

1010 Hurley Way, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95825
(916) 263-6000
Fax (916) 263-6042

CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD

12235 Beach Blvd., Suite 7
Stanton, CA 90680
(714) 890-7001
Fax (714) 890-7006
Contact:
Mike Marten
(714) 890-7004
Pager: (714) 212-0325

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

AUGUST 21, 2003

BOARD APPROVES 2004 RACING CALENDAR, 2003 OAK TREE DATES

DEL MAR, CA – The California Horse Racing Board on Thursday approved a 2004 racing calendar and authorized the Oak Tree Racing Association to begin its meet at Santa Anita Park on September 28 this year, one racing day earlier than originally scheduled, in order to offer major prep races for the Breeders' Cup, which Oak Tree will host four weeks later on October 25, 2003.

The 2004 racing schedule actually begins on December 26, 2003, with thoroughbred meets at Santa Anita in the south and Golden Gate Fields in the north, a quarter-horse meet at Los Alamitos, and a harness meet at Cal Expo in Sacramento.

The southern thoroughbred circuit continues at Santa Anita through April 18, followed by meets at Hollywood Park (April 21 through July 18), Del Mar (July 21 through September 8), Fairplex Park (September 10-26), Santa Anita/Oak Tree (September 29 through October 31), and Hollywood Park (November 3 through December 20).

The northern thoroughbred circuit continues at Golden Gate through April 4, followed by two separate meets at Bay Meadows (April 7 through June 20, then September 3 through November 7), then back to Golden Gate (November 10 through December 20).

The northern circuit begins at Stockton (June 16-27), and then continues at Pleasanton (June 30 through July 11), Vallejo (July 14-25), Santa Rosa (July 28 through August 9), San Mateo (August 11-23), Ferndale (August 12-22), Sacramento (August 25 through September 6), and Fresno (October 6-17).

The 2004 quarter-horse meet at Los Alamitos will run continuously throughout the year until December 19. Cal Expo will host two separate harness meets, the first from December 26 through July 31, the second from October 7 through December 24. There is a possibility of a third harness meet in Stockton from August 6 through September 2. The racing commissioners will consider that proposed 26-day harness meet at the Board's next monthly meeting in September.

The Board approved the Oak Tree license application for this year's meet from September 28 through November 9. The Sunday (Sept. 28) opening will overlap with closing day of the Fairplex meet. Oak Tree will offer four graded stakes that afternoon: The Lady's Secret Breeders' Cup Handicap, Yellow Ribbon Stakes, Oak Leaf Stakes, and Clement L. Hirsch Memorial Turf Championship. Two of those races will be nationally televised.

On Breeders' Cup day, (Saturday, Oct. 25), Oak Tree will offer a 12-race card beginning with a non-Breeders' Cup race at 9:40 a.m. The eight Breeders' Cup races will be run from 10:20 a.m.

through 3:15 p.m., followed by three more races. As part of its agreement with the Breeders' Cup, Oak Tree will not import any races from other states for wagering purposes. However, as required by California law, Oak Tree will offer simulcast wagering on the Northern California races.

In other business, Commissioners Alan Landsburg and John Harris, who serve on an ad hoc committee, discussed the possibility of imposing certain requirements on racing associations as part of the annual license application process. These issues will be discussed more fully at a public meeting, probably in September.

Landsburg suggested requiring racetracks to offer their signals to any and all licensed ADW providers. Harris said he wants to require racetracks operating more than 30 days of racing a year to initially install video surveillance cameras capable of long-term recording at all sensitive places around the backstretch, including all entrances and exits and the receiving barn, then to install cameras in shed rows. Harris also proposes a requirement for racetracks to provide sufficient cameras to eliminate blind spots in races, including head-on shots on all ovals. And he would require that all wagering locations transmitting data to California either have technology to instantaneously transmit data to the host track or, if that is not available, transmit their data significantly ahead of the race start time to insure that all data is at the host before the gates open.

Regarding a fourth concern expressed by Harris, that tracks should have sufficient space on their tote boards to show data for all wagering interests, Hollywood Park President Rick Baedeker said an LED display board has been purchased that will move from meet to meet.

The commissioners authorized the Board to become a compact member of the National Racing License Compact, which is an interstate compact designed to simplify the licensing process for racing participants. California has been participating in this program. The action Thursday meets an FBI requirement concerning the sharing of fingerprint records.

Representatives of the Postmortem Examination Program at UC Davis provided an update on their program. The program attempts to understand the causes of major injuries and to use this information to help prevent future injuries. The program has discovered new sites of horse injuries, developed new diagnostic techniques, and developed recommendations for injury prevention. This information is routinely conveyed to veterinarians and horsemen throughout the world.

“This program has had a profound impact around the world on the way practitioners examine horses,” said Dr. Rick Arthur, a practicing veterinarian in Southern California who serves on various state, national, and international committees dealing with the health of racehorses.

The Board also received a report from the California Marketing Committee, which uses a portion of the wagering dollar to market horse racing in California. Commissioners Harris and Landsburg are reviewing the state's marketing programs and will be making recommendations to the Board and to the California Marketing Committee later this year.

#