or they feel, I don't know. They can't tell us if it feels different, but myself, I don't think it was a big change; but the perception of having a new whip, a safer whip, I think was good for the public — for the — that's the biggest thing I thought.

More tracks are adopting it now. I don't think it cuts horses, whereas the old whip might've cut a horse every now and then. I'm sure some trainers will probably attest to that, so this one I don't feel like it — it's as abusive as another whip would. Having — the way we whip horses, I feel that there's no certain way, or they can decide on how we should whip a horse. Continuously, yes. I feel like you shouldn't be abusing an animal down the lane. I don't think it makes much difference. It won't affect them, the outcome, them winning or losing. But, yes, we are trying to make progress and changes in the whip, not only for the safety of the animal but the perception of the betting public.

**Mr. Carter:** The Pro-Cush Popper to my knowledge has not been become mandatory in any of the race tracks. I personally have started using it — a lot of fillies I ride and things like that. I have always been just a little bit bad about leaving whelps on horses, and I've went to using one of those Pro-Cush Poppers just because I know that it's eventually coming to the quarter horse industry also. I've got to where I really like it. It's just a little bit lighter, and it's really loud, but it doesn't — it doesn't seem like you're getting as much — sure enough — really hit with them but they're really, loud and it seems like you're getting a lot of bang for the buck, like you're doing good. I would really hate to ever see the — I know there's a push to limit how you whip a horse, like Robbie was saying, and that's a subjective issue that's just going to get — you're going to have the stewards, management, everybody, "Did you see that guy raise his arm up to whip a horse?" Guys are going to do it just accidentally and it's — I don't think it'll

be a good thing at all. With the Pro-Cush Popper is — you can hardly leave a whelp on a horse. Like I said, I've been about as bad as anybody in the industry about leaving whelps on them, and I know that I haven't ever left a whelp on one with one of those Pro-Cushion Poppers.

**Mr. Albarado:** It is mandatory — the Pro-Cush Popper is mandatory in all Kentucky race tracks now. It's been — in New Orleans we started using it twice a day and I think in February we're going to make it mandatory in Louisiana also. So, it's getting out — it's spreading out throughout the country and hopefully, it's safer and helps out everyone else.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay, another question or comment?

**Male Voice:** Comment about the general health and responsibility of the industry towards riders and towards trainers, too. In Illinois, we certainly are having issues with handling attendance like everybody everywhere else is, too. So we have a huge number of trainers out there that are really struggling right now and I feel a great responsibility to those people. That's why I ran for an office recently and why I'm going to try to help them if it's possible, and how I'm going to help them is we're going to push hard and spring for slots in the Illinois area. But what my comment is to the race riders is, I really know that some way or another, that as a critical component to this industry, we as an industry have turned our backs on or failed to meet our responsibilities. To them, in their later years or when they suffer catastrophic injuries, somehow or another that has to change. I don't think it's good for the industry to turn our backs on these guys in critical times. I don't think it's good for our industry to not realize the needs of these jockeys. I would like to kind of — I would like to have the two jockeys to comment on how horsemen's groups and how managements can best assist them in developing a responsible outlook towards the future and towards the jockey business.

**Mr. Albarado:** First of all, my — I think it needs to start with communications. I feel like we need to communicate more between jockeys, trainers, owners, race tracks. I think that's where it all starts and we were lacking that. We were lacking that and a main example yesterday — Nick Nicholson, he's communicates with us the utmost. Any time he's hand and foot — whenever we need him and I feel like there's never a problem. We never have problems at Keeneland Race Course because of that and it's a big part of it. In Illinois, I haven't been there in a couple years but I feel like there's — they have — I enjoyed it there. I had a great communication with everyone there. To say turn our back on things, I'm going to let G.R.

**Mr. Carter:** With the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund — I've been involved with it just ever so little. I don't know if everyone here knows or not, but Nancy LaSala of the — the manager of the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund over here — would you stand up, Nancy? Nancy has been — it's been amazing what this lady has done since she's taken over this fund.

I've been involved with getting in contact with, oh, maybe a half a dozen of the permanently disabled, and those are some of the awfulest stories you've ever heard in your life. Those guys, a lot of them do — they're bitter. They feel like the industry has forgotten about them. They feel like they gave their — they feel like they gave their health, permanently, for horse racing, and then we forgot about them.

With the advent of the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund, it's taken that burden off of the Jockeys' Guild and those guys are getting a lot more money than they used to get. I believe it's \$1,000.00 a month. There's like 60 of them around the country. Approximately — I think — I don't know the exact numbers. I think 9 of them were actually hurt riding a quarter horse, and 15 of them rode both breeds, but they all have the same thing in common. They got hurt and gave their health permanently for horse racing, and we owe it to those guys to take care of them for the rest of their life. You know in a small way — however we can to help.

Those guys, they count on that money, and Nancy has really done a phenomenal job of getting the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund off the ground. It's — with it, they've actually brought the endowment that the Jockeys' Guild used to be part of over to the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund to where there's a big push to get the endowment up where it would eventually take care of the disabled.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay. We're kind of run out of time. One more comment.

**Male Voice:** Guys, Mike Penna with the Horse Racing Radio Network. Robbie, G.R. thanks for coming here today and thanks for being with us. My question is — first of all, I couldn't agree with you guys more. I think that as an industry, as a sport, we need to find a way to do everything we can to promote our human athletes as opposed to our equine athletes because you guys are around a lot longer than our superstar race horses are on the race track but Robbie, getting back to something you said earlier about sponsorship — and I agree with you on that as well, that I think sponsorship is a great way to bring not only more financial benefits into our game but to expose our game on a bigger scale. One aspect of that is riders being allowed to wear advertising on their pants, during the races, but I know that's something that hasn't been accepted in all jurisdictions, yet. If you can talk about that just a little bit and some of the hurdles that the Guild and riders are facing with trying to get that in all jurisdictions, that would be great.

**Mr. Albarado:** Well, I feel like — I feel like its state-by-state. It's track-by-track. I think it's all different and it's up to the management. They're the ones who decide on how we can, how big the sponsorship has to be on our pants and all and our owners. Our owners, too. Most of our owners are in business as companies and might be competitors or — so we have to — there's a fine line between what we can wear, when can we wear it, and what

days we can wear it. It's a fine line — it's a huge contract, but I feel like we're going in the right direction with that. Hopefully in the future, we can all get on the same page and like you said, benefit financially, and expose people to the game.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay it's — we're out of time. Just to kind of sum up. There are a number of issues that the industry is dealing with concerning jockeys, and they're very complex issues, and they differ from state to state. We're all trying to wade through them and do what is right, but I think the message today is, no matter what those issues are, there's a group of riders, Guild members, that want to promote the sport and that's first and foremost. Then there's a second part of it that's just as important where Terry Meyocks and the Guild management will work with the different industry organizations and solve some of these challenges that we have. But the bottom line is — what I hear today — is these guys want to do their fair share to help our sport grow and prosper is that — did I put words in your mouth or do you want to —

**Mr. Carter:** No, not at all.

**Mr. Johnsen:** Okay. As we move forward, let's utilize this great resource. I'd love for us to see more jockey competitions. I think — I'd love to see more coordination. I'd love to see jockey trading cards, and I think that's a challenge that we can leave today for the different industry groups to help grow our great sport. Thank you for your attention this morning and have a great day.

**[Applause]**