



*From the Executive Corner*

# On The Right Track

by DOUG BURGE

After several years reflecting the national trend of declining numbers, California's Thoroughbred breeding industry is showing signs of stabilizing.

As depicted in the chart below, The Jockey Club's official report of mares bred in 2012 showed 2,406 mares bred in the Golden State as compared to 2,446 in 2011, a nominal reduction of 1.6 percent. With roughly 10 percent of the mares bred yet to be reported, this gap should reduce even further. After slipping to fourth in the nation in 2011, California returned to third behind Kentucky and Florida for most mares bred by state.

The Golden State stallions covering the most mares were Lucky Pulpit (Harris Farms) with 114 and Tribal Rule (Ballena Vista Farm) with 108. Although the total California stallion count went from 176 to 166, the state now ranks second in the country behind Kentucky's 224.

The numbers are not, however, a measure of a state's total foal crop, because it doesn't take into consideration the number of mares sired in another state who will be brought to the Golden State to deliver their foals as California-breds. Therefore, the influx of mares from out of state, combined with a very minimal reduction in mares bred in-state, should result in a level foal crop for 2013.

With Cal-breds making up over 50 percent of the field sizes both north and south, this is very welcoming news to the racing industry in the state. As widely known, handle is directly related to field size.

California is one of very few states that have shown stability in the numbers of mares bred, without having the benefit

of expanded gaming subsidies. Recent enhancements to the Cal-bred program (Maiden Bonus Program, Golden State Series and overall increase in overnight purses) are all attributing factors to the stabilization.

The results of the Barretts October Yearling Sale, in which the average increased 36.4 percent and the median was up 84.6 percent, should hopefully provide confidence with breeders to continue to produce quality foals in the future.

On another note, the recently concluded California Cup was well supported by horsemen as 103 horses entered the 10-race card. As a result, the total handle was \$11.8 million as compared to \$10.7 million in 2011. Also, for the first time since 2009, total purses offered for the day exceeded \$1 million.

While handle increased, the on-track attendance fell below 10,000 for the first time in the 23-year history of the event. Although attendance historically struggles when the Breeders' Cup is held in California, this year's numbers were very disappointing.

With Cal Cup being a fixture on the calendar, as the annual showcase of the Golden State breeding industry, both the California Thoroughbred Breeders Association (CTBA) and Santa Anita Park will work toward revamping the event and reversing the negative attendance trends. Various possibilities will be discussed including a significant shift of the date of Cal Cup from the fall. It is our goal to revitalize this all important day.

Congratulations to all of the winners on this year's card and a special thank you to all the horsemen who supported the event. 🐾

**The Jockey Club's 2012 Report Of Mares Bred Statistics**

State/Province	2011 Stallions	2012 Stallions	Percentage Change	2011 Mares Bred	2012 Mares Bred	Percentage Change
Kentucky	228	224	-1.8	15,714	15,361	-2.2
Florida	116	126	8.6	2,876	3,070	6.7
California	176	166	-5.7	2,446	2,406	-1.6
Louisiana	181	144	-20.4	2,674	2,072	-22.5
New York	51	60	17.6	1,147	1,641	43.1
Ontario	71	66	-7.0	1,396	1,288	-7.7
Pennsylvania	77	74	-3.9	1,188	1,061	-10.7
New Mexico	118	109	-7.6	1,066	983	-7.8
Oklahoma	98	93	-5.1	982	911	-7.2
Indiana	79	74	-6.3	898	865	-3.7

*Note: Each incident in which a mare was bred to more than one stallion and appeared on multiple RMBs is counted separately. As such, mares bred totals listed in the table above differ slightly from counts of distinct mares bred.*