

DRC race track protests fines

By Teri Banas
staff writer

The Michigan racing commissioner has fined Detroit Race Course more than half a million dollars for failing to promptly report an appraisal of its market value.

The \$544,000 fine, which has not yet been paid, is the latest action in DRC's battle with state racing commissioner William Ballenger over an ownership question at the track.

At issue is the Michigan Racing Law of 1980, which prevents the same people from owning more than one race track in a defined geographic area.

DRC's owners, Bernard Hartman and Herbert Tyner, also own Hazel Park Raceway. In addition, their Southfield-based company owns numerous apartment buildings in the Detroit area.

In accordance with the state law, DRC would have to be sold. In the

meantime, the law requires that the owners file updated appraisals every six months, according to Ballenger.

Kenn Christopher, Ballenger's racing analyst, said DRC failed to do that when it filed an updated appraisal on Sept. 14, 1983 — 136 days late. It was scheduled to file that appraisal the previous April.

NEITHER PROPERTY owner chose to comment on the fine. Tyner deferred comment to his attorney, Irwin Alterman of Southfield.

Alterman disputed Ballenger's interpretation of the law, adding they expected to challenge the fines "either administratively or by filing a lawsuit." He said some action would be taken this week.

"It was inappropriate to levy any fines," Alterman said. "The law doesn't require us to file any papers (an updated appraisal)."

Alterman said he would not elaborate on his interpretation of the law.

In total, Hartman and Tyner were fined \$4,000 for each day the appraisal was late. The partners also failed to report Hazel Park's appraised value in that 4½ month period, boosting their total fine to \$1.1 million.

"The law's requirement that the two tracks be appraised every six months stems from the Legislature's intent that at least one of the two tracks operated by Hartman and Tyner be sold by this coming December," Ballenger said. "The possibility of a sale is severely curtailed if prospective buyers cannot obtain up-to-date appraisals of the value of the race track property."

The law also requires the partners to sell one of their tracks to a buyer who offers to buy at the most recent appraised value. Ballenger noted that the value of both tracks decreased substantially since original appraisals were released in late 1982.

DRC's value dropped by more than

\$2 million since its original appraisal in October 1982. Its original market value was appraised at \$15,950,000. In September 1983 it was reappraised at \$13.3 million. That figure was based on a down payment of 25 percent of the selling price and a land contract. If a 20 percent down payment was made, the appraisal would increase to \$13.57 million, Christopher said.

THE APPRAISALS were made by the Dean Appraisal Co. of Detroit.

According to the racing commissioner's office, it's believed that fine is the largest financial penalty ever levied in the history of organized sports in North America.

Ballenger said he is also investigating whether failure to comply with the appraisal requirements of the law should result in criminal charges.

DRC's general manager David Karoub also declined comment.

Course offered in career switch

Careers in transition, the Oakland University Continuum Center's three-session career development course will be offered 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays, beginning Feb. 25, in Room 207

O'Dowd Hall on the Oakland University campus in Rochester. The course will be led by Rosemary Doyle.

Cost for the course is \$75 and includes job preference tests and a struc-

tured workbook. For further details, call the Oakland University Continuum Center. Preregistration is required.

It is aimed at persons who want to change jobs, develop a new career or examine other career options.

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