



From the EXECUTIVE CORNER



DOUG BURGE

CTBA PRESIDENT

Ring Out a Very Good Year

The year 2015 proved to be a good one for the California Thoroughbred industry. On the breeding front, the number of mares bred and resulting live foal crop increased for the second year in a row. Also, several promising young stallions have again been retired to stand stud in the state.

The strength of the breeding and racing program continues to provide the necessary incentives for people to invest in California. While every other state offers purse and awards from alternative gaming, we continue to advance strictly on handle and demand for our product. With any progress and assistance from the state legislature with Internet poker, fantasy wagering, or sports wagering legislation, the future could be even brighter.

In regards to the commercial sales markets, the demand for California-bred racing prospects also remains strong. The yearling and 2-year-old sales held in both Northern and Southern California yielded very favorable results. The long-term stability of these marketplaces are of concern and importance. The CTBA will continue to monitor and work closely with Barretts and other stakeholders to ensure that proper outlets exist. As the demand for Cal-breds continues to be at record highs, it is vital that commercial

breeders have confidence in the California sales venues.

In regards to racing, for the second consecutive year, California-breds have performed extremely well, winning nearly 20 graded stakes races through the first 11 months. After California Chrome's epic campaign in 2014, many Cal-breds followed in his footsteps, winning grade I races not only in state, but also at the prestigious Saratoga meet in New York. With 'Chrome back in training, and many promising young Cal-breds winning restricted stakes and moving up the ladder, this trend should definitely continue through the next year(s).

The other positive racing advancement has been the success in filling the numerous California-bred restricted races in Southern California. With less than half the foal crop from a decade ago, Cal-bred races are actually being offered at a higher percentage rate. Many maiden special weight races have been split, and the total number of opportunities have increased over the past few years. As Cal-breds make up more than 50% of the field sizes statewide, these positive trends are extremely important to the overall health of California racing.

As breeders continue to focus on quality, as well as quantity, the prospects for 2016 look as favorable as ever.

Happy Holidays.