

Good Reading: A Book Report of Bill Shoemaker's *Stalking Horse*

Submitted by Cecile Pasquino-Casson

This first book written by Bill Shoemaker is very interesting to read. Unlike his second book which I reviewed in the last newsletter, this book has a harder-to-follow plot. You must pay really close attention to follow all of the characters.

Bill once again spins a fascinating tale of life behind the scenes of thoroughbred horse racing. This time the plot involves a failing racetrack with Coley Killebrew, ex-jockey turned private eye, investigating a wager skimming operation. He travels to Louisiana in search of his prime suspects. To quote Coley about his background in this type of investigating, "For nearly twenty years, when I was chief steward with the Jockey Club, part of my job was to check out every race, jockey, horse, or owner that seemed just a little bit, uh, questionable; and there were a lot of those." (p.25)

The meaning of stalking horse is explained on page 32: "When a political party wants to change to odds in favor of their man, they throw in a new candidate, a stalking horse that kicks up a lot of dust, gets everybody all perplexed. Then, when he's done the damage, the horse gallops away and their

man is a shoo-in. "Out of the whole book, my favorite part was the lesson on running horses on a muddy track. An inside secret, Bill writes about is the use of three sets of goggles. "Mike whipped off his top set of goggles before passing the first post. By the turn, he'd dumped a second pair. He was in the homestretch before his final pair were coated. We didn't have to wait for the track announcer to tell us who won the race. Mike brought Chilly Jilly in a full head in front of the place horse." (pp. 216-217) Mike was able to see his way through the race giving him an advantage over the other jockeys who wore just one set of muddy goggles.

I highly recommend this book for an informative fictional, or is it, peek behind the racing world scenes as told by the legendary Bill Shoemaker. This book can be borrowed through the Delaware interlibrary loan system

"Fire Horse" by Bill Shoemaker
ISBN 0-449-14935-6
Ballantine Books, c 1994



Worming in 2010 (*not 1990 or even 2000*)

Submitted by DEC Member Bev Barnett

The May 2010 New Bolton lecture on worming was fascinating. Some wormers widely used today are only 3% effective! Save money and avoid those wormers.

Talk to your veterinarian to find out what is effective locally.

One of New Bolton's field service veterinarian's research verified that the reduced effectiveness of wormers experienced in the Southeast United States is true in Chester County, PA (and probably in Delaware's three counties). As I understand it, the best control is to identify which horses in a herd are the major worm carriers, and largely treat those 10-20% of horses. The rest of the herd may only need twice per year worming.

Start by collecting a fecal sample from a horse that has not been dewormed for two months.

To ensure freshness, the horse must be in a clean stall for about one hour prior to collecting the fecal sample. The cost of fecal analysis is offset quickly by purchasing only effective wormers and using them when most effective.

New Bolton lecturer Dr. Rose can explain how to use pasture rotation to minimize worms. In England, worms are managed by strip grazing. There it involves moving electrical fences daily. This may not be necessary if multiple fenced pastures are available. It depends on how many horses graze how many acres.

For more information, contact Jane Simone, New Bolton Director of Development (jsimone@vet.upenn.edu or 610 925 6500). Ask for a copy of Dr. Rose's power point presentation, or better yet, ask for Dr. Rose to give her worming lecture to your group.