HOPPERTUNITY SET TO ATTEMPT REPEAT BID IN NEXT SATURDAY’S GRADE I, $500,000 CLARK HANDICAP

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Nov. 18, 2017) – Mike Pegram, Karl Watson, and Paul Weitman’s Hoppertunity hopes to duplicate his effort from 2014 and become only the fourth two-time winner of Friday’s 143rd running of the $500,000 Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare (Grade I) at Churchill Downs.

“I’ll never forget when he won the 2014 Clark,” trainer Bob Baffert said. “He’s back and doing well. He’s always been right there all the time. He’s made $4 million by being right there and has always been a barn favorite. It sounds like it will be a tough Clark so it won’t be a walk in the park by any means.”

Hoppertunity’s probable Clark rivals include Ralph and Lauren Evans’ Jockey Club Gold Cup (GI) winner Diversify, Carl Hurst and William “Buff” Bradley’s Fayette (GI) victor The Player, and DARRS Inc.’s Lukas Classic (GIII) hero Honorable Duty, according to Assistant Racing Secretary and Stakes Coordinator Dan Bork.

This would be Hoppertunity’s fourth try in the Clark following a narrow runner-up finish in the 2015 edition behind Effinex and a fourth-place effort in last year’s race. Hodge (1915-16), Bold Favorite (1968-69) and Bob’s Dusty (1977-78) are the only two-time winners of the Clark Handicap.

Overall, Hoppertunity boasts an impressive record of 27-7-7-4 with earnings of $4,281,025. The 6-year-old horse by Any Given Saturday was most recently the runner-up in last month’s Comma To The Top Stakes at Santa Anita, his first race since finishing sixth in the March 25 Dubai World Cup (GI). The multiple graded stakes winner is scheduled to fly to Kentucky on Tuesday and could be accompanied by long-time Baffert assistant trainer Jimmy Barnes. The 58-year-old Barnes fractured his pelvis in a freak training accident in September at Santa Anita.

“He’s going to be in Del Mar next week,” Baffert said. “I think Jimmy may make the trip. He’s made a remarkable recovery. He’s been using a crutch and the doctor told him the other day to get rid of it and switch to a cane. He went through a scary time with this injury. He broke his pelvis when the pony went over him and the saddle horn hit him right in the stomach.”

LOVELL ‘SHOOTS FOR THE STARS’ WITH FORMER $50,000 CLAIM FAULT IN MRS. REVERE – Mark Martinez’ Agave Racing Stable’s Fault, a former $50,000 claim in May, is set to take on Grade II company in Friday’s $200,000 Mrs. Revere (GI) for trainer Michelle Lovell.

“We claimed her back in May and she’s really done well,” Lovell said. “She was super impressive winning the (Aug. 12) Pucker Up (GIII) at Arlington and we hope to keep shooting for the stars with her.”

Fault, a 3-year-old daughter by Blame, was claimed for $50,000 off trainer Al Stall Jr. on May 3 at Churchill Downs by Lovell. The bay filly was most recently fourth in Keeneland’s $150,000 Valley View (GIII) but was gaining ground in the late stages of the race.

“She was pretty far back early,” Lovell said. “Once she turned for home she really closed ground late and ran a great race. I think the extra distance in the Mrs. Revere could definitely help her.”

Among the probable entrants for the Mrs. Revere, a 1 1/8-mile turf test for 3-year-old fillies, is the Valley View winner and second-place effort in last year’s race. James Miller’s Lovely Bernadette, and Three Diamonds Farm’s I’m Betty G, according to Assistant Racing Secretary and Stakes Coordinator Dan Bork.

ROMANS JUVENILES DAK ATTACK, TIZ MISCHIEF TOP BUSY SATURDAY WORK TAB – Trainer Dale Romans’ duo of Dak Attack and Tiz Mischief, two of his top Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) prospects, were among 142 horses on the Churchill Downs work tab during a windy Saturday morning.

Albaugh Family Stables’ and Breereton Jones’ Dak Attack, the winner of the Aug. 20 Ellis Park Juvenile, returned to the work tab after nearly three months with a three furlong-breeze in :38.40 under regular exercise rider Faustino Herrarte. In the next set, Frank Jones Jr.’s probable $200,000 Kentucky Jockey Club (GI) contender Tiz Mischief breezed five furlongs in 1:01 with Herrarte aboard through splits of :23.60 and :48, before galloping out six furlongs in 1:15.40, according to Churchill Downs’ clocker John Nichols.

Fellow Jockey Club probables Lone Sailor (four furlongs :48.80) and Mr. Recio (four furlongs :50) also put in their final preparations before next Saturday’s 1 1/16-mile race.

Complete work tab: https://www.churchilldowns.com/horsemen/racing/workouts
STAKES PROBABLES: Seven stakes races worth $1.48 million in purses headline a lucrative Thanksgiving week of racing at Churchill Downs. The following horses are probable entrants, according to Assistant Racing Secretary and Stakes Coordinator Dan Bork:

- $500,000 Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare (GI) (1 1/8 miles, to be run Nov. 24 for 3-year-olds and up): Diversify, Good Samaritan, Honorable Duty, Hoppopotamus, Mr. Tom, Seeking The Soul, and The Player.
- $200,000 Mrs. Revere (GII) (1 1/16 miles on turf, to be run Nov. 24 for 3-year-old fillies): Daddys Lil Darling, Fault, I'm Betty G, Lovely Bernadette, Marina's Legacy, Oh So Terrible, Proud Reunion, and Tamit (Ire).
- $200,000 Kentucky Jockey Club (GII) (1 1/16 miles, to be run Nov. 25 for 2-year-olds): Bravazo, Diamond King, Enticed, Give Me A Minnit, Gotta Go, High North, Lone Sailor, Mr. Recio, O'Malley's March, Peppered, and Quip.
- $200,000 Golden Rod (GII) (1 1/16 miles, to be run Nov. 25 for 2-year-old fillies): Caroline The Great, Cash Out, Foxtrot Sally, Go Google Yourself, Monomoy Girl, Princess Warrior, Stronger Than Ever, and Sultry.

GOVERNOR'S SCHOLARS CLASS OF 2017 HONORED FRIDAY – Churchill Downs Racetrack honored members of its 2017 class of Churchill Downs Winner's Circle Governor's Scholars during a celebration of the program at the home of Kentucky Derby on Friday, Nov. 17.

A total of 31 current high school seniors from Jefferson County and surrounding counties participated during the summer between their junior and senior years in the program that is part of the overall Kentucky Governor's Scholars Program ("KGSP"). Twenty-seven of those students were joined at the track on Friday by parents, guardians and school representatives for a reception and lunch in the Jockey Club Suites. Small groups of the members of the 2017 Winner's Circle Governor's Scholars class were recognized in the track's winner's circle following each of the day's first six races.

Churchill Downs also presented a check for $15,000 to Dr. Aris Cedeno, KGSP's executive director and academic dean.

Participation of the members of the 2017 Class of Churchill Downs Winner's Circle Governor's Scholars in the overall Kentucky Governor's Scholars Program was funded in part by Churchill Downs. The private-‐private Winner's Circle partnership, now in its 17th year, has now funded the participation of a total of 518 students in the overall Governor's Scholars Program. The Winner's Circle program is unique in that it focuses on students who have overcome personal challenges or other adversity to become high achievers in both their personal lives and the classroom.

The Kentucky Governor's Scholars Program was created in 1983 with a mission to enhance Kentucky's next generation of civic and economic leaders. A partnership that includes the office of the Governor, the Kentucky State Legislature and private enterprise from throughout the Commonwealth funds the program, which selected students to attend without charge.

The Churchill Downs Winner's Circle Governor's Scholars honored Friday joined more than 1,000 students who participated in the overall program during five-week sessions conducted during the summer at one of three college campuses: Morehead State University, Murray State University and Northern Kentucky University.

Class of 2016 member Nyah Elizabeth Mattison, a senior at duPont Manual High School, spoke for Winner’s Circle Class of 2016 at the reception.

“As the daughter of an immigrant and as an African American student, being a Winner’s Circle Scholar is a recognition of that hard work. Being a Winner’s Circle Scholar is incredibly meaningful to me and incredibly humbling,” Mattison said. “All of us here have overcome challenges that have tested our limits, and being a Winner's Circle Scholar is a recognition of that hard work.

“As Governor's Scholars we have all learned the importance of community, in every form it takes. GSP has helped me to build a network of fellow scholars that I feel comfortable and trusting in reaching out to.”

Participants in Churchill Downs Winner’s Circle Governor’s Scholars Program include one student from each of the Kentucky House and Senate districts in Jefferson County. Some of those districts include portions of bordering Kentucky counties.

FREE ONLINE BRISNET PAST PERFORMANCES FOR CHURCHILL DOWNS; NEW BRISNET BETTING GUIDE DEBUTS ON-TRACK – Throughout Churchill Downs’ Fall Meet, Brisnet.com is offering horseplayers complimentary past performances for each day’s races at the Louisville, Ky. racetrack. To download the free Churchill Downs past performances online, guests can visit: https://www.brisnet.com/product/past-performances/FPP.

Additionally, Brisnet.com has introduced an excellent new product for on-track guests at Churchill Downs. The Brisnet.com Betting Guide features informative Brisnet.com Premium Plus Past Performances for four-to-eight different racetracks around the country in a bound book with high-quality paper. The book will retail for only $5, which means the new product will be significantly cheaper for Churchill Downs’ guests compared to previously-offered past performance products. It also will have better quality and more targeted content for horseplayers.

The new Brisnet.com Betting Guide is available at program stands and other distribution locations throughout Churchill Downs.
MILESTONE WATCH – Jockey Brian Hernandez Jr. began Saturday four wins away from 500 victories at Churchill Downs while Ricardo Santana Jr. was seven wins away from 200. … Trainer Greg Foley (399) was one win away from 400 career victories beneath the historic Twin Spires while trainer Ian Wilkes was targeting 200 career victories at Churchill Downs (196 wins). … Trainer Mike Maker was five wins away from 2,000 career victories.

KENTUCKY DERBY FUTURE WAGER – The first pools of the 2018 Kentucky Derby Future Wager will be offered Nov. 23-26. The traditional pool with 23 individual wagering interests and an “all others” option will return, and so will the Kentucky Derby Sire Future Wager, which debuted in 2015 and requires bettors to wager on the winning sire for next year’s Kentucky Derby winner. The other Future Wager dates will be Feb. 9-11 (Pool 2), March 9-11 (Pool 3) and April 6-8 (Pool 4). The lone Kentucky Oaks Future Wager will coincide with Pool 3 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager on March 9-11.

DOWN THE STRETCH – Churchill Downs’ popular “Who’s the Champ?” Handicapping Contest will return Sunday. Interested participants can enter for $35 ($30 for TSC Elite members) for a chance to win the $1,000 cash voucher first prize by placing mythical $2 win and place bets on Races 3-8. Second place receives a $500 voucher and third place is worth a $200 voucher. Registration will take place Sunday between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on the Clubhouse second floor at the top of the Gate 17 escalators. … The 50/50 charitable gaming raffle is back for the Fall Meet. Proceeds from the raffle will go towards charitable organizations that benefit from the Churchill Downs Incorporated Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that helps support the critical work of nonprofits in our industry, make a difference in important public health programs and provide meaningful opportunities in art and education. Visit www.derbygives.com to purchase tickets and for more information.

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