



Managing Editor's Welcome

As another year draws to a close, I find it appropriate to pause and reflect on the many important events that we've witnessed during the past 12 months. Whether it was a high or a low, they've all added up to make it another good year overall for Thoroughbred breeding and racing here in California.

November saw the relatively successful 14th renewal of California Cup—extensively reviewed in this particular issue of *California Thoroughbred*—as well as the inauguration of the Golden State's 38th Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger. How many of us could ever have imagined such a "changing of the guard" in the Capitol which we now hope will be beneficial to our industry.

The eleventh month of 2003 also saw records broken at Santa Anita Park during the 20th anniversary of Breeders' Cup, as well as the containment of the raging wildfires that had taken a grip of so many areas in California as October came to a close. Even though a number of our valuable farms were seriously threatened, thankfully none of them were destroyed, but that was only due to the heroic efforts of so many brave people.

In August and September, the CTBA's Del Mar Yearling Sale and Seventh Annual Harris Ranch Seminar were the center of attention, respectively. Though the former was unable to build on its record-breaking numbers of previous years, it remains the West Coast's premier yearling auction, while the latter event once again proved to be a roaring success all around.

During June, July and August, the release of the *Seabiscuit* movie took center stage as it vaulted "The Sport of Kings" back into the public limelight. A renewed interest in horses was the initial result, and we hope that the momentum garnered from this exposure continues to benefit our industry in the days, weeks and years to come.

April was California Gold Rush IV time, and these ten stakes races worth over \$1.3 million exclusively for California-breds,

The Big Picture

resulted in yet another exceptional day of racing and entertainment ably hosted by Hollywood Park.

February and March saw the crowning of last year's local champions and since then we have seen many of these same horses, along with a number of new faces, carry the California flag with distinction. Breaking the \$1 million dollar mark this year were a record four Cal-breds—Echo Eddie (June), Full Moon Madness and Sky Jack in August, and our 2002 Horse of the Year Continental Red at Cal Cup XIV.

Graded stakes wins were also recorded by such standouts as Joey Franco, Ninebanks, Cee's Elegance, Disturbingthepeace, Tizdubai, Standard Setter, El Dorado Shooter, Excessivepleasure and, of course, Sky Jack who became the Golden State's 34th millionaire with a track record-setting performance at Emerald Downs in Washington.

Seven months earlier, almost to the day, we saw the inaugural running of the \$3.6 million Sunshine Millions, a day of eight stakes races—split evenly between Santa Anita and Gulfstream Park—for Cal-breds and Florida-breds only. The event was warmly received and even though we were shown a clean pair of heels by our perennial East Coast rivals, rest assured that we will be back next year on Saturday, Jan. 24, to try and avenge this defeat.

Well, that was the year that was. The same one that also saw me celebrate a personal milestone of my own—my 40th birthday. So, even though we don't know what the next headline will be, what is certain is that it will be just one of many that will make up the big picture of what is in store for us during 2004.

Happy Holidays.

—Rudi Groothedde
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In the company of... "JJ" Gish, Vice President of Typecraft Inc. Wood & Jones (Printers of *California Thoroughbred* since 1998), his wife Ashley and my fiancée Lisa Marie Wood (left to right) at Cal Cup XIV.



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