

OTTB Showcase: The Totally Thoroughbred Horse Show

by [Jen Roytz](#)



Some of the OTTBs competing for EHM Stables this weekend are (from left) Powered by Love, Cayman Condo, Baltimore Raven, Prideland, Saratoga Jet, and Oregon Ridge.

Lexington, Ky. and Ocala, Fla. vie in ads and via their city slogans as the "Horse Capital of the World," but the Mid-Atlantic region is giving all challengers a run for their money when it comes to being the Off-Track Thoroughbred Capital of the World.

It was just one year ago that Maryland hosted three inaugural Thoroughbred-specific horse shows. This year, advocates of Thoroughbreds and post-racing repurposing of Thoroughbreds have come together to create the Thoroughbred Alliance Show Series, which will host several Thoroughbred-only shows in the Mid-Atlantic region, with each show benefiting equine rescue and rehoming programs in the area.

One of the nine shows in the spring-summer-fall series is this weekend's Totally Thoroughbred Horse Show at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore, Md. The event garnered more than 300 entries in its inaugural year in 2012.

"We thought it would be nice to have a Thoroughbred show at a race track," said Georganne Hale, racing secretary at the Maryland Jockey Club. "Stacy at Adena Springs' retirement program called me one day in hopes of putting something together to raise money for off-track programs around here. We decided on all Thoroughbreds. There was so much interest and success the first year, it was decided to have a series of shows with a year-end banquet in 2013."

It's not just the equestrians who are getting into the spirit of things around Pimlico. Mike Gathagan, vice president of communications for the Maryland Jockey Club hasn't had much

exposure to the performance horse world, but he and others in the press corps are looking forward to keeping up with the action at the event.

“One of the neat things about last year was seeing horses that we used to write about,” said Mike. “P Day was one of my personal favorites. I made a point of finding him and sent a tweet. This year we have Mr. O’Brien entered, and he was another one of our favorites in the press box. Longtime handicapper and racing analyst Frank Carulli made a fortune on him at 11-1 in the Dixie on the 2004 Preakness undercard, so I will be sure to find him next weekend.”

Horses and riders are coming from far and wide to attend this year’s show, including a group of thirteen OTTBs from Maryland-based EHM Stables, owned and operated by Betty McCue and her sister, Evelyn Martin.

“Some will be in the class that is judged on conformation,” said Betty McCue, wife of Maryland Jockey Club photographer Jim McCue. “We will have two in the leadline class, ten will go in the walk/trot with riders 15 and under, ten will go in the walk/trot/canter class, eleven will compete in the two-foot jumping class, and three or four will go in the three-foot jumping class.”

Betty and Evelyn grew up immersed in equestrian sports. Their family raised horses in Warrenton, Virginia and her family fox hunted, steeplechased and competed at horse shows throughout their childhood and into their adult lives.

Today, in addition to running their EHM Stables with Evelyn, Betty also works as an elementary school teacher at Timonium Elementary.

“I have patience as the horses learn a new career and the children work with them and learn to ride,” said Betty. “I carry that back and forth because just like some horses need to learn in a different way, so do some children in the classroom. A horse will do whatever you want if he understands what it is. You just need to build up their trust, confidence and understanding.”

One young woman who has not only learned these lessons from Betty, but has also put them into practice is Sydney Parker, who works and shows for EHM Stables and plays an integral part in retraining ex-racehorses as show horses and also in starting young Thoroughbreds under saddle.

“I will be riding a lot of horses on Saturday, but the one I show the most consistently is Saratoga Jet, who’s a very talented jumper that also loves to trail ride when we’re not showing,” said Sydney. “Another horse that is very dear to me is Cayman Condo. He came to us a year ago and I had an instant connection to him. I’ve shown him twice so far, and this will be his third show. Stewart Nickel was his owner on the track, and his daughter, Ellie, will be riding him in the walk/trot division, and I will be jumping him.”



The EHM Stables crew shows off some of their more recent awards

EHM Stables isn't your typical OTTB-centered organization. Whereas most farms that focus on retraining Thoroughbreds after the track are non-profits looking to adopt out their pupils, EHM Stables is not a charity but a fully functioning hunter/jumper show and sale barn.

"My sister and I do not have a 'rescue.' We do not receive any funding. We do this because we love Thoroughbreds and enjoy riding them and teaching students to ride and love them as well," explained Betty.

Students at EHM Stables don't just learn to ride; they learn to care for equine athletes from head to toe.

"Students at our barn learn everything," said Betty. "You learn to do stalls, you learn to clean your tack, and you learn to put on bandages and to deal with the vet and blacksmith. It isn't a camp, but they seem to come early and stay late."

The Totally Thoroughbred Horse Show begins at 9 a.m. on July 13 in the infield at Pimlico Race Track and will include eight classes with six ribbons awarded for each class and nearly \$10,000 in prize money paid to the owners of the first three finishers in each class.

The DEETS: Featured Horses

Ashwell Springs (1999 gr/ro M. Wolf Power (SAF) ó Altnaharra)

Record: 3-0-0-0 Earnings: \$1,250

Baltimore Raven (2005 dk b/br G. Meadow Monster ó Cleveland Brownie)

Record: 49-12-7-5 Earnings: \$205,682

Big Deal (1996 dk b/br M. Personal Flag ó Clever Exchange)

Record: 16-3-2-2 Earnings: \$94,883

* 2nd, Golden Sylvia Handicap

Cayman Condo (2003 b G. Partner's Hero ó Dixie Music)

Record: 80-16-17-18 Earnings \$478,531

* 1st, Delaware Certified Stakes (2008); 2nd Delaware Certified Stakes (2007); 3rd New Castle Stakes, Maryland Million Sprint Handicap

Giant Talent (2006 ch G. Giant's Causeway ó Lady of Talent)

Record: 27-2-1-5 Earnings: \$44,528

Hidden Appeal (2004 b G. Broad Brush ó Clandestine Caller)
Unraced

McNamara (2005 gr/ro G. Mizzen Mast 0 Valhalla Vixen)
Record: 28-9-7-3 Earnings: \$154,070

Oregon Ridge (1998 dk b/br G. A. P. Indy ó Pharma)
Record: 2-0-0-0 Earnings: \$640

Prideland (2002 dk b/br G. Lion Hearted ó Tequila Sheila)
Record 24-6-3-4 Earnings: \$159,037

* 3rd, Maryland Juvenile Championship Stakes

Powered by Love (2006 b G. Not For Love ó Mystic Dance)
Unraced

Property Man (1986 dk b/br G. Temperence Hill ó Bold Nita)
Record: 8-0-0-0 Earnings: \$120

Saratoga Jet (2003 b G. A. P. Jet ó Pierpont Account)
Record: 15-3-1-1 Earnings: \$100,653

Vow of Honor (2009 dk b/br F. Broken Vow ó Lady Rushmoore)
Record: 17-4-2-2 Earnings: \$78,751

If you have or know of a retired Thoroughbred with an interesting story to tell, we'd love to hear about it! Just email Jen Roytz (Jenlroytz@gmail.com) with the horse's Jockey Club name, background story, and a few photos.

*Jen Roytz is the marketing and communications director at Three Chimneys Farm in Midway, Kentucky. She also handles the farm's Thoroughbred aftercare efforts. She currently owns Point of Impact (by Point Given; a.k.a. Boomer), who retired from racing in late 2011 and is just in training (slowly, but surely) as a hunter/jumper. Contact Jen on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.*