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THOROUGHBRED DAILY NEWS
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008

**HEADLINE
NEWS**

NYRA AWARDED 25-YEAR FRANCHISE

The New York Racing Association has been awarded a 25-year franchise to operate Thoroughbred racing at Aqueduct, Belmont Park and Saratoga after an agreement was reached yesterday between NYRA, New York Governor Eliot Spitzer, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. Under the agreement, NYRA will cede its claim on the land the three tracks occupy, and the state will provide NYRA with \$105 million to satisfy a financial restructuring plan filed in bankruptcy court. NYRA filed for bankruptcy in 2006. The legislation also allows for the installation of a Video Lottery Terminal facility at Aqueduct. "This plan really came together in the last two days through the diligent efforts of State government: in particular, Speaker Silver and his staff were tireless in their efforts to make this significant piece of legislation a reality," said NYRA Chairman C. Steven Duncker in a statement. "We especially appreciate the tremendous work of the Governor and his staff as well as the Senate Majority leader and his staff. This legislation contains the key components for us to emerge from bankruptcy, and to improve upon what is already the best racing in the world." The organization's board will be comprised of 25 directors, with 14 appointed by NYRA and 11 by the state. The bill passed the state assembly yesterday morning by a vote of 92-40 and the senate yesterday afternoon by a vote of 39-17. **For the complete bill, click [here](#).**

PADUA BUYS FACE THE CAT

Padua Stables has purchased a majority interest in promising sophomore **Face the Cat** (Tale of the Cat) from owners David and Marilyn Randal, according to published reports. The three-year-old has been transferred from trainer Helen Pitts to Todd Pletcher's Palm Beach Downs barn. Pitts had been pointing the chestnut colt for the Feb. 24 GII Fountain of Youth S. at Gulfstream Park. Face the Cat broke his maiden second time out at Gulfstream Jan. 4 and added a four-length allowance victory over Nistle's Crunch last time out Jan. 30. Pitts trained 2007 Horse of the Year Curlin to his debut win at Gulfstream last year, only to lose the horse after he was sold and transferred to Steve Asmussen's barn.

GODOLPHIN DUO TAKE CENTER STAGE

Etched (Forestry) and **Numaany** (A.P. Indy), a pair of promising sophomore colts owned by Godolphin, line up in today's G3 UAE 2000 Guineas at Nad Al Sheba. Etched, a son of GI Breeders' Cup Distaff heroine Unbridled Elaine, was tabbed as a ★ **"TDN Rising Star"** ★ following a sharp debut victory at Belmont Park Sept. 29 ([video](#)). The chestnut was equally as impressive in Aqueduct's GIII Nashua S. Oct. 28 ([video](#)), scoring by 6 ½ lengths over subsequent GII Kentucky Jockey Club S. winner Anak Nakal.



Etched *Horsephotos*

Etched, formerly trained by Kiaran McLaughlin while racing under Sheikh Mohammed's Darley operation, makes his debut in the Godolphin blue for trainer Saeed bin Suroor. "Etched is a horse we like a lot and is pleasing us in his work," bin Suroor said. Numaany finished a well-beaten fourth for Darley and trainer Tom Albertrani in his Belmont unveiling Sept. 30, then overcame an eventful stretch run while obtaining ★ **"TDN Rising Star"** ★ status in a Nov. 2 ([video](#)) Aqueduct maiden contest. After taking a commanding lead in the stretch, Numaany bolted to the outer rail, forcing jockey Javier Castellano to lose his irons. However, the chestnut miraculously recovered and re-rallied to win going away by 2 ¾ lengths. "This is a big step up for Numaany, but he is a nice horse," bin Suroor added.

TALENT SEARCH SIDELINED

Talent Search (Catienuis), expected to start in the Mar. 29 G1 Dubai Golden Shaheen, has been sidelined by a hairline fracture in a knee, according to *Thoroughbred Times*. A homebred for Ken and Sarah Ramsey, the five-year-old was second in last year's GI Frank J DeFrancis Memorial Dash and GI Vosburgh S. and was third behind champion Midnight Lute in the GI Breeders' Cup Sprint for trainer Mark Shuman. He had been expected to make his first start for trainer Bobby Frankel at Nad al Sheba. The injury is not expected to be career-ending.

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