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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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VALENZUELA RECEIVES 2005 LICENSE

ARCADIA, CA – The California Horse Racing Board, in conjunction with the stewards at Santa Anita Park, participated in a settlement discussion Wednesday with jockey Patrick Valenzuela and his attorney, Neil Papiano, during which agreement was reached on the terms for a conditional license effective Thursday, January 13, through December 31, 2005.

“To our knowledge, these are the strictest conditions ever imposed on a licensee to participate in racing,” said senior steward Pete Pedersen. “I know of none more exacting.”

The new license agreement contains all of the pertinent conditions listed in Valenzuela’s previous agreements, including the requirement that he submit to drug and/or alcohol testing as directed. In addition to tightening the language of the previous agreements, with input from the Office of the Attorney General, the new conditional license agreement specifically allows for hair-strand testing, and it establishes procedures for Valenzuela to be tested in other racing jurisdictions when he leaves California to ride elsewhere.

Furthermore, Valenzuela has agreed to “maintain hair upon his head that is a minimum of one and one-half inches in length and of sufficient quantity (minimum 150 strands/shafts) to submit a satisfactory sample for hair-strand/shaft testing.”

The decision to license Valenzuela came five days after the seven CHRB commissioners unanimously adopted an administrative law judge’s recommended decision to grant the jockey’s appeal of a suspension that had been issued by the racetrack stewards last summer.

CHRB Executive Director Ingrid Fermin, who participated in the settlement discussion, was scheduled to meet in the early afternoon Wednesday with the other jockeys riding at Santa Anita to answer any questions they might have about this matter.

“As they will be competing against him, the other jockeys are entitled to know how we came to this point and what procedures will be in place,” said Fermin. “This is not just about Valenzuela. This is about all of the riders. I want to have open communications with all of the jockeys in order to address their concerns.”

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