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BRIAN ENG
CAL JESTICE
CORY MOELIS
CRAIG KAUFMAN
DANIEL YOUNG
DARREN SCHWEIGER
DAVID HARRISON
DENNIS HUBBARD
DYLAN DONNELLY
FRANCIS PAROS
JAMES HENRY (2X)
JASON SANTILLA
JOE KRAMER
JOHN GASPAR
JOHN SCHIMPF
KEN SEEMAN (2X)

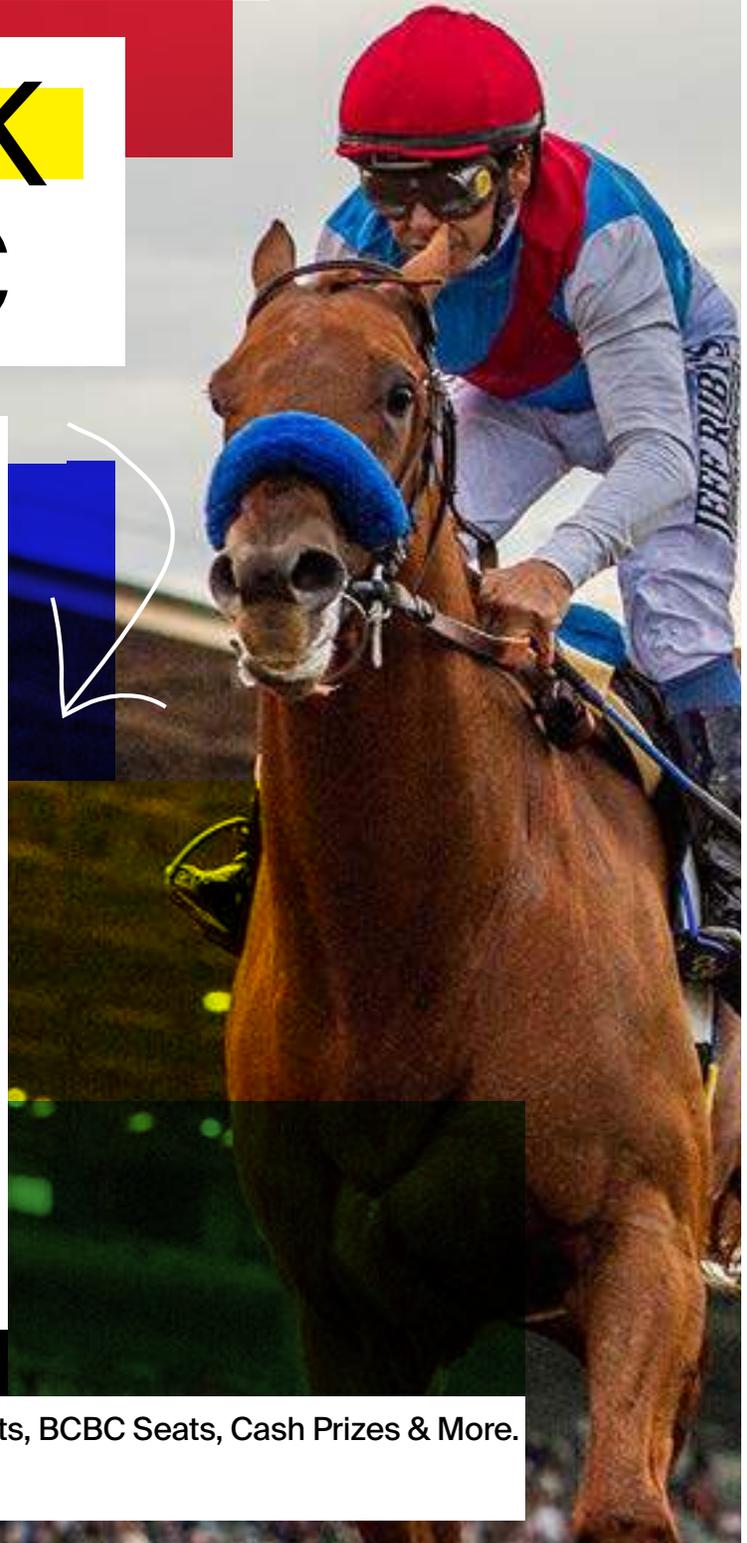
LEN HANSON
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MICHAEL KAVANA
MICHAEL TROSSEN
MIKE GILLUM
PAT STICH
RAY SAINZ
RICHARD SUGIMOTO
ROBERT IKE
ROBERT RUSDEN
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#NHC 2026

Welcome

Congratulations on qualifying for the 2026 NTRA National Horseplayers Championship (NHC) presented by Racetrack Television Network (RTN), Caesars Race & Sportsbook, and Horseshoe Las Vegas. I am thrilled to welcome you to Las Vegas for the largest and richest NHC in history! I'm also excited to welcome you back to the Horseshoe Las Vegas Events Center, which is again converted into the world's largest race and sports book for this one weekend a year. At the conclusion of what promises to be an exhilarating and sometimes exhausting three days of competition, one of you will collect a life-changing payday, win an Eclipse Award, and be recognized as the National Horseplayer of the Year.

For over a quarter-century, the NHC has brought together horseplayers from across North America to compete in the world's richest and most prestigious handicapping contest. Some of you have been qualifying for many years; for others, it may be your first time. Qualifying for the NHC remains a tremendous accomplishment because, unlike virtually every other handicapping contest, a seat at the NHC can't be purchased. It must be earned. Fewer than 10% of NHC Tour members qualify for the NHC each year, so making it to Las Vegas is a tremendous achievement of which you should be proud.

Nearly 800 participants representing more than 40 states and Canadian provinces will convene this weekend in Las Vegas at the Horseshoe Las Vegas. However, it is the story of how each of you got here that makes the NHC such a great event. The NHC is Thoroughbred racing's biggest national promotion, with participation from some 40 different organizations that host NHC qualifiers throughout the year. Any organization can host a handicapping contest, but only through cooperation and collaboration are we able to host a year-round Tour and National Championship worth millions of dollars. Many participating sites have sent representatives to Las Vegas this weekend to attend the NHC. I hope you will join me in thanking them for their participation and support.

Outlets that host qualifiers to the NHC see firsthand what I recognize each time I attend the races; that is the enthusiasm exhibited by horseplayers. Your passion and love for these beautiful Thoroughbreds, along with your wagering dollars, fuels not only the growth of the NHC, but every aspect of our magnificent sport. For that, we thank you.

The NTRA team has worked very hard this past year to make the 27th NHC the best yet. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to make your time in Las Vegas more enjoyable.

Good luck and God bless,

Tom Rooney
President and CEO
National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA)

**CONGRATULATIONS
NHC QUALIFIERS!**

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#NHC 2026

About The NHC

The NHC

The NTRA National Horseplayers Championship (NHC), presented by Caesars Race & Sportsbook, Racetrack Television Network (RTN), and Horseshoe Las Vegas is the richest, most important, and most prestigious tournament for horseplayers in the world. The NHC is the culmination of a year-long series of sanctioned local tournaments conducted by racetracks, advanced wagering deposit companies and platforms, casino race books, off-track betting facilities and horse racing and handicapping websites, each of which sends its top qualifiers to the national finals in Las Vegas. Each year, the NHC winner joins other human and equine champions as an honoree at the Eclipse Awards.

Established in 1999 the first NHC offered total purse money of \$200,000. The 27th NHC will offer total prizes and awards of over \$5 million.

The NHC Tour

The NHC Tour is a year-long bonus series offering additional prize money and qualifying berths to the NTRA National Horseplayers Championship (NHC). The 2024 NHC Tour awarded \$345,000 in cash prizes, \$75,000 of which was awarded to the tour winner.

Membership in the NHC Tour is mandatory in order for top finishers of sanctioned NHC qualifying events to be eligible to compete in the NHC Finals in Las Vegas.

Dave Nichols, of Wayne, PA won the 2025 NHC Tour. Nichols won \$75,000 in cash and is eligible for a \$5 million bonus at this year's NHC.



QUALIFY FOR THE NHC WITH CANTERBURY PARK



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Dan Piazza

#NHC 2026

Horseplayer of the Year

Benefitting from steady and sure play from the start, Dan Piazza, a financial advisor from Chicago, went virtually from gate to wire and held off a late close from Tom Boyd at the Final Table to win the 26th NTRA National Horseplayers Championship at the Horseshoe Las Vegas March 14-16 in Las Vegas. Piazza's victory earned him \$825,000, an Eclipse Award as 2025 Horseplayer of the Year.

Piazza stuck with his strategy throughout the contest. "I didn't try to do anything different and didn't get myself out of my comfort zone," he said. "That strategy put me up Friday and on Saturday; it was the same thing Sunday."



Watch Dan Piazza speech



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE

Keeneland Qualifiers to the NTRA National Horseplayers Championship

Brad Agee | Brad Anderson | David Basler | Karl Broberg | Blaise Brucato
Adam Burgoon | Scott Carson | Mike Ferrozzo | John Fisher | John Gaspar
David Gutfreund | Cal Jestice | Lawrence Kahlden | Tom Larkin | Steven Lipinski
Gary Machiz | Tom Maloof | Jill Matzat | John O'Brien Jr. | Raul Pantoja
Dan Riddell | Jerald Segall | Paul Shurman | Matt Trommer | Michael Weyer

Please visit Keeneland this Spring for two opportunities to qualify for the 2027 NHC.

APRIL 10 | \$400 SPRING CHALLENGE

Minimum of 1 BCBC and 2 NHC spots awarded.

APRIL 11 | \$3500 GRADE ONE GAMBLE

Minimum of 6 BCBC, 10 NHC, and 3 KY Derby Challenge
up for grabs, along with an estimated first prize of \$65,000
(based on 300 entries)

For details visit keeneland.com or contact Jim Goodman at jgoodman@keeneland.com.



NHC Past Champions

2024-2019



Mike Gillum — 2024

Entries: 765 | Prizes: \$4,455,514 | Winning Score: \$320.10

Mike Gillum found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow when he topped the field of 765 entries and took home the \$800,000 grand prize at the 25th National Horseplayers Championship. Gillum, who operates a produce company and is a regular at the Horseshoe Indianapolis.



Paul Calia — 2023

Entries: 765 | Prizes: \$4,455,514 | Winning Score: \$320.10

Paul Calia, of Kansas City, Missouri, bested 779 entries to take home the grand prize of \$800,000, in addition to finishing in 4th place (\$150,000), and an Eclipse Award crowning him Horseplayer of the Year at the 24th Annual National Horseplayers Championship (NHC).



David Harrison — 2022

Entries: 643 | Prizes: \$3,568,591 | Winning Score: \$342

David Harrison of Webster, N.Y., topped a field of 643 entries to win the \$725,000 first-place prize and an Eclipse Award as Horseplayer of the Year at this weekend's 23rd annual National Horseplayers Championship (NHC) presented by Racetrack Television Network, Caesars Entertainment, and Bally's Las Vegas.



Justin Mustari — 2021

Entries: 563 | Prizes: \$2,154,000 | Winning Score: \$370.80

Justin Mustari, 26, from Des Plaines, IL, and the youngest NHC champion, won a first place prize of \$725,000 and an Eclipse Award as Horseplayer of the Year at the 22nd National Horseplayers Championship.



Thomas Goldsmith — 2020

Entries: 694 | Prizes: \$2,997,500 | Winning Score: \$404.10

Thomas Goldsmith, 57, from Montgomery, TX, won a first place prize of \$800,000 and an Eclipse Award as Horseplayer of the Year at the 21st National Horseplayers Championship.



Scott Coles — 2019

Entries: 668 | Prizes: \$2,863,000 | Winning Score: \$367.00

Scott Coles, a futures trader from Illinois, was the youngest NHC champion to date. At 34, Coles topped a field of 668 entries, and amassed a total score of \$367. Coles won a first place prize of \$800,000 and an Eclipse Award as Horseplayer of the Year at the 20th National Horseplayers Championship.

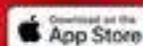


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NHC Past Champions

2018-2013



Chris Littlemore — 2018

Entries: 702 | Prizes: \$2,974,700 | Winning Score: \$348.30

Chris Littlemore, a retired autoworker from Whitby, Ontario, Canada, was never seriously threatened throughout the Semifinals and the Final Table, cruising to an \$800,000 first-place prize and an Eclipse Award as Horseplayer of the Year at the 19th NTRA NHC Presented by Racetrack Television Network, STATS Race Lens™. The NHC had a record field size of 702 entries (568 individual players) and offered a record overall cash and prizes totaling \$2,974,700.

Ray Arsenault — 2017

Entries: 654 | Prizes: \$2,385,000 | Winning Score: \$407.70

Ray Arsenault became the third Canadian to capture horse racing's most prestigious handicapping contest when he defeated 654 entries at the 18th NHC held at Treasure Island Las Vegas. Arsenault, a 64-year old transportation broker used his methods of searching out long shots and value horses to take the tournament lead on day two. He never looked back during Sunday's semifinal round and at the Final Table of 10 players, entering as the leader and continuing to win with long shots.



Paul Matties, Jr — 2016

Entries: 629 | Prizes: \$2,778,760 | Winning Score: \$399.50

Paul Matties, Jr. of Ballston Spa, NY topped a field of 629 entries to win the \$800,000 first-place prize and an Eclipse Award as Horseplayer of the Year. The 46-year old Matties amassed a winning score of \$399.50 over the 3 day tournament from 53 mythical \$2 Win and Place bets.

John O'Neil — 2015

Entries: 606 | Prizes: \$2,363,000 | Winning Score: \$327.20

John O'Neil, 74, of Huntington Station, NY collected a winning score of \$327.20 over the three-day tournament from 47 mythical \$2 Win Place bets. O'Neil was the NHC two-day leader at the end of Saturday's races but lost the lead toward the end of the Final 50 contest that led to the Final Table. In the seven mandatory races that made up the Final Table, however, O'Neil cashed in four of them.



Jose Arias — 2014

Entries: 500 | Prizes: \$1,590,000 | Winning Score: \$338.20

Jose Arias, a 36-year-old environmental safety engineer from Bell Gardens near Los Angeles, put up a record two-day total after taking the lead late on Day 1. On the third day of the competition held off all challengers, proceeding to the first ever NHC Final.

Jim Benes — 2013

Entries: 455 | Prizes: \$1,500,000 | Winning Score: \$268.40

Jim Benes, professional horseplayer, of Countryside, IL amassed a winning score of \$268.40 from 28 mythical \$2 Win and Place wagers and two mythical \$4 Win and Place "Best Bet" wagers over the two-day tournament. Benes, who qualified for the NHC at Hawthorne Race Course, was in second place at the conclusion of Day 1, and stay at or near the top of the pack throughout Day 2.





LAUREL PARK

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2026 LAUREL PARK CONTEST SCHEDULE

Secure your spot in the NHC and BCBC through our official 2026 qualifiers:

APR 18 | Preakness Preview Day Challenge

JUN 27 | DeFrancis Day Challenge

SEP 26 | Autumn Handicapping Challenge

OCT 24 | Maryland Million Day Challenge

EACH CONTEST \$500
(\$250 ENTRY FEE / \$250 BANKROLL)



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NHC Past Champions

2012-2007



Michael Beychok — 2012

Entries: 480 | Prizes: \$1,507,003 | Winning Score: \$238.60

Michael Beychok became the first and only person to win \$1 million at the NHC when he won the 13th DRF/NTRA NHC by one dollar on the last race in the contest. Beychok, a 48-year-old political consultant from Baton Rouge, LA, finished with a final score of \$238.60 to rally past Dave Flanzbaum.

John Doyle — 2011

Entries: 301 | Prizes: \$1,051,150 | Winning Score: \$224.80

John Doyle, a 49-year-old former IBM account executive from Scottsdale, AZ, who retired to become a professional horseplayer, topped 300 other contestants to win the \$500,000 first-place prize and title of 2010 Horseplayer of the Year at the 12th annual DRF/NTRA NHC at Red Rock Resort.



Brian Troop — 2010

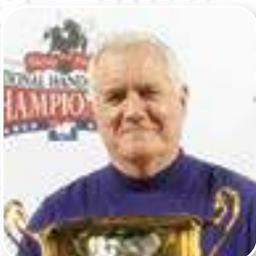
Entries: 302 | Prizes: \$962,000 | Winning Score: \$228.00

John Conte, a veteran public handicapper from Oceanside, NY won the \$500,000 first prize for topping a field of 302 at the DRF/NTRA NHC held at Red Rock Resort. Conte, author of the Grass is Greener turf selections that have been a staple in New York papers for many years, won the contest on a race taken off the grass. Going into the final race of the contest, Conte eventually found himself in 11th-place and in need of one more winner, a longshot, in order to pass the 10 players in front of him and give him the championship.

John Conte — 2009

Entries: 654 | Prizes: \$2,385,000 | Winning Score: \$407.70

Ray Arsenault became the third Canadian to capture horse racing's most prestigious handicapping contest when he defeated 654 entries at the 18th NHC held at Treasure Island Las Vegas. Arsenault, a 64-year old transportation broker used his methods of searching out long shots and value horses to take the tournament lead on day two. He never looked back during Sunday's semifinal round and at the Final Table of 10 players, entering as the leader and continuing to win with long shots.



Richard Goodall — 2008

Entries: 277 | Prizes: \$1,017,700 | Winning Score: \$272.30

Richard Goodall, a retired attorney based in Las Vegas, NV, won the ninth DRF/NTRA NHC in runaway style. Goodall's final bankroll was \$272.30, resulting in a record-setting margin of victory of \$76.

Stanley Bavlsh — 2007

Entries: 255 | Prizes: \$836,750 | Winning Score: \$189.20

Stanley Bavlsh, 54, of Virginia Beach, VA, won the \$400,000 first-place prize in the DRF/NTRA NHC held at Bally's. Bavlsh scored \$189.20 points – the lowest winning total in the eight-year history of the NHC – from making 15 mythical \$2 win-and-place wagers each day of the two-day tournament with eight being mandatory races that everyone has to play and the other seven being optional. Prizes were capped at \$42 to win and \$22 to place.



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★ **IN 2025, THE 34TH-PLACE FINISHER RECEIVED AN NHC SEAT!** ★
IN 2022-2025, 25 NHC SEATS WERE AWARDED – THE MOST IN HISTORY!

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Must Win Pick Your Prize Playing On-Site AND Win the June 14 \$300 NHC Qualifier

NHC/BCBC SUMMER QUALIFIERS

- ★ Saturday, July 18 - \$1,000 Haskell Challenge (online only)
- ★ Saturday, August 1 - \$500 Monmouth/Saratoga Challenge
- ★ Saturday, August 29 - \$800 Monmouth/Saratoga Challenge



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monmouthpark.com



NHC Past Champions

2006-2000

Ron Rippey — 2006

Entries: 226 | Prizes: \$536,000 | Winning Score: \$237.20

Ron Rippey, longtime public handicapper for the Newark Star-Ledger, captured the \$540,000 DRF/NTRA NHC. Rippey, 61, of Wayne, NJ earned his way into the national tournament by finishing second in a qualifying event at Autotote/Sports Haven on September 24. He won the national final and top prize of \$250,000 with contest earnings of \$237.20, an \$8.60 winning margin. Rippey hit a 17-1 shot named Alluring Bel in the 10th race at Santa Anita, last race of the tournament, to vault into the lead of the 224-person competition.



Jamie Michelson, Jr. — 2005

Entries: 214 | Prizes: \$412,400 | Winning Score: \$240.40

Jamie Michelson, Jr. following in the footsteps of lifelong friend Steve Wolfson, Jr. and emerged victorious to win in the sixth annual DRF/NTRA NHC at Bally's-Las Vegas. Michelson won the championship's \$200,000 grand prize and earned the title of Horseplayer of the Year just two years after watching Wolfson accomplish the same feat at NHC IV in Jan. 2003.



Kent Meyer — 2004

Entries: 259 | Prizes: \$240,000 | Winning Score: \$238.40

Kent Meyer became the fifth winner of the DRF/NTRA NHC, topping a field of 261 players at Bally's-Las Vegas. Meyer won first prize of \$100,000 and earned the crown of Horseplayer of the Year for 2004. Meyer compiled a total of \$238.40 based on mythical \$2 win-and-place bets on 15 races per day on each day of the two-day contest. In total, Meyer had eight winners between \$14.40 and \$51.80, plus two additional seconds in the 30-race contest.



Steve Wolfson, Jr. — 2003

Entries: 213 | Prizes: \$212,000 | Winning Score: \$279.60

Steve Wolfson, Jr became the fourth Horseplayer of the Year with his victory in NHC IV at Bally's-Las Vegas. Wolfson defeated a field of 213 players and claimed first prize of \$100,000 with a final bankroll of \$279.60. Wolfson leapt into contention in the contest with his play on Offlee Wild (\$56.80 to win and \$21.60 to place) in the Holy Bull Stakes at Gulfstream.



Herman Miller — 2002

Entries: 177 | Prizes: \$212,000 | Winning Score: \$205.30

Herman Miller jumped out to an early lead and never looked back on his way to victory over a field of 177 players in the third annual \$212,000 DRF/NTRA NHC at MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Miller prevailed after a seesaw battle with several challengers to take first prize of \$100,000. He hit nine winners in the 30-race tournament and scored a contest-winning bankroll of \$205.30 despite missing a race and making only 14 of his 15 available plays on the first day of competition.



Judy Wagner — 2001

Entries: 204 | Prizes: \$212,000 | Winning Score: \$237.70

Judy Wagner won the second DRF/NTRA NHC, defeating a field of 204 players and taking home a \$100,000 grand prize in January 2001. She was in eighth place after day one of the contest and used a strong rally on day two to leap to the top of the leaderboard. Her final national bankroll of \$237.70 based on \$2 win and place wagers on 30 races from eight tracks was good for \$7.30 margin of victory.



Steven Walker — 2000

Entries: 160 | Prizes: \$212,000 | Winning Score: \$305.40

Steve Walker from Lincoln, NE, won the inaugural Daily Racing Form/NTRA National Handicapping Championship to become the National Horseplayer of the Year for 2000. Walker knocked out a field of 160 handicappers to win \$100,000 at the MGM Grand in January 2000. He compiled a contest-winning bankroll of \$305.40 based on 20 mythical \$2 win and \$2 place bets.



The race to the Championship runs through Del Mar



Proud to be a part of the 2026 National Horseplayers Championship

The action is always world-class at Del Mar. This year we're excited to offer three handicapping challenges for a chance to qualify for the 2027 NHC.

- ◆ Summer Handicapping Challenge July 25-26
- ◆ Pacific Classic Betting Challenge August 22
- ◆ Fall Handicapping Challenge November 28

For more information, contact Chris Bahr at chris@dmtc.com.



DelMarRacing.com

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TO DAVE NICHOLS
2025 NHC TOUR
CHAMPION**





Good Luck at
#NHC2026

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Tour Champions

2008-2025



Sam Brooks
2008



Bryan Wagner
2009



Tom Noone
2010



Paul Shurman
2011



Mark Streiff
2012



Brent Sumja
2013



Eric Moomey
2014



Jonathon Kinchen
2015



Cheryl McIntyre
2016



Mike Ferrozzo
2017



David Gutfreund
2018



David Snyder
2019



Sally Goodall
2020



Joseph Kevin Costello
2021



Jay Johns
2022



Joseph Kevin Costello
2023



Brett Wiener
2024



Dave Nichols
2025



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Good Luck to all 18 qualifiers from Horseshoe Indianapolis in 2025

Joseph Carnevale
Patrick Cronin
Doug Bredar
Erik Fannin
Jill Matzat
Thomas Rapps
Harry Seaman (2)
Bill Bode
Pam Piscitelli

Pat McGhee
Brian Allen
Steve Bartz
Philip Lam
T.J. Taylor
Brian Feldman
Stephen Luca
William Robelen

2026 NHC Qualifier Seats

18 seats total

Road to Louisville* (January 17 - May 2)
NHC Qualifiers (July 10, July 11, December 5)
Road to Champions Day* (May 1 - October 24)
Veteran's Day* (November 11)

**Free Contests*

*Home of the Grade III \$300,000 Indiana Derby
Saturday, July 11, 2026*

Hall of Fame

2026 Inductees



Kevin Engelhard

NHC Tour Member since 2008

NHC Appearances: 17

NHC Mentor

Engelhard, of Franklin Park, NJ., is also a very accomplished horseplayer, with Top 40 finishes on the NHC Tour every year since 2014, and Top 10 finishes in 2016, 2020, 2023, and 2024. He's also had top finishes on Horseplayers.com, Aqueduct, Delaware Park, Laurel, Monmouth Park, and Woodbine.

"I am truly grateful to be elected to the NTRA Hall of Fame. I want to thank the association for this honor and look forward to continuing my involvement in the NHC and the Thoroughbred racing community," Engelhard said.

Engelhard also participates in the NHC Mentor program, which connects Tour members to many of the most formidable horseplayers who impart their wisdom on handicapping and contest play.

Hall of Fame

2026 Inductees



Mike Ferrozzo

NHC Tour Member since 2008

NHC Appearances: 18

2017 NHC Tour Champion

Ferrozzo, of Eagen, MN., has a wide range of accomplishments as a horseplayer. In 2017, he won the NHC Tour, and made the NHC Final Table in 2015. In addition to these NHC achievements, he has had great tournament success, winning at Canterbury Park, Hawthorne, Belmont, and Surfside, among others.

“I’m totally elated and honored, and want to thank everyone who supported me in the nomination and voting,” said Ferrozzo. “It’s not often that you get to be recognized with other lifetime achievers in a sport you’re passionate about!”

Ferrozzo also wanted to make sure to thank everyone who has helped him get to this point in his career.

“There have been hundreds of people I’ve learned from over the years in and out of the NHC, so I’d like to thank everyone who’s contributed to my handicapping knowledge and been a part of my horse racing experiences.”

Hall of Fame

2026 Inductees



Chris Littlemore

NHC Tour Member since 2011

NHC Appearances: 11

2018 NHC Champion

Littlemore, from Smith Falls, Ontario, has found great success being a horseplayer, with his biggest successes being at the National Horseplayers Championship itself. There, he was not only the champion in 2018, but he followed it up with a Final Table appearance in 2019, finishing 7th.

“It feels amazing. When I went to the races for the first time in the early 80’s, never in my wildest dreams did I think something like this would happen,” said Littlemore. “Having had success at the NHC has enabled me to be able to travel across the United States to racetracks I thought I would never be able to get to, but always wanted to see.”

Along with travel, Littlemore made sure to acknowledge those who helped him get to this moment.

“To be voted in the Hall of Fame by fellow horseplayers alongside past inductees is truly an honor.”

Hall of Fame

2026 Inductees



Ken Seeman

NHC Tour Member since 2009

NHC Appearances: 17

Seeman, a longtime horseplaying veteran from Wantagh, NY, had this to say about being inducted:

“Being voted into the NHC Hall of Fame by my peers is an amazing honor that is very special to me. I love the NHC and the community it creates and want to thank the NTRA for

creating this wonderful event. I am grateful to have made so many close friends with shared experiences to last a lifetime.”

While qualified for 17 previous NHCs, Ken has qualified this year and in 2027, meaning he will have played in 19 consecutive years. He’s placed in the top 25 six times, and the top 15 three times. Other than the NHC, Ken has won The BIG One Tournament on HorseTournays, and finished 2nd in the Pegasus World Cup Betting Championship.

“I’m proud of my accomplishment of having qualified for the NHC for 19 consecutive years, every year since I started playing contests. It’s so exciting to compete each year against some of the best handicappers in the world.”

During his career, Seeman worked in sports television and notably started with the “Thoroughbred Action with Harvey Pack” Show. “Working with and learning from Harvey and producer Mitch Levites put me in the starting gate of my long career in sports television.”

Thank You #NHC 2026

The NTRA wishes to thank the following organizations for their support of the NHC.

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2025 NHC Qualifying Sites

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Horsetourneys.com
Horseshoe Indianapolis

Horseshoe Las Vegas
Keeneland
Kentucky Downs
Laurel Park
Little Red Feather
Lone Star Park
Los Alamitos
Monmouth Park
NTRA
Oaklawn
Race Lens

Remington Park
Sam Houston Race Park
Santa Anita Park
Scioto Downs
Tampa Bay Downs
TourneyBets
TwinSpires
Woodbine
Xpressbet

2026 NHC Players' Committee

The NTRA and the NHC Players' Committee wish to thank all horseplayers who participated in 2025-2026 NHC Qualifiers.

Dennis Decauwer, Chairman (CA)
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Ross Gallo (FL)

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