

## TOC DIRECTOR PROFILE: BILL STRAUSS



Bill Strauss

Bill Strauss has built a reputation as a man who focuses on solutions.

"With my background in business and analytics, I believe there are some great opportunities today to leverage modern technology to promote larger field sizes and to attract more owners, gamblers and casual fans to racing," said Strauss. "It is important for all segments of our industry to work together and have a healthy dialogue on these core issues. And it is especially important to explain the reasoning for major strategic or policy decisions to all constituents. Transparency is key."

First elected in 2014, Strauss has combined his experience as a businessman and passion for horseracing to become a very valuable member of the board. He serves as TOC Vice Chair, Southern California, Secretary/Treasurer, Chairman of the Finance Committee, and a member of the Racing Affairs and Wagering committees. These assignments keep him busier than the average director – with a schedule that includes at least five meetings a month in addition to monthly board meetings.

Strauss was co-founder and CEO of Provide Commerce/Proflowers, a company he took public on NASDAQ in 2003 at \$15 per share, selling the company two years later for \$33.75 per share. A horse owner for nearly a decade, he has experienced the ups and downs of racing. Among his best horses are The Pamplemousse, Turbulent Descent and Mizdirection. A true fan and student of the game, he can be found as often in the mornings at the track as in the afternoon – especially in Del Mar, which he calls home year round.

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REPORT

**North Owner Outreach** — All owners are encouraged to visit the new TOC administrative office located in the Golden Gate Fields executive offices. The new office is easily accessible through the executive office entrance next to the Park and Lock parking lot.

Do you know someone who is interested in horse ownership and doesn't want to wait for the next New Owner Seminar? The TOC is happy to offer backside tours to introduce interested parties to horse ownership.

To schedule a tour or for assistance finding the new Golden Gate Fields office call (510) 559-7521 or email [lmorey@toconline.com](mailto:lmorey@toconline.com)

### New! Sentient Jet Deals for TOC Members

TOC and Sentient Jet have entered into a partnership to provide discounts for TOC members (more details to come soon).

For further information, call (626) 574-6620.

## CHAIRMAN'S LETTER Summer 2017



Dear TOC members,

I recently sent a letter out to the TOC membership about California's declining field sizes. In that letter, I urged our owners to hold up our end of the bargain to keep California racing vibrant by running their race ready horses whenever possible. I was humbled by the impressive response we received to that letter. Many TOC members called and wrote (or both!) to voice their opinions and bring up creative ideas about how to strengthen our race cards and

improve handle and ultimately purse generation.

While not everyone agreed with me, it has been a valuable process. It is encouraging to know that we have begun a healthy dialogue. Our membership is now more keenly aware that there is a problem and that we all have to work together towards a solution. All of your comments are taken very seriously by the TOC board and staff, and your suggestions have been and will continue to be discussed in our meetings with our industry partners.

Based on our owners' comments, as well as our recent meetings with trainers and track management, here are some of the categories that seemed to be considered most important:

**Improved Technology for Carding Races.** In California, unlike anywhere else in the U.S., owners and racetracks provide all funding for free year-round stabling for trainers at tracks and auxiliary training facilities (such as San Luis Rey). The TOC share of this funding will be more than \$6.5 million in 2017, which comes directly out of the purse account. The good news is there is increasingly improved technology that will allow the racing offices to access actual data of all racehorses stabled in California. This new data will drive the condition book by giving the racing office a better handle on inventory including which horses are in the stalls, and the horses' most recent racing and work history. As Chairman of the Stabling and Vanning fund, TOC President and CEO Greg Avioli is overseeing a broad-based project to make all of this information digital, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

**Horses Claimed and Taken Out of State.** Our field sizes for claiming races have been reduced substantially in recent years with one of the main factors being horses claimed from California tracks then taken out of state. To address this issue, we expect to see house rules in place at all California racetracks by the end of this year prohibiting claimed horses from racing out of state for 45-60 days or the end of the meet, whichever is greater.

**Entries/Scratches.** In an effort to make trainers more accountable for scratched horses, the tracks will be insisting on more accurate and honest communication between horsemen and the racing secretary about why a horse is being scratched and when it will return to the track. Trainers with

two entries in a race who scratch one will be required to better communicate their intent to the racing office. Abuse of this policy may result in penalties in the future.

**Allocation of Stalls.** There were many comments about stall allocation and how to maximize the stalls with horses ready to run. We heard frustration from many self-described "small owners" about not being able to get stalls. Del Mar said they will be establishing a 40-stall limit per trainer at their upcoming live race meet. Along with the tracks, we are exploring different alternatives for the allocation of stalls and rewarding trainers who are starting more horses.

In closing, please rest assured we are working hard on your behalf to improve the racing product and provide as many racing opportunities as possible for TOC members. We know we don't have all the answers and very much appreciate your continued constructive input.

Nick Alexander  
TOC Chairman



# LIVE VIDEO. RACE REPLAYS. ALL TRACKS.

RTN BRINGS ALL THREE TO YOUR TV, PC & MOBILE DEVICES.



For more details on our TV (dish and Roku) & Online Mobile Packages visit [ww.rtn.tv](http://ww.rtn.tv)

**RTN**  
RACETRACK TELEVISION NETWORK  
A BREED APART

## DEL MAR SEASON HIGHLIGHTS



Josh Rubinstein

TOC interviewed Josh Rubinstein, chief operating officer of Del Mar Thoroughbred Club, to find out what owners can expect as they head to Del Mar for the summer and fall meets.

### *What would you say are the two or three biggest highlights of the summer meet?*

We're still keeping our fingers crossed, but the recent announcement that the best horse in the world, Arrogate, is scheduled to run twice at the meet is truly special. Ticket sales for both days, TVG San Diego Handicap and TVG Pacific Classic, are through the roof.

We are also excited for people to see our new High Definition video board. The picture quality and clarity are amazing. As most in the industry are aware, we renovated the main track in the offseason, under our new Director of Track Maintenance, Dennis Moore, to match the grading and banking of Santa Anita. We believe horsemen, and especially their horses, will notice the difference and be pleased.

### *What special services will you be offering to owners?*

Horsemen basically get 50% off food and beverage through our "\$30 for \$20" voucher program. While we limit the public to one voucher per visit, horsemen can purchase multiple vouchers per day and use them throughout the meet. Something new for this summer... winning owners and trainers will receive a free video link to their race. We'll also continue the popular champagne toast in the Winners' Bar for victorious connections.

### *Can you give us an update on the Ship and Win program?*

Ship and Win has been a real success story. In 2016, 151 starters at Del Mar qualified for S&W. All told, through the end of May there have been 314 total starts in California via last year's Del Mar S&W program. The participation fee (initial race) has been increased by 50% from last year to \$1,500 in '17, and we'll continue the 30% purse bonus (non-stakes) with the first start. It is a bit of misnomer that Ship & Win is for out-of-state stables. We actually devised the program to incentivize local horsemen to purchase horses outside the state and as a "thank you" to all those owners that bring much needed horses to run at Del Mar.

### *Will there be a Breeders' Cup presence during the summer meet, and if so how will that affect owners (parking, seating, etc.)?*

Even though Breeders' Cup is five months out, there is tremendous buzz around town. Operationally there won't be any significant changes for the summer meet, but people will see heavy promotion highlighting Breeders' Cup and the weeklong festival. We do expect a few additional stakes horses to race with us this summer to familiarize themselves with Del Mar in preparation for November 3 & 4.

*(continued on back panel)*

PRESORTED  
FIRST-CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
ARCADIA, CA  
PERMIT #452

**TOC**  
Thoroughbred Owners of California  
Serving the California  
Thoroughbred Horseman Owner  
285 W. Huntington Drive  
Arcadia, CA 91007  
www.toconline.com  
Summer 2017

Introducing



**TOC**  
**ADVANTAGE**  
866-678-4289



**JOHN DEERE**  
Up to 28% off



**Office DEPOT**  
10-70% off



**SHERWIN WILLIAMS**  
Up to 40% off



**RED BRAND**  
Up to \$20 Rebate Per Roll



**SUNBELT COMMERCIAL**  
Preferred Pricing

*Any tips for owners about making plans for BC and the fall meet?*  
Make sure your tickets and parking are secured in advance. While currently there is limited seating available - and of course participants will be able to purchase accommodations upon entering their horses - there won't be any "day of" sales, and that includes on-site parking. Also, Del Mar fall meet passes / stickers will not get you into the facility on the two Breeders' Cup days.

The entire week is packed with Breeders' Cup festival events. We encourage people to come to town for the week and enjoy the party. Breeders' Cup at Del Mar has been a long time coming, and we are excited to show off our beautiful facility and San Diego to the entire world!

## TOC MEMBERS RE-ELECT SIX INCUMBENTS

TOC's membership re-elected incumbents Mark Dedomenico, Gary Fenton, Mike Harrington, Terry Lovingier, Jack Owens, and Bill Strauss to its Board of Directors. Dedomenico, Fenton, Harrington, Lovingier, and Strauss were elected to three-year terms, and Owens was elected to a two-year term. The new Board officially takes office on July 1.

Dedomenico has served on the board since 2011 and is chair of the Medication & Integrity Committee. Fenton, who is active on the Wagering and Owner Relations committees, was appointed to fill a board vacancy in September, 2016. Harrington, who was elected to his third term, is one of five owner-trainer representatives on the board, serves on the Racing Affairs and Medication committees, and is an at-large member of the Executive Committee. Lovingier, who has served on the board since 2013, chairs the Owner Relations Committee and serves on the Racing Affairs Committee. Owens was elected to the board in TOC's initial election and has served several terms since then including three terms as Chairman of the Board. He currently serves as Vice Chair, Northern California, as chair of the Wagering Committee, and as a member of the Northern California Racing Affairs Committee. Strauss, a board member since 2013, is Vice Chair, Southern California, Secretary/Treasurer, and chair of the Finance Committee, in addition to serving on the Wagering and Racing Affairs committees.

The newly elected Directors join Allen Aldrich, Nick Alexander, Bob Baffert, Joe Ciaglia, Ron Ellis, Ed Moger, Mike Pegram, Samantha Siegel, and Kathy Walsh in comprising TOC's 2017-18 Board.

A total of 6,989 ballots were mailed out to eligible voters, and 1,218 qualifying ballots were received. The complete vote tally is available for viewing on TOC's web site at [www.toconline.com](http://www.toconline.com).

Current TOC bylaws require that at least three board members be from Northern California. Representing Northern California on the Board are Aldrich, Moger, and Owens. TOC bylaws allow for up to six owner-trainers on the board, and representing the owner-trainer seats are Baffert, Ellis, Harrington, Moger, and Walsh.

### IMPORTANT DATES

- July 23:** New Owner Seminar at Del Mar.
- August 12:** TOC Southern California Annual Meeting at Del Mar.
- September 9:** Conformation Clinic at Golden Gate Fields.
- October 21:** TOC Northern California Annual Meeting at Golden Gate Fields.

For information on these and other TOC events visit [www.toconline.com](http://www.toconline.com) or call (626) 574-6620.