

Ferdie J. Deering

MAR 4 1982

If Gambling Wins, State Will Lose

GAMBLING interests are pushing campaigns to legalize their operations primarily for one reason: They expect to fatten their bank accounts with money from greedy people who think they might be lucky.

For years race track people have been pouring money into the state to build elaborate horse farms and have publicized exaggerated statements about the economic significance of horse breeding. Their estimates might lead the uninformed to conclude horses produce farm income on a par with cattle and wheat. It just isn't true.

Horses are loved by people in all walks of life, and by no means are all horse lovers gamblers. Race track habitues have a love greater than their love for horses, and that is love for money.

Attendance records indicate horse racing is one of the top sports. Records don't show why people go to races and they do not show that most of those who go come away losers.

The eyes of the nation are upon Oklahoma because it is one of the

bright spots in the present recession. Gambling interests have had their eyes upon this state for a long time and they figure it is ripe for the plucking.

A very old proverb says "Continual dropping wears away a stone." Gamblers have seen this happen here and they probably hope it may happen for them. It happened when Oklahoma legalized 3.2 beer, then whiskey, and now liquor advertising and open disregard for law.

At each step vague promises were made that "sin taxes" would help finance schools and do other great deeds. By no means have all of the implied benefits become realities.

The strategy is to get a little bit, then expand it and take over. When the state legalized bingo games they were to be held only for the benefit of religious or fraternal organizations, only once or twice a week, and with strictly limited prizes offered.

It is common knowledge now that bingo games are operated every night of the week in some places, with high stakes, and with profits directed to others than religious or

fraternal organizations.

Parimutuel supporters are gearing up a big campaign to open when and if the state supreme court rules that their petition contains sufficient valid signatures, something less than 100,000 out of a state population of three million people.

No doubt efforts will be made to convince voters that this constitutes great public demand for parimutuel gambling when in fact it barely meets legal requirements to put the question to a vote.

Those opposed to gambling do not have financial resources to match what gambling interests may raise. They do have the benefit of organizations and citizens who care about our state's moral climate.

Pending legislation that would put the state into the gambling business on another front by conducting a lottery for support of government is another barrage in the broad-scale assault to bring wide-open gambling to Oklahoma, with its accompanying vices.

If the gamblers win, all Oklahoma will lose!

March 4, 1982

ATTENTION: Freddie J. Deering

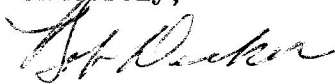
Dear Sir:

Responding to your March 4, 1982, editorial
"If Gambling Wins, State Will Lose".

Has Mr. Gaylord received more financial gain from
outside state interests, that realize pari-mutual
wagering in Oklahoma may reduce Arkansas, New Mexico
racing earnings, than from Mr. Gaylord's horse racing
stables that he races in other states?

By the way, I admired Mr. Gaylord's horse "Rumbo".
Is he now standing at stud, or continuing to race?

Sincerely,



Bob Decker
Route #1
Thomas, OK

APR 15 1982
**Betting to cut
taxes in state**

TO THE EDITOR:

Regarding Ferdie J. Deering's editorial:

Many states now have pari-mutuel wagering. Some are even state owned. Mr. Deering asked why, and answered the question with no facts or evidence to support his negativism. I would like the people of Oklahoma to have some knowledge of the impending request for pari-mutuel wagering and how it reduces their tax burden in creating new employment opportunities in the state.

Like other states now operating pari-mutuel racing, Oklahoma will

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increase state revenue and reduce taxes. Facts and figures are included from the state of Washington to bear me out.

Distribution of the racing dollar is: 84 percent is returned to the public, 5 percent to track, 5 percent to purses, 1 percent to Washington-Bred Bonus Fund and 5 percent to the state. In addition to wagering, the state receives the following: Admission tax, sales tax, license fees, miscellaneous tax and property taxes. Out of all this revenue the state incurs the racing commission operating expense.

I offer the years of 1977 and 1981 as fact to the revenue and growth of the industry. Longacres Race Track, Renton, Washington:

	1977	1981
Total attendance	864,422	1,289,730
Average attendance	8,475	9,921
Total handle	87,046,967	169,167,830
Average handle	853,402	1,301,291
Racing days	102	130
Pari-mutuel taxes	4,352,348	8,458,390
State expenditures	680,822	1,020,820

Source: Washington Horse Racing Commission, Olympia, Wash.

There are many ways in which the thoroughbred industry contributes to the state's economic well being. Several of which I would like to mention, such as the following:

The industry's total capital investment is estimated to be in excess of \$250 million, land being the largest single item with an estimated 23,000 acres being devoted specifically for raising and training of thoroughbreds, (this figure does not include the many additional acres of land utilized for the production of hay and grain for thoroughbred consumption).

Approximately \$41 million has been invested by horsemen in thoroughbred horses, and an additional \$52 million in plant and equipment.

The assessed evaluation for land, buildings and equipment owned by the Washington Racing Associations is estimated to be in excess of \$21 million and increases annually as plant additions and improvements are made.

The thoroughbred industry expends in excess of \$100 million annually, based upon 1978 figures.

In addition to the measurable expenditures made by racing patrons at the tracks, it is estimated that they contributed in excess of \$31 million to the economies of Seattle, Spokane and Yakima, Wash., for such items as transportation, meals, lodging, shopping, other forms of entertainment and miscellaneous expenditures.

Edward D. Bloom, city