

From the Executive Office



The Potential to Succeed

The May edition of this publication is always one of my favorites, as we showcase the California-bred foals of the current year. This year is no exception, as we have included foals by some of the top California stallions with the emphasis on first-crop sires and those whose first Cal-bred crop is on the ground.

It is our policy to highlight some of the prospective young sires, so as to better assist in the promotion of those with tremendous potential. As the stallion population in California continues to both improve and become even more competitive, the focus on young stallions is important.

It is also our goal to showcase as many different farms and stallions each year, so that we give ample coverage to the many different options available to our local breeders. We do include on an annual basis, however, the top California stallions and mares in order to stress the importance of breeding quality foals. This "California Foals of 2003" pictorial can be found on pages 21 to 27.

Along the lines of discussing quality foals, it is also that time of year for the annual CTBA Del Mar Yearling Sale inspections and farm visits. At the time of writing this editorial introduction, we've just finished the first leg of the trip (Northern California), including Southern and Northeastern Sacramento as well as the Sonoma area. Also scheduled for later in April are the Southern and Central California locations, fitting in with our goal of having all the prospective yearlings inspected by May 10.

This year, we moved the inspections back nearly two weeks in order to give consignors and their yearlings more time to prepare. The change also proved most fortuitous during our journey up north, where we missed the rain by a few days.

Our process for this year will be similar to that in the past. Each of the approximately 500 yearlings nominated must pass lengthy reviews on both conformation and pedigree in order to warrant acceptance to the sale. This strict criteria has been instrumental in building and protecting the integrity of our select sale.

In my discussion with breeders and consignors, it is apparent that the vast majority of nominators understand the importance of such a select marketplace for California-bred yearlings, because they support our commitment to maintaining the highest level of quality offered at the auction. Although there are still some who seem to encourage a more lenient evaluation process, such an approach does not support the goal and purpose of the sale.

Once again, I am very pleased with the overall quality of yearlings nominated. Although the bulk of the yearlings have yet to be inspected, on paper this is one of the strongest groups we have ever seen.

With this continued improvement in quality, coupled with the extremely lucrative advantage of owning a Cal-bred, the prospects for this year's sale look very promising. I am optimistic that the positive trends will continue.

— Doug Burge