

NEW RACE TRACK PLANNED

Morris Park to be Abandoned for a Course on Long Island.

APPROVED BY JOCKEY CLUB

Westchester Association Will Construct \$1,500,000 Plant Between Queens and Floral Park on L. I. R. R.

The construction of a race course which shall be the successor of Morris Park and the abandonment of the famous racing property at Westchester, of which rumors have been in circulation for the past two months, were definitely decided on yesterday, when plans that have been in preparation since early in September were approved by The Jockey Club and the New York State Racing Commission at a meeting held in the office of August Belmont, Chairman of the commission, 23 Nassau Street. The plans prepared for the Westchester Racing Association were considered by The Jockey Club at a meeting on Monday evening, but action in the matter was delayed until yesterday, when formal approval was expressed. It was announced immediately afterward that land on Long Island, just outside the New York City line and on the Long Island Railroad, between Queens and Floral Park, on which the Westchester Racing Association held options, had been transferred to that turf organization, and would become the site of the new course, which it is planned to make the most magnificent and completely equipped racing plant in this country.

The completion of the transfer also decided conclusively the future of Morris Park as a race track, as the Westchester Racing Association, the present lessee of the property from the heirs of John A. Morris, is determined to have another course ready when the present lease expires on Jan. 1, 1904. Thus the last racing at Morris Park will be held next year.

The Westchester Racing Association purposed continuing racing and had accepted entries for events to be run in 1903, 1904, and 1905, payments on account of which aggregate \$6,000, and it will soon open events to be run in 1906.

INCREASED CAPITAL STOCK.

The most important changes suggested in a letter to the Jockey Club related to the desire of the association to increase the amount of its capital stock, a necessary procedure, as the plans embraced alteration of the association from a club holding races on leased property to an organization which would hold valuable property and expensive improvements in its own right. The estimates of the cost of construction of the new track amount to \$1,500,000, and it was proposed to increase the capital stock to \$1,200,000.

The Westchester Association in the communication gave a general description of the land on which it wished to construct the new course, which it was stated had the advantage of being outside the boundaries of the city, thus being in accordance with the recommendations of the New York State Racing Commission in its annual report to the Legislature. This recommendation, in part, is as follows:

"The stability of any industry in which so much capital is invested as there now is in that of breeding thoroughbred horses is the first essential, and this stability may be best maintained by the recognition not so much of many racing plants as of those about whose permanency as racing organizations and of whose purpose in offering generous premiums and in establishing and maintaining important stakes there can be no reasonable doubt. Not merely should the programmes of such associations be in themselves a guarantee of permanency, but so far as possible these very racing plants should be so situated where they would be least liable to be crowded out by the trend of population in large centres, or where because of the rising values of these properties there would be inducement to dispose of these properties for other uses. Your commission would view with disapproval the establishment of racing plants so close to large cities as to suggest land ventures, making the properties earn dividends as racing plants until they would become valuable for other purposes, and then have them disappear."

The Jockey Club made announcement of its approval of the Westchester Association's plans in the following letter, which implies also the approval of the New York State Racing Commission:

Samuel B. Lawrence, Esq., President Westchester Racing Association, New York City:

Dear Sir: I am instructed by the Board of Stewards of The Jockey Club to acknowledge receipt of your favor of Nov. 21, 1902, as well as the annual report of the State Racing Commission, marked copy, for the year 1901.

I am further instructed by the Board of Stewards to state their entire appreciation of the subject matter of your letter and their desire to support your association in their efforts to establish the proposed race course upon Long Island. It is evident to the Stewards that the continued use of Morris Park for the purposes of the Westchester Racing Association is too uncertain for the proper development of racing interests, and they welcome gladly your new enterprise as supplying the long-felt need of a permanent situation where the future plans of The Jockey Club as well as of the breeders and racing interests can be wisely fostered and developed. The Stewards were much pleased with the able plans presented in detail, and desire me to state the fact to you.

Should you require any further confirmation of the indorsement of the Board of Stewards I have to request that you will so advise me. I remain, faithfully yours,

F. K. STURGIS, Secretary.

LAND FOR NEW RACE TRACK.

The land acquired by the Westchester Racing Association for the new track comprises 666 acres in all, the greater part of this being the property known as the "Mannice Place," alongside the Hempstead Turnpike, on which an option was acquired first, additional parcels then being secured until a sufficient amount of land for the purposes of the association was secured. This land is about 14½ miles from New York and is easily accessible by either the Long Island Railroad or trolley lines, the estimated time by rail from Long Island City at present being 27 minutes, which time, it was stated, will be reduced to about 18 minutes when rapid transit transportation is supplied.

The plot of 666 acres is all level ground, where there will be no necessity for grading. Of the land 421 acres lie on one side of the turnpike without further division by roads of any kind. On the larger parcel it is proposed to build the new course, which will be the greatest in the United States, the plans for this having been completed in advance. The new track will be a right-hand track, or, in other words, will be arranged so that horses will race over it with the inner rail to their right, the opposite of the plan of every other race course in this country. The idea is a revival of the method adopted by D. D. Monmouth in the construction of the famous Monmouth Park track at Long Branch, N. J., which has been cut up and converted to farm uses.

The main course will embrace three separate tracks, the outer of which will be used for the longer races, and will be one mile and a half in circumference, in the oval shape most popular for running courses. Just inside this there will be a turf course one mile and three furlongs in circumference, while inside this will be a third course of one mile and a quarter for steeplechasing. The width of the three tracks will be about 100 feet on the average for each, and the outer or larger course also will be provided with a chute, giving a mile and a quarter with one turn. A straightaway course of seven furlongs will enter the head of the stretch of the main course, for the running of shorter races, and this straightaway in time be extended to a full

mile if in the opinion of the club officials such a change promised to be popular.

Two other mile tracks will be built, one at the end of the upper turn of the race course for the use of the horses in training for races, thus preserving the greater course for racing alone, and another track on the parcel of land across the turnpike, which will be reserved exclusively for the yearlings that are trained at the new course. The training track and the race course will be so close together that they easily can be connected, and it is thought that both tracks in time will be used for racing should occasion arise.

The buildings will be the most elaborate ever constructed for any race course. The grand stand will be 250 feet long, 100 feet deep, and 50 feet in height, and will seat 11,000 persons. The public stand will be 250 feet long and of about the depth of the grand stand, and will seat 5,500. The ring will be under the grand stand, and will be the largest in use in this country. The clubhouse will be of three stories, equipped with every convenience for members and guests, and will be connected with both grand stand and paddock by bridges. On the side of the clubhouse will be the paddock, which will be built in substantial style, with slate roof, and a double row of stalls, or thirty-six in all, each 10 by 12 feet, and all under the slate roof of the paddock shed, which will be built with a long overhang. A novelty in the construction will be an arrangement of tunnels which will permit the owners of horses to lead them to the paddock without having occasion to cross any of the tracks or the roads dividing the race course property.

It has not yet been decided definitely what name shall be applied to the new racing property, but it is probable that it will be known as Belmont Park, in honor of the Chairman of the Stewards of The Jockey Club and of the State Racing Commission. The change from Morris Park was anticipated at least two years ago, though the plans for the Long Island course make it appear a new thing, and it is stated by the officials of the Westchester Racing Association that there will be no difficulty in changing the place for running the stakes that were closed for 1904-1905-1906, as the conditions named only the distances of each race, and did not specify any course over which the races were to be run.

The name of the association which will conduct the racing at the new track will be the same as that which managed the Morris Park meetings, as the charter will require this, but the same liberal policy as that which governed the Westchester Racing Association in its organization will be pursued. The Westchester Association was formed in 1895 to conduct racing after J. A. Morris refused longer to continue racing under the altered racing laws of New York. In its organization the members agreed to accept no more than 5 per cent. earnings on the stock subscribed for, all surplus going to the race fund.