

Sire Stakes, Excelsior finals headline weekend at Vernon

by James Witherite, Vernon Downs racing media

Vernon, N.Y. -- A dozen 2-year-old trotting colts and geldings square off in two \$53,500 New York Sire Stakes events on Friday (September 18) evening at Vernon Downs, while top New York-sired 3-year-olds vie for their share of \$380,000 in an octet of Excelsior finals and Sire Stakes consolations on the Saturday (September 19) program.

Friday's freshman card features undefeated Dayson, a winner six times in as many starts with a career bankroll of \$155,862 and a mark of 1:56 taken at Tioga. The son of Conway Hall has been installed the 9-5 morning line favourite in his division, carded as race 6, and Jeff Gregory handles the driving duties for trainer Howard Okusko. Among the five rivals Dayson will face is Dog Gone Lucky (John Campbell), who proved a faster winner at Tioga earlier in the season with a 1:55.4 triumph.

Saturday's program features a quartet of Sire Stakes consolations for 3-year-olds, each with a purse of \$50,000; and four Excelsior finals, each worth \$45,000. Notable contenders on the evening's 14-race card include Fashion Creditor (NYSS colt trot, 1:52.3m, Jim Morrill, Jr.), Barn Girl (Excelsior filly trot, 1:56.1s, Jeff Gregory), Crazshana (Excelsior colt trot, 1:54.1s, Trond Smedshammer), and Gold Coast Muscle (Excelsior colt pace, 1:50.4f, Mike Simons).

The Saturday program at the Miracle Mile also includes the culmination of the Vernon Downs Racing Under Saddle series, featuring a field of five trotters to compete in a non-wagering event.

First post each night is 6:45 p.m. Eastern time