



Race Track Industry Program

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

**Turf Publicists of America Mark Kaufman Workshop —
Lights, Camera...Racing!**

Moderator:

John Engelhardt, President, Turf Publicists of America and Director of Publicity of River Downs

Speakers:

Mark Ciardi, Producer, Secretariat

Jon Court, Jockey

John Hennegan, The Hennegan Brothers "The First Saturday in May"

G. D. Hieronymus, Director of Broadcast Services, Keeneland

Leonard Lusky, President, Commemorative Derby Promotions

Mr. John Engelhardt: This workshop's known as "Lights, Camera, Racing." For those of you who don't know me, I'm John Engelhardt, President of the Turf Publicists. I'll be moderating this today. Some may know me as the "Regular Guy" from the handicapping show at River Downs. I could tell you this. We have a very eclectic and talented panel here today that's going to kind of look at racing on television and in the movies from every side of the camera and production. We were really lucky to get the people here today that we do have, and what I'm going to do is I'm going to introduce each one of them. I'm going to ask them, basically, to give their own bio, so it's not in my words, it's in their own words; how they got into racing and what their current position is and then I'll cue up our video man in the back to kind of roll the action.

But if you would — right now, if you would go ahead and roll what we have up here. Bob, Bob Benoit, many of you know — unless you're very new to the organization — was one of the rare three-time Presidents of the Turf Publicists of America. He was here from '73, '74, '75. As a person that started out as a track photographer, I can tell you, it's a key job at the racetrack, and it's a wonderful job at the racetrack because you get to meet so many people in so many positive times.

If you'll look through these, the different people that Bob met throughout his career, obviously the bigger tracks on the West Coast, but it wasn't hard to get him to smile. He had an amazing attitude. When he was president of the Turf Publicists

of America, he was really a fantastic leader that elected to take on the extra year. If you needed anything extra from Bob, he was there. We're very sad to lose him, but we're awfully happy that he was with us throughout all the years he was here. HRTV produced this, and we'll just take a nice little music interlude before we get into "Lights, Camera, Racing," a salute to Bob Benoit.

[Video]

[Applause]

Mr. Engelhardt: Bob will truly be missed, and he's put together a quality company that hasn't missed a step in putting out some of the best images from the West Coast. I want to thank the sponsors, of course, that have helped us out to be here today, and I encourage anybody that's in the back to come on up. Don't be shy about coming in. I know a lot of people are coming in late from other workshops. The great thing about the panel that we have today is the passion that all of these individuals bring to the sport. I can tell you that after some lively conversation we had last night at the J Bar, down the road, as the wine flowed, so did their passion for the sport and the love of what each one of them does come across. So we're going to try to bring that same feeling back to you this afternoon.

As you know, the importance of getting our sport on the silver screen and in television is paramount; on websites for that matter. People want to see racing. We have the most colorful and exciting sport that has some of the most unusual characters — and these need to be brought to light. I know there's a project that G.D.'s working on that's going to record the history of some of the people in racing who, like Bob Benoit, may not be with us but whose opinions and feelings that we need to know and knowledge that they have about racing should be passed on to future generations and information will be there for anybody that's writing a book about the history of racing. So I want to thank everybody here on the panel and what we'll do is I'll just — we'll go — we'll start with G.D. Hieronymus. Of course he's the director of broadcast services at Keeneland, an award-winning operation. But G.D. has had to play host to the two biggest films that have been produced about thoroughbred racing, in the last decade, and that's *Seabiscuit*, which we all know and loved, and *Secretariat* that we can't wait to see.

If you could, just go ahead and roll the first DVD. G.D., a little bit about your background; a little bit about what we're going to see up here on the screen.

Mr. G.D. Hieronymus: I've been involved in television production since I was a junior in high school and I moved to Lexington, Kentucky to continue education at the University of Kentucky where I started at Channel 18 and I got started in horse racing, covered Spectacular Bid and Bluegrass and then one year also I happened to get bit by Secretariat. So that's kind of what got me into the game if you will.

I had the good fortune of meeting Tom Hammond and got to do first hand video and film production. That led to many things with the industry, including the Eclipse Awards, the National Thoroughbred Association, the NTRA, to the TPA and

just really producing the best of the best — from the horse farms and getting close to the stallions, to every racetrack, to witnessing 18 Breeders' Cups. I actually got to go again this year since they moved it back and it was not our closing day. Anyway, and I get to go again next year since its back at Churchill and it's not our closing day. So anyway, what we're looking at here is a lot of the action from the location at Keeneland. What you just saw there. We — its broadcast department, we provided a couple things for *Seabiscuit*. One was a — our entire audio PA system was used by the directors, assist directors, to talk to the crowd, to play a race call back, to get the excitement going. Another thing we did was a video assist, which was a — I had a wireless video operator with the primary camera throughout the entire course of the shoot.

You're challenged in that you've got a lot going on at the track. We had a horse sale going on in November that we had to get ready for. We have simulcasting going on. Plus you have fans that want to come by and witness what's going on. They may not want to participate in the filming of *Seabiscuit* but you want to be able to show them — not only the fans, but people even in our office. So what we did is we hooked up a direct feed from the primary camera into our wireless system and were able to, every day of the shoot, show the office and show around the facility what was actually going on. There you see the horses coming out on the track — Chris McCarron, who was supposed to be here today, couldn't make it, and one of he and Nick's favorite stories is how many takes it took for Seabiscuit to actually beat War Admiral. They actually had an animal from Charlestown that was really on the muscle and they had — the director had to yell, "Cut!" many times. But anyway, there's the primary camera, as you see. That's through our wireless video system in-house. So it really added a nice element and let people really get involved.

You got to remember that it was just — it was freezing cold out there. These extras stood out there all day long. 4,000 paid extras and you probably saw the first image, which were — I want to say 700-plus blow up dummies that all had the face on — you want to say something?

Mr. Engelhardt: Yeah, I just — tell us about this because I believe that this was actually invented for the movie.

Mr. Hieronymus: Yeah, we call it horse on a stick but it was a lot of fun to watch these guys work and that was really — I've been involved and done a lot of great productions in film and video, but to watch Hollywood come in to Keeneland and to pull this off and then to see the final results on the film itself was just incredible. So there you actually see the shot of Gary that they're taking. So lifelike, and if you could see Tobey Maguire on there, too. There was another D — we won't be able to show that today, but we put together another DVD that shows the actual fighting. Whenever he was at the smaller track and they pushed the riders off. But Tobey Maguire was a — he was a lot of fun to watch. One interesting story on him, or we're going to Secretariat. You want to pause that. It was fun that the primary camera was caught on him in the — an afternoon where he was supposed to smoke

and he was not a smoker. So to watch Tobey Maguire trying to learn to smoke was one of those things that was really a lot of fun.

Mr. Engelhardt: Do we have some of the *Secretariat* cued up here?

Mr. Hieronymus: There is some *Secretariat* footage as well, yes. Yes, yeah we can go ahead and go with that.

Mr. Engelhardt: Can we go ahead and see that? Now, one of the things I guess we want to know is, what parts of this — did anybody throw you any curves? Were there things that you just normally wouldn't do that you really had to go out of your way to get done for the production?

Mr. Hieronymus: Well you have to get the buy-in from every department at the track from inside maintenance, outside maintenance. There's so many people that you have to touch, and we've got great people at Keeneland that embraced that. That said, this is a big time film production, but we have got to embrace the smaller productions as well. Any time a TV crew shows up at your racetrack or at your farm or at your auction house, you need to take them by the hand and show them these stories. It's not every day that you're going to get a major motion picture show up at the track, but I think to develop the young minds and to get them thinking about stories about racing.

The students — invite them out to the track. Everybody's a producer these days. Everybody's got a camera. YouTube's gone crazy. We've got so many avenues to show off our sport. We really have to take these people by the hand and show them inside. Don't always require a press pass for them to get to the inside look. Let's take them inside and give them some more stories and follow up with them. As soon as that story's done, whether it's on their website, whether it's just their school, or at a news station, follow up with them. Ask them when they're coming back out again, and let's feed them some more stories. I think that's imperative for us to do, for every racetrack to do.

It was said this morning, that television we don't really take a lot of — it was this morning's quote. I wrote it down, actually. Excuse me one second. Gerard — we really undervalue the television in our industry and it's not just — we can't just rely on the films. We've got to rely on television. We really need to push them to come out and continue to do stories, how brief it may be, at our track and continue exposure.

Mr. Engelhardt: That's one of the things that we wanted to get out of this workshop is not every track's going to be a Keeneland or a Belmont, but it's how do you facilitate your local people that want to come to the race track. Of course, to some point, they've got to be vetted a little bit. As you know, sometimes you get neophytes. They need to be watched very carefully. It's a sport where somebody can get hurt rather easy, and there are certain areas that, quite frankly, you probably want to keep them away from.

Mr. Hieronymus: Uh huh, it's no doubt.

Mr. Engelhardt: And this, again, is this still *Secretariat*?

Mr. Hieronymus: This is all *Secretariat*. We also had another film in for the Breeders' Cup, which was *Dreamer*, which was also a lot of fun to be involved with and thankfully, that one did not take place at the same time as we had our horse auctions going on. It was more a summer shoot, a film shoot. So, a little more relaxed. This was a morning workout scene that some of the — and you can probably — Mark, you can probably touch on who the actors are there. That was the end of that video.

Mr. Engelhardt: Well and a perfect segue right into there—it's Mark Ciardi, not Mike as we got in the program, and it's great meeting people for the first time because you find out so much about them. Don't roll his video yet, because I want you to share your biography with these people. Because how you ended up being a producer from where you started is a pretty amazing story, and I wish you'd share that with everybody.

Mr. Mark Ciardi: Yeah, I'm not — I'm not sure how much time we have but — no I have a — I played professional baseball for five years with Milwaukee. I got up for a cup of coffee in 1987 and was lucky enough to kind of fulfill a dream. I had moved out to California halfway through that career when I got put on a big league roster, and that started my life in California which eventually led me to friends out there. It seemed like everyone was in the film business, except my partner and I, and we decided one year in 1996 or '97 to get in the film business. I had no experience in it.

We just decided to be producers, and we were dumb enough to think we could do it. So we self taught and made mistakes and truly taught ourselves the business. Used the relationships that we had through our friendships, and people that were involved in the film industry. We're smart about the stories we got and just probably got lucky as well; but was lucky enough kind of to have — our first film was a movie called *The Rookie*, which was close to my heart, because I'd actually played with the guy the movie was about and roomed with him one spring training and was very close. When you're an athlete you're kind of with people day in and day—day and night for years. I was lucky enough to get that story and tell it pretty well, and it kind of started our career and certainly doing some sports films. Followed that up with *The Rookie*, *Rookie* up with *Miracle* and then *Invincible* and now getting into horse racing with *Secretariat*. Really just lucky to get these iconic stories and just hope that we do them well. So—

Mr. Engelhardt: Well, I think it's great that we can utilize your experience as an athlete because you obviously brought that to the films that you've already made, but in *Secretariat*, you're a little bit of an outsider because as far as I recall, you didn't have a whole lot of exposure to racing before making *Big Red*. Should we roll you, your video?

Mr. Ciardi: Yeah, you can roll some — it's some of the images — stills from our shoot, and that's, of course, Diane Lane who plays Penny Chenery. John Malkovich and Nelsan Ellis, who's Nelsan who plays Eddie Sweat and Otto Thorwarth who plays Ronnie Turcotte and that's Keeneland Racetrack, which we will have as our Belmont because we're really only able to kind of go to Kentucky and then finish the show down in Louisiana. I think we really captured the beauty and spectacle of these tracks, and everyone at Churchill Downs and Keeneland were tremendous to us and very open to letting us use these tracks. By this time, I tried to explain it where we shot — when we were at the real locations, we shot toward the stands and everything kind of looking and selling the vastness kind of in the stands work. Then we turned the cameras inside when we got down to Louisiana and recreated the infields for all the different tracks that we shot out. That was down in Louisiana and was the exact replica of the infield in 1973.

Mr. Engelhardt: Just as I kind of questioned G.D. about bumps in the road, perhaps things that were unexpected. Things that you had to do out of the way — how did you see the cooperation of the racetracks? Were there things that happened that were unexpected and how did you get around them?

Mr. Ciardi: Yeah, I mean we wouldn't have been able to make the movie without the cooperation of the tracks. I think it serves each other. I think racing is served by a movie like *Secretariat* as it was with *Seabiscuit*. It takes cooperation from everyone, and we got it. Listen, it's not an easy movie to shoot. We had a fraction of what *Seabiscuit* had, so we had to be really smart about how we shot it; and the amount of extras we had; and how we were going to pull this movie off. One executive at Disney said it was probably the toughest movie that she had ever remembered the studio doing; and to try and pull it off for the number; and what we had to kind of do to really kind of pull this off in a great way. I think we've done that. We wrapped the movie about ten days ago, and we're now editing and I think — at least from what I've seen, you don't know until you see the movie, but the images that I saw and the scenes, I think we have a really special movie.

Mr. Engelhardt: Now I wanted to ask you as someone that was kind of an outsider, are you a disciple now? Do you love our sport?

Mr. Ciardi: I have. I've become — I mean I was like probably the casual fan that would watch the Triple Crown, maybe the Breeders' Cup. I didn't know much. I didn't know how horses even made the Kentucky Derby until I saw John's documentary. I think I became much more of a fan, certainly with *Secretariat*'s story and just seeing how unbelievable. I had a memory as a child watching the Belmont, and I just knew *Secretariat* was a great horse but not much beyond that. I think that's what any movie has to say or tell is what's the story behind what you think you know. With *Miracle*, it was, we knew, you knew that they beat the Russians but like what's behind the story that makes it interesting?

Clearly, with *Secretariat* it's not an underdog story from the horse's perspective. He was a terrific horse, but it was really Penny's journey and her coming into a world that she didn't know much about but had a love for when she was a child. So

you take those elements and you undertake and try to pull off these great stories, iconic stories. I think it'll be terrific for horse racing and hopefully enjoyable, not only the horse racing fans, but to spread beyond that. Because I think that's really what we have to do, and everyone in this room, you need to keep thinking beyond the core audience; and then if you get them, how do you keep them. I think that's going to be a good thing to think about from now until the release of the movie and how to take advantage of it. It's much of what we spoke about last night at dinner. I am the kind of casual, every day person from the outside looking like why is this story interesting. I think horse racing is such a beautiful, unbelievable sport that it needs even more fans, and I think this film should help.

Mr. Engelhardt: Well, a little bit later in the workshop, I want to kind of kid around to how we're going to market it and hopefully how racing can help do that. Leonard Lusky's the president of Commemorative Derby Promotions, but he's also the man behind secretariat.com. In a way, he was kind of a segue person with the *Secretariat* movie in helping; I think translate between the track and the movie. If there were issues, whether it be horsemen, whether it be technical — before we're going to — don't roll his segment yet because that's one where we just want to sit back and watch. But Leonard, tell us a little bit about, first of all, your biography. How you got into the game and how you assisted the movie.

Mr. Leonard Lusky: Well, I grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, so it's sort of was inherent in the blood to enjoy horse racing. In 1998, Churchill Downs hired me to create their 125th Kentucky Derby book. In doing so, I got to meet all of these iconic personalities who I had grown up just idolizing, and Mrs. Chenery was one of them. I found out from Penny that she really had a great motivation to perpetuate Secretariat's legacy to the benefit of the sport, but not really have the right venue to do it.

She really had a lot of great ideas but not any real vehicle. I really suggested a few things to her, like secretariat.com to bring her into the technology age. From then on, it's been a great relationship where we have, I guess, established a Secretariat brand and have been very fortunate to have things like the Disney film come up. It's one of these situations where, since I have been working with her I guess over a decade now, the Disney project was the fourth movie project that came across our desk and before me, no telling how many. It was the first one that she really truly embraced, and it was not only because of Mark and the director and screenwriter's treatment, but the fact that Disney had the right attitude, certainly the backbone financially and distribution.

I mean it was many things altogether, and of course the story, because she wanted to make sure that story was very true. In Hollywood, there are liberties that are taken sometimes, obviously. You can't fit a life story into two hours, a lot of times. It can't be a miniseries. In working with the Disney team, it was wonderful because they really understood the important points; the important points that made her life, the Secretariat story, what it is today.

Really, people ask me well, "Gosh isn't this movie just going to be great and it could be wonderful." We say yes, but we have been trying to, I guess, tell the Secretariat story for the last decade, and certainly Ms. Chenery for the last 36 years. This is just in one fell swoop a wonderful opportunity to reach, not only the audience that's in this room but like Mark said, outside. Very rarely does a chance happen where you can get outside your normal walls and this is one of them. We really feel fortunate to be a part of it and to have so many great participants within the movie.

Mr. Engelhardt: Right and well what helped Leonard is he's also a producer himself, and I believe everybody's going to sit back and enjoy the next five minutes, if you can kick up the third segment here.

[Video]

[Applause]

Mr. Engelhardt: Well done Leonard, and that was the voice of John Asher doing the voiceover. One part of this video, which I highly recommend, it goes back through time. There's a lot of old black and white footage there. Other people might want to take on a project similar to yours that might be track specific. Where does one go and how difficult is it to get to archive footage?

Mr. Lusky: Well, it used to be incredibly difficult. Again, with modern technology, it has become easier. I think really, that answer probably starts with the race track, the host race track. Because most race tracks do carry a lot of their own footage, or at least have the access to those that took it for them. In this case, I can't say enough about Churchill Downs, who really, they had to reassemble the broadcast from CBS, NBC, and ABC. I mean, it was all three of them for this particular project.

Outside of the television broadcast, when you get back before that, it's a matter of really digging and finding these undiscovered gems of footage. UCLA archives right now have quite a bit of it, but it's just actually tracking it down. I mean there are reel-to-reel in basements that you have to look through, and I think that that is the challenge with anything that is that historic or traditional; to find the pieces, as you know G.D., that have been kept and kept well and being able to be used.

Mr. Engelhardt: G.D., the library at Keeneland is one of America's greatest resources for racing, if not the greatest resource. Is there a place someone can go to get archived footage or is it all copyrighted?

Mr. Hieronymus: Well we do have a plan. We have got a digital asset management project going on where we, we are saving. We are archiving the sport, and we've kind of taken it upon ourselves. It's like you say, there's tracks that's got their archives themselves. There are films that are sitting in a closet somewhere, and it's something that we want to continue to do and keep in the library. Eventually, you should be able to go into the library, or online, and type in

the name of that horse, the trainer, that owner, and come up with the DRF past performances, photographs, articles and video, and film.

We're currently working with New York Racing Association and have over 800 films that we're working on to restore, and that's only a touch of theirs, you know.

Mr. Engelhardt: But will filmmakers be able to get to it and you'll release it?

Mr. Hieronymus: We want to do that, and there's certain guidelines that you have to go through for rights regarding whether it's a network broadcast or whether it's the maiden win of Secretariat, or whoever that horse may be, but yeah, it's all unique each investigation into a horse, person, whatever. So and we will make available —

Mr. Engelhardt: Hopefully there will be filmmakers for years to come that are going to want to use your resource. One of my favorite modern-day filmmakers comes as a team, and that's John and Brad Hennegan. If you were here two years ago, they gave us a sneak preview of what's become one of my favorite films of all time, and that's *The First Saturday in May*. When I talked earlier about passion amongst this group, John Hennegan certainly is right up there with the best of them. I hope most of you have seen *First Saturday in May*. If you haven't, shame on you and go buy it for a Christmas present because you won't be sorry.

The Hennegans, who come from a racing family — I'm not going to steal your bio — just had an amazing way of getting a comfort zone with the subjects that they film, and we're going to hold off on his latest project on Larry Jones, and you'll see exactly what it is I'm talking about. So John, if you would, basically kind of go into your background and what's really given you this passion, has really given you the inside track to getting some extraordinary video.

Mr. John Hennegan: Well first of all, thanks for the plug, the Christmas sales plug, John. Also, just quickly, we just want to thank you and Doug Reed and Wendy Davis and the turf publicists for having us here—

Mr. Engelhardt: Thank you for coming.

Mr. Hennegan: — and letting me share the stage with — and the room, with Mr. Duchossois — just what I was talking about — people that are passionate about the game and want to see it elevated as it should. My brother and I have just been humbled by the kind reception to our film, and we appreciate that. Anyway, quickly into our bio. I come from a racing family from the Baltimore area. My grandfather was a secretary of the American Trainers Association. His best friend was a trainer named Henry Clark. When my father was a little boy, a teenager, he worked the elevator at Timonium and then went on to become a patrol judge, placing judge, assistant clerk of scales, clerk of scales for NYRA for 39 years.

So my brother and I grew up on Long Island, and we grew up having all our summer jobs at the race tracks, Aqueduct, Saratoga, Belmont's ice cream server,

security guards, you said you got bit by Secretariat, I got bit by Gulch. I worked in Leroy Jolly's barn one summer, but we went off to school and started getting into television and film and we really — we started to write a film about horse racing because we really just felt it was an underserved kind of pop culture deal.

I moved out to LA. We wrote this script, and we tried to get it going, and it was just like people just didn't get it. My brother and I were getting really frustrated so he said, "You know what," I remember we saw Afleet Alex at the Hopeful in Saratoga, and said, "We got to show these people the racetrack that we know." We said, "Let's take the lowest hanging fruit of the Kentucky Derby, the race that everybody knows, and do a *Hoop Dreams* at the racetrack." We kind of followed Afleet Alex on paper and Galloping Grocer, I believe, was the other horse, and the other eludes me, but there were three great stories. We're like, "All right, we're going to do this."

Completed *First Saturday in May*, and like I said, we've been humbled by the response from the horse racing community, how much it's been embraced. I won't get into kind of — the major obstacle we've had is distribution, and I won't get into the details of the indie film business side right now, but it's — these economic times it's not that great. It's like how do you get this out to the masses? And like I said, everyone in this room and the turf publicists have really turned it into a grassroots phenomenon, and we're very appreciative of that. But you know when — and we're kind of, my brother and I, professionally are kind of where Mark and his partner were about '96, '97, maybe '98 after this. This opened a couple doors for us but we're trying to kick them in.

So we — as we're trying to figure out where we're going to go next and what we're going to do, we saw that Larry Jones was retiring, and we had become friendly with them through the making of *First Saturday in May*. He told us it was his favorite movie. When he announced this, we're like, "We just need to document this guy," and we didn't have any financier, nothing. We're just — it's not going to stay in time, so we just started following him on weekends. We've been doing that for the last year just to capture him, because my brother and I are really passionate about telling these stories and bringing the race track to life for people that don't know anything about it.

That's our small contribution that we are really — we are devoted to that — is the storytelling aspect of this great world that we all could tell stories for days, and we do sometimes. So regardless of the business side, we just have gone ahead and done this, and we're going to show a clip here in a second and — let me preface it by saying this isn't going to — *First Saturday in May* we wanted a broad appeal to horse racing, kind of a beginners view. This, we said, "You know what, let's do this for the horsemen. Let's show a complicated guy in a complicated situation." You were talking about Penny's journey. Larry was kind of thrust into the limelight and didn't want to be, so it's like how he's dealt with that and — anyway you can — Is that all right if they roll it, or —?

Mr. Engelhardt: Yeah. Well, ladies and gentlemen get tied on, because this is amazingly personal, and I really think that exemplifies the talent that the Hennegan brothers have of getting people to open doors and to trust them and let them into their private life.

[Video]

[Applause]

Mr. Engelhardt: John, you really have a truly amazing talent of showing the story the way it is. If there's anybody out there that's a fledgling documentary or filmmaker, is there any part or advice that you can pass on that allows you to get into somebody's personal life as well as you have to put on the screen?

Mr. Hennegan: I mean it was kind of a domino effect, because what allowed us such great access in *First Saturday in May* were our ties to the race track and our small crew of me and Brad. You know, like there wasn't 19 people around.

Mr. Engelhardt: I've seen them work, it is. That's the crew.

Mr. Hennegan: And you know, like you said, like what you were saying to G.D. about welcoming people to your race tracks and stuff, it's dangerous. By having just one person, or a small amount of people, they forget we're there. They know we know our way around the horses, so anyway. That allowed us to great access in *First Saturday in May*, and people forget you're there, quite frankly, a lot of the time, so you capture the stuff. But *First Saturday in May* helped us to really get into Larry's life, and it's really a testament to these folks, too, not just Larry and Cindy, his wife, but everybody in the last film to allow us to become part of their lives, which we really, really do. So —

Mr. Engelhardt: Well, I know it's a work in progress, but do you have an idea of when it would be put together? Or how long it might be and how it will be promoted or aired?

Mr. Hennegan: Yeah we — our first step is like let's finish it, and we're gearing towards the fall in the Kentucky area, because the World Equestrian Games and the Breeders' Cup. Obviously, Larry's a Kentucky hero. This past weekend we actually didn't make it in here. I was in Hopkinsville, Kentucky at the Hopkinsville Christmas Parade, where Larry was the Grand Marshal, and it was awesome to be in a small town and see how he was just — I mean this was General MacArthur showed up, you know? But as for the rest of — as I said, as I alluded to before there's distribution problems. This is — this is not mainstream fare.

We'll go to some film festivals and show it in some places, but it's tough out there. We're looking for — we're looking for Mrs. Havishams. We're looking for some race tracks to back, you know, whatever. We're all ears. I'll give you my email address, John@henneganbrothers.com. But you know what, as I said before, we just started

doing it, because if we sat there and worried about the business end and what we know now, we would just be inactive. So —

Mr. Engelhardt: If that's a taste, I can't wait to see the whole play.

Mr. Hennegan: Thank you.

Mr. Engelhardt: Now we're going to go to the other side of the camera, and actually someone else that's really on a personal level, let people into his life. We're going to show this in two segments. The first one I think is a little tough, and the second one I think is real upbeat. This concerns Jon Court. I hope the word got out over the last two seasons about *Jockeys* on Animal Planet. I know that to some of the hardened, race-core people, its like, "Well, I already knew that. Well, "Why are they calling jockeys' names in races?" I really think what the producers did was they took our sport to a new audience in a way that kind of was like Racing 101. That kind of brought them along. They didn't just say, "So and so is a jockey agent and he's got so and so." They explain exactly what a jockey agent did and how it went.

The main thing was is they took you into the lives and into the locker room of the jockeys. Some people think maybe they over did some of the spills, but for people that don't go to racetracks, I don't think they really understand the danger that these guys put themselves into every single time they get up on a horse. Before we go to Jon's first segment on Animal Planet, we have two, Jon would you just give us a synopsis of what got you into the game and the early part of your career?

Mr. Jon Court: Well, what got me into the game was a childhood dream. I was raised in central Florida, just south of Ocala. No particular close town, so I was northeast of Orlando, which I could get the metropolitan life and then just southeast of Daytona Beach. So I got quite a taste of it and directly north of Ocala. So, but I was the one child that was just drawn to horses and had the inquiring desire, and I just pursued it as a young child. Of course, I would tell them I was going to be a jockey. "What are you going to be?" I was going to be a jockey, and they'd tap my head and, "Oh that's nice," and "you'll grow out of it."

They kept me in school, but then about the time I hit the double digit age in the early '70s, there's nothing else to be said when you watch Secretariat. The passion was stirred again. So from that point on, from an early teenager, I started working off some farms and around thoroughbreds and just continued to pursue that dream. I guess just to bring you up to date; I've been doing it for 29 years now and still love it. Still have the need to win, enjoy the thoroughbred industry and just riding races. I really enjoy it, but you've got to win. You've got to feel that competition fulfillment, so —

Mr. Engelhardt: All right, we're going to go to the first of two parts in Jon's segment, and then I want to come back and ask you what it's like to have somebody with the camera follow you around from your home, to a race, to the jockeys' room. If you run Jon's first segment, please?

[Video]

Mr. Engelhardt: Jon, that's kind of a gut-wrenching session. Take us with you. I mean, number one; you've got a camera following you in your home, your personal life. You're talking with your wife. We'll start there, and then I'll work our way into the jocks' room. Were you always aware they were there or after a few minutes they fade?

Mr. Court: Yeah, you're aware of it. Yeah, John, you're aware of it and unlike John here, I wish it was just a camera. It was usually two, two at a time. You've got a boom over your head. You're wearing a mic. You've got lighting, and then they're using filters and reflectors. Even though you just see me there, they're showing reality and those things do happen. It's not — I mean I've been riding 29 years. Actually, I was — they don't show you the scene where I do congratulate the next winner. So it's not as if every rider goes to his corner and sulks, but yeah that happens quite frequently, quite frequently; especially early on in someone's career. But that's the reality of it, so we worked hard at it. Some of those takes we actually had to put forth the effort to do it and didn't always get it right the first time.

I would make a scene like that boot scene. We just did that, and I mean, they just — I thought they were wearing it out, but even today I can still walk through an airport and someone will bring up the boot scene, you know.

(Laughter)

Mr. Court: I feel like a — I don't know what — it was on *Diff'rent Strokes*. "What about it, Willis?" or whatever he always had to say, so I'd always explain it. But I spoke to him just like it was the first time I had heard it and responded to it just honestly as I possibly can. I don't give them all the details. Some of the sound bites in there, I mean, they were really trying to incorporate as much swearing as they could, and I was failing on that end. But I can reel off expletives as good as anyone, but I'm just usually failing there. Usually there were two cameras, and at the house there would be three cameras.

They were taking every ample opportunity to get any angle, so whether they're shooting you from outside, across the living room and on the other side of the kitchen, they were very thorough. They had a big crew, but there were times that it wouldn't allow that big of a crew. When you're walking through the crowds, you would have just the one cameraman, and someone leading them or whatever, but we had just a window of opportunity to shoot, and usually it was the Oak Tree meet, and they made that clear to us. Then I learned about catch-up time and catch-up audio and studio time, which you have to implement to try to complete a certain scene. So we would be back at Santa Anita when there wasn't racing, and do different type of catch ups or interviews or what have you. We would try to put as much footage and reality as we possibly can. Literally, as I was saying, before they ever were showing the series, we stood up to the plate to show scenes that

would be embarrassing and revealing; so that if we can maybe not only show the audience that has been around us forever; but draw a new audience and bring them to the races. Put a personal touch and realize that we are not, as I have often said, animated characters out there; that we're families, and we're out there struggling from time to time, and it's not always glory. So —

Mr. Engelhardt: How about in the jocks' room? I mean, I'm at the track. Just the cacophony of what happens — you're on one horse; 12 minutes later, your boots are polished. You've got new silks on; you're back out. Was there a time there where, like the other guys in the room; A) were there guys that would just duck away from a camera; or B) after they were there for a couple of weeks, was it just like anybody forgot they were there because you had to go to your job?

Mr. Court: Yeah, it always seems like there was that variety there. There were those that would duck the camera, but there were those that were always trying to jump in there and trying to get a scene or two.

Mr. Engelhardt: *(Laughter)* Give us a name.

Mr. Court: Oh I — like what do you want the ones that were ducking the camera or the ones that were —

Mr. Engelhardt: In front of it.

Mr. Court: — oh in front of it? Where we —

Mr. Engelhardt: Joe Talamo?

Mr. Court: — I would say Victor Espinoza, if nothing else, as popular as he is and a very accomplished rider, he would — a Kentucky Derby winner for that matter, would actually be courteous and would go around and not interfere. Sometimes they would interfere — guys would just go work as ever, and if you're in my way, you're in my way. You'd hear that, "Cut, can we do that over?" It was — so we would have to take several different takes and, from time to time —

Mr. Engelhardt: You were never at any point sure if that segment was going to air or if the next segment we're going to see is going to air.

Mr. Court: I never knew, really, how they were going to put together some of the storyline. I had a general idea, but some of the storyline we actually got to work with it and change some of it up. They had a — we didn't have scripts, but we did have the clipboard to follow. Again, it was because you had just a window of opportunity within a month to shoot a series that was going to run 13, 12 series, 12 shows. So we had to do what we can to implement the proper footage that they were looking for.

Mr. Engelhardt: Well, it was neat because, through Mike Smith, we got a peek at the early days of Zenyatta and right now we're going to get a peek at something

that, unless you're a person that gets a chance to be in a jocks' room, that you'll see that these guys go through that turns out to be a positive. I believe we've got part two of Animal Planet with Jon?

[Video]

Mr. Engelhardt: — All right we want to finish that up on a positive note for Jon Court. I know we started a little bit late. If somebody's got a pressing question for this talent pool that we have up here, if we could get maybe a quick question or two. Don't be shy, but I know that they're coming in right behind us for the "Horsemen and Jockeys Weighing In" seminar. Was there something that was left out there, something we missed? A question that anybody has? We have two microphones. All right, if you're all going to be shy — ladies and gentlemen, these people came from far away to help us out today.

[Applause]

Mr. Engelhardt: And stay tuned before you go, we want to remind everybody that after the Jockeys Weighing In, at 5:00 in the Press Room if you are a Turf Publicist member —



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