



NEWS FROM NORTH CALIFORNIA

By Charles E. Dougherty, Jr.
CTT Deputy Director

The appeal by the "Save Bay Meadows" Committee was heard before the 1st District Court of Appeals on September 19.

By all accounts, a decision is due by the Court before the end of the calendar year of 2007. If successful, the citizens group will push that the Bay Meadows development be put to a vote by San Mateo residents as to whether they want the proposed project to move forward. If the appeal is denied, it basically ends any hope that Bay Meadows will not be developed in the near future. It seems almost certain that Bay Meadows Land Company would start their project in the fall of 2008.

After months of meetings and industry input, the CHRB awarded 2008 race dates for Northern California. In what seems to a certainty, Bay Meadows will hold its final thoroughbred race meet from February 6 through May 11. In addition, the San Mateo Fair will race from August 6-8. The CTT worked hard to get Bay Meadows to agree to stay open for stabling and training in the fall of 2008. There is a real possibility that construction could commence shortly after the finish of the San Mateo Fair. Bay Meadows

management has agreed to work with the CTT in establishing training hours that will work to ensure the safety of both horse and human during any possible construction times.

The new Tapeta racing surface that was installed at Golden Gate Fields is being embraced by the trainers thus far. The first horse set foot on the surface on October 5. In fact, a horse even worked a half mile that first morning! The trainers seem to be extremely pleased and encouraged that the surface is kinder and safer for their horses. Michael Dickinson, the creator of Tapeta, has told trainers that his goal is to reduce the amount of injuries by 50 percent. Now, that is a worthy goal!

Golden Gate Fields management was clearly thrilled with the first three days of entries taken as they awaited the first race run on the Tapeta surface. The number of horses entered for the first 3 days averaged 8.5 per race in comparison to the average field size in Northern California this year of 6.9. The

first race run on the surface was on opening day of the Golden Gate fall meet, and a flat mile race was clocked in a very respectable 1:38.1.

The fair circuit was finished for the year with the running of the Fresno Fair in early October. The management of the Fresno fair should be thanked as they spent considerable funds to install rubber bricks throughout the paddock area. The Stockton Fair has announced that they are in the process of securing funds to install a new turf course at their facility. If all plans go accordingly, the first turf race will be run at Stockton during their Fair of 2009.

Pleasanton is aggressively seeking funding to install a synthetic surface. Once Bay Meadows closes, the CTT is very hopeful that this facility will become the second barn area (besides GGF) in the Bay Area to accommodate the stabling needs for our horses. If all goes well, Pleasanton will have installed a new surface by the end of the fall of 2008. Good luck to them...