

For Immediate Release

Limited Media Credentials Available

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**New York's Best Totters and Pacers Go Head-to-Head in 'Night of Champions'
with \$1.8 Million in Purses on the Line
Part One of the Two-Part Series Kicks Off Saturday, September 12th**

Credentials for Members of the Media

A limited number of press credentials are available for members of the media who wish to cover the races. Credentials provide access to the New York Sire Stakes Night of Champions Reception Saturday, September 12th, viewing of the races, and paddock access when possible. Please email one of the above contacts to reserve your place & credentials.

YONKERS, NY, September 10 — On **Saturday, September 12th**, the best trotters and pacers bred in New York State will descend on the historic **Yonkers Raceway at Empire City Casino** for the first of the two-part annual **New York Night of Champions**. The competition was inaugurated in 1990 by the **New York Sire Stakes** (NYSS) and celebrates its 26th anniversary this year.

For the first time, the competition will be held on two nights. On Saturday, **September 12th**, the Empire State's best three-year-olds will compete in four Sire Stakes finals, each racing for a purse of \$225,000.

Part two of the competition will take place on **Saturday, September 26th**, with New York's premier two-year-old trotters and pacers taking center stage in four races, going after their share of \$900,000. Total purses for the two nights are **\$1.8 million**, with all eight races again sponsored by prominent Empire breeding farms.

"It's always an honor for Yonkers Raceway to host the New York Night of Champions," Raceway COO Bob Galterio said. "With Yonkers generating far and away the highest revenue among all New York harness tracks, it's only fitting the divisional champions are crowned here."

First post time of the night at is 7:10pm at Yonkers Raceway with the NYSS Night of Champions taking races five through eight on the dozen-race card. Highlights are below:

Fifth Race (Majestic View Farms Filly Trot) – **Barn Doll** (driven by Jeff Gregory, post 6) looks to repeat as divisional champ. This season's points leader has been ultra-consistent, as in 10-for-12 this season (\$352,863) and 17-for-21 lifetime. The daughter of Conway Hall, co-owned and trained by Steve Pratt, enters off a blowout win at Yonkers Raceway earlier this month. **Jewels in Hock** (driven by Jim Morrill Jr., post 4), one a select few who knocked off Barn Doll, enters winning half of her 16 tries in 2015 (\$241,496). **Lady Winona** (driven by Jason Bartlett, post 7) is the stronger lass in the Julie Miller-trained entry.

Sixth Race (Cameo Hill Farm Filly Pace) – **Bettorhaveanother** (driven by Tyler Buter, post 3), **Band of Angels** (driven by Jason Bartlett, post 8) and defending champ **Mosquito Blue Chip** (driven by Jim Morrill Jr., post 7) have all enjoyed successful summers, though "Mosquito" did make an uncharacteristic break in her latest try at Yonkers Raceway. **Bedroomconfessions**(driven by Dan Dube, post 6) enters as hot as any of these, with three wins in her last four tries.

Seventh Race (Morrisville College Equine Institute Colt/Gelding Trot) – Is there anything Yonkers Trot winner **Habitat** (driven by Jim Morrill Jr, post 3) can do for an encore? A career millionaire off his open-length win this past Saturday, the son of Conway Hall gets another look at Trot finalists **Buen Camino** (driven by Trond Smedshammer, post 1) and **Workout Wonder** (driven by Dan Dube, post 6). **Royal Deceptor** (driven by Mickey McGivern, post 5) and **Wings of Royalty** (driven by Jason Bartlett, post 7) have both had productive seasons.

Eighth Race (*Blue Chips Farms Colt/Gelding Pace*) – **Artistic Major** (driven by Jim Morrill Jr., post 3), the leader in the clubhouse, has some talented foes in **Betting Exchange** (driven by Jason Bartlett, post 5) and **National Seelster** (driven by Andy miller, post 7), among others.

The lineup for Part Two of the New York Night of Champions on Saturday, September 26th will be drawn on Tuesday, September 22nd.

About the New York Sire Stakes:

The New York Sire Stakes was the first program of its kind developed in North America and later became the model for state-bred racing programs in nearly all of the major harness racing states and provinces on the continent.

Sponsored by NYS harness racing industry organizations, the first NYSS events were held in 1961. The official New York Sire Stakes program was inaugurated in 1965 when the state's harness tracks and breeding industry leaders who sought to spur the breeding industry successfully lobbied the State Legislature for support of their endeavor. The group was led by the late Dr. Harry M. Zweig, a distinguished veterinarian from Nassau, NY. Dr. Zweig's tireless efforts proved successful when the Laverne Law was enacted. The legislation created the Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund (the Fund), the public benefit corporation that administers the New York Sire Stakes program. The law mandates the Fund to receive a percentage of the industry's betting handle to manage the NYSS program and to perpetuate its mission.

The New York horse racing industry came together once again in 2001 to advance the sport of harness racing in the state through the addition of video lottery terminals at each race track. With harness racing's late Bruce Hamilton leading the way, the industry again ran a successful campaign and the NYS legislature amended the pari-mutuel law, allowing video lottery terminals at the state's harness racetracks. The first racino opened at Saratoga Raceway in 2004, paving the way for racinos at the remaining six race tracks statewide. Since the inception of racinos at harness tracks, New York Sire Stakes purses have more than doubled and continue to increase!

About the Development Fund: The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund (the Fund) is a public benefit corporation established in 1965 by the Laverne Law (Laws of New York, Chapter 567 of the Laws of 1965). The mission of the Fund is to promote agriculture through the breeding of standardbred horses and the conduct of equine research within the State. To carry out its legislative mission, the Fund administers the New York Sire Stakes races, Excelsior/State Fair Series races, and County Fair Races. Additionally, the Fund provides assistance to county agriculture societies and contributes to the statewide 4-H program and to the Harry M. Zweig Fund for Equine Research.

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