

Thoroughbred season opens Friday at DRC

The cry "They're Off" will echo and reecho through the confines of the Detroit Race Course Friday for the earliest opening of the thoroughbred season on the west side of metropolitan Detroit in several years.

This will be a big first year for the Detroit Racing Association which operates the DRC facilities and the big mile track. Thoroughbred racing has been anything but successful at the Livonia plant in the past three years and Vice President and General Manager Richard S. Wilson hopes to get racing back on the high level it once had.

"The DRA hasn't had the opening spring dates in several years," smiled Wilson as he discussed some of the promotions he plans to boost attendance and wagering this year.

"With the fresh money available and fans waiting for the return of the runner, we hope to give them a show of the like they have never witnessed in the Detroit area. We know we have to do something drastic to shake our operation out of the doldrums it has fallen into during the past two years."

With that in mind, Wilson set out to explain the DRA will continue its 2:30 p.m. post on weekdays and 1:30 p.m. on Saturdays and holidays, hopes to excite bettors with the return of the Big Perfecta and feels the track will have a better class of horses than for several seasons.

"Tom Dorsey, our director of racing, has been scouring the south, east, southwest and far west for stables," said the DRA boss. "We know we have plenty of talent available for the opening and the first few weeks and then the big stables will begin to move in from the Fairgrounds, Oaklawn Park in Hot Springs, Southern Florida at Tampa land from the tracks in Maryland and California.

"Everything points to a much better season than last year and we hope the return of the Big Perfecta, once the most popular of the betting gimmicks in Michigan, will have that same popularity. We have the horses, we have the gimmicks, we have the early post... everything for the enjoyment of patrons and we're hoping to attract them like bees to honey."

Thus the big mile track is ready for its first opening meeting in a few years and spirits are high for the most successful campaign in at least three years.

Announcer Jack Riggs will officially open the 1974 campaign when he makes the cry of "They're Off" shortly after 2:30 p.m. Friday and then it will be 241 consecutive days of racing until the season ends at Hazel Park come next December.

The DRC had only a 90 day season last year, preferring not to use the final 30 days which were turned over to Hazel Park where the 1973 activities ended just a week ahead of Christmas Day.

Track Supt. Jimmy McPhee and his crew have been working on the big mile track for the past four weeks, that is, doing everything possible to have the surface in top shape in face of heavy snows and equally heavy rains.

"Just give us a few more days like we had over the weekend," said McPhee, "and we'll have the track in as good condition as one can expect this far north while still in the winter season."

Horses have been working out on the big oval for the past several days; between the snows and the rains but it was only on Saturday that McPhee could say conditions were ripe for the horses.

Post time for the opening program will be 2:30 with the first race on Saturday slated to go at 1:30 p.m.

Then it will be back to the daily routine with 121 days of racing at the DRC before shifting to Hazel Park for the closing 120-day campaign.

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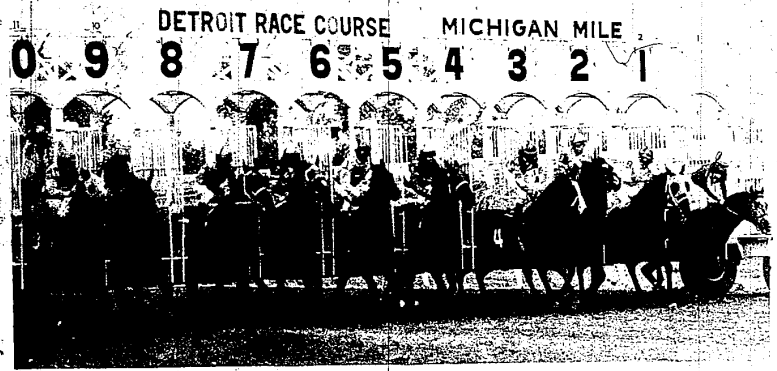
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THEY'RE OFF AND RUNNING Friday at the Detroit Race Course where the 121-day thoroughbred meeting will be highlighted by the \$100,000 Michigan Mile on June 22.

There will be nine races weekdays and 10 on Saturdays and holidays, with the Big Perfecta again being added as a wagering attraction.

Turf Tips, Quips

By Doc Minard

Racing Commissioner Leo Shirley quickly settled the matter of a six-night conflict between Northville Downs and Hazel Park caused by his awarding dates that had the two metropolitan Detroit area tracks competing against each other during the final week of Hazel Park and the opening week of the Downs. Shirley settled the matter by taking six nights from Northville's 20-night summer meeting, trimming it total to 14.

True enough that erased the conflict but it didn't do a thing to ease John Carlo's mind, now he has to try and stage a successful summer campaign in a matter of four weeks.

The decision wasn't that much of a surprise since Shirley reportedly had told various individuals connected with the racing industry that Northville might wind up with 24 nights. It didn't work out that way in his original

dates but he sure did take care of it in the ruling last week.

Reasons cited for the action were: 1. the track would have trouble getting enough mutual help to conduct the meeting during the six nights; 2. Northville would have trouble getting enough horses; and 3. the American Totalisator Co. wouldn't be able to furnish machines.

Those close to the racing situation point out the commotion was dead wrong in all its assumptions.

In the first place the track has a contract with the totalisator clerks union to furnish help based on or management has the right to hire enough outside help to man the machines if the union can't.

In the second place, the fact that the big horse has been looking for since he entered the racing business.

BOB KALISH, of Southfield, has nothing but smiles these days as he watches Spanish Mac, a five-year-old Diller Hanover pacer, perform as he expected it would when he bought it several months ago.

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 - Thurston at Garden City East
 - Garden City West at Riverside
 - North Farmington at John Glenn
 - Plymouth Canton at Northville
 - Tremont at Plymouth Salem
 - Redford Union at Belleville
 - Southfield at Seaholm
 - Waterford at Stevenson

Hawk victory comes on pins

Farmington Harrison wrestled Livonia Stevenson, 27-19, in a match which found two Hawks winning on pins and that was the difference between the teams. The teams split the 12 matches but Harrison emerged the winner.

A first

The nation's first Institute for the Administrative Advancement of Academic Women, a practical training program to prepare women faculty members for senior administrative positions in major universities, was held at the University of Michigan in 1973. The program was funded by the Carnegie Corp. and the Ford Foundation.

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