

Cal-Breds On Course In Counterpart Cups



From the Executive Corner

by DOUG BURGE

Photos by Benoit & Associates



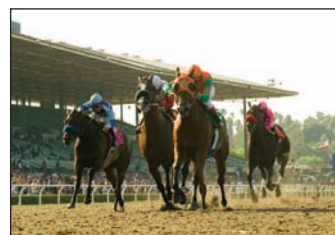
Mr. Chairman



Swift Winds



Famous Ruby



Tribesman



Lightmyfirebaby

The 19th renewal of California Cup held at Santa Anita Park on Oct. 5, during this year's 40th Oak Tree Racing Association meet, provided the usual large competitive fields as well as very lucrative purse opportunities for locally bred horses. The attendance, at nearly 21,000, exceeded expectations, as historically this number suffers when Breeders' Cup is held in California. Typically the highlight of the Oak Tree meet, Cal Cup attendance can decline significantly when competing locally with the Breeders' Cup. Therefore, it was gratifying that fans came out to support some of the top California-breds currently competing.

The handle for the day, however, was a big disappointment. Following the wagering trends seen across the country for the latter half of the year, the total handle plummeted over 37 percent, with the out-of-state handle accounting for the largest drop. Obviously the poor economy, which has left less discretionary money for wagering purposes, was a major cause. Other variables that led to the decline could include the shift from a Saturday to a Sunday, perhaps the shift to the early October date versus later in the year, and the overall marketing focus across the country. Whatever the reasons, our Cal Cup Committee will review the event and make the needed adjustments that are within our control to help reverse this trend for the future. Cal Cup is a very prestigious event for those breeding and racing in the state and it is important that all aspects of that day be maximized.

The actual date of Cal Cup was chosen in order to provide enough time between that event and the Breeders' Cup. This did prove advantageous as four of the eight California-breds entered in the Breeders' Cup ran in Cal Cup races. The other entrants prepped in graded and open stakes at Oak Tree. The last time Breeders' Cup was held in California (2003), only one Cal-bred competed. It is very exciting to see that seven Cal-breds will likely compete for Breeders' Cup titles on their home turf this year.

This large number of entered horses showcases the depth of the quality of horses bred here in the state. Good luck to the connections of Idiot Proof, Tiz Elemental, Saucey Evening, Add Heat, California Flag, Bold Chieftain, Cost of Freedom and alternate entry Atka. I am hopeful that we will be featuring their accomplishments in next month's *California Thoroughbred* magazine. 🐾



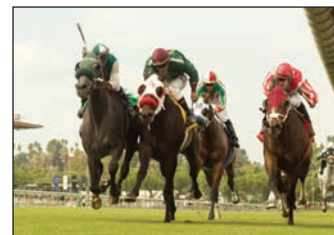
Lucky Primo



Saucey Evening



Distant Victory



Guts



Kool Comic