

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REPORT

By Charles E. Dougherty, Jr. CTT Deputy Director

As the summer fair racing circuit of 2007 starts to wind down, the anxiety as to what Northern California's overall racing circuit will look like starts to grow.



By all indications, Bay Meadows will not race after 2008. While many horsemen held out hope that Bay Meadows would be spared of their development plans and continue to race, that scenario looks less likely each day. In fact, the Bay Meadows Land Company (BMLC) is telling the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) that they would only like to race until July of 2008.

It is very disappointing that BMLC has taken this position, as they made such an issue of not originally being granted an exemption for the synthetic surface mandate. The CHRB granted the waiver, with BMLC now saying they can't race past the summer months. Go figure! The CTT is very involved in negotiations

in trying to get Bay Meadows to commit to a stabling program through the fall if they do not race after July of 2008.

There will be plenty of discussion surrounding the experiment of Vallejo and Santa Rosa running a combined meet this summer. Unfortunately, the handle figures did not increase, but rather decreased from previous years. Many on the circuit felt figures may have been different if Santa Rosa ran the first week of its meet without the carnival and then finished with its traditional fair meet the last two weeks. I'm sure that will be considered for next year.

After weeks of waiting for the City of Albany's approval, the installation of the Tapeta racing surface at Golden Gate

Fields (GGF) finally started on July 22. Horses were moved out to Vallejo, Pleasanton, and Bay Meadows during the construction time. The GGF management has set a tentative October 12 date as to when the horses can move back into the barn area. Besides the new racing surface, GGF is spending approximately \$1 million to refurbish and paint all the stalls in the barn area. The areas between all the barns have been leveled off to improve drainage as well. In addition, the CTT is working closely with GGF to renovate its recreation hall for our backstretch workers.