

JOAN K. LENTINI—THE POST-STAR

Babette Gladstein, VMD, inserts an acupuncture needle into the back of Chester, part quarter horse, to relax his muscles before starting out for his day of work at the track.

# Trainers try alternative therapy

Acupuncture needles, chiropractors used to cure what ails horses

By ABIGAIL TUCKER  
tucker@poststar.com

SARATOGA SPRINGS ♦ Babette Gladstein looked remarkably serene as she slid needles into the quivering hide of a thousand-pound thoroughbred.

When she removed the pins 20 minutes later, some of the shafts were bent; evidence, she claimed, of how the animal's great, aching muscles had fought and then relaxed against the metal, at last releasing a cascade of chemicals that soothed its pain.

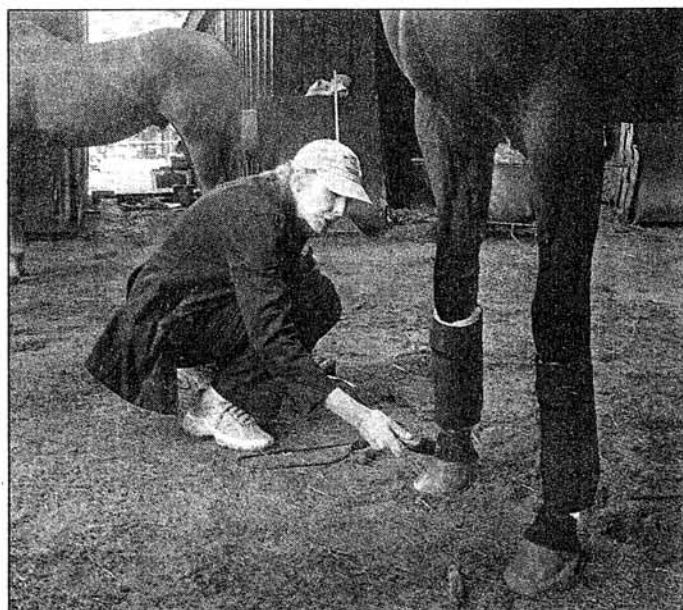
Equine acupuncture and other alternative medical techniques are increasingly com-

mon in the Saratoga backstretch as trainers seek relief for their race horses, some of which experience chronic pain.

Horse chiropractors, nutritionists, massage and magnet therapists and even psychics turn a lively business at the Saratoga Race Course. Herbal remedies and ultrasounds are commonly administered.

"Yes, drugs have a place, usually in an acute situation," said Gladstein, a Manhattan-based acupuncturist.

"But drugs shouldn't be used chronically," she said. Prescription drugs merely mask pain, sometimes causing the animals to exacerbate injuries, while acupuncture helps to relax the horse and ease pain while preventing further injury, she said.



JOAN K. LENTINI—THE POST-STAR

Babette Gladstein, VMD, demonstrates an ultrasound procedure on a thoroughbred that will be beneficial in the healing process for injuries.

ANIMALACUPUNCTURE.NET  
877-279-2591