

News from the North

By Richard Scheidt

Attendees at the TOC Conformation Clinic on April 12.

BAY MEADOWS



Racing News

Get your claiming horses ready!

The first claiming series concluded – and it was a great success – so two more have been scheduled!

Bay Meadows conducted the first *Triple Play Race Series* at the recently completed spring race meet. This three-leg event began with a \$10,000 claiming race, followed by two starter allowance races for horses that competed in previous legs. All three legs offered enhanced purses, and horses claimed out of the first leg were eligible to continue in the series under new ownership. That's where the fun began.

More than 80 claims were dropped in the first leg, which was split into two races, with eight entries each. When the dust settled, the final leg winner was Bonk, owned by Bob Bone and trained by Steve Sherman. Bone won an eight-way shake in leg one to claim Bonk for \$10,000 and took home with winner's share of the \$60,000 final leg purse.

Two additional series have been scheduled this year for Northern California. A unique three-race, three-fair event begins at the San Mateo County Fair, on Wednesday Aug. 6, with an open claiming race for \$6,250 runners at one mile on the main track. Leg two, scheduled for Aug. 24 at Cal Expo, will be a starter allowance at one mile and one sixteenth. The final leg will be run Sept. 14 at the San Joaquin Fair, a starter allowance at a mile and a quarter. The final leg will carry a purse of \$40,000! Horses claimed from leg one will remain eligible for the series, and only those horses running in the first two legs will be eligible for the final. If a horse is claimed in the first leg and goes on to win the series, a \$6,250 bonus will be paid to the original owner(s).

Golden Gate Fields is not to be left out of the fun. The fall race meet will feature a three-race claiming series for two-year olds – beginning with a \$25,000 open claiming race on Oct. 18. Leg two will be on Nov. 15, and the final leg will be run on Dec. 13, with an estimated purse of \$75,000. If a horse is claimed in the first leg and goes on to win this series, a \$5,000 bonus will be paid to the original owner(s).

For complete details on the racing series, please contact the local TOC or racing office.

Seminar Update

TOC's Continuing Education Seminars are rapidly gaining popularity in the North. On April 12 more than 40 participants took advantage of a hands-on conformation clinic at Bay Meadows. Former trainer and current Racing Director at Bay Meadows, Richard Lewis, led an introduction to basic horse structure, pointing out items to look for when selecting a horse for purchase at sale or in the paddock. Groups then visited the

barns of trainers Jeff Bonde and John Martin.

The first TOC Northern California Veterinary Seminar took place on May 31 at Golden Gate Fields. The 45 new and prospective owners that braved the chilly morning were treated to an informative discussion on veterinary medicine and how it relates to owners, the different types of veterinarians on the racetrack, and how the trainer-veterinarian relationship works. The panel of speakers included California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) Equine Medical Director and veterinarian, Rick Arthur, practicing veterinarian Kim Kuhlman, and local trainer Aggie Ordonez. The panel also discussed synthetic surfaces, steroid use, equine hospitals, and the role of the CHRB in equine welfare.

The seminar included a tour of the Golden Gate Fields Equine Hospital, led by hospital director, Dent Caton. In addition, Dr. Kuhlmann outlined the steps a horse is taken through for a surgical procedure, and answered questions relating to the clinic. TOC hopes to make the seminar format an annual event in the North.

The Seminar Series continues in with an Introduction to Ownership on Aug. 2 at the Sonoma County Fair in Santa Rosa, followed a Conformation Clinic Oct. 11 at the Big Fresno Fair. Visit www.toconline.com for the entire 2008 schedule of events.

Future Race Dates

2008 has been called a "transition year" for Northern California racing. With the last day of racing at Bay Meadows scheduled for Aug. 18 at the San Mateo County Fair, the question remains, where will racing be conducted for those "old" Bay Meadows dates? Rest assured that TOC representatives are deeply involved in the future plans for racing in both Northern and Southern California.

While at time of publication the CHRB has not granted 2009 race dates, it is clear that the Alameda County Fair in Pleasanton is the likely recipient of some additional race days apart from their traditional two-week fair. Pleasanton representatives have indicated a desire to install a synthetic racing surface as soon as possible, followed by a turf course at a later time. It is possible that any dates awarded to Pleasanton might be run – in the near term – at an alternate facility in 2009 and beyond, while track construction takes place.

While there is still some uncertainty about where and when racing will be conducted next year, there is one certainty: TOC will do its best to represent owners' best interests in developing a consistent, long-term successful racing schedule for Northern California. Please check back for an update in the Fall 2008 issue of the Owners' Circle and at www.toconline.com.