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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New York Sire Stakes Underway at Race Tracks Across New York State

Racing Series at 21 County Fairs to be held May through October

ALBANY, N.Y. – The 53rd official season of New York state's premier harness racing program is underway with an exceptional lineup of races and events at harness tracks and county fairs statewide. The New York Sire Stakes promote the breeding, buying, and racing of Standardbred horses in New York state, and are administered by the Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund. The races are open to eligible two- and three-year-old New York Standardbreds.

The 2017 Sire Stakes season kicked off at Tioga Downs on May 28 with three races featuring three-year-old filly trotters, Celebrity Ruth and Barn Bella, who broke two track records on opening day. Racing continued the first week of June with events at the Saratoga Casino, Buffalo Raceway and Vernon Downs. Additional events follow in June and July at Batavia Downs, Goshen Historic Track, Monticello Raceway and Yonkers Raceway. A complete schedule of races can be found at www.nysirestakes.com.

"The Sire Stakes do so much to promote Standardbred horse breeding in New York state, while also bringing fans together to celebrate regional horse talent. These races have great energy, and truly should not be missed," said Peter Arrigenna, board trustee, Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund.

The New York Sire Stakes was the first program of its kind developed in North America and has since become the model for all state-bred racing programs. The first Sire Stakes events were held in 1961, four years prior to the program's official 1965 inauguration when the state's harness tracks and industry leaders sought to spur the breeding industry by lobbying the State Legislature to support their endeavors. This resulted in the passing of Laverne Law, which mandates the Fund receives a percentage of the industry's betting handle to manage the Sire Stakes program.

As part of its legislative mission, the Fund receives financial resources from the mutual handle at licensed tracks across the state, which it uses to provide purse money for the New York Sire Stakes. Since the inception of racinos at harness tracks, New York Sire Stakes purses have more than doubled and continue to increase annually, further spurring horse breeding while also creating more jobs and greater public involvement in Standardbred horse racing.

A series of non-pari-mutuel races are also scheduled to be held at 21 county fairs across New York between July 4 and August 22. The County Fair Finals for each age and gait will be held at the Saratoga Casino on September 15 and the New York Sire Stakes Finals will take place on October 14 at the Yonkers Raceway.

At the start of this year's season, The New York Sire Stakes launched its new [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts with the goal of sharing news and race results with fans and members of the harness racing community. Updates to the existing www.nysirestakes.com website are ongoing.

About the Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding 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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