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October 7, 2011

## **Notice to the Industry** Ontario Racing Program – 2012 Schedule of Race Dates

### **ORC issues conditional Race Date Schedule for 2012**

Further to the Notice to the Industry issued August 15, 2011, the Director is providing Notice of the conditional 2012 live and simulcast Race Date Schedule of the Ontario Racing Program.

The conditional schedule is subject to receipt of any requests from stakeholders and other interested parties. **To be considered, requests to vary the schedule must be accompanied by rationale and received by October 21, 2011.** A final decision on the 2012 Schedule will be communicated in early November. Following the release of the final decision, any person who feels they are aggrieved may appeal the decision of the Director, and a hearing process will follow.

Race dates will issue to each Racetrack Operator as a Term and Condition attached to each Licence to Operate a Racetrack issued by the Director in the late fall 2011. In determining the 2012 Schedule of Dates, the Director instructed the Implementation and Monitoring Group to provide a recommendation based on an evaluation of the 2011 season, discussions with the stakeholders and racing participants, and application of the Framework approved by the Board in 2010.

Having considered the recommendation of the Implementation and Monitoring Group, the Director issues the Ontario Racing Program for 2012 as follows:

#### **Thoroughbred**

Woodbine

167

Premier Cards

#### **Quarter Horse**

Ajax

40

19 Signature Cards  
21 Grassroots Cards

**Standardbred**

Woodbine	130	Premier Cards
Mohawk	98	Premier Cards
Flamboro Downs	188	Signature Cards
Georgian Downs	103	Signature Cards
Grand River	65	Signature Cards
Rideau Carleton	159	Signature Cards
Windsor	88	Signature Cards
Western Fair	123	Signature Cards
Kawartha Downs	96	48 Grassroots Cards 48 Signature Cards
Clinton	19	Grassroots Cards
Dresden	23	Grassroots Cards
Hanover	30	Grassroots Cards
Hiawatha Horse Park	44	Grassroots Cards
Sudbury Downs	62	Grassroots Cards
Woodstock	23	Grassroots Cards

**Fort Erie Racetrack**

Due to ongoing planning and development for next year's season and based on a request from the racetrack operator, issuance of the 2012 race dates for Fort Erie has been deferred.

All racetracks are approved to provide simulcast product at their racetrack and in their associated teletheatres 366 days in 2012. All designated Premier and Signature Cards are approved for outbound simulcast. A Signature Card designation for a race date requires the simulcast distribution of product. All race dates are approved for telephone account betting.

Jointly, both Racetrack Operators and their respective horsepeople's association will be held to account in servicing the customer under this approved schedule.

Copies of the calendars for the provincial Ontario Racing Program, Regional calendars and separately for each track individually are available on the ORC website under the "What's New" section.

Reasons for decision are attached.

John L. Blakney  
Executive Director

## **REASONS FOR DECISION**

### **Ontario Racing Program Standardbred**

#### **Overview**

In September of 2010, the ORC Board accepted and approved a framework for the Ontario Racing Program and the allocation of race dates. To implement the principles of the approved framework, the following parameters were applied:

1. Community-based tracks should primarily operate from May until Labour Day weekend.
2. Conflicting dates within regions should be resolved wherever possible to improve racing opportunities.
3. Seasonal start and end dates should be coordinated between tracks to reduce or remove overlap and gaps.
4. Certain longer term proposed structural changes could be tested through the use of "pilot programs" incorporated in this schedule.
5. Accepting that a phased-in approach is being used, purse monies would move between racetracks in certain limited circumstances.

Implementation of the Framework in 2012 continues to focus on a number of fundamental initiatives which include:

1. Race date calendars have been synchronized to promote wagering and increase racing opportunities for horsepeople. By removing scheduling conflicts, the same or even fewer race dates can mean more racing opportunities.
2. A system of purse management has been implemented to enhance the consistency, fairness and equity across the province.
3. Increasing provincial consistency on race conditions, qualifying times and allowances that will enhance fairness and equity in racing as well as simplify the system for participants and bettors.
4. Entry preference for Canadian-based horses was implemented in 2011, requiring horses to be in the country at time of entry.

#### **Central East Region**

##### **Georgian Downs**

Georgian Downs has been issued 103 days of Signature race cards in 2012.

Georgian Downs will remain open for the first two weeks of January to close the gap in the Central East region while Kawartha Downs is 'dark' for their Christmas break. Georgian will shut down for the remainder of January, February and most of March, with opening night set for March 31. The decision to keep Georgian closed for March

was due to the horse supply issues experienced in the Central Region during this time. These dates will be shifted until the end of the year. As in 2011, Sunday and Wednesday are added when Flamboro closes down in mid-October and extend into November.

In mid-November, Georgian will move to Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday racing, with Monday serving as the secondary product to the Premier card. The rationale for racing four days a week in these three months is to give an indication of the demand of the Georgian product in the marketplace for an extended concentrated time.

An analysis was completed to measure the viability of Georgian racing on Friday nights during the final three months of the year, instead of the Monday or Wednesday. Based on past history of 2010, Georgian held cards on Friday nights for the final three months of the year and except New Year's Eve, the handle failed to reach \$70,000 on any of those nights. Due to this and the fact that Flamboro Downs, another GCG product, races on Friday night, the conclusion was made that this option did not meet the criteria of the Framework.

### **Kawartha Downs**

Kawartha Downs has been issued 96 days of 48 Grassroots cards on Saturdays and 48 Signature race cards on all other days in 2012.

When racing starts back in 2012, Kawartha will shift to a Monday and Saturday weekly racing schedule until May. Kawartha struggled as the 'bridge product' on Thursdays, as their handle decreased, so the Monday will be used as a trial to see how it performs as the secondary product to the Premier card. Beginning in May, Kawartha will move back to Thursday, but race in the evening and once again be the secondary product to the Premier card on that night. The Thursday/Saturday schedule will continue for the remainder of the year until its dark period in mid-December for Christmas.

## **Central West Region**

### **Clinton Raceway**

Clinton Raceway has been issued 19 days of Grassroots race cards in 2012.

A baseline of race dates was assigned to Clinton based on a consistent racing schedule similar to other community based tracks that begin around the May holiday weekend and conclude in September. It is recognized that in the community of the Grassroots based tracks cold weather and lack of customer demand are not conducive to racing until after Mother's Day and around the holiday weekend. This track has a traditional racing schedule and facilities that cater to the local horsepeople and the local community of fans.

## **Flamboro Downs**

Flamboro Downs has been issued 188 days of Signature cards in 2012.

In 2011 Flamboro is not currently racing in the month of October. It was recognized that with the early closure of regional racetracks and until Western Fair opens in mid October, Flamboro should remain open. In 2012 the month closure at Flamboro will begin in mid-October and run through mid-November. This change was also implemented to balance the amount of race days and opportunities in the region for the two months.

Through April and May, Thursday dates will be dropped, as compared to 2011, to address the horse supply shortage experienced in the Central Region during these two months. Those days are shifted to Fridays in August and September, with the expectation of benefiting from an on-track crowd and providing more opportunities for OSS events.

In November and December, Flamboro will once again drop Thursdays as an extra night of racing is added to the Georgian Downs schedule during this period.

## **Grand River Raceway**

Grand River Raceway has been issued 65 days of Signature cards in 2012.

The reduction of four dates from 2011 aligns the end of the Grand River racing season with the start of the Western Fair racing season in October. The reduction is also the result of the condition of the purse account at Grand River and the need to maintain and/or increase the purses through a reduction in dates.

## **Hanover Raceway**

Hanover Raceway has been issued 30 days of Grassroots race cards in 2012.

Potential construction shortened race season for Hanover in 2011. In 2012 the meet will once again extend into September as previous years. In July and August, the Wednesday card has been moved to Thursday to remove the overlap with Grand River. This change will create a 7 day a week racing schedule between Clinton, Grand River, Hanover, and Woodstock. This change will provide more racing opportunities to the horse people in those areas.

## **Western Fair Raceway**

Western Fair Raceway has been issued 123 days of Signature cards in 2012.

As noted under the section on Grand River, Western Fair and Grand River raced numerous times on the same day in previous years. This schedule conflict had a negative effect on the demand for the product at each of their tracks on those dates. With more synchronized calendars, Grand River and Western Fair have significantly reduced the number of overlapping race dates.

### **Woodstock Raceway**

Woodstock Raceway has been issued 23 days of Grassroots race cards in 2012.

Woodstock will continue with the same racing calendar as 2011.

## **Eastern Region**

### **Rideau Carleton Raceway**

Rideau Raceway has been issued 159 days of Signature cards in 2012.

Rideau will continue with the same schedule as in 2011.

## **Northern Region**

### **Sudbury Downs**

Sudbury Downs has been issued 62 days of Grassroots race cards in 2012.

Sudbury will open with two Saturday nights in April before commencing the regular racing schedule of Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the summer and into the fall. The racing schedule will conclude on November 24. The seven-month meet at Sudbury is the sixth longest meet in the Province.

The four dates from December have been removed from 2012 due to the lack of demand from previous years for the product at this time. It is noted there are ample racing opportunities in other regions available to Sudbury area horsepeople.

The Director is prepared to review this decision upon the conclusion of 2011 racing season, to assess customer demand and horse supply with a view to either replace the December dates or remove the Wednesdays in November, or maintain the issued schedule, depending on the outcome of the review.

## **Western Region**

### **Dresden Raceway**

Dresden Raceway has been issued 23 days of Grassroots race cards in 2012.

Dresden will continue with the same schedule as in 2011.

### **Hiawatha Horse Park**

Hiawatha has been issued 44 days of Grassroots race cards in 2012.

The drop in three days corresponds to the opening and closing of the Windsor meet in the Southwest Region. Hiawatha will race five months, May through September, on Thursday and Saturday evenings. There will be no overlapping dates for Hiawatha with any other track in the Region, which should aid in any horse supply issues.

### **Windsor Raceway**

Windsor Raceway has been issued 88 days of Signature cards in 2012.

Windsor will continue to race the same three day a week schedule in January, February, and then again in the fall, October through December. The fall meet will start in September with one day a week on Sundays. Similarly the spring meet will end with a two day a week schedule (Sunday/Wednesday) from mid March to the end of April. The rationale for reducing days in late spring is a result of horse supply issues experienced in the spring, a time when Windsor had difficulty filling cards. This was due to many American-based trainers returning to Michigan and Indiana for the beginning of those meets. Additionally it is recognized that the combined purse account of Windsor/Woodstock/Dresden cannot sustain the current purse structure at Windsor without a minor reduction in dates.

## **Premier**

### **Woodbine Racetrack**

Woodbine Racetrack has been issued 130 days of Premier cards in 2012.

Woodbine will continue with the same schedule as in 2011 remaining at four days a week. The reduction to 4 days a week was expanded last year to address the horse supply issue and demand for the product. While major gains have been realized in wagering numbers, an analysis of 2011 identified that the horse supply shortage issue remained through the months of March, April and May 2011. To address this supply issue, Georgian Downs will remain closed through the month of March and Flamboro Downs is reduced from five days a week to four days a week during April and May.

### **Mohawk Racetrack**

Mohawk Racetrack has been issued 98 days of Premier cards in 2012.

Mohawk will continue with the same schedule as in 2011, racing 5 days a week.

**Ontario Racing Program  
Thoroughbred**

**Thoroughbred**

**Woodbine Racetrack**

Woodbine Racetrack has been issued 167 dates of Premier cards in 2012.

**Ontario Racing Program  
Quarter Horse**

**Quarter Horse**

**Ajax Downs**

Ajax Downs has been issued 40 days of 21 Grassroots cards on Sundays and 19 Signature race cards on Tuesdays in 2012.

Ajax will continue with the same schedule as in 2011.