

# Del Mar Facts

Del Mar is unique in that its facilities are owned by the State of California and controlled by the 22nd District Agricultural Association, operators of the Southern California Exposition, which annually attracts more than 1.5 million visitors from mid-June through the 4th of July holiday to what is commonly called the "Del Mar Fair."

Since 1970, Del Mar racing has been operated by a corporation of prominent California owners, breeders and community leaders known as the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club. Its original—and continuing—mission was to conduct the sport for the sport's gain and to channel profits back into the facility. Under a non-dividend-paying arrangement, its directors/stockholders do not receive any individual remuneration.

## History Highlights

*July 3, 1937*—Del Mar opens its gates for the first time and Bing Crosby is there to greet a crowd of more than 15,000. Twenty-two days of racing are presented that first season "where the turf meets the surf."

*August 12, 1938*—Seabiscuit, with "Iceman" George Woolf aboard, outduels Ligaroti to win their historic \$25,000 match race before 20,000 at the track and a nationwide radio audience. Sporting types note the race put Del Mar "on the map."

*September 3, 1956*—On Labor Day, John Longden becomes the world's winningest rider with victory No. 4,871 aboard Arrogate in the Del Mar Handicap. Longden surpasses the mark of Englishman Sir Gordon Richards.

*September 7, 1970*—On Labor Day, Bill Shoemaker displaces John Longden as the sport's winningest rider, scoring astride Dares J for his 6,033 triumph.

*August 10, 1991*—Golden Eagle Farm's 3-year-old Best Pal, owned and bred by Mr. and Mrs. John C. Mabee, wins the inaugural running of the \$1-million Pacific Classic.

*July 28, 1993*—On opening day, Del Mar unveils its completed \$80-million grandstand, doubling its capacity in a state-of-the-art facility. The award-winning complex was completed one year ahead of schedule and under budget.

*August 10, 1996*—Two-time Horse of the Year Cigar comes to Del Mar for the sixth Pacific Classic and a chance to go past Citation and his modern-day record of 16 straight wins. But the track's then largest crowd ever—44,181—witnesses a shocker instead of a crowning when 40-1 Dare And Go upsets the 1-10 favorite.

*2007 - 2014*—As mandated by the State of California, Del Mar raced on a synthetic main track surface called Polytrack for eight seasons. It returned to natural dirt in 2015.

*November 2014*—Del Mar conducts a 16-day fall race meeting, the start of a new dual-season racing cycle for the seaside oval. The meet proved highly successful at both the wickets and the turnstiles boding well for future sessions.

*November 3-4, 2017*—Del Mar hosts its first Breeders' Cup Championship, which proves a smashing success. New betting marks are established, the track draws rave reviews and the racing proves world class. B.C. folks schedule a return in 2021.

## Track's "Performance"

- ▲ Del Mar has been among the nation's elite tracks in terms of **daily average handle** for more than two decades. In 2020 its daily average for its summer meet was \$17,318,575, a number bested by only a few racetracks in the country.
- ▲ Del Mar also has been a national leader in terms of **daily average attendance** for more than two decades. In 2019 the on-track attendance per day was 11,264, totaling 405,504 fans during the 36-day summer season.
- ▲ At its 2020 summer session, Del Mar paid its horsemen a total of \$18,411,696 in purses, a daily average of \$681,915, the highest at a meet in California and near the very top among all tracks nationally.
- ▲ In 2020, the DMTC simulcast signal was sent to more than 1,000 locations nationwide and throughout the world from Canada to Peru, from Europe to South Africa. The signal added \$245,481,287 to the track's pari-mutuel pool.

## Economic Impact

- ▲ Since its inception in 1970, DMTC has paid approximately \$905.4 million to the state, its agencies and municipalities and various charities, including:
  - \$444.4 million to the State of California
  - \$355.3 million to the Del Mar Fairgrounds
  - \$25.8 million to California municipalities, including \$10.2 million to the City of Del Mar
  - \$9.0 million to charity
  - \$70.9 million to equine research and breeding
- ▲ The track's employment during the summer race meet exceeds 5,150; its annual payroll is \$33.1 million
- ▲ A three-year (2017- 2019) economic impact report by Sport Management Research Institute pegged Del Mar's impact in the local community at \$299.62 million with each racing visitor spending \$2,335 on average
- ▲ North County hotels have an average occupancy of 69.8% on an annual basis, but in August -- during the heart of the Del Mar summer meet -- occupancy jumps to 86.7%, with many hotels exceeding 90%

(Updated 10/19/21)