



*From the Executive Corner*

# Six Of The Best

by DOUG BURGE

“Am I having a good day, or what?”

That was the closing line uttered by Richard Dreyfuss’s character in the popular horse racing movie “*Let It Ride.*” The same statement applied to the breeders and owners of California-bred horses on July 7, as Cal-breds won three grade I races that day across the country. Furthermore, in an eight-day period from June 30 through July 7, horses bred in the Golden State won a total of four grade I races, a grade II, and a grade III that was run in track record time.

This remarkable week began with two-time California Horse of the Year Lava Man capturing his third consecutive grade I Hollywood Gold Cup and then Idiot Proof breaking the Monmouth Park track record for six furlongs in the grade III Jersey Shores Breeders’ Cup, followed by Somethinaboutlaura defending her title in the grade II A Glean Invitational Handicap.

Then, on Saturday July 7, Cal-breds really shined, capturing a record three grade I’s at tracks on both sides of the country. Undefeated Nashoba’s Key started the day with a victory in the grade I Vanity Invitational Handicap at Hollywood Park then, at Calder Race Course in Miami, River’s Prayer won the grade I Princess Rooney Handicap—with fellow Cal-bred Shaggy Mane completing the exacta—and, finally, Bilo won the grade I Triple Bend Invitational Handicap also at Hollywood.

In total, these Cal-bred graded stakes performers generated almost \$1.4 million in purse money for their owners. Plus, the roughly 15 percent breeder awards and 12 percent stallion awards (with maximum purses considered in each race) also goes to those responsible for producing such top class runners. It really was an amazing week and further proof that, indeed, “It pays to be Cal-bred.”

Based on these results and the trend over past few years, it is evident that our program is succeeding in providing ample incentives to breed better horses. We had a record number of seven grade I-winning Cal-breds in 2006, and are on target to match, or even beat, that number this year.

It also should be noted that, unlike certain other state incentive programs across the country, California breeders and stallion owners are awarded when Cal-breds are successful in prestigious races outside of their home state. The recent graded stakes one-two on the East Coast, plus the annual Sunshine Millions at Gulfstream Park in Florida during January, are examples of the magnitude of nationwide opportunities that significantly benefit breeders.

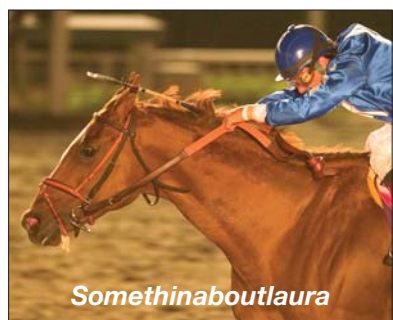
This amazing program continues to reward those investing in California racing, and the results speak for themselves. All of these aforementioned stars are highlighted in this month’s publication. 🐾



**Lava Man**



**Idiot Proof**



**Somethinaboutlaura**



**Nashoba’s Key**



**River’s Prayer**



**Bilo**