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# News Release

For Immediate Release  
Wednesday, August 24, 2005

## Former HBPA employee charged with fraud

In the late fall of 2004, the Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association conducted an internal investigation into a number of irregular banking transactions involving the Owners' Awards Program.

The HBPA immediately contacted the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) with their discovery and the Ontario Provincial Police component of the ORC Investigative Unit initiated an investigation.

The result of an extensive seven-month investigation by the Ontario Racing Commission Investigative Unit in cooperation with the Toronto Police Service has led to the arrest of the former financial administrator with the HPBA.

Leslie Smith, aged 42, of Mississauga has been charged with one count of Criminal Breach of Trust and one count of Fraud over \$5000.00.

Smith has been released from custody on an undertaking to appear at the Finch Ave Provincial Court in Toronto on September 23, 2005.

The Investigative Unit of the Ontario Racing Commission is comprised of civilian investigators and police officers seconded from the Ontario Provincial Police Illegal Gambling Unit of the Organized Crime Section.

The Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA) is a non-profit trade association representing over 4,500 Thoroughbred owners and trainers across the province. The HBPA represents horsepeople's interests within the industry and provides extensive benefits programs, such as insurance, pensions, and scholarships.

The Owners' Awards Program is an HBPA initiative which was developed to stimulate growth and interest in the Ontario-bred horse. A bonus is paid to the owner of any horse born in Ontario (Ontario-bred) that wins a race at an Ontario racetrack.

Ontario  
Racing  
Commission

Anyone with information regarding illegal activities associated with racing is asked to contact the Illegal Gambling Unit at (705) 734-1166, or Rob McKinney, Director of Investigations at 416-327-0520, or the ORC Integrity Hotline at 1-877-668-RACE (7223).

ORC

Contact: John L. Blakney, Executive Director  
(416) 327-0520

HBPA

Contact: Nick Coukos, Executive Director  
(416) 747-5252