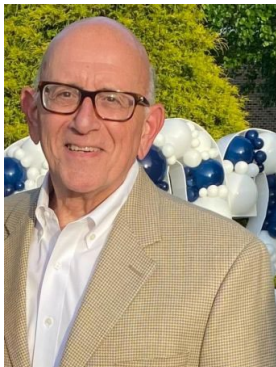


Roberts, Warkentin in Communicators Hall

September 16, 2022, from U.S. Harness Writers Association

USHWA has elected veteran racing writer Bob Roberts and broadcaster Ken Warkentin to the pinnacle of their professions, membership in the Communicators Hall of Fame.

Roberts and Warkentin come from quite different backgrounds (although they have one brief intersection at Northfield Park near Cleveland), but both have excelled in their respective specialties to merit their selection into the Communicators Hall.



Bob Roberts

Roberts is a “double-gaited” horse racing writer, having worked on both the Standardbred and Thoroughbred beats for many years. He began his career in 1970 in Cleveland, and worked for several newspapers in the Buckeye State, making most of his fame at The Cleveland Plain Dealer, for whom he worked some 30 years. He also served as publicity director at the Thistledown racetrack on the shores of Lake Erie. For a while he was a columnist for The Horseman And Fair World magazine.

Roberts has been honored several times in his career for his storytelling ability, most notably with a John Hervey Award in 2003. He also interviewed the star-crossed Standardbred horseman Walter Case Jr. for his newspaper in a widely-read feature. On the Thoroughbred side, he won a Golden Quill award for feature racing about the Waterford Park (now Mountaineer) racetrack in West Virginia, and his 1988 piece on the Preakness was judged the top story produced on that year’s Triple Crown classic. Roberts has also won numerous state-wide awards for his coverage of racing on both sides, and has shown depth of perspective and extended knowledge in writing about both sports.

Warkentin started race calling in the Toronto area as a teenager, and progressed on to racing at higher levels of tracks, such as Flamboro Downs and Northfield Park, before joining The Meadowlands in 1991 in one of the most high-profile spots in the industry, sharing announcing, television, and publicity duties with the late Communicators Hall of Famer Sam McKee. There he has stayed for over three decades.



Ken Warkentin

Warkentin has called somewhere in the vicinity of 235,000 races, but his best-known two dozen calls have come for the Hambletonian, North America’s premier harness race. He has worked for NBC and ABC, ESPN, CBS Sports Network, and Fox Sports during their coverages of the trotting classic. The prolific Warkentin also turns out numerous press releases, including his “Road To The Hambletonian” in the weeks leading up to that race, and conducts an annual Race Callers Fantasy Camp. He has been recognized for his work at the Elitloppet, Sweden’s premier harness race, and frequently returns to his native Canada for guest appearances. Somehow he also finds time to participate in and referee ice hockey.