

Who Funds California Cup Day?

BY WILSON SHIRLEY

“The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the establishment of a day each year, on which a number of stakes races for California-bred Thoroughbreds, conducted as the California Cup Day, is an event that should be undertaken to further promote the Thoroughbred industry in this state.”

With these words, California's State Legislature in 1989 created what has become one of the most popular events on the California racing calendar. Conducted during the Oak Tree meeting at Santa Anita, California Cup (Cal Cup) Day is always among the top half-dozen best-attended, highest-wagering events of the California racing year.

Individually and through their organizations, California horsemen have been enthusiastic supporters of Cal Cup Day since its inaugural running in 1990. One of the event's first official sponsors, the California HBPA, authorized the allocation of 100% of net purse revenues generated from all wagering on Cal Cup Day to fund its million-dollar purse program. TOC has continued this commitment to the promotion and improvement of the California Thoroughbred.

Funding for Cal Cup purses comes from three sources: the CTBA-administered California-Bred Race Fund; TOC-autho-

ri- rized purse revenues from Cal Cup Day wagering; and the nomination, entry, and starting fees paid by individual owners to compete in the day's races. From the beginning, horsemen's contributions to Cal Cup purses has been substantial: in 1997 owners put up \$145,000 in fees to run and more than \$539,000

in purse revenues, contributing altogether more than 62% of the money required for the day's \$1-million purses.

The remaining Cal Cup stakes obligation is allocated by CTBA from that portion of its California Incentive Program designated as the California-Bred Race Fund. Amounting to approximately \$1.2-million per year, the California-bred race fund represents ten percent of the CTBA-administered California-Bred-Incentive Program, whose revenues stem from a statutory deduction from all Thoroughbred

wagering. Between one-quarter and one-third of the California-Bred Race Fund is used for Cal Cup Day stakes purses; the rest is distributed year-round as supplementary purse bonuses for California-bred racehorses.

Since its first running in 1990, California's horsemen have contributed nearly \$5.5-million to the success of Cal Cup Day, in purse money alone, fully two-thirds of the stakes funding needed to fulfill the Legislature's desire to promote the state's Thoroughbred industry.

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Owner Bill Thomas (middle) discusses race strategy with trainer Mel Stute (left) and jockey G.F. Almeida (right) on Cal-Cup Day.

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California Cup Day Funding	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994(est.)	1995	1996	1997	8-Yr. Total
Total Cal-Cup Purses Paid	\$1,000,000	\$1,050,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000	\$8,250,000
Horsemen's Fees	\$154,900	\$148,075	\$162,550	\$130,200	\$144,825	\$139,200	\$142,900	\$145,150	\$1,167,800
Parimutuel Revenues	\$557,122	\$522,733	\$595,071	\$490,059	\$558,624	\$498,840	\$523,868	\$539,048	\$4,285,366
Total Horesmen's Contributions	\$712,022	\$670,808	\$757,621	\$703,449	\$638,040	\$666,768	\$684,198	\$5,453,166	
California-Bred Race Fund	\$287,978	\$379,192	\$242,379	\$379,741	\$296,551	\$361,960	\$433,232	\$415,802	\$2,796,834
Horsemen As Percentage of Purse	71%	64%	76%	62%	70%	64%	61%	62%	66%