



A Couple of Class Acts

by DOUG BURGE

Our annual Harris Ranch Seminar has proved, year after year, to be one of our more popular events. This venue provides not only the opportunity for CTBA members to discuss and learn more about industry issues, but also offers a great networking environment for breeders across the state. Plus, this event provides an opportunity to relay ideas and concerns to both myself and the organization's board members. Not to mention that you get a good steak, or two!

Over the years, the topics covered in this seminar have included equine health issues, pedigrees and mating theories, conformation traits, and selling for the marketplace. For this year, the focus centered on marketing—both at the racetrack, and farm and sales level. Given the increased competition facing the racing industry in California, not only within the state but also in other racing states that have grown purses and incentive awards through casino gaming, this subject is of utmost importance to us all. A recap of the individual presentations can be found on pages 28 and 29 of this issue.

Besides providing a forum for further education, discussion, and debate on various topics, this annual event also allows for a brief time to forget about the ongoing headaches and challenges we encounter on a daily basis and reflect on the “good old days” and emotional highs associated with racing. For the 150 people in attendance who were fortunate to hear the dinner speech from Dogwood Stables founder and president Cot Campbell, we were reminded of why we are all so passionate about this sport. Over the past few years, we have had some very good featured speakers at this seminar, including Frank Stronach, Penny Chenery, Julie Krone and Chris McCarron. This year was no exception, as the crowd was extremely entertained. We will have a hard time in the future topping this particular seminar, but I am sure that our Education Committee will come up with many more first-class events.

On another note, our recent CTBA Sales' Northern California Yearling Sale, through the support of

numerous consignors and buyers located throughout the state, proved very successful. After enduring the stress and disappointment of the Del Mar Yearling Sale in August, it was gratifying to not only see a major improvement in the marketplace in Northern California, but to receive the thanks and appreciation from the majority of breeders who were involved.

A marketable yearling, on pedigree, conformation or a combination of the two, did sell well as this vendue. The “big fish theory” was proven once again, in that placing a yearling in the proper marketplace can yield very favorable results. The overall set-up (stabling, showing area, sales arena, offices, concessions, etc.) was very sale-friendly and complimented by many of the people who were in attendance. I would like to thank the Alameda County Fairgrounds for their assistance and support in providing such a great location.

This sale provides a much needed service to the Northern California breeders and must remain a fixture on our fall calendar. These positive results for the renewed venture by CTBA will help create future growth for this very important vendue.

