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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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BOARD FAVORS COMPREHENSIVE TESTING AT UC DAVIS

SAN MATEO, CA – California racing commissioners took the first step toward ushering in a new era in equine drug testing Thursday by indicating they want the Kenneth L. Maddy Equine Analytical Laboratory at UC Davis to begin testing all samples in California horse racing.

The Maddy Laboratory, which currently handles one third of the equine samples in California, is one of the premier laboratories in the world and one of only two laboratories in North America accredited by the International Organization for Standardization. It is also a research laboratory, which allows the Maddy Laboratory to deal with problems quietly and effectively.

Accepting a recommendation from the CHRB Medication Committee, the five racing commissioners attending the meeting at Bay Meadows Racetrack voted unanimously to begin negotiating an interagency agreement with the university whereby all equine samples will go to the Maddy Laboratory after the current contract with Truesdail Laboratories expires on June 30, 2005, provided the Board can negotiate acceptable terms for the interagency agreement.

From its opening in 2000, the Maddy Laboratory has dedicated its efforts toward improving drug testing for California by developing state-of-the-art instrumental testing procedures. The testing panel permits the detection of over 800 compounds in every sample, which ensures that California horses are subjected to the most rigorous testing available.

“Senator Ken Maddy truly loved horse racing and worked hard in the State Legislature to keep it healthy,” said CHRB Chairman John Harris. “He knew that the integrity of racing is dependant on strong drug testing and research. One of his last bills created the Maddy Lab at Davis, which he dedicated only months prior to his death in 2001. I know he would be pleased to see the CHRB act to enter into an interagency agreement to move all of its testing to the Maddy Lab. I feel this action further enhances an already strong program and maintains California racing as the model for a strong medication regulation and testing program.”

Dr. Rick Arthur, a member of the Board of the Oak Tree Racing Association, concurred, “This is a long overdue change for California. We are finally utilizing the exceptional assets of the University of California to protect the integrity of horse racing.”

Dr. Ron Jensen, the CHRB equine medical director, who is on the faculty at Davis, also voiced support for sending more samples to the Maddy Laboratory when he explained, “We are all aware that graded stakes are the most prestigious and important races in the U.S. The American Graded Stakes Committee of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) is the organization that

selects and designates races that will have graded status. This committee has determined that there should be more thorough testing on samples collected from horses competing in graded stakes, and proposes to make such testing mandatory for maintaining or achieving graded stakes status. This testing was easily accomplished in California because the testing done at the Maddy Lab on all California samples meets or exceeds the TOBA guidelines.”

Harris elaborated, “When we begin sending all samples to the Maddy Lab, all tested horses racing in California will get the ‘supertest’ whether they run in graded stakes or claiming races.”

In other action, the Board accepted the recommendation of its Race Dates Committee and allocated the remaining harness dates for the latter half of 2005 to the Cal Expo racing facility in Sacramento. It is anticipated that the California Exposition and State Fair will operate the harness meet for a minimum of 26 racing days between July 31 and September 22. Indications are that a new organization, the Sacramento Harness Association, will apply for a license to run the remaining harness dates between September 23 and December 31, for a minimum of 50 racing days. Still unresolved is the status of the mixed breed meet that historically has been run at Cal Expo during the summer. Those dates still will be run as a mixed meet but at a different fair.

The Board voted to hire an outside firm to perform a detailed forensic audit of the pertinent records of the Jockeys’ Guild to make certain that public funds are being properly administered and spent for health benefits for California jockeys, as required by California Law. CHRB Commissioner Richard Shapiro said a CHRB auditor reviewed some of the Guild documents, but “their record keeping is inadequate. There is no alternative left for us except to do a forensic audit. We have the obligation and responsibility to make certain that public funds are being spent properly.”

The Guild has been receiving about \$1 million annually from uncashed refunds in order to provide medical coverage for California jockeys and their families. Jockey Ronald Warren, Jr., a founding member of the new California Jockeys Guild, said the national Jockeys Guild has failed to pay the bills of insured jockeys and their families who visited “fully covered” providers and hospitals.

Shapiro said, “Until this is resolved, no more money will be turned over to the (national) Guild. I have asked the Guild to provide us with documentation for any unpaid bills for California jockeys’ medical coverage.” Noting that Warren’s group wants to take over the administration of the health program for California jockeys, Shapiro noted, “They are taking all the right steps. They are moving forward intelligently. And they are making an outreach effort to all jockeys in the state.”

The commissioners asked the Thoroughbred Owners of California, which negotiated the contract with the Jockeys Guild for the health program, to meet with both jockey groups to determine whether there is a need to change the eligibility criteria for the program to address how best to define participation criteria for a California jockey eligible for benefits.

The Board authorized for public notice a regulatory amendment that would prohibit horses claimed in California from racing in other jurisdictions until 60 days after the close of the meet at which they are claimed. The proposal received the unanimous support of racetracks and horsemen who said California’s horse population is being depleted by owners and trainers who claim horses in order to race them in other jurisdictions.