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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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CHRB MEETING TO FOCUS ON RACING SURFACES

SACRAMENTO, CA – A comprehensive discussion of California’s racing surfaces involving as many as 38 panelists from many segments of the horse-racing industry will be the focus of a Special Purpose Meeting being held by the California Horse Racing Board on February 20 at Santa Anita Park.

The meeting in the Baldwin Terrace Room will be webcast through a link on the CHRB website (<http://www.chrb.ca.gov>). The Board will first conduct a closed executive session beginning at 9:30 a.m., and then the public session and webcast will begin at approximately 10 a.m.

“We have scheduled this special meeting in part to review our track surfaces,” explained CHRB Chairman Richard B. Shapiro, who has personally invited 38 individuals representing racing secretaries, trainers, jockeys, manufacturers and experts in synthetic surfaces, veterinarians and researchers, track maintenance experts, racehorse owners, and racetrack owners.

“Clearly, with the situation that has developed at Santa Anita, and much that has been written about the Board’s mandate, it seems logical and appropriate to pause and see where we are today, what we know today, and what we should be looking for or doing differently in the future,” continued the chairman. “The meeting is to review where we are, identify concerns, discuss solutions, get the facts to date, improve communications, and create collaborative efforts.

“This meeting is not designed to prove any point or position. It is to provide information, facts, and ideas on how we can best achieve our common goals of safe racing surfaces and the betterment of the racing business.”

Four engineered surfaces have been installed at California racetracks since the Board issued a mandate last year requiring synthetic surfaces at all racetracks operating four or more weeks of continuous thoroughbred racing.

Vice Chairman John Harris said the goal of synthetic surfaces is to “keep horses sounder, longer,” and he hopes to hear opinions on how best to achieve that goal. “This is more than just some experiment,” he added. “It holds great promise to enhance the durability of horses.”

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