

CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD
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RACE DATES COMMITTEE MEETING

of the **California Horse Racing Board** will be held on **Wednesday, April 27, 2005**, commencing at **11:00 a.m.**, at **The Churchill Downs Hollywood Park Race Track, in the Sunset Room, 1050 S. Prairie Avenue, Inglewood, California**. Non-committee members attending the Board's committee meeting may participate in the public discussion, but shall not participate in any official committee vote or committee executive session.

A G E N D A

Action Items

1. Discussion and action regarding the **appropriate location for the running of the 2005 allocation of fair racing dates (thoroughbreds and emerging breeds) of the California State Fair and Exposition.**

Further information regarding the committee meeting may be obtained from John Reagan, Senior Management Auditor, at the CHRB Administrative Office, 1010 Hurley Way, Suite 300, Sacramento, California, 95825; telephone (916) 263-6000 or fax (916) 263-6042. A copy of this notice can be located on the CHRB website at www.chrb.ca.gov

RACE DATES COMMITTEE

Commissioner Richard B. Shapiro, Chairman
Commissioner John C. Sperry, Member
Commissioner Marie G. Moretti, Member

STAFF ANALYSIS
SELECTING A VENUE FOR THE FAIR RACING OF CAL EXPO

RACE DATES COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 27, 2005

Background:

Cal Expo recently received CHRB approval to conduct a harness meet at their facility in Sacramento for the remainder of 2005. Some of those dates will replace the traditional fair meet in August. Cal Expo has been in discussion with other fairs regarding the possibility of conducting their fair racing at an alternate venue. Jack Liebau sent the attached email to CHRB Chairman John Harris and Commissioner Richard Shapiro regarding questions and concerns about the possible choices for that venue change. This meeting will review those issues and others concerning the change of venue including Mr. Liebau's plan that he refers to in his email.

Recommendation:

This item is for information and discussion.

John and Richard:

Until now, I have respected Norb Bartosik's request that our discussions remain confidential. In light of Dave Elliot's email to John, I assume that our discussions are no longer deemed to be confidential.

Norb did talk to me about the possibility of the Cal Expo dates being run at a fair venue (I then assumed the venue to be Pleasanton) except for the Sunday and Monday of the Labor Day weekend subject to Bay Meadows not conducting racing on the Saturday of Labor Day. In short, the suggestion was that Bay Meadows would give up its allocated Opening Day in order not to be overlapped on Sunday and Monday. I advised Norb that Bay Meadows would not be willing to give up that Saturday because it was a big day and also it was of importance in the overall promotion of Labor Day, historically the day which experiences the highest on-track attendance in Northern California. Unfortunately, in 2005, Bay Meadows was not allocated the Friday of the Labor Day weekend for the first time since 1988, because the Board wanted to reduce the four day racing overlap with Cal Expo in Sacramento. Ironically, as it now stands, Cal Expo is no longer slated to conduct thoroughbred racing in Sacramento over the Labor Day Weekend and Bay Meadows has lost the traditional Friday opener.

I now believe that the venue Norb had in mind was Santa Rosa, because I have learned that Pleasanton has booked its facility for the Scottish Games over the Labor Day Weekend. Assuming such to be the case, horses would be at Santa Rosa from July 27 to August 6 (Sonoma County Fair); they would then move to the San Mateo County Fair (August 10 to August 22) and then return again to Santa Rosa for the Cal Expo Dates (August 24 to September 4). From the perspective of the San Mateo Fair, it is not advantageous to be sandwiched between two meets at Santa Rosa because horses would probably lay-up during the San Mateo Fair in order to avoid moving. Actually, Pleasanton would be a more acceptable venue because the ship from Pleasanton to Bay Meadows is much easier than the one from Santa Rosa to Bay Meadows. From Bay Meadows perspective, it is totally repugnant to think that its meet might be overlapped with a meet that has "purchased" the Cal Expo dates and that Cal Expo has been able to double dip by realizing revenue from both its conduct of a harness meet and the "sale" of its racing dates. Obviously, the notion of the Cal Expo dates being run at Santa Rosa does not fall within the statutory language of Section 19549.1, wherein the Board is granted authority to allocate dates for a "combined race meet."

Concern about the mixed breeds losing racing opportunities has been voiced. For whatever reason, the pattern in past years has been for the mixed breeds to ship from Santa Rosa to Sacramento, thereby passing or skipping the San Mateo County Fair. In 2004, the San Mateo County Fair was only able to card four mixed breed races-all of which were Arabian races. On the other hand, Cal Expo carded four Appaloosa, fifteen Arabian, twelve Mule and six Quarter Horse races. The San Mateo County Fair would not only welcome, but would commit to the carding of at least forty-one races (the four breed races run at San Mateo plus the thirty-seven races that filled at Cal Expo during 2004) for the mixed breeds. Sometime ago, I was asked if the San Mateo County Fair would make stalls available for the mixed breeds. I asked them how many they needed, and I was told somewhere around a 100. I told the inquirer that mixed breeds would be guaranteed 125 stalls.

We are in the process of formulating a plan which includes the rearranging and contraction of racing dates in Northern California; something beneficial to San Mateo County Fair, Humboldt County Fair, The Big Fresno Fair, Cal Expo, and Bay Meadows, and Northern California horsemen who believe that there is too much racing given the current horse population. Most importantly, the purpose of the plan would to improve racing in Northern California, and therefore, we would hope that the common good would prevail over self interest.

Jack