

# A Plan To Move Forward



*From The Executive Corner*

by DOUG BURGE

With the announced closure of Betefair Hollywood Park in December, the California Thoroughbred Breeders Association (CTBA) has been actively meeting and planning the future racing and stabling needs for Southern California with the other horsemen's groups. Assuring that ample racing/stabling opportunities are available is obviously vital to the long-term investment by breeders, owners and trainers. Therefore, a consensus among CTBA, Thoroughbred Owners of California (TOC) and California Thoroughbred Trainers (CTT) as to the direction and coordination both north and south would provide the support and confidence needed to get through this transition period.

Optimistically, the revised racing calendar and stabling locations can provide many new and refreshing opportunities. For example, The Stronach Group recently announced that major improvements would be made to turn the San Luis Rey Downs Training Center, located in northern San Diego County, into a world-class training center. Discussions center around constructing a seven-furlong turf course, replacing the main track surface and building turf gallops on the property. This would provide the stabling for approximately 500 horses that would be displaced from Hollywood Park. Options for the remaining horses inventoried in the state are also being considered and will soon be finalized.

As a breeder, the investment decisions made today need to be supported by ample racing opportunities in the future. In representing and watching over the farms in the state, the CTBA has taken an active role not only to guarantee long-

term racing needs, but also protect and promote all the private facilities throughout the state.

The stabling and vanning fund, which generates income from satellite wagering, should be allocated only for horses in active training. There needs to be more oversight that assures horses are started and laid up at the Thoroughbred farms and not at a subsidized track or training facility. Even with the loss and consolidation of farms over the past several years, there still remains plenty of stall and training space as well as pastures at the many farm locations spread throughout the state.

The changes made to the racing calendar could also provide better coordination north and south, as well as access to other markets, such as San Diego in the fall with a proposed second meet at the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club. With Santa Anita Park expecting to pick up the majority of the Hollywood Park spring/summer dates, and run from December 26 through July 6, 2014, an opportunity would exist to offer lucrative turf racing in the north during late spring/early summer. As the Santa Anita turf course would need some breaks and maintenance, a coordinated effort with Golden Gate Fields seem very practical.

As the horsemen's groups, and the racing associations and fairs, continue to work together with the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB), there is optimism that the future racing opportunities and stabling needs will be met. While we are all saddened with the loss of Hollywood Park, we as an industry must move forward for all those investing in racing. 🐾



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