

REVIEW

In 1985, a reduction in pari-mutuel handle and attendance at Illinois race tracks resulted in a decrease in State revenue to the lowest level reported in the previous 10 years.

The pari-mutuel handle at Illinois race tracks decreased 9% when compared with the previous year, resulting in a total handle of \$923,234,631. Attendance also decreased to 6,747,921 racing fans, from last year's total of 7,629,148. Revenue to the State totaled \$60,178,854, a decrease of 12% from 1984.

The decline in racing attendance and handle may be related to several factors including: the fire at Arlington Park Race Track; increased competition for the wagering dollar within the State; and fewer available gambling dollars due to significant economic downturns in geographic areas supporting race tracks—Moline, Cicero, Collinsville, and Crete. Additionally, new sources of competition in 1985 are placing Illinois' racing programs in an increasingly adverse position. This year marked the first time that the bordering states of Minnesota and Iowa conducted pari-mutuel wagering.

In July of 1985, a fire destroyed the grandstand and clubhouse facility at Arlington Park Racetrack. 54 of the remaining 55 racing days scheduled at Arlington Park were transferred by the Board to Hawthorne Race Course in order to continue offering horsemen an opportunity to race as well as to minimize the loss of revenue to the State. One racing day was retained by Arlington Park for the running of the Budweiser-Arlington Million. Arlington Park erected tents, temporary seating, and concession stands in order to present the Budweiser-Arlington Million V in a fair like atmosphere. Prior to the fire, thoroughbred racing at Arlington had been experiencing a 7% increase over 1984. At the conclusion of the Arlington Park thoroughbred meeting conducted at Hawthorne, wagering handle had decreased 14%. The loss of Arlington Park Racetrack is estimated to have cost the State of Illinois 1.3 million in pari-mutuel tax revenue in 1985, excluding local taxes and employment opportunities that the racetrack provided.

Legislative activity in 1985 was minimal. Senate Bill 743 was enacted to reduce the privilege tax on racing conducted in counties under one million people, thereby affecting Fairmount Park, Quad City Downs, and Balmoral Park. This legislation reduced the progressive tax structure to 1% for the first \$400,000 wagered on a daily racing program. It also reduced the tax on multiple wagers involving two horses from 2.5% to 1.5% and from 7% to 5% for multiple wagers involving three horses or more.

During the 1985 racing season, fans were provided more opportunities to wager on races of

national and international importance conducted outside of Illinois. These events continue to spark interest and draw fans to Illinois race tracks and intertrack wagering facilities. The total handle from simulcast wagering in 1985 totaled \$9,734,095, an encouraging increase of 73% over 1984. Additionally, the intertrack wagering program continued to expand and draw racing fans that otherwise would not have been able to participate due to time and travel constraints.

Although many Board cases are currently pending in the Appellate Court, one major appellate decision was rendered in 1985. The Illinois Appellate Court affirmed the constitutionality of the Board's purse redistribution rules. The decision in *Margulis v. Illinois Racing Board*, 132 Ill. Ap. 3rd 38 (1985) relied heavily on *Kline v. Illinois Racing Board*, 127 Ill. Ap. 3rd 702 (1984). Together, these cases held that in order to redistribute a purse or to impose a penalty on a trainer, it is not necessary that the Board prove that a prohibited substance effected the performance of a particular horse. Rather, the courts have accepted the Board's interpretation of the rules and have held that the Board need only prove that a prohibited substance was present in a post-race sample.

In 1985, the Illinois jockey and driver associations requested that the Board implement a pilot project to test the urine specimens of individuals racing at Illinois racetracks for controlled substances. The problem of drug abuse in the pari-mutuel racing industry is two-fold: the impact of an individual's ability to safely perform his duties; and, possible drug addiction which may make the individual more susceptible to improper influences. In addition, the abuse of chemical substances by jockeys and drivers may have a negative impact on the fairness of the competition, the public's perception of the integrity of the sport and the outcome of the race. The Illinois Racing Board has a strong commitment to assure the public that those individuals participating in racing are performing to their maximum ability. The Board has implemented a Substance Abuse Rule to clearly define its position as it relates to the use of alcohol and illegal drugs.

With respect to the Human Drug Screening Pilot Project, a total of 819 human urine samples were tested from a population of 730 individuals; 623 urine samples were screened from 568 harness drivers and 196 urine samples were screened from 162 thoroughbred jockeys. Of the samples tested, there was a seventeen (17) per cent positive rate for cocaine and marijuana.

In 1985, the Illinois Racing Board Laboratory received 14,811 post-race urine samples and 15,454 post-race blood samples from horses participating in

races in Illinois. After testing these samples, the Laboratory issued eleven (11) positive findings for prohibited substances. The positive drug reports issued by the Laboratory included nine (9) Etorphine positives, one (1) Promazine derivative positive, and one (1) Corticosteroid positive.

Of the 15,454 post-race blood samples received, 3,637 were screened quantitatively for Phenylbutazone and its metabolites. Of those tested, 169 were reported over the accepted level, for a percentage of one (1) overage violation per 91 post-race blood samples tested. By employing new synthetic corticosteroid radioimmunoassay tests in November of 1985, the Laboratory was able to detect the presence of steroids in specimens which were previously undistinguishable. A routine testing confirmation procedure for steroids is in the preliminary stages of development at the Illinois Racing Board Laboratory.

The following statistics are indicative of the total number of samples received by the Illinois Racing

Board Laboratory during 1985:

	<u>Urines</u>	<u>Bloods</u>	<u>Lasix Bloods</u>	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Positive Samples</u>	<u>Quants</u>
Harness	8,179	8,617	4,348	21,144	10	14
Thoroughbred	6,632	6,837	8,472	21,941	1	155
Totals	14,811	15,454	12,820	43,085	11	169

During 1985, the Governor's Task Force on Horse Racing made several recommendations concerning the breeding programs in Illinois. Two of the recommendations suggested were to remove the Illinois foaling requirement and to reduce the required percentage of Illinois ownership in order to qualify a stallion to stand in Illinois. These recommendations, which would require an amendment to the Horse Racing Act of 1975, are expected to be introduced during the 1986 Legislative Session.

Monies distributed from the breeding program are offered in the form of purses and special awards. During 1985, \$13,726,202 was distributed to Illinois-bred thoroughbred owners while \$13,553,666 was distributed to Illinois-bred standardbred owners. Illinois-bred thoroughbreds won 36% of all thoroughbred races in Illinois and accomplished a record number of open company victories. Illinois-bred standardbreds were victorious in over 40% of all harness races run in Illinois.