

Buffalo hosts NYSS sophomore colt pacers on Wednesday

by Brian J. Mazurek, for Buffalo Raceway

HAMBURG, N.Y. --- Memorial Day is known as the unofficial start of summer. Another sure sign of summer is the arrival of the New York Sire Stakes at Buffalo Raceway.

Wednesday night, the 3-year-old colt and gelding pacers invade Buffalo Raceway to begin the first of eight different divisions of the New York Sire Stakes that will visit the half-mile oval at the Erie County Fairgrounds now through the close of the meet on Sunday, July 26.

There are three divisions of the 3-year-old colt and gelding pace Wednesday that will be worth \$105,000 total. The three legs has attracted big-name drivers along with some top horses which are eligible for North America Cup and/or Meadowlands Pace.

They'll be gunning for the track records as well as a nice payday. The 3-year-old gelding pace record is 1:53.4 set by Murder He Wrote in 2014 while the 3-year-old colt mark is 1:52.3 established by Steelhead Hanover in 2012. That clocking is also the all-aged pacing track standard.

The opening race on the 13-card will be the first Sire Stakes test and will feature Ultimate G, a third place finisher at Tioga Downs in his last attempt. In the money in all four starts this season, Jim Morrill Jr. will guide Ultimate G as the 2-1 choice, the only entrant in the field of seven with a victory in 2015.

Americanprimetime is Meadowlands Pace eligible and will score from the five post for driver Rick Dane Jr. Americanprime (American Ideal-Prime Xample A) broke stride in his last outing in the Sire Stakes at Tioga Downs and lost any chance.

The back half of the early daily double will also feature the boys. K-Rock is the early choice at 8-5 with Matt Kakaley scheduled to drive. K-Rock (Rock N Roll Heaven-Sunduel A) has a win and two second place finishes in his three appearances thus far this season. On May 17 in Sire Stakes competition at Tioga, K-Rock scorched a 1:23 time to the three-quarter marker but stalled out and finished in second just a half-length behind National Seelster.

Berkley is the top threat in the race for driver Mark MacDonald. A winner of \$118,470 last season, Berkley (Art Major-Monterey) has been saddled with bad posts in his last two starts but should be a factor after drawing better this time. He'll start out of the four spot.

The last Sire Stakes contest, set as the fourth race, will feature Sicily (Art Major-Capri Hanover) who won the Sire Stakes at Tioga Downs on May17 in 1:51.1. Sicily, the 8-5 morning line favorite, will be driven by Matt Kakaley. A winner of over \$114,000 in his young career, the Ron Burke trained Sicily could be using this race as a tune up for the prestigious North America Cup starting at June 13 at Mohawk Raceway along with the Meadowlands Pace.

The main challenger in the mile race could come from If You Want Fire who is also eligible for the Meadowlands Pace. With over \$77,000 in the bank thus far in his lifetime, If You Want Fire

(Bettor's Delight-Dream Of Treasure), will start from the six post for Brett Miller, who will be in the sulky for trainer Casie Coleman.

There will also be two \$15,000 divisions of the Excelsior 'A' Series for the 3-year-old colt and geldings and a \$6,800 'B' Series race.

There are 13 races on tap with post time set for 5 p.m.