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GRADE I WINNERS VAHAVA, SOCIETY TO MEET IN SATURDAY'S GRADE III, \$250,000 CHICAGO STAKES AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, June 15, 2024) – Grade I winner **Vahva** is set for her return to Churchill Downs where she'll face an accomplished group of five fillies and mares in next Saturday's 34th running of the \$250,000 Chicago Stakes (Grade III).

Run at seven furlongs, the Chicago Stakes field also includes last year's dominant winner **Society**, who's poised to make her seasonal bow. Carded as Race 7 of 11, the Chicago Stakes will have a post time of 3:51 p.m. First post is 12:45 p.m.

Owned in partnership by **Belladonna Racing, Edward Hudson Jr., West Point Thoroughbreds, LBD Stable, Nice Guys Stables, Manganaro Bloodstock, Runnels Racing, Steve Hornstock** and **Twin Brook Stables**, Vahva recorded her first Grade I victory six weeks ago when she cruised to a two-length score in the Derby City Distaff on Kentucky Derby Day. Trained by **Cherie DeVaux**, Vahva's impressive resumé also includes victories in last year's Raven Run (GII) at Keeneland and Charles Town Oaks (GIII). The now 4-year-old daughter of Gun Runner has already banked more than \$1.5 million in purse earnings in 12 starts with five wins, three seconds and two thirds. Jockey **Irado Ortiz Jr.**, who was in the saddle for the Derby City Distaff, will return to Churchill Downs for the Chicago Stakes. The duo will break from post No. 3.

Society, owned by **Peter Blum Thoroughbreds** and trained by **Steve Asmussen**, dominated her five rivals in last year's Chicago Stakes by 10 ³/₄ lengths. Like Vahva, Society also is a Grade I winner. As a 3-year-old, Society cruised to a 5 ³/₄-length victory in the Cotillion Stakes (GI) at Parx. The Chicago Stakes will be Society's first start since finishing a troubled fourth in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint (GI). **Tyler Gaffalione** will have the mount Saturday from the rail.

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

- Society (Gaffalione, Asmussen)
- **Royal Spa** (Florent Geroux, Rodolphe Brisset)
- Vahva (Irado Ortiz Jr., DeVaux)
- **Chi Town Lady** (Jose Ortiz, Wesley Ward)
- **Positano Sunset** (Julien Leparoux, Ian Wilkes)

Fans can watch and wager on all the action from Churchill Downs on www.TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby.

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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