

Monticello hosts NYSS July on 11

by Shawn Wiles, for Monticello Raceway

Monticello, NY --- The 2017 New York Sire Stakes (NYSS) season kicks off on Tuesday (July 11) at Monticello Raceway when 3-year-old trotting fillies take center stage. Going to the gate are two division of Sire Stakes, with each split racing for \$59,100, in addition to three heats of the Excelsior A class (\$15,000) and two heats of the Excelsior B class, going for a purse of \$6,800 each.

The first heat of regular Sire Stakes is race one and pits the top two fillies of the state against one another in Barn Bella and Mamora Bay. Barn Bella, who won last year's NYSS final, will start from the rail, with regular driver Jeff Gregory. The Conway Hall – Bravissima is a filly owned by Steven and Nancy Pratt and Purple Haze Stable. She sports a respectable tally of \$354,645 in lifetime earnings and a lifetime mark of 1:51.3, taken in the Empire Breeders Classic last month at Tioga Downs. She comes into the race with six wins in seven starts this year, with her only miscue coming at Buffalo Raceway when she made a break and opened the door for bridesmaid Mamora Bay.

Mamora Bay (post position six) is very familiar with the Monticello oval as she won as a 2-year-old in 2:00:1 at the Mighty M oval. The Chapter Seven – Giulie lass has a win and a second in Sire Stakes competition thus far this year. She will be driven by trainer Sam Schillaci for owner Peter F. Barbato of Demarest, N.J. Thus far this year in Sire Stakes competition she had a win last week at Buffalo in 1:59.4 and a second place finish at Tioga Downs. She has earned \$41,433 in 2017 and has a mark of 1:57.3. She comes into the race with a solid base under her with four qualifiers and three stakes events under her belt. She will need to be tight starting from the outside.

Race eight features the second heat of Sire Stakes with six starters. Celebrity Ruth, 5-2 on the morning line, is starting from post position two and looks to be the one to beat. She is fresh off a second place finish in the Empire Breeders Classic. She has one NYSS win this year at Tioga, and finished second in the Lady Suffolk at Yonkers Raceway. The Archangel filly has earned \$90,971 thus far this year with a record of 1:53.4. She is trained and driven by Trond Smedshammer for owner White Birch Farm.

Maewegonow (post position four) is trained and driven by the capable Charlie Norris and will also be in the hunt. She was second in her last start at Buffalo and visited the winner's circle at Tioga Downs in the same company.

On paper Prairie Diamonds (Diamond Goal – Princess Cosette) looks the one the to beat in the first heat of the Excelsior A Class in race two. Fresh off her win at Tioga Downs in 1:56.4 in overnight company, she will start from post position four and is 3-1.

Cinnamon Prayer (post position seven) sports a four-race win streak coming in to the third race. The Prayer I Am – Cinnamon Caviar filly is trained by Dennis Laterza, who is always a threat at Monticello, and will be driven by Jim Morrill Jr. She is owned by Roy Dobbins.

The last division of the A class, race six, features local talent Comfort To A Fool (Credit Winner-I Promisenottotell) she is trained by long-time Monticello horseman Gary Messenger and co-owned by Messenger in conjunction with Scott Woogen.

Post time for the afternoons Sire Stakes action is at 12:50 p.m.

