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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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RULE CREATES SPECIAL CONDITION FOR LAYOFF HORSES

SACRAMENTO, CA – A new rule goes into effect Saturday in California allowing horses returning from layoffs of at least six months to be entered in claiming races in which they will be ineligible to be claimed, just one time, in an effort to encourage owners to give horses needed time off.

As originally proposed by the Thoroughbred Owners of California, to be eligible for the non-claiming option, the horse must be entered at a claiming level equal to or greater than the price for which it last started and must be returning from a layoff of at least 180 days.

“We would like to have horses have the opportunity to be rested, lengthening their career,” said TOC Director Tom Bachman in testimony before the Board. “It is to the owner’s advantage to be able to bring that horse back and run one time (and) not have to worry about somebody claiming the horse and taking advantage of the time and money spent in the rehab of the horse. It’s as simple as that.”

CHRB Chairman Richard B. Shapiro endorsed the concept and commented, “We’re trying to find a way to give the owner an incentive to put a horse out for some R&R. The owner’s made an investment in rehabilitating the horse and he doesn’t want to see that first time back he loses the horse and the investment.”

Vice Chairman John Harris commented that stopping on a horse, giving the horse ample time to recover from an injury, and then getting the horse back into racing can easily cost several thousand dollars. “Allowing a horse to run at the price it last ran may better encourage horses being returned to racing,” he explained. “It is good for all concerned. Longer term, I think we can do even more to encourage this area of good equine management.”

The Board conducted a public hearing and adopted this rule in May. The rule then passed review by the Office of Administrative Law and was filed with the Secretary of State, effective September 20, 2008.

Horses entered for the non-claiming option will be identified in the official program, and Equibase is taking steps to identify horses running for this condition in their past-performance lines beginning next month.

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