



“I’ve always admired Barry Irwin. His Team Valor has gotten to the top of the racing ladder not only in the United States but also in international racing.

He has steadfastly supported drug-free racing with his eloquence and perseverance and has been a leader in our battle for the soul of American racing.”

George Strawbridge, Jr.



Equine Advocates
proudly presents the

**2014 Ellen & Herbert Moelis
Equine Savior Award**

to

Barry Irwin



Barry Irwin

“Barry Irwin is a leader in the fight to ban medication in American horse racing. Over the years, he has stepped up and addressed the problem, tirelessly working on behalf of the health and welfare of our horses and their jockeys. Barry is a persuasive communicator who is not afraid to speak out in order to bring attention to our industry’s struggle with the issue of medication. The Water Hay Oats Alliance (WHOA) congratulates Barry on this well-deserved honor as a champion for the horses and our sport.”

Staci Hancock

Thoroughbred Owner/Breeder (Stone Farm) and Founder of WHOA

“Do the Right Thing” was the name of a popular 1989 film by Spike Lee. It could also very well be the motto of Barry Irwin.



Barry Irwin leading his champion Animal Kingdom to the Winner's Circle after winning the Kentucky Derby in 2011

Barry is very dedicated to the sport of Thoroughbred horse racing. He loves and is passionate about it and he has been very successful, winning both the Kentucky Derby and the Dubai World Cup with his great champion, Animal Kingdom. An interesting fact about Animal Kingdom is that he is the first Kentucky Derby winner to win a Grade 1 race at the age of five. That's not only interesting, but quite extraordinary and surprising that there has been only one.

In covering Animal Kingdom's stunning victory in the 137th Kentucky Derby in 2011, Joe Drape of the New York Times wrote, "He is the son of a Brazilian-bred stallion

2014 Moelis Award Honoree

and a German-bred mare. He is owned by a syndicate of 20 partners led by a sometimes ebullient, often cranky former turf writer. He is trained by an Englishman who has never been cited for violating a medication rule and believes your horse should be allowed to be a horse as much as possible. No, Animal Kingdom is not your typical Kentucky Derby winner.”

For years, Barry Irwin has been among the most outspoken of those leading the charge to bring medication rules in American horse racing up to the same no-tolerance standards as Europe. His biggest gripe is with the many trainers who he says give drugs to horses to make them run faster and not feel pain when they run.

“I have been pretty fortunate with the trainers I have used over the years and I’ve been on the same page with most of them,” Irwin said, “But most trainers don’t want to be scrutinized. They want to go about their

own business and they want to be able to tell you about things in their own sweet time...I can’t deal with that because I think I can help in the process of healing and diagnosing problems. If I don’t find out about it before it’s too late then it’s bad for me and bad for my clients. Most of the break-ups with trainers that I have had over the years have been because of what I would call the ‘sin of omission’ where if a horse has a little thickness in a tendon or something like



Barry Irwin's love for horses began at a very young age.



Photo Credit: Cindy Pierson Dulley

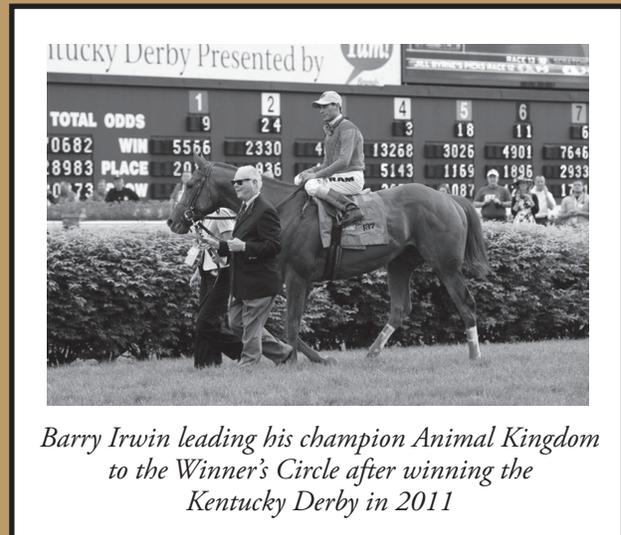
Animal Kingdom winning the Kentucky Derby in 2011 with Jockey John Velasquez up.

A Call to Action

that, 99% of the trainers are not going to say anything about it to the owners. They are going to administer whatever therapy they think necessary or warranted and they are going to hope to God when they come in the next morning that the situation is resolved. I don't like people who do that. I can handle anything, any bad news they throw at me. I consider that to be my main job, but when trainers don't tell me what's going on, that's bad. The first trainer I had was Neil Drysdale. The minute anything happened he was on the phone with me and we were able to make a decision right away... so I was spoiled right off the bat. There are not many trainers who are as forthcoming as he is."

From 1969 through 1978 Irwin was a turf writer for the BloodHorse, the editor for the Thoroughbred of California and a syndicated columnist for the Daily Racing Form. He said he eventually got bored because he was not able to write anything that was "hard-hitting." He had also hosted a television and radio show, but found that what he really wanted to do was to get more deeply involved in the racing industry and with the horses themselves.

"Right near the end of 1978, I quit my job at the 'Form' and bought a couple of horses," he said. "They won a bunch of races and everyone thought I knew what I was doing so I became a bloodstock agent and did that for 10 years. I was also very aware of what Cot Campbell was doing with Dogwood, so when a couple of guys approached me about doing partnerships, we decided to form a company (operating a stable of syndicated race horses). The first horse we bought, Political Ambition, won the Hollywood Derby, a Grade 1. I ended up buying those guys out and the rest is history."



Barry Irwin leading his champion Animal Kingdom to the Winner's Circle after winning the Kentucky Derby in 2011

Maverick

Irwin founded Clover Racing Stable which eventually evolved into Team Valor International, one of racing's most successful public syndicates operating today. The vision of Barry Irwin was to breed the best horses to race from stallions and mares both from here and abroad. That imaginative and progressive way of thinking is what led him to breed the Brazilian-bred sire, Leroidesanimaux to the German-bred mare, Dalicia. Their foal was the colt, Animal Kingdom and a champion was born!

Barry Irwin still loves to write and does so regularly for a variety of publications where he freely expresses his opinions about the issues in racing that he feels most passionately about. His wonderful cutting edge Op Eds that appear in the online racing magazine, Thoroughbred Daily News (TDN) are brutally honest and to the point. He pulls no punches and everyone seems to read them whether they agree with him or not. He has become one of the most eloquent and important voices for the anti-drug movement in American Thoroughbred racing.

“The reason I do what I do in terms of my Op Ed writings is that I am a track and field fan,” Irwin continued. “That is actually my first love and it’s kind of like horse racing. That sport has been riddled with drugs and corruption and it’s now practically non-existent in the U.S. after the collegiate level. I don’t want to see the same thing happen to horse racing. That’s why I put as much effort as I do into this because I don’t want to see the sport of racing disappear.”



Barry Irwin and his wife, Kathleen

Irwin has lobbied and testified at hearings on Capitol Hill. In 2012, at a hearing before the Senate Committee on Science and Transportation which focused on the use of drugs in Thoroughbred, Standardbred and Quarter Horse racing, Irwin told the committee under the questioning of New Mexico Senator Tom Udall, “Putting horses at risk and mistreating them

Outspoken

by juicing them with drugs is no way for states to line their coffers, for racetracks to improve their bottom line or for trainers to make a better living...We need to stop drugging Thoroughbred racehorses...We should be celebrating these glorious athletes, not trashing them.”

Irwin is in favor of doing anything to rid the sport of drugs, including the passage of federal legislation. One way he says would be to amend the Interstate Horseracing Act in order to “... help us get rid of trainers who cheat... We need to clean up our sport both in terms of cleansing the game of bad actors and cleansing the bloodstreams of our horses.”

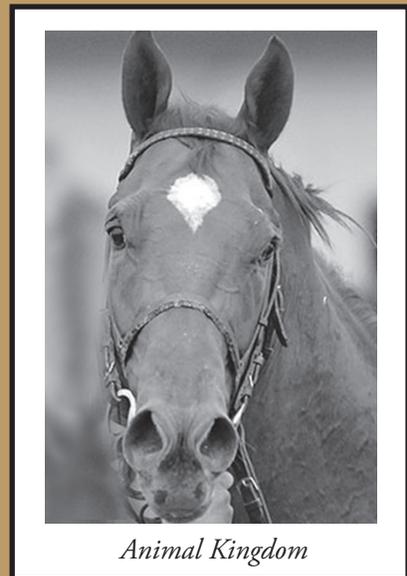
Note: The Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (H.R. 2012/S.973) has been introduced to accomplish the same goal.

Barry Irwin’s concern for horses also includes his involvement to ensure the humane fate and safe placement of them after their racing careers are over. He has bought back several horses who were about to fall through the cracks. One such horse was Colway Rally. Irwin explains:

“He was a British horse we bought when he was around six and we raced him until he was about nine or ten. He was a hell of a horse. We sold him to a breeder as a stallion and we thought he was fine, but we kind of lost track of him. One day, I got a call from a guy I knew who was an agent in Canada and whose wife worked at a veterinary college there. She said they found out that Colway Rally was on his way to slaughter...so I sent the money to buy him and she rescued the horse and brought him back to health. He served as a stallion at the vet college for several years until he died.”

Irwin has sent some of his horses to a Missouri-run horse organization called, Renaissance Rescue. He also likes a group called Changing Leads in Alabama that specializes in retraining Thoroughbreds.

A charity called Race for Education, founded to raise money for scholarships for the offspring of backstretch workers, is an organization



Dedicated

with which Irwin is very involved. He serves on the Board and funds a couple of his own personal scholarships for the group, as well as contributing through Team Valor International, whose partners donate a portion of their racetrack earnings to the charity.

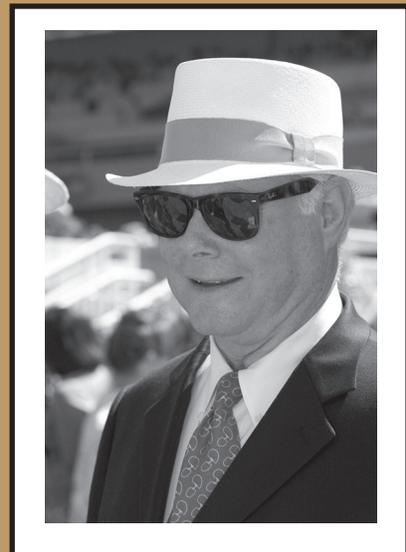
Barry lives in Versailles, KY with his wife, Kathleen whom he met online on an AOL chat board. He was living in California at the time and she was living in Kentucky.

“We just hit it off,” he said. “That was in the late ‘90’s. In 2000, I moved to Kentucky and needed to hire some help and so I asked Kathleen if she knew anyone. She asked me what it paid and I ended up interviewing her and that was it. It was Kathleen and me. We were the only staff for about five or six years.”

The sincerity and conviction that Barry Irwin conveys when he speaks about his call for change in the sport that he loves is undeniable. He also cherishes the freedom to express himself and refuses to back down or allow himself to be censored.

“I have always been outspoken – that’s just me, ever since I’ve been a kid,” he said. “I have been able to create my own little world. I have my own stable. I generate my own income, so I don’t need or require a lot of contact with the traditional people in the horse world. I have never joined any groups because I think I can serve a greater purpose by being a maverick type. Once you join one of these (industry) organizations, they basically emasculate you and you become just like them – you are a member of status quo and then you can’t move the ball. William Faulkner once said, ‘In literature one rogue is worth a thousand saints.’ I believe that. That’s my philosophy.”

Thank you, Barry, for being the “rogue” who you are! We congratulate you for your honesty, integrity and your work to make the horse racing industry better, more humane and safer for both horses and humans.



Two Op Eds

op/ed

by barry irwin

April 20, 2014

Ogden Mills (Dinny) Phipps, in his position at The Jockey Club, has a degree of power, but what he really has is influence. Because of that, a lot of people take what he says seriously. But in the last few weeks I have ceased to take him seriously at all.

The man is to be admired as a breeder carrying on a long family tradition of excellence on the turf, as exemplified most recently by his GI Kentucky Derby winner from last year Orb (Malibu Moon) and by his long-time stance against allowing the use of Lasix in New York.

Mr. Phipps, however, was an influential board member when NYRA famously caved in to allow the use of Lasix when the New York Racing Association was the last major racing jurisdiction standing against it. And today--right now--at a time when the proponents of banning Lasix have their best window of opportunity yet to eliminate race day drugs, Mr. Phipps, as the leader of The Jockey Club, now looks set to back down from a another fight.

Because of the advent of the PETA video tape, most horsemen in our country are sufficiently beat up and vulnerable. If horsemen are ever going to listen to reason, the time is right this very second.

In the last couple of weeks, however, Mr. Phipps is doing his best imitation of a paper tiger. And, because powerful men fear him and others are just too

uninformed to know the difference, Mr. Phipps has been posturing like a man that is dead-set against the use of drugs in racing and he is getting away with it in some circles. He is using his bully pulpit at The Jockey Club to inform trainers and owners that he has run out of patience, hot damn it!

Mr. Phipps announced last summer at The Jockey Club Round Table that he wanted every jurisdiction in racing to back a plan developed by Alan Foreman that seeks to have as many states as possible adopt his model for uniform medication rules in the United States.

As I have been pointing out since last August, the plan is a ruse, because it allows the use of Lasix on race day. Without banning Lasix there can be no clean horses on race day in our country. And until that is achieved, our industry will forever be labeled by PETA and countless potential fans as one that does not respect the Thoroughbred.

So a couple of weeks ago Mr. Phipps said that if states do not band together to agree to adopt the Foreman plan, he will have no choice but to back Federal legislation. Why does this remind me of Cleavon Little pointing a pistol at himself and threatening himself in Mel Brooks' movie "Blazing Saddles?"

Then this week, Mr. Phipps comes up with another initiative that calls for trainers and owners to voluntarily reveal any medications given to horses in the two weeks leading up to a graded stakes race. None of these things moves the ball. None of these things is designed to stop race-day medication. It is nothing but smoke and mirrors.

By Barry Irwin

I, for one, have no intention of joining this latest initiative. I have no interest in jumping through another hoop for The Jockey Club or the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders' Association until such time as Mr. Phipps and The Jockey Club take a strong stance against the use of Lasix and back a plan to implement this notion.

Ironically, in real life, Mr. Phipps actually wants horses not to race on drugs. And I believe he is sincere in this. But his actions strongly indicate that Mr. Phipps believes just as strongly that he lacks the clout to get horsemen to give up the ghost on Lasix. I humbly suggest to him that he is dead wrong.

Right now Mr. Phipps is agreeing to make a deal with the devil to pass a half-measure in the name of showing the world that racing really is serious about putting its house in order. But he is selling us out instead of standing tall against trainers and owners that want to run horses on drugs.

Mr. Phipps, if you want to show true leadership and be true to your own high principles, let Alan Foreman know you want him to include a ban on Lasix in his Mid-Atlantic proposal. If you fail, nobody is going to hold it against you. But if you chicken out, I for one will never forgive you for letting the sport down.

December 21, 2013

OPEN LETTER TO RACETRACK VETS

I contend that every race day at every major racetrack in North America a trainer cheats by sending out a horse for competition in an illegally enhanced state.

I further assert that the foreign substance(s) used on their horse in most instances was not obtained or administered by the veterinarian overseeing the horse's welfare at the barn of the trainer.

Yet, if you ask race goers (be they horseplayers or fans) who they feel is responsible for filling horses full of illegal substances, the majority would finger the veterinarian.

Since vets are not the ones responsible for the preponderance of cheating taking place at American racetracks, why are they not leading the charge to clear up this misconception that paints them as the bad guys?

The answers to that question are myriad. Here are a few: 1) they want to maintain an ongoing business relationship with a particular trainer, 2) they want to keep alive the notion among clients that they might have some secret sauce of their own in their little "black bag" and 3) they want to fly below the regulatory morass without having to dirty their hands.

Racetrack vets have a singular focus: don't interrupt your income stream. Earnings for professional services rendered can be jeopardized by failing to comply with anything a trainer asks a vet

Barry Irwin

to do and by encountering trouble from taking direct responsibility for a mistake with a regulatory body.

Given the state of play, it is nothing if not astonishing that yet another year is about to go by without racetrack vets taking a meaningful positive step to advance the cause of their patient--the Thoroughbred racehorse.

Racetrack vets earn income from the markup between the wholesale and retail cost of drugs, referrals to specialists or hospitals and by charging for diagnostics by use of their equipment, such as X-ray machines, ultra-sound scanners and endoscopes.

If they get paid (which is never a given), they make a good living. But because of the convoluted manner they choose to structure their income stream, they inherently feel vulnerable. So they never want the boat rocked.

In human medicine and in some rare instances on the backstretch, money is earned by charging a patient for services rendered. Physicians get paid for diagnosing ailments.

Doctors do not normally operate a pharmacy, which in essence is what racetrack vets do.

If vets changed their fee structure, charged for diagnoses and stopped operating a mobile pharmacy, they would be better off, their equine patients would be better off and the owners of the horses would be better off.

Think about it: if the greatest component of a vet's income is derived from selling

drugs, do you think they are prone to writing more prescriptions for their patients?

Incentivizing vets to prescribe controlled substances in order to maximize their income stream is a formula for failure and added expense for horse owners.

(Some vets do charge for diagnoses, including the best known lameness vet on U. S. backstretches and nobody balks. But racetrack vets made a calculated mistake many years ago to offer free diagnoses in exchange for being able to mark up drugs in order to be compensated. It really behooves them to think about standardizing their fee structure to take them out of the pharmacy game.)

Back to my main question, which is "why vets do not try to elevate their professional standing above the cesspool of cheating trainers?" I think it is high time the racetrack members of the veterinary profession took a step to once and for all clear up the notion that cheating through PEDs (performance enhancing drugs) is a racetrack vet issue.

It seems inconceivable that any of the vets practicing at major racetracks in America went to vet school to become an equine practitioner in order to get rich. They studied, sacrificed and worked hard because they want to help horses.

I understand that working on the backstretch can lead vets to become jaded and callous, which can make them vulnerable to crossing the line. But these instances most assuredly would fall into the minority.

In His Own Words

Being proud people that have sworn their allegiance to improving the lot in life of a racehorse, vets should want their families and peers to respect and admire them. But when cheating takes place at the racetrack each and every day and onlookers consider vets to be the source of the problem, it seems reasonable to assume that vets would want to stand up for themselves and their peers.

Yet, here we are. The AAEP (American Association of Equine Practitioners) has just finished yet another annual meeting and nothing has changed for the better.

So since they cannot seem to generate the inertia required to move their butts off the dime, I will offer them a suggestion to take a positive step in the right direction.

Somebody...ANYBODY...at the AAEP, come up with a plan to join with major racetracks in America to create on-track pharmacies for the sole purpose of giving confidence to horseplayers, fans, trainers and owners that the vets are not involved in administering any illegal substances to racehorses.

It is not for me to say how this will be funded or operated, but the basic premise goes something like this: If anything is found in the system of a horse that was not obtained from the on-track pharmacy and administered in a timely fashion, the veterinarian can no longer be held responsible.

This will shift the focus of cheating away from equine practitioners and squarely on to the trainers where it most assuredly belongs.

Rare is an instance of any vet administering a substance to a horse without the direction or permission of the trainer.

If, on the other hand, a vet is found to be responsible for a foreign substance being in the system of a horse on race day, his or her license should be suspended and or revoked, so that this individual is no longer dragging down the entire veterinary profession.

Honest, hard working vets should want crooked vets out of the system more than anybody else.

Yet...yet...here we are. It is nearly 2014 and the vets are more worried about having their income streams interrupted than doing something to protect their professional reputations.

Every honest owner and trainer reserve the top veterinarians. It is time for these stalwarts of their profession to take positive steps to remove any suspicion about their practices or motives.

Please, I urge you, take the initiative before somebody or some entity does it for you. In order to stop tongues from wagging, show that this game has the ability to take steps to improve the public perception of horse racing by providing a vehicle to end all of the suspicion.

Have feedback for publication? Email suefnley@thetdn.com