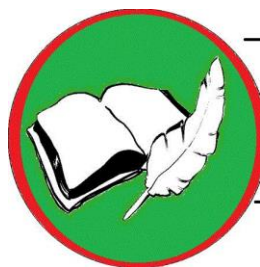


## PAULICK'S STORY ON OXFORD DOWNS NOMINATED FOR BERGSTEIN AWARD CONVOLUTED TRACK OPERATING UNDER LOOPHOLE IN FLORIDA RULES 2013 AWARD WINNER EXPOSES A 'MOCKERY AND SHAM' OF STATE, SPORT

The depths of the loopholes in Florida's racetrack regulatory system are exposed quite vividly in a *Paulick Report* glimpse of Quarter Horse racing at Oxford Downs that has been nominated for the Stan Bergstein Writing Award.

Ray Paulick, publisher of the *Paulick Report* and defending winner of the Bergstein Award, set the scene for the 10-day race meet in Summerfield, Florida, that is designed to qualify track owner Anthony Mendola for permits to operate a card room and racing simulcasts. Paulick describes a makeshift facility that is overseen mostly by Mendola and his family and stages match races with horses that are owned by Mendola's wife and the family of other track officials. Mendola and his teenage son are among the three stewards.

Paulick writes "So we have a teenaged son and husband as stewards judging races owned by the teen's mother and track owner's wife. There is a track veterinarian, who is to determine whether horses are sound enough to compete, judging the soundness of her direct family's horses. It is a situation so convoluted that I can only repeat what the Woody Allen character, Fielding Mellish, said in the movie 'Bananas' about a courtroom trial: 'It's a travesty of a mockery of a sham of a mockery of a travesty of two mockeries of a sham.'"



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**The Stanley  
Bergstein Award**

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For his troubles, Paulick got kicked out of the track's clubhouse, which was a construction trailer.

The full story is [here](#).

Paulick also delved into Florida racing regulation last year in his story that won the \$25,000 Bergstein Award, which Team Valor began presenting in 2012. That piece focused on a drawn-out investigation of a drug violation at Tampa Bay Downs.

For the 2014 award, Team Valor has also nominated nominated stories from Frank Angst in the *Blood-Horse* on drug compounders, Joe Drape in the *New York Times* on a rash of drug issues across the U.S., Ed Donnelly for the *Paulick Report* on jockeys' use of illegal electrical devices and Bill Finley on the financial impact of drugs in racing when considering a steep decline in the average number of starts per horse.

Team Valor encourages writers and editors to submit stories for consideration for the award to Jeff Lowe at [jeff@teamvalor.com](mailto:jeff@teamvalor.com) by November 1.