ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BRITISH COLUMBIA RACING COMMISSION

FOR

1977

BRITISH COLUMBIA

HON. GARDE B. GARDOM, Q.C.
ATTORNEY-GENERAL
OF THE PROVINCE OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

R. BRUCE HARVEY
CHAIRMAN OF THE
BRITISH COLUMBIA
RACING COMMISSION

MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

To Colonel the Honourable WALTER S. OWEN, Q.C., LL.D.,
Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

The undersigned has the honour to present the Annual Report of the British Columbia Racing Commission for 1977.

GARDE B. GARDOM
Attorney-General

Victoria, B.C., January 1978.

PERSONNEL OF COMMISSION

The Commission, during 1977, consisted of:

Chairman—R. Bruce Harvey.

Commissioners—
Reverend Desmond Kimmitt.
J. R. C. (Jack) Short.

Commissioner-Secretary—Robert E. Collis.

Commission Staff

Thoroughbred Racing Stewards—
W. D. F. (Don) Dunn.
Joseph L. Horton.

Standardbred Racing Judge—Brian M. V. Middleton.

Veterinarians—
Dr. Alan D. Purvis, D.V.M.
Dr. Gordon Davis, D.V.M.

Stenographer/Office Supervisor—Mrs. Glenna Perkins.

Chief Investigator—Joseph Shepherd.

Investigators—
Kenneth A. F. Yarker.
Wilfred E. Denty.
Robert J. Anderson.

Licensing Supervisor—Mrs. Mary-Lou Annal.

Clerk-Typists—
Miss Marjorie Lasnier.
Miss Tracey Blain.

Annual Report of the British Columbia Racing Commission

The Honourable Garde B. Gardom, Q.C.,
Attorney-General, Victoria, B.C.

SIR: The Racing Commission supervised all horse-racing in the Province in 1977, upon which pari mutuel betting was permitted. This racing, thoroughbred, standardbred, and quarter-horse, was presented before 1,312,442 patrons who wagered $115,437,693.

The purse money paid to all horsemen totalled $5,727,196 and the Provincial Government received $8,080,639 under the *Pari Mutuel Betting Tax Act.*

The Commission is pleased that it supervises a rapidly expanding sport. A brief comparison demonstrates the extent of this growth. Five years ago, in 1972, the total number of days of horse-racing within the year was 107, with a gross wagering of $39,446,053. In 1977 the number of days totalled 259 with wagering of the aforementioned figure of $115,437,693.

However, these increases bring in their wake a number of issues which require the continuing attention of your Commission.

A. The more rapidly expanding segment of the sport in British Columbia is the standardbred. The Commission is most pleased that harness racing, which was for many years in the doldrums in this Province, is now both well established and achieving an increasing excellence in the quality of the racing being presented.

At the same time, the expansion in the area of the thoroughbred has been much more modest, merely keeping pace with the inflationary increase in the total economy.

Your Commission cannot escape the conclusion that there are only so many dollars available for wagering; and that the advent of year-round racing in British Columbia and, an even more significant factor, the immense sums of money now received into lotteries, are making the market for the gambling dollar a highly competitive one.

It is in this realization that your Commission has a recommendation before the Government for a decrease in the percentage received by the Province under the *Pari Mutuel Betting Tax Act.*

It is the same insight which has caused the Commission to be cautious in responding to the requests by segments of the industry for an increase number of racing-days. Indeed, in recommending to the Government that the dates for racing in 1978 remain almost exactly the same as in the previous year, your Commission intends being able to monitor precisely the growth, or otherwise, of the sport.

We repeat, however, that we supervise a burgeoning sport, which requires ever-escalating levels of oversight. We further regard an important aspect of our over-all task as your Commission to be the encouragement of all segments of horse-racing in British Columbia to continue to achieve that excellence which will draw the increasing patronage of the people of our Province.

B. Costs within the total sport also increase rapidly. Your Commission is most particularly concerned by the financial difficulties of the breeders of racing-stock, which stock is the lifeblood of the sport. In conjunction with your Com-

mission's proposal for a decrease in the Government's share of the mutuel percentage, we also have certain long-term recommendations before the Government regarding assistance to the breeders. We continue to urge most strongly the implementation of these recommendations.

C. In concert with all segments of the sport, your Commission is unanimously and respectfully of the conviction that there is no merit in the retention of legislation which disallows horse-racing on Sundays.

We make the point that while both Federally and Provincially there is a thrust to retain recreational spending within our own jurisdictions, your Commission is dismayed by the substantial funds wagered by British Columbians on Sunday racing in the State of Washington, moneys which would, with changed Provincial and municipal legislation to allow Sunday racing here, accrue to the sport within our own Province.

D. Your Commission is conscious of the fact that it is responsible for the conduct of horse-racing throughout British Columbia.

In this regard, we were most happy that, in 1977, our recommendations for monetary assistance to the Interior tracks were implemented by the Government.

The Commission has also been most pleased by the excellent public response to the newly vitalized and enthusiastically presented thoroughbred racing at Sandown, on Vancouver Island. We continue to explore ways by which the Commission may assist in providing an expanded opportunity for Island residents to participate in the sport.

E. The members of our Commission keep themselves aware of developments on the racing scene throughout North America. Mutual areas of concern exist on such diverse issues as, for example, uniform judging, medication, horse identification, exotic forms of wagering, and, above all, that of legalized off-track betting on horse-racing, the promotion of which is being strongly urged by major segments of the industry in Canada, a fact which your Commission regards with grave anxiety in terms of its potential negative impact on racing as a sport.

In all these mutual concerns, your Commission finds most valuable the opportunity to attend the annual meetings of the Canadian Racing Commissions, at which we were represented in 1977, and at which we anticipate a full attendance by the Commission in January 1978.

Your Commission also remains a member of the National Association of State Racing Commissioners. Unfortunately, no member of the British Columbia Racing Commission has been present at an annual meeting since 1973. However, it is expected that a full representation will be in attendance at the 1978 conference.

During 1977 the Commission held 25 formal meetings to decide racing-dates, rule amendments, appeals from Stewards' rulings, and to consider numerous other racing matters.

THOROUGHBRED RACING

1. Exhibition Park, Vancouver

(April 11 through October 15, 1977)

The British Columbia Jockey Club presented racing on 108 days this year and attendance fell short by the barest of margins, the magic one million patron mark. The purse money distributed to thoroughbred horse-owners competing at Exhibition Park was $4,157,949, plus nomination and subscription fees paid to enter stake races. Owners of British Columbia-bred horses received a further $837,528 as a purse subsidy from the Provincial Government.

Comparative Statistics for Exhibition Park, 1973–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1973	109	57,738,655	529,712	+24.1	8,383	+1.9
1974	100	66,419,396	664,193	+25.3	9,134	+8.9
1975	101	75,958,605	752,065	+13.2	8,888	−2.7
1976	104	79,620,397	765,580	+ 1.7	9,240	+3.9
1977	108	89,347,766	827,294	+ 8.0	9,268	+ .3

Rulings of the Stewards

There were 75 rulings issued by the Stewards at Exhibition Park during the racing season for various violations of the rules and regulations. Of those issued, 31 were for irregular personal conduct, 28 for careless or faulty riding, eight for irregular licensing procedures, two for reinstatement, and six for drug-related offences. Four of the drug finds were for the analgesic drugs phenylbutazone and hydroxyphenylbutazone, and one for procaine. The penalties imposed by the Stewards on these occasions were licence suspensions and, in one case, a substantial fine of a practising veterinarian for his inadvertent administration of a medication too near race-time. In all cases of a reported positive drug-finding the horses were subsequently disqualified from the race and the purse money redistributed.

The Stewards utilized the race video on 61 occasions to conclusively confirm or refute suspected or reported rider infractions. These viewings resulted in the Stewards altering the order of finish in 23 races.

2. Sandown Park, Sidney

(October 21 through November 21, 1977)

The Capital City Turf Club, operators at Sandown Park, attempted to extend their race-meet an additional three days; however, the weather was unkind and therefore the over-all presentation was adversely affected.

This race-meeting was relatively free of rule violations; however, a positive finding of the drug phenylbutazone resulted in substantial fines to two licensees responsible for the condition of the horse in question. Two minor suspensions were ordered for the riding infractions by two separate jockeys, and one indefinite suspension was issued to a licensee for extremely poor conduct. The race video aided the Stewards in their review of all races and the order of finish was altered three times for careless or faulty riding.

Comparative Statistics for Sandown Park, 1975–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1975	16	2,813,849	175,865	—	2,805	—
1976	16	3,436,401	214,775	+22.1	3,303	+17.7
1977	19	3,711,847	195,360	− 9.0	2,801	−15.1

Horse-racing in the Interior

The Interior racing circuit received well-needed assistance from the Provincial Government this year in the form of improvement grants equivalent to the betting tax collected at each centre.

The Government realized that these tracks were under extreme financial hardship and were operating under threat of closure if aid was not forthcoming. The grants, distributed through the Racing Commission, were specifically to improve facilities and the presentation of horse-racing within their respective communities, and if possible, for over-all community benefit. This aid program was established in relation to dollars wagered on a *per diem* basis and will be terminated when each track reaches an established wagering level. In 1977 the six minor tracks received a total of $35,000 under this program.

3. Desert Park, Osoyoos

(June 10, 11, 17, and 18 and August 19, 20, 26, and 27, 1977)

Comparative Statistics for Osoyoos, 1973–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1973	4	33,523	8,380	+53.8	931	+16.3
1974	4	44,605	11,126	+32.7	712	−23.5
1975	4	61,524	15,381	+38.2	672	− 5.5
1976	4	74,255	18,563	+20.6	874	+30.0
1977	8	121,616	15,202	−18.1	595	−31.9

4. Sagebrush Downs, Kamloops

(June 22, 24, and 25, August 31, and September 2, 3, and 5, 1977)

Comparative Statistics for Kamloops, 1973–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1973	3	109,190	36,397	+98.5	4,233	+340.0
1974	5	173,137	34,627	− 4.8	1,283	− 69.6
1975	5	183,809	36,761	+ 6.1	1,126	− 12.2
1976	7	245,275	35,039	− 4.6	1,280	+ 12.0
1977	7	239,830	34,261	− 2.2	2,261	+ 76.6

5. Fair Grounds, Williams Lake

(June 30 and July 1 and 2, 1977)

Comparative Statistics for Williams Lake, 1973–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1973	3	34,890	11,630	+ 20.1	4,533	− 24.5
1974	4	47,126	11,781	+ 1.3	3,661	− 19.2
1975	3	59,452	19,817	+ 68.2	2,000	− 45.3
1976	3	39,161	13,053	− 34.1	428	− 78.6
1977	2	55,212	27,606	+111.8	3,450	+706.0

6. Sunflower Downs, Princeton

(July 8 and 9, 1977)

Comparative Statistics for Princeton, 1973–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1973	2	31,396	15,698	+37.9	1,525	+ 0.3
1974	2	36,094	18,047	+14.9	1,250	+18.0
1975	2	29,926	14,963	−17.0	800	−36.0
1976	2	47,008	23,504	+57.0	1,052	+31.5
1977	2	53,406	26,703	+13.6	1,087	+ 3.3

7. Kinsmen Park, Vernon

(July 15, 16, and 18, 1977)

Comparative Statistics for Vernon, 1973–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1973	2	42,280	21,140	+49.3	2,250	+18.4
1974	2	53,568	26,784	+26.7	1,850	−17.7
1975	2	43,505	21,752	−18.7	1,350	−27.0
1976	2	56,035	28,017	+28.8	1,823	+35.0
1977	3	97,764	32,588	+16.3	2,816	+54.4

QUARTER-HORSE RACING

The owners of quarter-horses remain hopeful that a major facility will be developed upon which to race their quarter-horse stock. In 1977, recognized quarter-horse racing was conducted at Osoyoos and Kamloops in conjunction with the thoroughbred horse-racing.

STANDARDBRED RACING

Cloverdale Raceway is now the home of standardbred racing in British Columbia. The local residents who had supported harness racing while it ran at the old Ladner location have enthusiastically moved to the Cloverdale plant to show their appreciation of the sport.

Orangeville Raceways Ltd. are the lease operators of the track and before year-end were able to open their new clubhouse facility for the added comfort of their ever-increasing patrons.

Racing was offered on 63 nights and Saturday matinées between January 1 and April 9, and an additional 44 days between October 17 and December 31, 1977.

RULINGS OF THE JUDGES

There were 116 rulings issued by the Judges at Cloverdale Raceways during the racing-season for various violations of the Rules and Regulations of Standardbred Horse Racing, and the Rules and Regulations of the Canadian Trotting Association, the latter adopted under the Provincial regulations. Careless and irregular driving practices accounted for 99 of the rulings, personal conduct required 13 rulings,

irregular licensing procedures necessitated three further rulings, and one ruling was related to a drug offence. The positive drug-finding was for the analgesic drugs phenylbutazone and hydroxypenylbutazone, for which the licensee responsible received a suspension and a substantial fine. As required by the regulations, the horse from which the positive finding was determined was disqualified and the purse money redistributed.

8. Orangeville Raceway Ltd.

Cloverdale Raceway, Surrey

(January 1 to April 9 and October 17 to December 31, 1977)

Comparative Statistics for Orangeville Raceway, 1976–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1976	111	16,483,073	148,496	—	1,828	—
1977	107	21,718,493	202,979	+36.7	2,124	+16.1

9. Lower Fraser Valley Exhibition Association

Cloverdale Raceway, Surrey

(September 13, 15, and 17, 1977)

Comparative Statistics for L.F.V.E.A., 1976–77

Year	Number of Days	Amount Wagered	Daily Average	Daily Percentage Change	Average Daily Attendance	Daily Percentage Change
		$	$			
1976	2	21,021	10,510	—	515	—
1977	3	91,759	30,586	+191.0	1,064	+10.6

The Lower Fraser Valley Exhibition Association presented their three days of harness racing in conjunction with the Surrey Fair, and it would appear this will become a regular event of the annual fair. This association offered the only minor harness racing in the Province this year, as Smokey Downs in Squamish decided not to operate in 1977.

REVENUE FROM HORSE-RACING, 1977

All personnel employed within the confines of the major racetracks in Vancouver, Surrey, and Sidney, and the owners, trainers, and jockeys at the Interior race-meetings, are required to be licensed by this Commission.

Assistance is also offered the Consumer Taxation Branch in that the Commission collects the 7-per-cent social services tax on the sale of horses at the supervised race-meetings.

To obtain a more clear picture of the revenues received by the Provincial Treasury from the racing industry, the following breakdown also includes the total pari mutuel betting tax:

Licence Fees and Fines

(January to December 1977)

	$
Occupational (1,512 @ $1)	1,512.00
Owners (1,441 @ $5)	7,205.00
Trainers (255 @ $5)	1,275.00
Probationary trainers (53 @ $5)	265.00
Jockeys (57 @ $15)	855.00
Apprentice jockeys (19 @ $5)	95.00
Jockey agents (21 @ $5)	105.00
Jockey valets (11 @ $1)	11.00
Veterinarians (10 @ $15)	150.00
Blacksmiths (22 @ $5)	110.00
Tradesmen (10 @ $15)	150.00
Stable names (184 @ $10)	1,840.00
Partnerships (427 @ $1 per horse)	427.00
Authorized agents (456 @ $2 or A/A only $1)	917.00
Colours ($1 for annual; $5 for life)	774.00
Company registrations (9 @ $25)	225.00
Reissue of lost licences	38.00
Licence fees from Interior race-meets	288.00
Licence fees from Sandown Park	371.00
Licence fees from Cloverdale	1,627.00
Total	18,240.00
Fines	1,975.00
	20,215.00
7-per-cent social services tax collected by Commission on bills of sale at Exhibition Park, Sandown, and Cloverdale	19,012.42
7-per-cent social services tax on horses claimed at Exhibition Park	86,976.00
7-per-cent social services tax on horses claimed at Cloverdale Raceway	13,038.84
Pari mutuel betting tax	8,080,639.00
Total	8,219,881.26

All of which is respectfully submitted.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RACING COMMISSION

R. Bruce Harvey, *Chairman*
Desmond Kimmitt, *Commissioner*
Jack Short, *Commissioner*
Robert E. Collis, *Commissioner-Secretary*

January 1978.

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