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MARYLAND INVADER RECRUITING READY STEPS UP IN CLASS IN SATURDAY'S BASHFORD MANOR

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, June 30, 2016) – Sagamore Farm's **Recruiting Ready** caught the attention of numerous horseplayers on May 28 when he won his career debut at Pimlico by an astonishing 10 ¼ lengths, an effort that convinced trainer **Horacio DePaz** that his 2-year-old son of **Algorithms** is ready for Saturday night's \$100,000 Bashford Manor Presented by Thorntons (Grade III) – the first of three stakes on closing night of Churchill Downs' 38-day Spring Meet.

"He really ran lights out last time," DePaz said by phone from his Maryland base. "He's been training real well since his last effort and he's proven himself."

Recruiting Ready appears to be training forwardly as his last two works at Laurel Park were bullets. He went five furlongs in 1:00.40 on June 18 and a half-mile in :47.60 on June 25.

"He's definitely matured after that last effort," DePaz said. "He just does things so easily and he's really put it together. He came out of his race in such good order that we figured that we would run him here since it's a good spot for him. He gets to ship, he'll be running up against some nice horses and we'll get a good idea of what he can really do."

The 5 ½-furlong Tremont Stakes at Belmont Park on June 10 was another option for Recruiting Ready's stakes debut, but it came up a little too quick on the horse's schedule.

"That race was two weeks after so it was coming up too soon," DePaz said. "The horse is so forward that he's putting himself in this early position, so we'll find some good spots and hope that he can stretch out."

Jockey **Edgar Prado**, the pilot in Recruiting Ready's maiden triumph, will ship to Churchill Downs to ride in the Bashford Manor.

The six-furlong Bashford Manor field from the rail out (with jockeys and **Mike Battaglia's** morning line odds): **Classic Empire** (**Julien Leparoux**, 4-1), **Boys From Boston** (**Eric Camacho**, 15-1), **Tip Tap Tapizar** (**Ricardo Santana Jr.**, 3-1), **My Golden Aura** (**Francisco Torres**, 12-1), **Riv** (**Jose Valdivia Jr.**, 5-1), **U S Officer** (**Corey Lanerie**, 5-1), **Capt. Grider** (**Miguel Mena**, 8-1), **Raising Rumors** (**Brian Hernandez Jr.**, 12-1) and Recruiting Ready (Edgar Prado, 4-1).

CHINA GROVE SEEKS REDEEMPTION IN DEBUTANTE – Following a runner-up effort behind **Bode's Dream** in her stakes debut in the Astoria at Belmont Park on June 9, **Katherine G. Ball's China Grove** will attempt to redeem herself when she takes on nine other 2-year-old fillies in Saturday evening's \$100,000 Debutante Presented by GE Appliances (Listed).

The 2-year-old daughter of **City Zip** stumbled badly coming out of the starting gate in her most recent effort, which trainer **Ben Colebrook** believes had an impact on how close she was to the winner.

"I had a lot of people come up to me after the race that day and said that she would have won if it weren't for the start, but I don't know," Colebrook said. "She would have been closer to **Todd (Pletcher's)** filly though, that's for sure. She ran a good race; she just stumbled badly and got shuffled back. One of her biggest strengths is her tactical speed and had she broken well I don't know if she would have won but it would have been a real horse race."

Prior to her troubled second in the Astoria, China Grove broke her maiden in wire-to-wire fashion at Keeneland on April 28 by 1 ½ lengths. She will be breaking from the 10-hole in Saturday's race.

"I like the outside post with her," Colebrook said. "With that, (jockey) **Albin (Jiminez)** has some options with her. She broke her maiden at Keeneland real nicely so she's definitely well-developed early. We're hoping that she can be just as good as a 3-year-old."

Colebrook will not be in attendance Saturday because he will saddle **Limousine Liberal** in the \$250,000 Smile Sprint (GII) at Gulfstream Park. Instead, assistant trainer **Jennifer Buswell** will saddle China Grove.

"We're running all over the place," Colebrook said. "It's a lot of hard work so hopefully everything works out well. Both horses are in good spots and are doing well so hopefully they can show up on Saturday."

The field for the Debutante from the rail out (with jockey and morning line odds): **Silver Threads** (**Robby Albarado**, 20-1), **Anna's Bandit** (**Eric Camacho**, 5-1), **Grandma's Princess** (**Miguel Mena**, 20-1), **Country Candy** (**Ricardo Santana Jr.**, 8-1), **Tricky One** (**Florent Geroux**, 4-1), **Pretty City Dancer** (**Julien Leparoux**, 4-1), **Maximum Edge** (**Brian Hernandez Jr.**, 8-1), **Whole Scoop** (**Corey Lanerie**, 12-1), **Like a Hurricane** (**Francisco Torres**, 8-1) and China Grove (Albin Jimenez, 7-2).

ALSVID RETURNS IN KELLY'S LANDING – **Black Hawk Stables' Alsvid** will try to close out the Spring Meet on a good note in Saturday night's \$67,000-added Kelly's Landing Overnight Stakes following a win over **Limousine Liberal** in the Aristides (GIII) on June 4 which was his second consecutive triumph in the six-furlong event.

The 7-year-old son of **Officer** was 0-for-6 in 2016 prior to his Aristides win, but finished in the money in all six efforts with three seconds and three thirds.

"After we won the Aristides this was the race that we were pointing for," trainer **Chris Hartman** said. "He ran a good race, that's for sure. He had been running well all year he just hadn't been able to win and had been in real tough, but he really likes to run."

Alsvid will stretch out to seven furlongs for the Kelly's Landing

"I don't think it's a big deal – seven-eighths isn't going to kill him," Hartman said. "It's well within him to run that distance. It's the same kind of race so I don't think it will affect him much at all."

The race figures to be a slow one up front with no clear frontrunner in the race. Hartman believes that Alsvid has the ability to run well on the lead since he had a more swift running style at the beginning of his racing career.

"I would probably think that he would be on the lead or at least with the leaders," Hartman said. "Since there isn't much pace in there he should be forwardly placed. When he was younger he used to just go straight to the lead and go wire-to-wire; he has the capability if he can hold it."

The field for the Kelly's Landing from the rail out (with jockeys and morning line odds): **Bayerd (Florent Geroux, 10-1)**, **Island Town (Brian Hernandez Jr., 5-1)**, **Helooksthepart (Robby Albarado, 5-1)**, **Schivarelli (Corey Lanerie, 9-2)**, **Natchez (James Graham, 20-1)**, **Wabel (Julien Leparoux, 5-2)** and Alsvid (**Chris Landeros, 2-1**).

DUBAI SKY RETUNRS FOLLOWING 15-MONTH LAYOFF IN FRIDAY ALLOWANCE RACE – **Three Chimney Farm and Besilu Stables' Dubai Sky** will make his first start since a victory in the 2015 Spiral (GIII) at Turfway Park when he goes to post in Friday's second race, a three-other-than allowance/optional claiming event at 1 1/16 miles on the Matt Winn Turf Course.

Following his Spiral Stakes triumph over a year ago, the son of **Candy Ride** was on track for the Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands (GI) but was sidelined due to an injury in his left hind leg.

"He was on a routine gallop one morning and just seemed to lose his hind leg a little bit," said **Kenny McCarthy**, assistant to Hall of Fame trainer **Bill Mott**. "So he was pulled up and by the time we came back to the track he was lame in his left hind leg. It seemed like everything we had thrown at him up to that point he had handled really well. We came out of Gulfstream with him and ran two good races down there and came up for the Spiral and ran well there so we were happy to come here and give him a shot but unfortunately it was not meant to be."

Despite coming off the shelf after having not run in over a year, McCarthy believes that Dubai Sky can regain his old form.

"Knock on wood he's ready to go," McCarthy said "He's trained fantastic and he really like the way he's doing. It's a long layoff, but it's about time to get started with him again. I think the fact that he's another year older so he's bigger and stronger and a more powerful horse than ever, so we look forward to seeing him run on Friday."

The scheduled post time for Friday's second race is 1:14 p.m.

SINGLE 6 JACKPOT ENTERS THURSDAY AT \$671,761 – A highlight of the meet's final days is the **20-cent minimum Single 6 Jackpot** wager, which resumes in Thursday's third race with a **carryover pool of \$671,761**. The Single 6 requires a single winning ticket to pay-out its entire pool, but if there is no individual winner on Thursday or Friday, the entire pool must be paid out on Saturday's wager to players who have the most winners on their Single 6 tickets.

Since May 13, the daily six-race sequence has challenged bettors to select the winners of six consecutive races but the Jackpot pool only is paid if there is a single winning ticket. When multiple tickets contain six winners – which has been the case for each of the last 28 race days – 90 percent of that day's pool is paid out and 10 percent is added to the Jackpot carryover. Takeout on the Single 6 Jackpot is just 15 percent, which is one of the lowest multi-race wager takeout rates in American racing.

Saturday night's Single 6 Jackpot, including any added money in the carryover, will be paid to ticket holders with the most winners in the six-race series, which covers Races 4-9 starting at approximately 7:26 p.m.

'DOWNS AFTER DARK' DETAILS – Saturday's 11-race closing night card is billed as "**Downs After Dark Presented by Stella Artois and Jack Daniel's.**" Admission gates open Saturday at 5 p.m. (all times Eastern), the first race is 6 p.m. and the "Downs After Dark" theme is "**My Country 'Tis of Thee**" in which guests are encouraged dress in their finest **red, white and blue** to celebrate the Fourth of July holiday weekend and enjoy **draft beer, specialty cocktails, BBQ, food trucks, "Bet or No Bet Presented by Thorntons"** and **live music by local country band Wildwood.**

The evening's Independence Day Weekend theme will include displays of **World War II** and **present-day military equipment** in the Plaza, a display of **thousands of American flags by Flags4Vets** at Gate 10 and **special honors for four members of the military** in the G.H. Mumm Winner's Circle following the fourth race at approximately 7:26 p.m.

General admission is \$10 and reserved seats start at \$25. Seating in the Courtyard is available for \$69 and Winner's Circle Suites for groups of 18-20 are also available. Tickets and dining options can be purchased online at www.churchilldowns.com.

Also, **special pricing is available to active duty military and veterans** who present a valid military ID. Members of those groups will receive **50 percent off of general admission and box seating for up to six** for Saturday night's program.

DOWN THE STRETCH – With just three racing dates left at the Spring Meet, **Mark Casse** and **Mike Maker** remain tied atop the trainer standings with 18 wins apiece. ... Casse is attempting to land his first Churchill Downs training title since the 1988 Spring Meet. He has eight horses entered in seven races over the final three days: **Casses Story** (Thursday Race 3, 7-2), **Sanity** (Friday Race 4, 5-2), **Conquest Curlgirl** (Friday Race 9, 5-2), **Top of the Game** (Saturday Race 2, 5-2), **Classic Empire** (Saturday Race 7, 4-1), **Pretty City Dancer** (Saturday Race 8, 4-1), **Havana Dream** (Saturday Race 9, 6-1) and **Moonlight Sky** (Saturday Race 9, 10-1). ... Maker is a five-time Churchill Downs leading trainer, and also has eight horses entered in seven races: **Triple Creek** (Thursday Race 2, 5-2), **Watchyourownbobber** (Friday Race 2, 5-2), **Bingo Kitten** (Friday Race 8, 8-1), **Pick Pocket** (Friday Race 10, 4-1), **Run Time** (Saturday Race 5, 12-1), **Tacola** (Saturday, Race 5, 15-1), **Sail Maker** (Saturday Race 6, 8-1) and **Walking the Kitten** (Saturday Race 9, 3-1). ... **Steve Asmussen**, the record 17-time champion trainer, is third with 12 victories. ... Corey Lanerie has all but wrapped up his 11th Churchill Downs riding title in the last 12 local meets with a 51-38 lead over nine-time local leader **Julien Leparoux**. ... Churchill Downs' all-time leading owners **Ken and Sarah Ramsey** remain in their familiar position atop the owner's standings with a 12-7 lead over **John C. Oxley**. The Nicholasville, Ky. residents are in pursuit of their record-extending 26th local title. ... Congratulations to jockey **Brian Hernandez Jr.** and his wife **Jamie** on the birth of their son **Benjamin Joseph Hernandez** on Wednesday morning. Little "B.J." weighed in at seven pounds, 15 ounces and was 19 inches long. ... Hernandez needs five wins over the final three days to become only the 20th jockey to ride 400 winners at Churchill Downs.

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