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ECONOMY LEADS TO MIXED RESULTS FOR SUFFOLK DOWNS' 2008 MEET

EAST BOSTON, MA - Suffolk Downs wrapped up its 2008 racing season with declines in live wagering and attendance and an increase in all-sources handle, track officials announced today.

On-track handle for the 102-day live meet was down 7% from last year, as was attendance. All-sources handle was up 11% on the strength of 13% growth in transmitted handle.

"We averaged almost one horse more per race this year and that combined with increased coverage from TVG helped bettors around the country find the Suffolk Downs' simulcast signal," said Chip Tuttle, Chief Operating Officer of Suffolk Downs. "Even with those gains, declines in attendance, live handle and our overall handle on-site and the deteriorating economy make business conditions very difficult for facilities like ours that do not have the competitive advantage of expanded gaming."

In 2007, Suffolk Downs bucked national trends with increases in live handle (14%) and attendance (22%). The partnership that owns Suffolk Downs has invested substantially in the facility and the racing product but the operation has not been profitable for the last several years.

The highlight of the meet was Commentator's victory in the 66th running of the \$500,000 Massachusetts Handicap on September 20 before a crowd of 17,712. The MassCap was part of the Breeders' Cup Challenge "Win and You're In" Classic Division. According to his owner, Tracy Farmer, Commentator's presence in the MassCap was due, in part, to Suffolk Downs' groundbreaking zero-tolerance anti-slaughter policy that the track instituted under new ownership in 2007.

Winston Thompson bounced back from an injury-shortened 2007 campaign to capture his fourth Suffolk Downs riding title in five years and his fifth overall at the East Boston oval. Thompson was the lone rider to top the century mark for the meet, recording 101 wins from 647 mounts (16%) to finish 11 wins ahead of David Amiss. Defending title-holder Tammi Piermarini was fifth with 63 wins.

"It was a lot of hard work," said Thompson. "I had to earn it. I just kept on working."

John Rigattieri continued his reign atop the trainer standings, earning his fifth consecutive title. Rigattieri saddled 66 winners from 295 starters (22%). Marcus Vitali was second with 45 wins. Former Eclipse Award winner Michael Gill topped the owner standings for the fourth time with 42 wins, having last done it in 2005. Monarch Stables was second with 32 wins.