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## **GRADE I WINNER TAPIT TRICE SET FOR 4-YEAR-OLD DEBUT IN \$275,000 BLAME STAKES**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, May 25, 2024)** – **Whisper Hill Farm** and **Gainesway Stable**'s highly-regarded 4-year-old colt **Tapit Trice**, the winner of the 2023 Blue Grass (Grade I) and seventh-place finisher of the Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI), is set for his 4-year-old debut against 10 rivals that entered Saturday's 5<sup>th</sup> running of the \$275,000 Blame Stakes (GIII), the featured race on "Stephen Foster Preview Day" at Churchill Downs.

Run at 1 1/8 miles the Blame Stakes is the local prep for the June 29, \$1 million Stephen Foster Stakes (GI). Along with the Blame, the stellar afternoon of racing will also feature the \$275,000 Arlington (GIII), \$275,000 Regret (GIII), \$275,000 Shawnee (GIII), \$275,000 Aristides (Listed) and \$275,000 Audubon (Listed). The Blame Stakes will go as Race 10 of 11 with a post time of 5:27 p.m. (all times Eastern), first post is 12:45 p.m.

Trained by Hall of Famer **Todd Pletcher**, Tapit Trice has been away from the races since Aug. 26 when he finished third to **Arcangelo** and **Disarm** in the Travers (GI) at Saratoga. The striking gray son of Tapit has been based at Churchill Downs since late April as he continued his preparations for his seasonal bow. Prior to the Travers, Tapit Trice bravely defeated **Verifying** in the Blue Grass to become one of the top contenders for Kentucky Derby 149. In the Derby, Tapit Trice had a tough journey to finish seventh as the slight 9-2 second choice in the wagering behind **Angel of Empire**. **Flavien Prat** will unite with Tapit Trice in the Blame for the first time since he finished third in his career debut. The duo will break from post No. 5.

Other accomplished older horses that entered the Blame include Clark (GII) winner **Trademark**; Oaklawn Handicap (GII) runner-up **Highland Falls** and recent Ben Ali (GIII) runner-up **War Campaign**.

Here is the field for the Blame Stakes from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

- **Frosted Departure** (Julien Leparoux, Kenny McPeck)
- Highland Falls (Florent Geroux, Brad Cox)
- War Campaign (Tyler Gaffalione, Phil Sims)
- **Uncle Jake** (Joel Rosario, Carlo Vaccarezza)
- Tapit Trice (Prat, Pletcher)
- **Dreamlike** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Pletcher)
- **Classic Causeway** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Kenny McPeck)
- **Last Samurai** (Cristian Torres, Eddie Milligan Jr.)
- **Cagliostro** (Jose Ortiz, Cherie DeVaux)
- **Five Star General** (Corey Lanerie, Grant Forster)
- Trademark (Martin Garcia, Vicki Oliver)

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Tickets for Saturday are available at [www.churchilldowns.com](http://www.churchilldowns.com).

**TWO-TIME GRADED STAKES WINNER XIGERA ATTEMPTS TO REBOUND FROM RECENT LATROIENE DEFEAT IN \$275,000 SHAWNEE** – **Rigney Racing**'s accomplished 4-year-old filly **Xigera** will face a talented field of nine fillies and mares that entered Saturday's 5<sup>th</sup> running of the \$275,000 Shawnee Stakes (Grade III), part of a jam-packed, stakes-filled Saturday card at Churchill Downs.

Dubbed as "Stephen Foster Preview Day," the Shawnee Stakes is the prelude to the \$500,000 Fasig-Tipton Fleur de Lis (GII), held Saturday, June 29 at Churchill Downs. Run at 1 1/16 miles, the Shawnee Stakes was carded as Race 8 with a post time of 4:23 p.m. First post on the 11-race card is 12:45 p.m. Along with the Shawnee Stakes, the afternoon will also feature the \$275,000 Arlington (GIII), \$275,000 Blame (GIII), \$275,000 Regret (GIII), \$275,000 Aristides (Listed) and \$275,000 Audubon (Listed).

Conditioned by **Phil Bauer**, Xigera had a stellar 3-year-old campaign winning the Mother Goose (GII) at Aqueduct, Falls City (GIII) at Churchill Downs and Tepin Stakes at Ellis Park. The daughter of Nyquist made her seasonal debut on Kentucky Oaks Day when she finished a disappointing fifth in the Fasig-Tipton La Troienne (GI) over the sloppy surface. Jockey **Julien Leparoux**, who has ridden Xigera in all but one of her 11-lifetime starts, will be aboard in the Shawnee from post No. 6.

Several other accomplished fillies and mares entered the Shawnee including Coaching Club American Oaks (GI) heroine **Wet Paint**, Grade II winner **Hoosier Philly** and recent dominant allowance winner **Scylla**.

Here is the field, in order of post position, for the Shawnee Stakes (with jockey and trainer):

- **Magical Lute** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Ian Wilkes)
- **Malloy** (Jaime Torres, Wayne Catalano)
- **Wet Paint** (Flavien Prat, Brad Cox)
- **Take a Stand** (Luis Saez, Vicki Oliver)
- **Bellamore** (Tyler Gaffalione, Steve Asmussen)
- **Xigera** (Leparoux, Bauer)
- **Scylla** (Javier Castellano, Bill Mott)
- **Hoosier Philly** (Edgar Morales, Tom Amoss)
- **Hidden Connection** (Rey Gutierrez, Bret Calhoun)

**EUROPEAN INVADER OTTOMAN FLEET HEADLINES GRADE III, \$275,000 ARLINGTON STAKES – Godolphin’s** talented turf specialist **Ottoman Fleet (GB)** headlines a field of eight older horses that entered Saturday’s 88<sup>th</sup> running of the \$275,000 Arlington Stakes (GIII) at Churchill Downs.

Run at 1 1/16 miles on the Matt Winn Turf Course, the Arlington Stakes is one of six stakes contests on the “Stephen Foster Preview Day” program. The Arlington Stakes will go as Race 6 of 11 with a post time of 3:18 p.m. The 11-race program will get underway at 12:45 p.m. Along with the Arlington Stakes, the stakes-laden card will also feature the \$275,000 Blame (GIII), \$275,000 Shawnee (GIII), \$275,000 Regret, \$275,000 Aristides (Listed) and \$275,000 Audubon (Listed).

Trained by top European conditioner **Charlie Appleby**, Ottoman Fleet was a Group II and III winner in Europe prior to making his state-side debut May 4 at Aqueduct where he finished a close second to **Master Piece (CHI)** in the Fort Marcy (GII). The 5-year-old gelded son of Sea The Stars (IRE) will be ridden in the Arlington Stakes by **Flavien Prat** from post No. 1.

Another talented horse that entered the Arlington stakes is **WinStar Farm** and **Siena Farm’s** seven-time winner **Emmanuel**. Trained by **Todd Pletcher**, Emmanuel’s stakes-filled resume includes victories in the Pennine Ridge (GII), Tampa Bay Stakes (GIII), Poker (GIII) and two wins in the Canadian Turf (GIII). Jockey **Irad Ortiz Jr.** will be in the irons from post 2.

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

- **Ottoman Fleet (GB)** (Prat, Appleby)
- **Emmanuel** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Pletcher)
- **Smokin’ T** (John Velazquez, Shug McGaughey)
- **Stitched** (Tyler Gaffalione, Greg Foley)
- **Northern Invader** (Jose Ortiz, Cherie DeVaux)
- **Chasing the Crown** (Joel Rosario, Mike Maker)
- **Harlan Estate** (Declan Cannon, Whit Beckman)
- **Irish Aces** (Luis Saez, Brendan Walsh)

**MULTIPLE GRADED STAKES WINNER BUCHU LEADS FIELD IN \$275,000 REGRET – Rigney Racing’s** two-time Grade II winner **Buchu** leads a field of 10 3-year-old fillies that entered Saturday’s 55<sup>th</sup> running of the \$275,000 Regret Stakes (GIII) at Churchill Downs.

Run at 1 1/8-miles on turf, the Regret Stakes field will go to post at 4:55 p.m. in Race 9. The stellar 11-race program, featuring six stakes contests, will begin at 12:45 p.m. Along with the Regret Stakes, the program will also feature the \$275,000 Arlington (GIII), \$275,000 Blame (GIII), \$275,000 Shawnee (GIII), \$275,000 Aristides (Listed) and \$275,000 Audubon (Listed). All six stakes contests will lead horses to similar stakes contests on Stephen Foster Day, held Saturday, June 29 at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Phil Bauer**, Buchu began her 3-year-old campaign on April 6 at Keeneland where she narrowly defeated **Mo Fox Givin** in the Appalachian Stakes (GII). As a 2-year-old, the daughter of Justify cruised to a 3 3/4-length score in the Jessamine (GII) at Keeneland prior to shipping to Santa Anita where she finished sixth in the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (GI). Jockey **Martin Garcia** retains the mount on Buchu in the Regret and will break from post No. 6.

One of Buchu's rivals in the Regret is the ultra-consistent **Way to Be Marie**, the recent runner-up finisher in the Edgewood Stakes (GII). Owned by **Robert LaPenta** and **Madaket Stables** and trained by **Rob Atras**, Way to Be Marie has only finished outside the top 2 once in her six-race career. The daughter of Not This Time took the lead at the head of the stretch in the Edgewood, run earlier this month on Kentucky Oaks Day, but was caught in the shadow of the wire by **Dynamic Pricing**. Jockey **Florent Geroux** will have the return-call from the rail.

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

- Way to Be Marie (Florent Geroux, Rob Atras)
- **Everland** (Abel Cedillo, Eric Foster)
- **Gavea (GER)** (Julien Leparoux, Al Stall Jr.)
- **Dancing N Dixie** (Jose Ortiz, Mark Casse)
- **Poolside With Slim (IRE)** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Rusty Arnold II)
- Buchu (Garcia, Bauer)
- **Hello Hollywood** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Brian Lynch)
- **Sassy Princess** (Flavien Prat, Brendan Walsh)
- **Pin Up Betty** (Luis Saez, Mike Maker)
- **Faith Understood** (Florent Geroux, Jonathan Thomas)

**ACCOMPLISHED SPRINTER SKELLY HEADLINES \$275,000 ARISTIDES STAKES** – RedLane Thoroughbreds' speedy **Skelly** headlines an accomplished field of eight sprinters that entered in Saturday's 36<sup>th</sup> running of the \$275,000 Aristides Stakes (Listed) at Churchill Downs.

The six-furlong Aristides is part of a six-pack of stakes races dubbed as "Stephen Foster Preview Day" to help catapult horses to the June 29 Stephen Foster Day at Churchill Downs. The other stakes on the 11-race card are the \$275,000 Arlington (Grade III), \$275,000 Blame (GIII), \$275,000 Regret (GIII), \$275,000 Shawnee (GIII) and \$275,000 Audubon (Listed). First post is 12:45 p.m. and the Aristides will go as Race 7 at 3:51 p.m.

Trained by **Steve Asmussen**, Skelly is a 10-time winner from 15 starts including back-to-back wins in the Count Fleet Sprint (GIII) at Oaklawn. The speedy gelded son of Practical Joke only has one blemish in his record since Feb. 25, 2023, a runner-up finish in the Riyadh Dirt Sprint (GIII) in late February. Skelly will be piloted in the Aristides by **Ricardo Santana Jr.** from post No. 3.

One of the other accomplished horses in the Aristides field is **Nathan Hayden's** recent Churchill Downs Stakes (GI) runner-up **Here Mi Song**. Trained by **Billy Stinson Jr.**, Here Mi Song is a six-time winner from 24 starts. His impressive resume includes victories in the Commonwealth (GIII) at Keeneland and Jeff Hall Memorial at Ellis Park. **Tyler Gaffalione** will ride Here Mi Song from post 8.

Here is the field for the Aristides Stakes from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

- **Tejano Twist** (Rafael Bejarano, Chris Hartman)
- **Closesthegame Sugar** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Adam Rice)
- Skelly (Santana, Steve Asmussen)
- **Angkor** (Martin Garcia, Phil Bauer)
- **Payne** (Keith Asmussen, Steve Asmussen)
- **Bourbon Heist** (Luis Saez, Ian Wilkes)
- **Surly Furious** (Abel Cedillo, Glenn Wismer)
- Here Mi Song (Gaffalione, Stinson)

**WIDE-OPEN FIELD OF 10 SET TO CONTEST \$275,000 AUDUBON STAKES** – A wide-open cast of 10 3-year-olds, including Grade II winner **Can Group**, multiple graded stakes paced **Cugino** and American Turf (GII) runner-up **Formidable Man**, was entered in Saturday's 5<sup>th</sup> running of the \$275,000 Audubon Stakes (Listed), one of six stakes contests held on "Stephen Foster Preview Day" at Churchill Downs.

The Audubon Stakes, a preview for the \$250,000 American Derby (Listed) run Saturday, June 29 at Churchill Downs, will go as finale on the 11-race program with a post time of 5:58 p.m. Run at 1 1/8 miles on the Matt Winn Turf Course, the Audubon Stakes is part of six stakes contests on the program. Along with the Audubon, the card also includes the \$275,000 Arlington (Grade III), \$275,000 Blame (GIII), \$275,000 Regret (GIII), \$275,000 Shawnee (GIII) and \$275,000 Aristides (Listed). First post is 12:45 p.m.

Among the accomplished horses entered in the Audubon Stakes includes **William and Suzanne Warren's** American Turf runner-up Formidable Man; **HRH Sultan Bin Minshal Al Saud's** American Turf third-place runner **Lagynos**; **D. J. Stable** and **Cash Is King's** Bourbon Stakes (GII) winner Can Group; **West Point Thoroughbreds** and **Jimmy Kahig's** Transylvania (GIII) runner-up and American Turf fourth-place finisher **Cugino** and Augustin Stable's Rushaway third-place finisher **Twirling Point**.

Here is the field for the Audubon Stakes from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

- **Nomos** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Todd Pletcher)
- Cugino (Robert Patt, Shug McGaughey III)
- Cameo Performance (Tyler Gaffalione, Brendan Walsh)
- Thomas Aquinas (Brian Hernandez Jr., Ian Wilkes)
- Formidable Man (Luis Saez, Michael McCarthy)
- **Camaro Z** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Greg Foley)
- **Rock'n a Halo** (Edgar Morales, Tom Amoss)
- Twirling Point (Frankie Dettori, Jonathan Thomas)
- Lagynos (Cristian Torres, Steve Asmussen)
- Can Group (Francisco Arrieta, Mark Casse)

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