

Betting

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punishment and masochists of chance. Most are there to place a few dollar wagers with the hope of breaking even. Some are even willing to shell out wads of cash — two, three times a week or more — relying on Lady Luck to grant them a win.

"A diverse crowd shows up," says Bob Wellmeier of Pari-Mutuel, the company that organizes the event. He estimates that big-time spenders will cast out more than \$50 a day; average patrons bet about \$5. About \$8,500 flowed through his cash registers Tuesday.

"I'd say we had 300 people attend a day. Three fourths of them were local residents, 1/4 of them were those who travel the circuit," he says, estimating the fair rakes in about \$850 a race.

Avid horse lover Jane Yeary confides she goes the races because it's exciting. "Boy, does your adrenaline begin to flow when your horse takes off into the lead."

The 67-year-old Pike County resident waves her arms in the air when she wins. "I think I won \$15.50 when Speedy Frostbite was first," she says. "I get so involved."

Also charged with the thrill is Sue Lowe and her daughter, Julie Clemens. The Malta residents, who came to the fair to watch their horses compete in the races, spend \$13 in less than five-minutes. "We win a few and we always lose a

few," says Lowe. "I always bet on our horses."

She's confident that Little Nubbin, her 2-year-old filly, will win. "My husband's out there driving. We come here to cheer him on."

Merely a spectator is Herman Hinton, the director of Adelphi Band. "It don't matter who wins or loses. I just like to see them go."

A fair would be incomplete without the races, he contends. "I wouldn't come if there wasn't any."

Neither would Les Hatfield of South Salem. Burned twice, once by the sun and again by a "spiteful animal," he says: "I come here because you have a chance. You know you ain't gonna win the midway games."

He tears up \$4 of betting tickets. "It's not so bad to lose, but if you're foolish enough to do it again you deserve to have your money taken away," he jests, heading again for the ticket tent.

Richard Ancowitz, a New York City trial lawyer, paces the betting pit as he glances at the horses that pass him in a blur. "This is my vacation. We're traveling through all the Ohio fairs playing the horses. To me, this is relaxation."

So far he's down \$1.80. "I might spend \$20 a day." Today he and his legal partner, Lonnie Goldman, head to Mansfield. "Some people call us crazy. We're just into horses."

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