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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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HARRIS AND ISRAEL NEW CHRB CHAIRMAN & VICE CHAIRMAN

ARCADIA, CA – California’s racing commissioners elected John Harris chairman of the California Horse Racing Board and they elected David Israel their new vice chairman Thursday during the monthly meeting at Santa Anita Park. The Board also addressed issues relating to medication violations, equine fatalities, injury monitoring, rebates, shoeing practices, special funds, and claiming restrictions.

Chairman Harris previously served two years as chairman in 2004 and 2005, and since then he served as vice chairman. Governor Gray Davis first appointed him to the CHRB on November 9, 2000. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger reappointed him to a term that expires July 26, 2011. Chairman Harris owns and operates Harris Farms, a diversified agricultural, beef, and hospitality company located in the San Joaquin Valley near Coalinga. Since 1966, the farm has been raising and training thoroughbreds on what is now a 400-acre division. Multiple Breeders’ Cup Classic winner Tiznow was raised at Harris Farms. Their most successful campaigner, in partnership with Don Valpredo, was the Cal-bred Soviet Problem, who was named California Champion 3-Year-Old Filly in 1993 and California Horse of the Year in 1994. He also bred and raced California Champion Work the Crowd with the late Senator Ken Maddy. Chairman Harris is a member and past steward of The Jockey Club. He was elected a director of the California Thoroughbred Breeders Association in 1974, served as the organization’s legislative chairman for 20 years, and was twice elected CTBA president. He also has served on the boards of the Breeders’ Cup, Thoroughbred Owners of California, Grayson-Jockey Club Research Board, and the Center for Equine Health/UC Davis Advisory Board. He currently serves on the boards of the Race Track Chaplaincy of America, Western Growers Association, California Cattlemen’s Association, and Pacific Legal Foundation.

Vice Chairman Israel was appointed to the CHRB by Governor Schwarzenegger on July 9, 2008. He also was appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger to the board of directors of the California Science Center in 2005. He currently serves as one of the governor’s appointees on the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum Commission and recently concluded a one-year term as president of that body. He served three years on the board of directors of the California Governor’s and First Lady’s Conference on Women. Vice Chairman Israel has been a writer and producer of many television series and movies, including “Midnight Caller,” “The Untouchables,” “Tremors,” “Turks,” “Fast Copy,” “Crimes of the Century,” “Bay City Blues,” “Jake Lassiter: Justice on the Bayou,” “The Port Chicago Mutiny,” “Pandora’s Clock,” “House of Frankenstein,” “Y2K,” and “Monday Night Football.” He served as director in the office of the president for the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee in 1984 under Peter V. Ueberroth. A graduate of Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism, he was a reporter and syndicated columnist for the *Chicago Daily News*, *Washington Star*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*. His magazine articles have appeared in *Sports Illustrated*, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, *Playboy*, *Sport*, and *California*. As a sports columnist, he often wrote about horse racing, and covered the Triple Crown campaigns of Seattle Slew and Affirmed.

In other business,

- In a report to the Board, Dr. Rick Arthur, the CHRB equine medical director, said medication violations have greatly decreased since the Board enacted tough new penalty guidelines. He explained that under the guidelines, violations are “very costly to trainers even on a first violation. You get to a second and third violation and it becomes a very expensive mistake. Trainers are beginning to realize that. The anabolic steroid situation has gone better than anybody expected. The non-steroidal anti-inflammatory violations appear to be down. We have not had a clenbuterol violation in Southern California since the fall of 2007. We have not had a TCO2 violation in Northern California since June 2007, and there were only two TCO2 violations in Southern California in 2008 – from more than 40,000 samples. The efforts we’ve made to be tough and fair and consistent are paying off.”
- Concerning equine fatalities, Dr. Arthur reported to the Board, “We have had one racing fatality at Santa Anita since December 31, and in Northern California we have not had a racing fatality since the (Golden Gate) meet started on December 26. We went back through the records going back to 2004 and could not find a major racing track with dirt that had no fatalities for a month. Apparently the rain or maintenance changes or other changes solved some of the problems. There have been training fatalities at both facilities. Those numbers are about the same as last year.”
- Relating to the report on equine injuries, CHRB Executive Director Kirk Breed met with Dr. Arthur and others on Wednesday to discuss ideas about monitoring non-fatal injuries more thoroughly. There will be a full report to the Board on that monitoring program at a future meeting.
- In response to questions from the racing commissioners about the freezing of test samples, Dr. Arthur said about 25,000 samples have been frozen and stored at the Ken Maddy Laboratory over the last 18 months. As for putting those samples to any use, Dr. Arthur explained, “We are limited in California in what kind of regulatory action we can take, but let’s say trainer X comes up with a human growth hormone positive. We can go back and test other samples (from that trainer’s horses), and if we find 12 other samples with the new test that have human growth hormone, it’s going to be very difficult for that trainer to say, golly, I don’t know where that came from. The whole goal of drug testing is a deterrent. If people are bending the rules, we don’t want them to sleep well at night. And knowing we have those frozen samples that we can retroactively test is a deterrent.”
- The Board agreed to begin the regulatory process to repeal a CHRB rule that places restrictions on the state’s racetracks and simulcast organizations on doing business with off-track betting facilities that offer rebates to persons wagering on horse races. Testimony from the public and comments from commissioners indicated that strict enforcement of rebate restrictions might encourage bettors to switch to locations where rebates are not prohibited and therefore discourage wagering on California races.
- The Board approved for 45-day public notice a proposed rule to allow thoroughbreds to race without shoes provided that the trainer declares at the time of entry that the horse will race unshod. The information must be noted in the official program. The requirements are the same for horses that previously raced unshod and are being switched back to wearing shoes. It is believed that some horses train and race better without shoes, especially on synthetic surfaces where traction can be an issue. This policy had been in effect for several months under an executive order issued by the Board last year. Dr. Diane Isbell, the examining veterinarian at Golden Gate Fields and an early proponent of the program, indicated that certain horses may benefit from racing unshod.

- Executive Director Breed reported to the Board on a variety of fiscal issues of importance to the Board and industry. These included changes in industry funding requirements and the status of the State's Fairs & Expositions Fund; the continuing shift from traditional handle to ADW handle and percentage changes in amounts overall; status of the recently created Jockeys' Retirement Fund – jointly administered by the CHRB and Jockeys' Guild; funds provided for audits of trainers' payroll and workers' compensation records and/or problem gambling prevention; and newly enrolled legislation that substantially changes the license fees on wagering handle and the funding formula for CHRB operations and drug testing. Breed also introduced the concept of real time wagering monitoring as an adjunct of the Board's regulatory responsibility.
- The Board approved for 45-day public notice a proposed regulatory amendment to provide that a claimed horse is not eligible to race in another state until 60 days from the date it was claimed. The current rule restricts such a horse from racing in another state until 60 days after the close of the meet at which it was claimed. Therefore, the proposed change would shorten the period of restriction.

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