



Trainer Candidate

RAUL A. GARRIDO

Raul Garrido, a native of Caracas, Venezuela, has been around horses since the age of 3. Horses were a big part of the family, and his father, a podiatrist, was the owner of many racehorses.

Garrido started training in Venezuela in 1990 soon after he earned his BA in veterinary medicine. He trained in his home country for almost 10 years and came to the United States in 2000. Garrido chose to settle in Maryland, where he stabled his horses at the Bowie Training Center.

He moved his stable to Laurel Park when Bowie closed, and currently owns and trains five horses stabled at Laurel and at a training center in Sykesville, Md. Since 2000 in the U.S., Garrido has won more than 250 races and his horses have earned about \$3.6 million.

Garrido is advocate not only for growth in the racing and breeding industry but for cohesive action to protect the business and educate the public on its benefits and focus on equine welfare.

“We have to make a lot of changes to keep people involved in the business,” he said, “but we can’t forget there are a lot of outside agents like PETA that are against us. We need to improve the barn area here, work together on the condition book and make races for every horse on the backstretch.”

Garrido said the automatic 10% deduction of purse money for trainers, a program championed by the MTHA Board of Directors and implemented earlier this year, was a positive development he hopes leads to other changes.

“We need to always try to make things better,” said Garrido, who believes having at least one Spanish-speaking representative on the MTHA board is important. “We have excellent facilities here—Laurel is a very nice track compared with other ones that I have been to. Maryland also has many nice farms, and we have to make sure we keep that business here.

“We all fought a lot to increase purses and look at what has changed over the years. Even the simple things can make a difference.”