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## **News Release**

### **Quarter Horse Program announces new Advisory Group**

#### **Quarter Horse Racing Industry Development Plan**

*Toronto, ON* — The members of the new Quarter Horse Racing Industry Advisory Group met for the first time in February 2008, beginning a new phase in the implementation of the Ontario Quarter Horse Racing Industry Development Plan (Plan). The Advisory Group has been selected to assist in the stewarding of the Plan with industry stakeholders, evaluating progress on implementation of the Plan, and making recommendations to the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) on industry issues.

The Quarter Horse Racing Industry Advisory Group will be responsible for providing input and advice to the ORC Administration in the following areas:

- Developing benchmarks, targets and expected outcomes for the Plan
- Preparing budgets and annual performance reviews for Programs
- Recommending revisions to the Plan that reflect the changing environment and business needs of the Ontario Quarter Horse racing industry
- Reviewing Program eligibility criteria, to ensure these are in-line with goals and objectives of the Plan
- Championing the Plan within the racing industry

The Ontario Racing Commission is the Program Administrator for the Quarter Horse Racing Industry Development Plan. The ORC has worked with industry and the track operator of Ajax Downs to develop the multi-year Plan to support the growth of the Ontario Quarter Horse racing sector in a responsible, sustainable and measured manner. Moving forward, the Advisory Group will play a key role as liaison between the ORC and industry as the various components of the Plan are established.

“The role of the Advisory Group will be supported by working sub-committees,” said Wendy Hoogeveen, Director of Industry Development and Support at the Ontario Racing Commission. “The contribution of this Group will be an important part of building a healthy and sustainable Quarter Horse racing industry, one that will have a positive impact on Ontario’s economy.”

Wendy Hoogeveen is the Chair of the Quarter Horse Racing Industry Advisory Group. The position of AQHA Representative has not yet been filled. The Quarter Horse Racing Industry Advisory Group representatives include:

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### **QROOI Representative**

**Bob Broadstock** is a breeder, trainer, and owner, as well as the President of the Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario, Inc (QROOI). Broadstock also runs his own computer programming and consulting business. He and his wife Marie own a farm near Port Perry, Ontario. Their home-breds earned nearly \$70,000 last year. "I am looking forward to the day when I can work on my horse business full-time. I am hoping the Quarter Horse Racing Industry Development Plan, incorporating the slot agreement and the breeding program, will get me there."

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### **QROOI Representative**

**Joe Tavares** has been racing and breeding Quarter Horses for more than 20 years, and presently trains for Norm Picov. Tavares is a past-president of the QROOI, and the owner of a trucking company. He and his wife Christine have owned many fast horses, but none quite as spectacular as Go Smashing Baby. Recently retired, the mare is a winner of 27 races and earnings of \$147,664. She was never out of the money in 39 starts and set four separate track records. Tavares has a vision for Quarter Horse racing in Ontario and looks forward to 50 days of racing in the season. "I want to see our horses running from 100 yards to 870 yards. I see a thriving Quarter Horse market with a horse for every course."

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### **QROOI Representative**

**Erik Lehtinen** has been racing Quarter Horses since 1987. He has served as a QROOI Director and a member of the Rules Committee. He is the AQHA 4-A-Horse Breeders Referral Member for Ontario, and participated in the Focus Group sessions for the Quarter Horse Plan. Lehtinen and his wife Joyce are proud to have purchased the winner of the first American Eaagle Stake (Jet Overdrive) from which they produced a foal who went on to win the last American Eaagle Stake (Pass Over Dash). Lehtinen has high hopes for the future of Quarter Horse racing in Ontario. "I want to see Quarter Horse racing prosper and grow, bringing in new fans/owners/trainers. I want to see the breeding sector grow with top quality mares."

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### **Ajax Downs Representative**

**Norm Picov**, along side his father Alex Picov, opened Picov Downs for Quarter Horse racing in 1969. In 2006 the track was renamed Ajax Downs as part of the Slots at Racetracks Program. Ajax Downs sits on 65 acres of Picov's prime commercial real estate in bustling Ajax, a stone's throw from Highway 401. It features over 200 slot machines, a simulcast theatre and a restaurant. Live racing is run on Sundays and holiday Mondays, May through October. A new five-furlong oval course is under construction and expected to open September 1, 2008. Picov served on the Steering Committee of the *Quarter Horse Racing Industry Development Plan*.

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### **Ajax Downs Representative**

**Ken Richards** is the alternate track representative, and the Operations Manager for Ajax Downs Racetrack. Richards oversees Ajax Slots, Ajax Simulcast and three Durham Region Teletheatres, operated as partners with Woodbine Entertainment. He has been involved in horse racing in Ontario since 1961. Ken is also President of Durham Race Operations Ltd. and Ken Richards & Associates. Before his working relationship with Ajax Downs, Richards was an Investment Recovery Manager at

Ontario Hydro for 39 ½ years. "The future of Quarter Horse Racing at Ajax Downs promises to be very exciting, particularly when our new Racetrack is in place."

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### **Thoroughbred Representative**

**René A. Hunderup** is Founder & Chairman of the Board of the Heste Group of Companies (which includes Norse Ridge Farms Limited and Heste Sport Inc.) and is the 2006 and 2007 AQHA Canadian Breeder of the Year. Since first becoming involved with the horse industry in 1978, Hunderup has developed what is today a full service race horse training and breeding facility serving both the Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse sectors. He is a past President of the QROOI and actively involved in the American Quarter Horse Association in several capacities -- as Ontario Racing representative, a past member of the AQHA Racing Committee, a long-term member of the AQHA Marketing & Public Information Committee and most recently, as a member of the International Committee. Hunderup is also Chairman and CEO of PDi-Pharmaceuticals and DRx Corporation.

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### **Standardbred Representative**

**Dean Leifso** is a Barrister in Hanover, Ontario. He has been a Standardbred breeder and owner for over 30 years and currently owns Leifwood Farms. He is also the Chairman of Hanover Raceway, which hosts live Standardbred racing from May through September and houses 110 slot machines, a restaurant and simulcast venue. Leifso has been active in Ontario's horse industry at a governance level for many years and has served as Chair and Director of Standardbred Canada, President of the International Trotting Association, OSS stakes publicity and promotions, Director for the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame and, recently, a Director of Equine Canada and Chair of the Equine Canada Breeds and Industry Council.

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### **Member-At-Large**

**Al Patterson** is the owner of A.L. Distributing and lives on his farm in Millgrove, Ontario where for the past 25 years he and his family have raised registered Quarter Horses. Patterson has volunteered years of dedicated service to the horse industry, earning special recognition from the Ontario Equestrian Federation where he has also served as President; and in 2008 was inducted into the Ontario Quarter Horse (OQHA) Hall of Fame. Patterson has served on the Board of Equine Canada since 2002 and most recently as the President. In 2006, he presented with the Gary Convey Memorial Award of Distinction.