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KENTUCKY DERBY ALUM WEST SARATOGA RETURNS TO CHURCHILL DOWNS AS HEADLINER IN SUNDAY'S GRADE III, \$400,000 MATT WINN

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Sunday, June 2, 2024) – **Harry Veruchi's** popular 3-year-old colt **West Saratoga**, the 12th-place finisher in Kentucky Derby 150, is set to tackle 10 rivals that entered in next Sunday's 27th running of the \$400,000 Matt Winn (Grade III) at Churchill Downs.

Run at 1 1/16 miles, West Saratoga will take on several improving 3-year-olds in the Matt Winn including Pat Day Mile (GII) runner-up **Nash** and Wood Memorial (GII) runner-up **Society Man**.

Carded as Race 8, the Matt Winn field will go to post at 4:22 p.m. (all times Eastern). The solid nine-race program also will include the third running of the \$175,000 Leslie's Lady Overnight Stakes in Race 4 at 2:13 p.m. First post is 12:45 p.m.

West Saratoga, trained by **Larry Demeritte**, kicked off the Road to the Kentucky Derby 150 with a victory in the Iroquois Stakes (GIII) at Churchill Downs. The gray son of Exaggerator began his 3-year-old campaign at Tampa Bay Downs, finishing second in the Pasco and third in the Sam F. Davis (GIII). Following those races, Demeritte shipped West Saratoga back to Kentucky where he finished second in the Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII) at Turfway Park, narrowly winning the place photo over eventual Preakness Stakes (GI) winner **Seize the Grey**. Veteran rider **Jesus Castanon**, who rode West Saratoga in the Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI), will have the call in the Matt Winn from post No. 4.

One of West Saratoga's rivals in the Matt Winn is **Godolphin's** Nash who will stretch back out to two turns following his runner-up effort to Seize the Grey in the Pat Day Mile. Trained by **Brad Cox**, Nash has never finished outside the top three in seven-career starts. The son of Medaglia d'Oro returned to the winner's circle two starts ago when he dominated six rivals in the Hot Springs Stakes at Oaklawn. Prior to that start, Cox briefly pointed Nash on the Road to the Kentucky Derby but opted to bypass Kentucky Derby 150. Jockey **Florent Geroux** will be in the saddle for the Matt Winn and break out of post 6.

Another 3-year-old with back class that entered the Matt Winn is **Reeves Thoroughbred Racing, West Paces Racing, GMP Stables** and **Carl and Yurie Pascarella's** Wood Memorial runner-up Society Man. Trained by **Danny Gargan**, Society Man finished 16th in the Kentucky Derby after breaking from the far-outside post and encountering a wide journey. **Corey Lanerie** will have the mount in the Matt Winn out of post 7.

Here is the complete field for the Matt Winn from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

- **Northern Flame** (Julien Leparoux, Kenny McPeck)
- **Who Dey** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Tommy Drury)
- **Scatify** (Jose Ortiz, John Sadler)
- West Saratoga (Castanon, Demeritte)
- **Rocketeer** (Tyler Gaffalione, Cox)
- Nash (Geroux, Cox)
- Society Man (Lanerie, Gargan)
- **Mighty Message** (Cristian Torres, Tom Amoss)
- **Next Level** (Jareth Loveberry, Keith Desormeaux)
- **Luna Tap** (Luan Machado, Doug O'Neill)

Fans can watch and wager on all the action from Churchill Downs in www.twinspires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby. For more information about the 2024 Spring Meet, visit www.churchilldowns.com.

DOMINANT ALLOWANCE WINNER EMERY SEARCHES FOR FIRST STAKES SCORE IN \$175,000 LESLIE'S LADY – **Stonestreet Stables'** dominant 5 ¼-length allowance winner **Emery** will be in search of her first stakes victory when she takes on six fellow 3-year-old fillies that entered in Sunday's third running of the \$175,000 Leslie's Lady at Churchill Downs.

Run at seven furlongs, the Leslie's Lady will go as Race 4 on the nine-race card with a post time of 2:13 p.m. Sunday's program at Churchill Downs also features the \$400,000 Matt Winn (GIII), run as Race 8 at 4:22 p.m. First post is 12:45 p.m.

Emery, conditioned by **Brad Cox**, began her career nine months ago at Saratoga when she dominated a six-furlong maiden special weight by 5 ³/₄ lengths under **Tyler Gaffalione**. The daughter of More Than Ready returned five weeks later to take on five rivals in the Frizette but finished a disappointing fourth as the even-money favorite to eventual champion 2-year-old filly **Just F Y I**. In her first start as a 3-year-old, Emery returned at Keeneland, cruising to a first-level allowance victory at odds of 1-2. Gaffalione will be back in the saddle for the Leslie's Lady from post No. 7.

One of Emery's rivals in the Leslie's Lady with stakes experience under her belt is Northern California invader **Charlene's Dream**. Owned by **Domeyko Taylor** and trained by **Ed Moger Jr.**, Charlene's Dream showed precocity during her 2-year-old season, winning both the Pike Place Dancer Stakes and Golden Gate Debutante Stakes. The Texas-bred daughter of Qurbaan has not been to the races since her victory in the Golden Gate Debutante on Nov. 25. **Evin Roman** will ride from post 2.

Another filly with stakes accolades on her resumé that entered the Leslie's Lady is **Rigney Racing's** Goldfinch Stakes winner **Legadema**. Trained by **Phil Bauer** and ridden by **Martin Garcia**, Legadema shipped to Prairie Meadows three weeks ago to garner her first black-type race of her resume in the Goldfinch. Prior to that race, the daughter of Arrogate narrowly defeated **Sam's Treasure** in a first-level allowance event at Keeneland. Legadema will break from post 5.

Here is the complete field for the Leslie's Lady from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

- **Blue Squall** (Cristian Torres, Randy Morse)
- Charlene's Dream (Roman, Moger)
- **Monlit Lady** (Ricardo Santana Jr., Fausto Gutierrez)
- **Pink Lady Lu Sha** (James Graham, Elias Lopez)
- Legadema (Garcia, Bauer)
- **Tambo** (Jose Ortiz, Peter Eurton)
- Emery (Gaffalione, Cox)

DOWN THE STRETCH – Live racing from Churchill Downs continued Sunday with a first post of 12:45 p.m. for a 10-race card featuring the Old Forester Mint Julep (GIII) in Race 7. Due to continuous rain throughout Saturday afternoon and into the early evening, Race 3 was taken off the turf and run at 5 ¹/₂ furlongs on the main track. Races 7 and 10 remained on the turf which was listed as “good.” ... Saturday's \$275,000 Blame Stakes (GIII) winner **Highland Falls** received a career-best 101 Brisnet Speed Rating for his one-length victory over **Cagliostro**. Two races prior, in the \$275,000 Shawnee Stakes (GIII), **Scylla** also earned a career-best Brisnet Speed Rating of 99 with her 3 ¹/₄-length victory. ... Jockey **Keith Asmussen** remains at UofL Hospital Sunday where he underwent surgery to repair a fractured left femur. Asmussen's mount **Singsational** clipped heels in Race 2 Saturday at Churchill Downs, resulting in the young rider's injury to his femur, along with three fractured ribs, lower right lung contusions and hemopneumothorax. **Singsational** was uninjured. ... For more information about the Churchill Downs Spring Meet, visit www.churchilldowns.com.

ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK

Churchill Downs Racetrack (“CDRT”), the world's most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility and Race and Sports Book. www.ChurchillDowns.com.

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