

Tribute from the *Daily Racing Forum*

Stan Bergstein, a harness racing titan who advocated for cooperation between the Standardbred and Thoroughbred industries to solve the sports' common problems, died on Wednesday morning at his home in Tucson at the age of 87, according to a family friend. Bergstein had been suffering from health problems for the past year, and died under the care of hospice, surrounded by his immediate family. Bergstein stepped down in February after 50 years as the executive vice president of Harness Tracks of America, the Standardbred industry's trade association. He was immediately appointed as the organization's first executive emeritus, and continued to advise the association and write guest columns for the *Daily Racing Form* until the weeks before his death. The only person to ever be inducted into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame and its Communicators Hall of Fame, Bergstein worked in a wide variety of roles at racetracks, auction houses, announcers booths, and racing publications, and he maintained extensive collections of harness racing books and artwork. He was widely respected not only in the harness industry, but also in the Thoroughbred industry, and he served as a mentor to generations of young racing professionals through a close association with the University of Arizona Race Track Industry Program, located in Tucson, for the past 40 years. Bergstein was a forceful proponent of forging closer ties between the Standardbred and Thoroughbred industries, most notably in tackling medication abuse and problems with drug-testing. In dozens of commentaries, Bergstein maintained that the Standardbred industry's problems were — or would be — those of the Thoroughbred industry, and that neglect of a problem in one sport would damage the other. Bergstein borrowed from the Thoroughbred industry early in his career, incorporating claiming races as a racing secretary while working at the Chicago tracks in the 1950s. At the time, the harness racing industry did not run claiming races, and they are now as commonplace in Standardbred racing as they are in Thoroughbred racing. Bergstein also spearheaded the creation of Standardbred Investigative Services, a security agency modeled on the Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau. A native of Illinois, Bergstein attended harness races as a young man and received a journalism degree from Northwestern University. He was the former executive editor of *Hoof Beats* magazine and the former vice president of publicity and public relations for the United States Trotting Association. The U.S. Harness Writers Association was scheduled to honor Bergstein at its 2012 conference this winter for his lifetime of service to the industry. "There are few people in the sport, and certainly none of the younger generation, who do not revere Stan Bergstein for his unprecedented accomplishments in harness racing," said Jason Settlemoir, the president of the writers' association when the honor was announced. "Honoring him at our 2012 dinner seems a small 'thank you' compared to what he has done for harness communications, racetracks, and just the entire sport in general."