



*From the EXECUTIVE CORNER*



DOUG BURGE

CTBA PRESIDENT

## CTBA MIXED SALE AND CALIFORNIA CUP ARE RESILIENT

**T**his past month the CTBA hosted and coordinated two important events for California breeders: the January mixed sale, and the 31st running of California Cup. With the current COVID protocols in place in Los Angeles County, both events were conducted very differently than in the past (to say the least).

The mixed sale held at Fairplex in Pomona had to be conducted completely outdoors, with limited seating, social distancing, masks worn at all times, and no food or beverage offered. We, along with Fairplex, explained that we were conducting an essential livestock auction and everyone would adhere to the protocols in place. The outdoor setup was well received by the majority of consignors and buyers as they expressed appreciation for our efforts. Most were very surprised that we even would be allowed to have a sale in Southern California.

With a much smaller on-site crowd due to everything men-

tioned above regarding the current protocols, the final numbers were on par with the past few years. In fact, the slight increase in average price yielded the highest amount since we took over the sale three years ago.

**This was the first CTBA-hosted sale that offered online bidding for buyers, and although it was cumbersome and confusing to many, the online platform did significantly drive sales. We have communicated with the program developer concerning the many issues and obstacles that potential viewers and buyers had, and have a commitment from them to simplify the process for future sales. In fact, we are also planning tutorial sessions in the near future for all those interested in learning how to utilize the online bidding platform.**

On another subject, California Cup at Santa Anita was also conducted under similar protocols, limiting the overall experience of

an established special event. With very large fields in every race, total purses well over \$1 million, and 80 degree sunny weather in January, the only thing missing was the fans. As horse owners are permitted to attend when their horses are competing, it was good to see and hear them rooting for their equine connections.

The total handle, even with very little currently allowed to be wagered on-track or at satellite facilities, was still over \$11 million, primarily through the Advance Deposit Wagering providers and out-of-state bets.

A special thank you goes out to TVG for its support and promotion of the day. We would also like to acknowledge our sponsors, City National Bank and John Deere, for sticking with us even without the traditional on-track experience that they had grown accustomed to.

Here's looking forward to hosting these two events again next January with more certainty and normalcy. **CTB**