‘IT’S GO TIME’ FOR ROMANS AS HE ATTEMPTS TO OVERTAKE
MOTT FOR ALL-TIME LEADING TRAINER

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Sept. 15, 2017) – Boldly Dared is not a familiar name to many but for Hall of Fame trainer Bill Mott, this horse holds a special significance. That’s the horse Mott won with on June 8, 1986 to surpass Henry Forrest as the all-time leading trainer with his 272nd win at Churchill Downs – a record that could be broken at any day now by trainer Dale Romans.

“Well, the meet is here, it’s go time.” Romans said with a smile. “Bill (Mott) is one of my heroes. He invited me to dinner last fall at the Breeders’ Cup and we were talking about the record. He could come back to Kentucky at any time to give me a run for my money but I think he knew we were coming for him.”

Mott holds a two-win cushion on Romans (701-699 wins) but Romans is unleashing the firepower to start the September Meet, with 12 horses entered in 9 different races Saturday and Sunday:

**Saturday:** Tiz Mischief (Race 1), Bryzzo (Race 1), Eight Minute Ellie (Race 2), Cucciolo (Race 2), Race Me Home (Race 3), Mr. Freeze (Race 4), Tenkoz (Race 4), Miss Katie Bug (Race 6) and Hollywood Star (Race 10).

**Sunday:** Cove Blue (Race 4), Fayetteville (Race 4), Promises Fulfilled (Race 7) and Sportscaster (Race 10).

Mott’s entries on opening weekend:

**Saturday:** Own Agenda (Race 1) and Confiscate (Race 7)

**Sunday:** Bristol’s Brooke (Race 2).

Romans, who turned 51 on Aug. 14, is expected to be at Churchill Downs on Friday and Saturday for his entries as he also splits time between buying horses at the Keeneland September Yearling Sale.

“I talked with Bill the other day when we were still at Saratoga and he told me he’s going to try his best to be here when we break the record,” Romans said. “That would mean the world to me.”

LOUISVILLE-BASED OWNERS ATTEMPT TO PUT THEIR NAMES BACK IN ‘ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY PICTURE’ – Dr. Harvey Diamond’s Skychai Racing and David Koenig’s Sand Dollar Stable are familiar with the “Road to the Kentucky Derby” process, most recently supplementing Fast and Accurate to Kentucky Derby 143 after his Spiral Stakes (Grade III) victory. But the Louisville-based stable has a new rooting interest this year with homebred Tres Equis in Saturday’s $150,000 Iroquois Stakes (GIII).

“It’s always special to have a homebred in a stakes race,” Diamond said. “This is actually our first horse out of this dam to race so it’s really exciting having one show some early talent.”

The Iroquois, one of four stakes events on the first Saturday of the 11-day September Meet at Churchill Downs, is the first scoring races on the 2017-18 “Road to the Kentucky Derby” process, most recently supplementing Fast and Accurate to Kentucky Derby 143 after his Spiral Stakes (Grade III) victory. But the Louisville-based stable has a new rooting interest this year with homebred Tres Equis in Saturday’s $150,000 Iroquois Stakes (GIII).

“Mike (Maker) said he handled the dirt all along in training so it wasn’t too much of a surprise that he ran so well in his second start,” Diamond said. “With Stay Thirsty on the top side and Brandys Secret on the bottom side, we had to name him after some type of liquor. We couldn’t take the name Dos Equis but this will do.”

“Brandys Secret was really nice horse on the turf,” Maker said. “It wasn’t really an experiment running him on the turf first out because of that but he really excelled on the dirt in his last start.”

The Iroquois is also a part of the Breeders’ Cup “Win & You’re In Juvenile Division” and its winners will earn an automatic berth into the $2 million Sentient Jet Breeders’ Cup Juvenile (GI). Breeders’ Cup will pay $60,000 in entry fees and provide travel allowances for the connections to compete on Nov. 4 at Del Mar.

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The Iroquois is carded as Race 10 at 5:20 p.m. (all times Eastern) on an 11-race card that begins at 12:45 p.m.

The complete field from the rail out (with jockey, assigned weight and morning line odds): Ten City (Jack Gilligan, 122 pounds, 3-1); Hollywood Star (Robby Albarado, 118, 5-2); Pont Du Gard (Florent Geroux, 118, 15-1); Tres Equis (Kendrick Carmouche, 118, 8-1); Ebben (James Graham, 118, 20-1); Smart Remark (Manny Cruz, 118, 15-1); Flameaway (Julien Leparoux, 120, 4-1); Big Gemmy (Brian Hernandez Jr., 118, 15-1); The Tabulator (Jose Valdivia Jr., 120, 6-1); and Mo Diddley (Corey Lanerie, 118, 10-1).

**BREEN HOPES TO TAKE CHARGE ON ‘ROAD TO KENTUCKY OAKS’** – New Jersey-native Kelly Breen isn't afraid to ship horses to Kentucky and he'll get the true test with improving-filly Take Charge Paula in Saturday's $200,000 Pocahontas (Grade II), the kickoff on the “Road to the Kentucky Oaks”.

“She’s been training really well,” said Breen, who shipped three horses to Churchill Downs on Wednesday to run Saturday. “We'll see if she is able to stretch out around two turns. This is a good test for her since she’s been so impressive sprinting in her first two starts. Churchill Downs is a great spot to be when testing out young horses like this.”

The Pocahontas, one of four stakes events on the first Saturday of the 11-day September Meet at Churchill Downs, is the first scoring race on the 2017-18 “Road to the Kentucky Oaks” – the series of races that will ultimately determine the field for the 144th running of the Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) on Saturday, May 5, 2018 and Longines Kentucky Oaks on Friday, May 4, 2018. Points awarded to the Top 4 finishers will be 10-4-2-1 as part of the “Prep Season” that showcases foundation-building races in advance of the “Championship Series,” which begins in late February.

Take Charge Paula, a 2-year-old filly by Take Charge Indy, was a wire-to-wire winner in both of her career starts, most recently defeating a field of eight by three lengths in the White Clay Creek Stakes at Delaware Park.

Breen is familiar with talented fillies, having trained 2017 Kentucky Oaks-entrant Miss Sky Warrior to an eighth-place finish. The 3-year-old filly by First Samurai has been off since the Oaks but has resumed training at Belmont Park.

The Pocahontas is also a part of the Breeders’ Cup “Win & You’re In Juvenile Division” and its winners will earn an automatic berth into the $2 million Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies (GI). Breeders’ Cup will pay $60,000 in entry fees and provide travel allowances for the connections to compete on Nov. 4 at Del Mar.

Carded as the finale on Saturday’s 11-race card, with a scheduled post time of 5:50 p.m. (all times Eastern). The action kicks off with a first post of 12:45 p.m.

The field for the Pocahontas, in order of post position (with jockey, assigned weight, and morning line odds): Lady Freedom (Florent Geroux, 118, 30-1), Firstmate (Kendrick Carmouche, 120, 20-1), Snowfire (Julien Leparoux, 118, 6-1), Harbor Lights (Ricardo Santana Jr., 118, 8-1), Primo Extremo (Walter De La Cruz, 118, 8-1), Vision of Justice (Gabriel Saez, 118, 20-1), Take Charge Paula (James Graham, 120, 6-1), Sunny Skies (Robby Albarado, 120, 4-1), Sultry (Joe Rocco Jr., 118, 10-1), Upset Brewing (Corey Lanerie, 118, 5-1), Patrona Margarita (Brian Hernandez Jr., 118, 20-1) and Kelly's Humor (Shaun Bridgmohan, 120, 9-2).

Sharing the shedrow with Take Charge Paula are 2-year-old colts Glass Bridge and Swiping Dan. Both are entered Saturday in Races 2 and 4, respectively.

“Both of these colts could be talented,” Breen said. “I almost wish the races were around two turns but we should still be fine.”

Breen is scheduled to be at Churchill Downs on Saturday while also spending time at the Keeneland September Yearling Sale.

**LOCUST GROVE, OPEN MIND KICK OFF COMPETATIVE STAKES SEQUENCE SATURDAY** – The $100,000 Locust Grove (Grade III) and $100,000 Open Mind (Listed) will kick off a stakes quartet on Saturday’s 11-race card at Churchill Downs.

**John Gunther’s Tiger Moth** will attempt to pick up her third-consecutive stakes victory as the 3-1 morning line favorite in the Locust Grove.

The Locust Grove, for fillies and mares 3-years-old and up run at 1 1/16 miles, is carded as Race 8 on the 11-race program with a scheduled post time of 4:18 p.m. (all times Eastern).

Trained by Brad Cox, Tiger Moth picked up her first stakes win on July 15 in the Mari Hulman George Memorial at Indiana Grand when she defeated a field of eight rivals by 2 ½ lengths. The 5-year-old mare by Street Sense was victorious nearly a month later in Ellis Park’s Groupie Doll (GIII), narrowly defeating the Ian Wilkes-trained Walkabout.

The Locust Grove field from the rail out (with jockeys and morning line odds): Brooklynsway (Robby Albarado, 10-1); Blue Prize (Arg) (James Graham, 7-2); Mo D’Amour (Florent Geroux, 4-1); Romantic Vision (Brian Hernandez Jr., 4-1); Fuhriously Kissed (Julien Leparoux 5-1); Sweetgrass (Chris Landeros, 6-1); and Tiger Moth (Corey Lanerie, 3-1).

**Carl Moore Management LLC and Brad Grady’s Mayla and Brook T. Investment’s Ivy Bell** are familiar with seeing the tail-end of multiple graded stakes winner Finley'sluckycharm at Churchill Downs but the two sprinters will get the opportunity to shine themselves in the Open Mind.

The six-furlong Open Mind for fillies and mares is scheduled as Race 9 with a post time of 4:49 p.m.

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The Open Mind field from the rail out (with jockeys and morning line odds): **Grace’s Treasure** (Jesus Castanon, 5-1); Mayla (Gabriel Saez, 9-5); **Profound Moment** (C.J. McMahon, 15-1); Ivy Bell (Brian Hernandez Jr., 8-5); **Athena** (Joe Rocco Jr., 7-2); and **Tricky Zippy** (Corey Lanerie, 12-1).

The Locust Grove and Open Mind are the first two legs of an all-stakes late Pick 4 that will conclude with the $150,000 Iroquois (GIII) and $200,000 Pocahontas (GII). All four races are a part of the late Pick 5 and Single 6 Jackpot sequence.

**MILESTONE WATCH** – Along with the heated-battle between Dale Romans and Bill Mott for the all-time leading trainer honors at Churchill Downs (701-699 wins), trainers Greg Foley (397) and Kenny McPeek (394) are approaching 400 career-victories beneath the historic Twin Spires while trainer Ian Wilkes is targeting 200 career victories at Churchill Downs (191 wins). … Trainer Mike Tomlinson is just one win away from 500-career victories. The Oklahoma native has 499 victories so far in his 28-year career.

**ALBARADO, ROMANS, RAMSEY DEFEND SEPTEMBER TITLES** – Veteran jockey Robby Albarado had the hot hand during last year’s September Meet with 15 wins, three more than Corey Lanerie and Brian Hernandez Jr. Lanerie piloted 58 winners during this year’s Spring Meet to collect his 13th riding title in the last 15 meets at Churchill Downs. Romans, a 14-time local leading trainer, was last year’s September Meet leading trainer with six wins to Asmussen’s five. Asmussen earned his record-extending 18th Churchill Downs training title with 23 wins during the spring. The leading owners last September were Ken and Sarah Ramsey, who have won a record 28 crowns and 469 races at the Downs. This spring’s top owner was Maggi Moss, who won 11 races compared to the Ramsey’s nine.

‘INSIDE CHURCHILL DOWNS’ AIRS FRIDAYS AT 6 P.M. EDT ON ESPN 680/105.7 – Inside Churchill Downs,” the weekly horse racing radio show co-hosted by Churchill Downs Racetrack’s John Asher, Darren Rogers and Kevin Kerstein, airs every Friday at 6 p.m. EDT on ESPN 680/105.7. The one-hour Friday night program will deliver a wide-ranging list of interesting guests, from jockeys, trainers, owners to well-informed handicappers and other industry insiders.

Those outside the Louisville radio market can listen live online at http://www.espnlouisville.com/ or via podcast on the station’s website or https://soundcloud.com/.

**DOWN THE STRETCH** – Central Avenue will be bustling with activity Saturday. In addition to the live racing at Churchill Downs, ESPN’s College GameDay will be in town in advance of that night’s nationally-televised ACC showdown on ABC between the 14th-ranked University of Louisville football team and third-ranked Clemson at nearby Papa John’s Cardinal Stadium. Kickoff was moved from 3:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., which means visitors can now enjoy the best of both worlds as Churchill Downs’ final race is set for 5:50 p.m. Two years ago, approximately one thousand Clemson fans pre-gamed at Churchill Downs, and their alumni has booked an event for Saturday. Also, WCCP 105.5 FM, the flagship station of Clemson athletics, will broadcast a pre-game show from Churchill Downs that day. … On Sundays, Churchill Downs is offering a special “Stakes and Eggs” brunch special in the Stakes Room every. The $45 package for adults and $22 package for children includes a seat in the Stakes Room on the fourth floor of the Clubhouse and all-you-can-eat access to the brunch menu that includes an omelet station, scrambled eggs, biscuits and country gravy, French toast, hot brown, carved country ham, crispy bacon, sausage patties, hash brown potatoes with peppers and onions, fresh fruit, garden vegetables, breakfast breads and a chef’s dessert display.

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