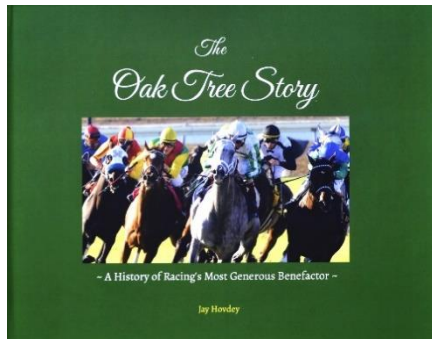


## **“The Oak Tree Story” Celebrates the History of a Unique Racing Enterprise**



(July 23, 2025) – If ever there was a Golden Age of Thoroughbred racing in North America, there was no age more golden than the closing decades of the 20th Century. A trio of Triple Crown winners graced the stage. Champions like Cigar, Ruffian, and Forego thrilled their fans. Their human counterparts became headline names, while the competition rose to memorable heights.

Someone had to put on the show, and as empresarios go, few rivaled the Oak Tree Racing Association as a host of great Thoroughbred competition. For more than 40 years, Oak Tree presented an autumn season of first-class racing at iconic Santa Anita Park, inspiring players to descend upon Southern California to enjoy the hospitality of their Oak Tree hosts and compete against the best the sport had to offer.

It did not take long for the Thoroughbred world to discover that Oak Tree operated unlike any other racing association. Its founders pledged every nickel of profit to a deserving list of recipients, from equine veterinary research to the welfare of the men and women who work tirelessly to care for the Thoroughbred athletes. There were no stockholders demanding return on investment, no family coffers to pad. The Oak Tree Racing Association answered to no one other than the people and horses it was designed to serve, donating more than \$30 million over the years to its various causes.

“The Oak Tree Story – A History of Racing’s Most Generous Benefactor” begins with the birth of the unique association, founded by a group of rare visionaries, and courses through its many seasons of championship events. For racing’s loyal fans, the names that decorate Oak Tree’s history will ring familiar bells, names like Bill Shoemaker, Charlie Whittingham, John Henry, Best Pal, Cougar II, Zenyatta, and Laffit Pincay, Jr. Readers will savor the recollection of special autumn afternoons when events like the Yellow Ribbon, the Oak Tree Invitational, the Norfolk Stakes, and no less than five presentations of the Breeders’ Cup attracted the best the sport had to offer.

And while Oak Tree no longer sponsors a race meeting, its philanthropic mission continues in support of numerous industry and community organizations, as detailed in the book.

Packaged in a classy, coffee table format and full of archival photographs from across the decades, “The Oak Tree Story” is written by veteran journalist Jay Hovdey, a five-time winner of the Eclipse Award for writing and a member of the Joe Hirsch Media Honor Roll at the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame. Published by the Oak Tree Racing Association and printed in the U.S., the book can be purchased directly at [www.oaktreeracingbook.com](http://www.oaktreeracingbook.com).

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