FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MOTHERHOOD AND HORSE RACING – A SEAMLESS EXACTA FOR PITTS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, May 12, 2018) – It was a typical Saturday morning for trainer Helen Pitts when she left her Finchville, Ky. home at 4:30 to make a nearly 40-minute drive to Churchill Downs after her babysitter arrived to watch her two children, Olivia (6-years-old) and Rylee (3) – a juggling act for the Maryland native, even on Mother’s Day Weekend.

“The most difficult part is finding a babysitter who can get over to our house at 4 o’clock,” Pitts said. “For instance, today is their first tee ball practice at noon. I’ll leave the track around 10 o’clock, drive home and make sure they’re ready to go. Then, take them to practice and leave half-way through to drive back to Churchill and saddle two horses later in the afternoon. Luckily, I have a friend that will be able to pick them up after they’re finished. Right after I saddle the horses, I’ll run back to pick them up.”

Pitts is a multiple Grade I-winning conditioner, most known for training two-time Old Forester Turf Classic (GI) hero Einstein (BRZ).

“I’ve been doing this for many years,” Pitts said. “It’s difficult and tiring but worth every penny. I manage through it most days but it sometimes catches up to me. They love to be out at the racetrack. I think it’s valuable that they help. It’s a little easier on the weekends and when they’re out of school because I’m able to bring them to the track with me. They’ll help out around the barn and they’ll get to run around with me.”

“She’s got the kids back there watering off the horses and picking up around the barn,” Churchill Downs outrider and Pitts’ husband Greg Blasi said. “I know she likes to have them around helping out.”

A winner of 241 races, Pitts has a string of 12 horses in Barn 46.

DERBY WINNER JUSTIFY CONTINUES TRAINING FOR PREAKNESS – Kentucky Derby (Grade I) winner Justify continued his preparation for the Preakness Stakes (GI) Saturday morning at Churchill Downs, galloping 1 ½ miles with Humberto Gomez in the saddle for Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert.

“He looks good out there,” assistant trainer Jimmy Barnes said. “Everything looks great.”

Owned by China Horse Club, Head of Plains Partners LLC, Starlight Racing and WinStar Farm, Justify will continue to gallop into the Preakness, according to Baffert.

Baffert is expected to arrive in Kentucky late Sunday night and watch the undefeated colt train Monday morning at Churchill Downs before flying to Baltimore Wednesday.

MOQUETT RETURNS TO CHURCHILL DOWNS AS HE CONTINUES TO BATTLE SARCOIDOSIS – It was a welcome sight Saturday morning on the Churchill Downs backstretch when trainer Ron Moquett watched his horses gallop with longtime owner Alex Lieblong as he continues to battle the autoimmune disease sarcoidosis.

“Sometimes horses are the best medicine,” Moquett said. “The doctors told me I’m allowed to be out there but have to take it easy. It’s amazing the power of horses because most times at home I don’t even want to get up to get a glass of water. But, when I know I get to see my horses, I get right up.”

Moquett, 46, is fighting atypical sarcoidosis – a disease which affects the lungs and doesn’t allow those affected to be around large crowds. A winner of 683 races, Moquett was hospitalized for several weeks this winter in Hot Springs, Ark.

“I feel good now,” Moquett said. “I’ll just keep fighting. I’m so grateful for everyone who has helped me personally and professionally during this time.”

DOWN THE STRETCH – There is a $393,347 carryover in the 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot Saturday afternoon at Churchill Downs. The sequence begins in Race 6 with a scheduled post time of 3:18 p.m. (all times Eastern).

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