**UKATH, FRIDAY, OCT. 27**

**WITH MICK PETERSON: DIRECTOR OF UK AG EQUINE PROGRAMS**

**CARL NATHE:** THANKS, KEITH!

**Mick Peterson:** I really got the racing bug. I love the industry. All it takes is a few mornings out there watching them train at Keenland. You sit there drinking your coffee watching the horses train and you’re hooked!

**CARL NATHE:** THAT’S THE DIRECTOR OF AG EQUINE PROGRAMS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY, MICK PETERSON, TALKING ABOUT HIS LOVE OF THE THOROGHBRED INDUSTRY. PETERSON ORIGINALLY THOUGHT HE WAS HEADED TO A CAREER AS AN ENGINEER IN THE AUTOMOTIVE OR ARROWSPACE INDUSTRIES. THINGS CHANGED IN HIS FIRST FACULTY POSITION AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY.

**Mick Peterson:** I got started working with equine orthopedic surgeon Wayne McIlwraith there. We were looking at imaging methods for exercise induced arthrosis. That’s how I originally got involved from an ultrasound to imaging standpoint.

**CARL NATHE:** TODAY, MORE THAN 20 YEARS LATER, PETERSON IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE WORLD’S FOREMOST EXPERTS ON HORSE RACING TRACK SURFACES BE THEY DIRT, TURF, OR SYNTHETIC.

**Mick Peterson:** The huge increase on the number of starts on turf. This year, it’ll be almost 25% of the thoroughbred starts will be on turf. We’re trying to make the dirt and turf as safe and reduce the catastrophic injuries so they are as low as they are in the synthetic. We have to pay attention to the training, we have to pay attention to the surfaces they are training on, we have to pay attention to everything that’s done to manage their health and welfare.

**CARL NATHE:** A PART OF UK’S COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & ENVIRONMENT, AG EQUINE PROGRAMS PREPARE STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN THE EQUINE SCIENCE ASPECT, THE ECONOMIC ASPECT, AND THE COMMUNICATIONS ASPECT OF HORSE INDUSTRY.

**Mick Peterson:** The opportunities are unbelievable for the students. They are tied to the center of the world for the equine industry here in Kentucky.

**CARL NATHE:** RECENTLY UK CELEBRATED THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RENOWED GLUCK EQUINE RESEARCH CENTER AND THE WORK OF ITS SCIENTISTS AND STAFF.

**Mick Peterson:** Gluck is very unique because its focused-on disease of the horse. You’re looking at everything from parapsychologists to geneticists. The one common theme they’re all working one the health of the horse and the longevity of the horse and performance of the horse and supporting the reproduction that’s so critical in central Kentucky.

**CARL NATHE:** PETERSON BELIEVES THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT FOR UK AG EQUINE PROGRAMS AND THE THOROGHBRED INDUSTRY.

**Mick Peterson:** The way we engage new people in the sports and tie them to the sport is going to be involving them with the horse and understanding the opportunities for animal welfare and the excitement of racing.

**CARL NATHE:** WE INVITE YOU VISIT UKY.EDU. THERE YOU CAN FIND OUR UKNOW NEWS PAGE AS WELL AS HOW TO ENGAGE WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA VIA FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM. SEEING BLUE, I’M CARL NATHE WITH UK AT THE HALF.