



Global Aftercare

Issue 13

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IN THE NEWS



10th IFAR Conference Held in Saudi Arabia

The International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) held its 10th annual conference on 9 February. It took place in conjunction with the 41st Asian Racing Conference (ARC) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The 41st ARC was presented by the Asian Racing Federation (ARF) and the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia (JCSA), which was the host.

The 10th IFAR conference featured a tour of the JCSA's Retraining & Riding Academy followed by a lineup of international speakers addressing a wide range of topics relating to the aftercare of racehorses. HRH Prince Bandar bin Khalid Al Faisal, Chairman of the JCSA and the Saudi Equestrian Authority, officially opened the conference.

“Horse racing, like all horse sport, is founded on a unique partnership between people and horses,” he said. “That partnership carries obligations that extend well beyond the moment a horse leaves the track. Aftercare is therefore not a ‘nice-to-

Continued on page 2

10th IFAR Held

have' nor a response to public opinion, but a fundamental measure of integrity, credibility and sustainability in our sport.

“By placing aftercare at the centre of discussions, via forums such as this, we affirm our commitment to a sport that is not only successful, but responsible, principled and worthy of public trust.”

IFAR Chair Dr. Eliot Forbes provided the welcome address, and HRH Princess Nanda-Devi Norodom, the President of the Cambodian Equestrian Federation, delivered the keynote address. The rest of the conference, which was moderated by renowned broadcaster David Eades, featured a mix of presentations, panel discussions, videos, and networking opportunities.

“The occasion of our 10th IFAR conference naturally invites reflection,” said Forbes. “In a decade, IFAR has helped create a global conversation on aftercare. We have taken a topic that was too often treated as ‘back of house’ and helped move it into the boardroom, into strategy, and into the industry’s consciousness. We have delivered 10 annual conferences designed to challenge, inform and provoke the kind of thinking that leads to better practice.

“Today marks not only where we have been, but where we choose to go next. It signals intent for the next period, not just to keep talking, but to keep building capability, sharing what works and lifting standards.”

The first panel, Setting the Standard: Leadership in Aftercare, included Andrew Harding, ARF Secretary General and Executive Director of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA); Paull Khan, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the European and Mediterranean Horseracing Federation (EMHF); Aaron Morrison, CEO of Racing Victoria; and Salem Saeed Binmahfooz, Chairman Advisor and Technical Committee member of the JCSA.

Following the first panel, there were three individual presentations. Abdullah A. AlAseeri, Secretary-General of the Saudi Equestrian Authority, presented on aftercare in Riyadh; Melissa Ware of Racing Victoria discussed traceability and measuring the success of post-racing programs; and Grace Muir offered insight into HEROS, which combines retraining and rehoming with children’s education, veterinary education, and owner development.

The final panel of the conference, Responsibility in Action: How Participants Shape Aftercare Outcomes, featured Rob Dauth of MyRacehorse; Anna Kerr, CEO of The National Stud; and Dr. Alan Lai of Champs Legacy.

Throughout the afternoon, videos from the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC), JCSA, and New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) were shown highlighting aftercare in action.

Natasha Rose, Chair of the IFAR Conference Committee and the Executive Manager, Equestrian Affairs Projects, at HKJC, provided closing remarks.

Established in 2016, IFAR works to advocate for the lifetime care of retired racehorses, to increase awareness within the international racing community of this important responsibility, and to increase awareness in the sport horse world regarding the versatility of the Thoroughbred horse.

IFAR has a long history of collaboration with the ARF, and this is the fifth time it was held in conjunction with the ARC. The 2026 IFAR Conference was presented in association with, and with the support of, the JCSA. It was also proudly supported by the Japan Racing Association, which has entered into a multi-year sponsorship agreement to support IFAR’s activities around the world.

Welcome to the 13th edition of Global Aftercare

Introduction by IFAR Chair Dr Eliot Forbes

The successful conduct of the 10th IFAR Conference in Riyadh marked an important milestone for our organisation and for the global aftercare community.

Held in conjunction with the 41st Asian Racing Conference (ARC), this was our 10th annual conference and a valuable opportunity to reflect on how far the conversation around aftercare has progressed over the past decade. What was once too often treated as a peripheral issue is now increasingly recognised as a core responsibility of a sustainable racing industry. Riyadh provided a fitting setting in which to celebrate that progress while also challenging ourselves to keep building capability, sharing practical models and lifting standards internationally.

By every practical measure, the conference was a highly successful event. Delegates came from 32 countries, underscoring the breadth of international interest in aftercare and the strength of IFAR's global reach. The conference room was nearly full to capacity, creating an atmosphere of genuine engagement and shared purpose throughout the day. Feedback following the event confirmed that delegates particularly valued the international collaboration, the practical examples presented, and the emphasis on whole-of-lifecycle responsibility for the Thoroughbred.

I would like to record my sincere thanks to the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia (JCSA), the Asian Racing Federation (ARF), and the Japan Racing Association (JRA) for their support in staging such a successful event. The JCSA was an outstanding host and provided not only the setting for the conference, but also a memorable field trip to its Retraining and Riding Academy, which brought the themes of the day to life in a practical and engaging way. We were also pleased to have an IFAR booth at the ARC conference, which provided an additional platform to engage with delegates and further raise awareness of IFAR's work and the importance of aftercare. These partnerships matter enormously, and Riyadh was a strong example of what can be achieved when organisations work together with shared purpose.

I also want to thank Tasha Rose of the Hong Kong Jockey Club for her leadership of the Conference Committee. We were also delighted to have David Eades bring his expertise to the event as moderator, helping guide the programme with professionalism, insight and polish.

As Chair of IFAR, I also had the honour of addressing



the wider Asian Racing Conference during the equine welfare session, which is [now available online](#). In that presentation, titled *Is Aftercare the Real Ethics Test for Racing?*, I spoke about international aftercare and the proposition that aftercare is where racing's responsibility is proven, not merely promised.

That discussion reinforced an important point for our industry: aftercare is not a niche issue, but a central expression of racing's credibility, ethics and future sustainability.

In other news, we were pleased to have a presence at the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) conference last December in Denver, Colorado. With the support of the AAEP, we were able to avail ourselves of an opportunity to have a booth at the world's largest gathering of equine veterinarians.

This was an important step in broadening awareness of IFAR and aftercare within the veterinary community. We thank Kristin Werner and Erin Halliwell for their efforts in promoting IFAR at that event and helping connect with this important audience.

We have also continued our social media campaigns, building engagement and awareness of IFAR and of aftercare more generally. These campaigns are an

Continued on page 4

IN THE NEWS

Welcome from the Chair cont.

important part of how we share good practice, promote success stories and broaden the global conversation around lifetime responsibility for the Thoroughbred. Please follow our channels @IFARnews and like and share our reels and messages to help extend that reach.

Finally, the ARC in Saudi Arabia also saw the next Asian Racing Conference awarded to New Zealand in 2028. While we will certainly mark that date in our diary, we are actively progressing plans for an IFAR event in 2027 and look forward to making a further announcement in the near future.

I would also like to take this opportunity to offer a special and heartfelt thank-you to our Executive Officer, Jen Krawczyk, as she steps down from that role. Jen has provided strategic insight and organisational leadership across IFAR's recent conferences. Based in Melbourne, this has required her to work across multiple time zones and at many unsocial hours in support of IFAR's committees and activities. We thank her sincerely for her commitment and dedication, and wish her well as she continues her important work in aftercare and equine welfare.

We also warmly welcome Emily Aitkenhead as IFAR Conference and Operations Manager. Emily brings a strong background in racing and equestrian, and I look forward to working with her as we continue to build on IFAR's momentum.

It has been a busy and productive period for IFAR. We are extremely pleased with the successful delivery of the Saudi event, which in itself represents a significant achievement for the year. But our work does not stop there.

Across advocacy, engagement, communications and international collaboration, we continue to advance IFAR's mission on a number of fronts. This breadth of activity is only possible because of the strong support and commitment of our member organisations, and I thank them sincerely for the important role they play in enabling IFAR's ongoing work and impact.

Update from Saudi Arabia

Riyadh recently hosted the leading international stakeholders in horse racing and welfare during the joint International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) and the Asian Racing Conference (ARC). For Saudi Arabia, the conference represented a significant opportunity to present its national approach to equine welfare and aftercare.

In parallel, a landmark collaboration was announced between UK-based charity HEROS and the JCSA's Retraining and Riding Academy, focused on knowledge-sharing to strengthen international standards in racehorse retraining and welfare. This collaboration is the first formal international operational partnership, based exclusively on the exchange of knowledge and experience, with no financial component. This approach reflects a shared belief that advancing animal-human welfare is a collective responsibility, best achieved through mutual support, openness and the sharing of expertise.

"HEROS has always believed that the aftercare community must work together to raise global standards," said Grace Muir, CEO of HEROS. "Our partnership with the new Retraining and Riding Academy of Saudi Arabia is rooted purely in the supply and exchange of knowledge and experience –with the shared goal of improving outcomes for these incredible horses who give us, as human beings, so much."

Dr Francesca Compostella, Executive Veterinary & Welfare Director for the JCSA, emphasised the importance of building structured and sustainable systems to underpin progress, saying: "Equine welfare in Saudi Arabia relies on best standards, coordination, capability building and long-term stewardship. Collectively, we make sure that progress is not left to goodwill alone, but supported by a coherent, durable system that safeguards horses and humans alike, thus earning public trust."

News from around the globe



RESTART Horses Shine at the Longines Hong Kong International Horse Show

Following the success of its inaugural edition, the Longines Hong Kong International Horse Show returned for its second year, delivering a diverse programme that combined international sport with popular feature events. The show hosted top-level show jumping with athletes representing 30 nations, alongside crowd favourites including the Shetland Pony Grand National and dog agility demonstrations.

Also returning for a second year was the Hong Kong Jockey Club's RESTART Aftercare Programme Musical Ride. Building on its debut appearance in 2025, the musical ride showcased eight former racehorses that graduated from the Club's retraining programme. The horses represented a range of second careers currently pursued in Hong Kong, including riding school horses and active competition horses.

For 2026, the musical ride expanded in scope, featuring two distinct costume and musical themes presented across five performances throughout the event. Each display highlighted the horses' training, adaptability, and focus in a major indoor show environment, underlining the thorough preparation required for their transition beyond racing.

The inclusion of the RESTART Musical Ride forms part of the Hong Kong Jockey Club's ongoing

commitment to Thoroughbred aftercare. It provides an opportunity to demonstrate the versatility of retired racehorses while increasing public awareness of the RESTART programme. For many spectators, it also offered the chance to see familiar racing names performing confidently in their second careers.

The musical ride continues to be an important educational and promotional element within the Longines Hong Kong International Horse Show programme.



Treo Eile Announces Three-Year Commitment to Polo Performance Classes

Treo Eile has announced a new three-year commitment to supporting the €3,000 Thoroughbred Polo Performance Classes, an initiative designed to showcase the versatility of the Thoroughbred breed and highlight the adaptability of horses transitioning from racing into polo.

Taking place on June 5 at All Ireland Polo Club, Dublin, the event will feature both an educational demonstration and competitive performance classes, providing a valuable platform for riders, trainers, and retrainers within the polo sector. Entries are free and open until Friday, May 29.

The initiative aims to establish a clear pathway for polo riders and retainers to source and develop suitable Thoroughbreds, strengthening the connection between the

racing and polo industries. It also reinforces Treo Eile's ongoing commitment to promoting second careers for Thoroughbreds and supporting their transition into diverse equestrian disciplines. Treo Eile will also be continuing to award Best Playing Pony awards to thoroughbreds at a number of Ireland's leading polo tournaments.





The Jockey Club Launches Traceability Survey

The Jockey Club has announced the launch of its traceability survey, which records the status of a Thoroughbred, including the horse's use and location, so that the industry can better understand the whereabouts of Thoroughbreds that have retired from breeding and racing. Respondents can also provide additional information about the horse to help generate data on the lives of retired Thoroughbreds.

"With the traceability survey, we hope everyone who owns, leases, or boards a retired or unraced Thoroughbred will voluntarily report the horse's status to help us improve traceability," said Kristin Werner, deputy general counsel and director of Industry Initiatives, The Jockey Club. "Understanding where Thoroughbreds go after their racing and breeding careers will advance the entire industry's aftercare efforts and support welfare, accountability, and public trust in the sport."

The Jockey Club requests all Thoroughbred owners complete the survey, which should take only a few minutes per horse, by June 30, 2026, but the survey will remain open so owners can update their horse's future status. In July, The Jockey Club will assess the survey responses, and an analysis of the responses will be provided at the 2026 Round Table Conference.

An Interactive Registration (IR) account, which is free at registry.jockeyclub.com, is required to complete the survey. Once logged on to IR, click Traceability Survey.

The survey is part of The Jockey Club's ongoing Traceability Initiative, which was announced at the 2023 Round Table Conference.

The survey targets older horses born in 2017 and prior with paper certificates of foal registration, complementing the digital certificate traceability prompts that began in 2024.

For horses with no survey response, The Jockey Club Registry will follow up with emails to the last known connections of horses born in 2017 and prior with paper certificates of foal registration that do not have a Thoroughbred Incentive Program number or Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance activity and have not been reported as exported, deceased, or breeding stock. Connections of horses with a digital certificate will also receive follow-up notices from the Registry.

The Jockey Club Traceability Initiative helps track Thoroughbreds after their breeding and racing careers, estimate the current population, and improve traceability. Analysis of information submitted through the initiative will enable The Jockey Club to more effectively direct information and resources regarding a horse's transition from racehorse to second career.

Resources for horse owners looking to find new careers for their Thoroughbreds can be found on The Jockey Club's website at bit.ly/tjctbcareers.

Owners wishing to retire their horse from racing should use the Transferred as Retired from Racing process, which will permanently retire the horse.

The Jockey Club, founded in 1894 and dedicated to the improvement of Thoroughbred breeding and racing, is the breed registry for Thoroughbreds in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico.





Western Riding Wrangling New Crop of Off-the-Track Participants

Story Courtesy Racing Queensland

The variety of disciplines on offer in English riding has long provided a suitable pathway for racehorses to transition into their post-racing lives.

But it is Western riding that is proving to be a new popular avenue for both Thoroughbreds and Standardbreds enjoying their off-the-track careers. The growing popularity of Western riding was no more evident than at the Cowgirls Gathering event.

Having started in 2021, the annual event is held at Kilkivan and features classes, clinics, competitions and interactive demonstrations with educators, along with live music and entertainment every night. Cowgirls Gathering Sponsorship Manager Vera Gentner said around 600 people attended the latest edition of the three-day event.

“It’s basically a gathering and celebration of the Aussie cowgirl, and women who like the Western style of riding coming together in a safe space,” Gentner said. “There are so many different things to do, and you don’t even have to take a horse, it can be with or without a horse.

“Some of the top clinicians from around the country come and do the clinics and the demos and competitions, and it’s just a fabulous atmosphere and a lot of fun.”

One event specifically tailored to showcase the potential of off-the-track horses is the popular Race to Ranch competition. The event includes groundwork, trail tasks, ranch-style obstacles, and low-pressure ridden activities, each designed to suit horses at different stages of their re-education journey.

It was Sandra Hagan and former galloper Ghabbie who took out this edition’s top prize, which included \$500 from the Queensland Off-The-Track (QOTT) Program.

Event organisers are hopeful for a boost in the number of Standardbreds entering the next Cowgirls Gathering. The rise in popularity of Western riding, especially through recent TV series like Yellowstone, has seen a rise in participants keen to give the discipline a try. Gentner said the support from the QOTT Program had proven to be extremely valuable in attracting a new crop of talent.



Tattersalls Online and Treo Eile Announce New Sale of Retrained Thoroughbreds

Tattersalls Online and Treo Eile have announced a new collaboration for 2026 with the launch of a dedicated online sale of retrained Thoroughbreds on 27th – 28th July, to be staged alongside the Tattersalls Ireland July Show taking place at Tattersalls Ireland from 24th – 26th July.

The Treo Eile Summer Sale in collaboration with Tattersalls Online will provide a high-quality platform to showcase the versatility of retrained racehorses, while offering a transparent and commercial route for their transition into second careers. This collaboration reflects the shared commitment of Tattersalls and Treo Eile to equine welfare, integrity, and innovation. Entries will be open to retired or unraced Thoroughbreds that meet defined performance criteria across key disciplines.



RoR teams up with TopSpec for Education and Dressage Initiatives in 2026

Retraining of Racehorses (RoR) has announced a new partnership with TopSpec, who will be supporting the RoR Introduction to Owning a Former Racehorse education series alongside a selection of RoR Regional Dressage Championships.

Held at retraining centres across the country, Introduction to Owning a Former Racehorse days offer invaluable insights, practical tips and support for new owners. With expert advice on managing the transition and understanding retraining practices, these days aim to leave attendees feeling more confident with their own journey.

TopSpec's support for the education series sits alongside their support of a selection of RoR Regional Dressage Championships, expanding on the support they provided to two of these events last year.

David Catlow, Managing Director of RoR, said: "We are thrilled to be joining up with TopSpec for these initiatives in 2026. Their commitment enables us to provide more opportunities for former racehorses and their riders, as well as to continue to support newer owners as they embark on their retraining journeys."

Katy Mickle, Managing Director of TopSpec said: "At TopSpec we've always believed that every horse deserves the very best nutrition. Thoroughbreds transitioning from the track can have unique dietary needs, and we truly believe that TopSpec's feeding approach of feeding a balancer and adjusting the energy intake with a suitable TopSpec cube or mix makes it one of the most suitable feeds for former racehorses as they settle into retraining and new careers.

"Supporting organisations like Retraining of Racehorses and the incredible work they do to give these horses fulfilling second lives is something we're genuinely proud of. We appreciate the dedication and patience it takes to retrain a racehorse, and nutrition will play a big part in that. We look forward to supporting this education series to help people navigate the feeding of their horse through every stage of their retraining journey."



Longshot Winner Reunites with His Trainer to Compete in Dressage

Meikei Die Hard, a gelding by Hard Spun out of Meikei Sofia, made history in 2020 when he won the Chunichi Shimbun Chukyo Kinen (G3) as the longest shot in an 18-horse field — sent off at 163/1!

When he retired in May 2022, his owner sent him to Old Friends Japan in Maniwa, Okayama Prefecture, along with a generous donation to cover the costs of his transition.

The connections formed on the track did not end when his racing career was over. His former trainer, Kazuya Nakatake of the Japan Racing Association (Ritto), had long enjoyed riding as a personal hobby and made a point of visiting his old charge at Old Friends Japan.

His exercise rider, too, came by whenever time allowed. The bond simply continued.

Then, in December 2025, that bond took center stage.

Trainer Nakatake rode Meikei Die Hard in the dressage division of the RRC (Retired Racehorse Cup) Final at the JRA Equestrian Park in Setagaya, Tokyo — a national competition for off-track Thoroughbreds.

A sitting JRA trainer competing alongside his former racehorse is almost unheard of, and fans followed the pair around the venue all day.

"I rode this horse many times during his training days," Nakatake said afterward, "but to ride him again after he's become a riding horse — I really couldn't be happier."

A horse cared for, connections preserved, and a second life lived with dignity — and a little bit of glory. That is exactly what this story is.





Retired Cult Hero Master Jamie Teaching New Lessons

Story Courtesy Racing Queensland

As far as Queensland cult heroes go, they don't come much bigger than Master Jamie. The former galloper claimed 19 victories from a 64-start career, with notable wins coming in back-to-back Rockhampton Cups in 2022 and 2023, and in the 2020 The Gateway at Eagle Farm to book a spot into the Group 1 Stradbroke Handicap.

The gelding was also the first horse from the Beef City to go past the magical \$1 million prizemoney mark. Trained by Graeme Green, he formed a formidable partnership with jockey Les "Bubba" Tilley who took the Thoroughbred into his care in Toowoomba when he was retired in 2024.

An excitement machine on the track, these days Master Jamie is a calming influence in retirement at the Glastonbury property of Queensland Off-The-Track Acknowledged Retainer Sandi Seviar. The retrainer explained how a connection with Graeme's daughter Sileas – known affectionately as Mully – led to the former champion racehorse landing with her in the Gympie Region.

"I've had some really good outcomes for Mully Green, and she put me in touch with Bubba who had Master Jamie with him," Seviar said. "He was obviously very special and instrumental in his career, and Bubba was just finding himself time poor, and wanted to ensure that Jamie wasn't sitting in the paddock and wasting his prime years, so he reached out to me to see if I could give him a job.

"And he certainly found a job - he's got a really good job babysitting and educating the young horses coming through the QOTT retraining program. We call him 'Uncle Jamie,' and we take him down the road with us when other horses have their first outings or showing them the arena for the first time - he's just got the calming presence of an experienced horse.

"I call him the VIP of the farm - whenever someone hears his name that's involved with racing, especially up in North Queensland, they're always really keen to see what he's doing and how he is."

The now 9-year-old has impressed Seviar since coming under her care in November last year. The horsewoman said Master Jamie's calm

demeanour had him primed for a new life after racing in the showjumping and dressage arenas.

"He's a bit of an old legend...a lot of people get really hung up on and love these off-the-trackers that have had one or two starts, and they're great, but I love the older horses that are coming off the track and been everywhere," Seviar said.

"He's just a professional, and anything you do, if you ask him a question, he answers with, 'let me figure it out.' He's just a bit of a calming force, and he's got a bit of a talent there for jumping and a little bit of dressage as well. So, we'll make sure he has his opportunity to go out in the competition truck and show him off a little bit as well. It's been really lovely being able to ensure that he's got a good job to do and has been given a solid education."

While Master Jamie is not being retrained and rehomed through the QOTT Program, two other retired gallopers in Seviar's care are thriving as part of the program. She has rehomed 12 horses since joining the QOTT Program in 2023 and is excited to welcome more retired gallopers in the future, thanks to the support offered to her as a QOTT Acknowledged Retainer. [Click here](#) for more information on the QOTT Acknowledged Retainers Program.



IFAR'S Vision

- All horses are treated in a humane and ethical manner every day of their life.
- All suitable horses find a home after racing.
- Every industry participant, administrator, owner and breeder recognises and embraces their responsibility towards Thoroughbred aftercare.
- All racing jurisdictions have effective and well-funded aftercare, traceability and education programmes in place.
- Thoroughbreds are valued and sought-after athletes by the equestrian community.
- IFAR leads a highly-engaged and global community of horse professionals advocating for Thoroughbred aftercare.



Dates for the Diary 2026

Australia

24th-27th April - Victorian Showjumping Championships

2nd-3rd May - Kingaroy Show

6th-8th June - Melbourne International Three Day Event

10th-11th October - QLD Teams Dressage Championships

Great Britain

14th May - Royal Windsor Horse Show

22nd May - RoR Eventing Championships

12th August - Badminton Show

16th -17th September - Blenheim Palace International Trials

Ireland

10th January-28th April - Treo Eile's 2026 Thoroughbred Arena Eventing Series

20th May - Treo Eile's Webinar Series - Oxidative Stress

27th-28th July - The Treo Eile Summer Sale

United States

19th April-22nd November - East Coast Thoroughbred League

23rd April - New Vocations' Open Barn & BBQ

2nd June - Thoroughbred Hunter Derby

1st-4th October - T.I.P. Championships

7th-10th October - Thoroughbred Makeover and National Symposium

Follow us on our social media platforms



Interested in becoming an IFAR Member or Supporter?


- Membership costs US\$2,000/year (additional contributions are welcomed)
- Includes an opportunity to participate on committees, when vacancies are available, as well as full voting and nomination rights and the opportunity to display IFAR's logo.
- Membership requests reviewed on a quarterly basis
- Those unable to contribute financially should consider becoming an IFAR Supporter, which is free (but does not include membership rights)
- Click [HERE](#) to access the membership application form after reading the [code of conduct](#).

Contact

c/o Thoroughbred Charities of America
P.O. Box 910668
Lexington, KY 40591
Phone: (859)-276-4989 or (859) 224-2720
info@internationalracehorseaftercare.com

How IFAR can support you

IFAR comprises members with significant knowledge and expertise and is ready to assist those seeking help. This assistance may be general advice or guidance or it may be tailored to specific issues relating to the welfare of Thoroughbred racehorses and how to develop aftercare provision in their countries, taking into account cultural differences.

IFAR and  TCA

IFAR is proud to be associated with [Thoroughbred Charities of America \(TCA\)](#), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization supporting Thoroughbreds and the people who care for them.