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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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BOARD WAIVES THREE RULES TO ENHANCE BREEDERS' CUP

DEL MAR, CA – The California Horse Racing Board on Thursday waived three of its own rules for one day only – October 25, 2003 – to accommodate horses, owners, and trainers participating in the Breeders' Cup hosted by the Oak Tree Racing Association at Santa Anita.

One waiver covers foreign horses that do not have lip tattoos for identification, as required by a CHRB rule. For the Breeders' Cup only, this requirement will be waived for foreign horses. The racing commissioners waived this requirement based on assurances from Breeders' Cup representatives and from their own equine medical director, Dr. Ronald Jensen, that all foreign horses can be properly identified even without the tattoo.

"All foreign horses travel with a passport that includes their color and all of their markings," explained Jensen.

Another waiver aimed primarily at foreign horses will allow human attendants to escort horses onto the track until the finish of the post parade and, if requested, to be present at the starting gate. Attendants will be notified they are accompanying the horses "at their own risk."

The third waiver will allow owners and trainers to obtain special 120-day licenses for the sole purpose of participating in the 2003 Breeders' Cup for one third of the normal fee for that license classification. Owners and trainers will pay \$50 instead of the normal \$150 fee for full-term licenses.

CHRB Executive Director Roy Wood said the CHRB waived these same three rules for the last two Breeders' Cups held in California.

Still, the reduced-fee waiver was the subject of debate. CHRB Vice Chairman John Harris objected to approving a reduced fee for "wealthy" owners and trainers, adding that "all licensees should be treated equally."

But the other commissioners considered the waiver appropriate. Chairman Roger Licht felt the accommodation to owners and trainers would send the right message to Breeders' Cup executives and help bring the championship day back more often to California, providing needed boosts to California racing and the state's economy.

Commissioners William Bianco, Sheryl Granzella, and Alan Landsburg voted with Licht to approve the fee waiver. Harris voted in opposition. Commissioners Marie Moretti and John Sperry were not in attendance. The Board approved the other two waivers unanimously.

In other action, the Board approved license applications for meets at Bay Meadows (from August 29 through November 2), Fairplex (September 12 through September 29), and Cal Expo (September 26 through February 29). The license for the harness meet at Cal Expo was approved on condition that operators submit a signed lease agreement with Cal Expo by July 30.

The Board asked the CHRB staff to work with the Board's legal counsel and draft a rule for consideration that would discourage owners and trainers from claiming horses in California in order to run them in other states. One trainer, Roger Stein, testified that 12 horses claimed during the Santa Anita meet have since raced elsewhere. Stein said this practice will further reduce field sizes and kill the sport in California if something isn't done to prevent this form of "piracy."

The Board adopted a regulatory amendment to allow for distribution of a superfecta pool even if less than five wagering interests finish the race. The previous rule required the cancellation and refund of the superfecta pool when fewer than five wagering interests finished the race, which caused confusion and disappointment among fans who correctly selected the first four finishers and thought they had won the wager. The Board took similar action early last year concerning trifecta pools, and to date there have been no adverse incidents as a result of the rule change.

The Board adopted permanent regulations covering backstretch worker housing that were previously approved as temporary emergency regulations. The permanent regulations are virtually identical to the emergency regulations approved in May, 2002. All racing facilities have been found to be in compliance with the emergency regulations.

The Board heard testimony from jockeys and the clerk of scales concerning the weighing of jockeys and some of their equipment before and after races. The testimony indicated that all of a jockey's equipment weighs approximately 10 pounds. Some of this equipment is reflected in the riding weights printed in the track program, but other items, such as the required safety vest and safety helmet, are not. One concern of the Board is whether the public is aware of the accurate weights of jockeys and their equipment. Another concern is whether the current scale of weights properly takes into consideration the increasing size of each generation of jockeys. The Board intends to continue reviewing this matter and is recommending that all racing associations obtain improved, accurate digital scales.

"All of our audits have shown that jockeys are following the regulations (by carrying their correct weight)," said Wood. "But there is a perception problem among the public."

"We need to assure the fans they are getting a fair break," added Harris.

The Board heard testimony from staff and others concerning late odds changes. As in all previous inquiries, the latest reviews determined that all wagers were properly placed before the start of the race, but the odds continued to change after the start because of the time required for those legal wagers to be transmitted to the host track, processed, and posted. A representative of Autotote said all tote companies serving North American horse racing are working together to improve the process and transmit the information more quickly.