

CALIFORNIA AUTHORITY OF RACING FAIRS  
Live Racing Committee  
Tuesday, February 28, 2023

MINUTES

A meeting of the California Authority of Racing Fairs (CARF) Live Racing Committee was held at 10:30 A.M., Tuesday, February 28, 2023. The meeting was held via teleconference originating at the CARF office, 1776 Tribute Road, Sacramento, CA 95815.

CARF Live Racing Committee members joining by conference call: Jerome Hoban, Lauri King, Tom Martinez and Jim Morgan.

Staff and Guests participating via conference call: Larry Swartzlander, Tom Doutrich, Heather Haviland, Juliana Gomes, Raechelle Gibbons, Ann Grottvit, Louie Brown, Cody Boyles, Matt Cranford, Mike Francesconi, Greg Gomes, Andy Titus, Duane Martin, Ruben Gastello, Tiffany Loushin, Jeanne Wasserman, Tag Wotherspoon, Moira Kenny, Ellis Davis, Jim Kuvallis, Stacey Lapham and Caroline Titus.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Comment.** None.

**Agenda Item 2 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Humboldt County Fair Race Dates Overlap.** Mr. Swartzlander reported that CARF maintains a position seeking two weeks of racing at Humboldt County Fair without concurrent racing at Golden Gate Fields (GGF), with the emphasis being placed on the second unallocated week (Aug. 23-29). Per California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) direction for the affected parties to reach a financial compromise, CARF has offered GGF and Thoroughbred Owners of California (TOC) principals a payment of \$125,000 in purse money for the second week, which is the estimated equivalent of 50% purse money generated that week. This offer has been declined.

Mr. Swartzlander stated GGF's position is that they require \$150,000 in commissions in return for not racing the second week and TOC's position is that GGF should race concurrently with Ferndale both weeks (complete overlap).

Mr. Swartzlander stated that if the parties come to the CHRB Board Meeting without reaching a compromise, it is likely the Board will allocate dates similar to 2022 (first week without overlap and second week with overlap). Mr. Swartzlander stated that the TOC has yet to send out a formal position.

**Agenda Item 3 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on 2023 Purses.** Mr. Swartzlander stated that the 2023 purse structure being proposed to the TOC includes: 1) keeping overnight purses at 2022 levels, 2) an additional stakes race at Pleasanton, possibly

creating the biggest day in fair racing, 3) stabling at Pleasanton and Sacramento June through August, and 4) raising purses \$38,000 at Ferndale in the event that they are allocated their second week of racing without overlap.

Mr. Doutrich reported on the current status of purses in California and stated that CARF's proposal puts the fairs in a strong position for summer racing.

Mr. Morgan stated that should Humboldt County Fair be allocated a second week without overlap, a \$38,000 purse increase is insufficient to incentivize horsemen to ship to Ferndale and the purses should be on parity with every other CARF racetrack, including upgrading the stakes races. Mr. Doutrich replied that he understands the concerns, but that the CARF purse structure requires approval from TOC, which is currently advocating for complete overlap at Ferndale and that getting approval for purse parity is not probable.

Mr. Swartzlander stated that he understands all of Mr. Morgan's concerns regarding Ferndale and that he suggests waiting for the result of the CHRB dates allocation before finalizing the proposal for the 2023 TOC Horsemen's Agreement.

Mr. Morgan brought up the age of GGF's synthetic racing surface and asked if there are plans to replace it and if its age and condition should be considered by the CHRB as reasons not to allocate an additional week to GGF. Mr. Swartzlander stated that he has not heard of official plans to replace the surface, but that David Duggan reported that amendments were added to the surface and that it is suitable for racing.

Mr. Hoban asked Mr. Doutrich to elaborate on the benefits of adding an additional stakes race to the closing day of Pleasanton and to provide the financial cost to the fair. Mr. Doutrich stated that the number one reason for this addition is "timing." Southern California is dark that week without racing, offering Pleasanton the opportunity to showcase the weekend to the local community as well as simulcast outlets and ADW platforms nationwide. This addition would improve the entire fair program and benefit all racing fairs. The concept is to create a "Mile Day" with a 10-race card, running 90% of the races at a mile or longer, potentially creating the biggest day in fair racing history.

Mr. Hoban asked about the fair's financial obligation if a \$150,000 stakes race is offered. Mr. Swartzlander replied that \$75,000 will come from the purse account with the fair being responsible for the \$75,000 balance if the consolidated purse account finishes in a negative position for the year. If the purse account generation can cover the \$150,000 while remaining in a positive position overall, there will be no obligation from the fair.

Mr. Swartzlander stated that while he would like to implement a day like this at all fairs, the circuit loses 30-40 head of quality horses when Del Mar opens. Pleasanton is uniquely positioned to capture those allowance and stakes level horses before they leave Northern

California. Mr. Morgan added that a day like this showcases the disparity in purse levels with Ferndale addressed earlier in the meeting. Mr. Doutrich stated that CARF staff will reevaluate the Ferndale marathon purse pending the outcome of the CHRB meeting.

**Agenda Item 4 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on 2023 Racing Incentives.** Mr. Swartzlander reported that a full list of proposed horsemen incentives is included in the meeting packet. The incentives are the same as those offered in 2022 (Trainer Start Incentive, Owner Start Incentive and Out-of-State Shipping Bonus), apart from requesting an additional \$300 for each runner at all fairs. These incentives require TOC approval.

**Agenda Item 5 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on 2023 Auxiliary Stabling.** Mr. Swartzlander stated that the 2023 plan is for fairs to remain self-sufficient regarding stabling with Pleasanton and Sacramento serving as alternate auxiliary sites June-August. Mr. Swartzlander recommended that CARF not provide auxiliary stabling to Santa Rosa and let them reach a stabling agreement with GGF.

Mr. Swartzlander stated that he will meet with Cal Expo staff to discuss auxiliary stabling costs at Sacramento and possible reductions.

**Agenda Item 6 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Horse Power Coalition Project.** Mr. Swartzlander stated that racing industry principals have joined together with backstretch workers, jockeys, animal welfare advocates, fans and more to create the California Horse Power Coalition (CPHC) with the intent of preserving and protecting the equestrian culture in California. All tracks are participating in this public relations effort and TOC staff has requested CARF fairs join the cause for \$2,500 a month with a six-month commitment, which Mr. Swartzlander will approve unless there is objection from the group. No objections.

Mr. Morgan asked if there will be a follow-up meeting with GGF, TOC, CHRB staff and CARF regarding the upcoming CHRB meeting and dates allocation. Mr. Swartzlander requested delaying calling a meeting until TOC has provided a letter with their official position.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Haviland