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‘ALL SYSTEMS GO’ FOR SCYLLA IN SATURDAY’S FASIG-TIPTON FLEUR DE LIS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, June 28, 2024) – “All systems go, we’re ready for the Fleur de Lis.”

That was the confident response from Hall of Fame trainer **Bill Mott**’s chief assistant, **Kenny McCarthy**, when asked about **Scylla**’s preparations for Saturday’s \$500,000 Fasig-Tipton Fleur de Lis (Grade II) at Churchill Downs.

Owned by **Juddmonte**, Scylla is the heavy 6-5 favorite against a compact field of five rivals in the 1 1/8-mile contest. A regally bred daughter of Tapit out of the champion mare Close Hatches, McCarthy has overseen much of Scylla’s development over her six-race career.

“She’s really continued to train great here with us at Churchill after the Shawnee,” McCarthy said. “She’s shown a lot of natural talent, and she’s really starting to figure it all out mentally, too. The Fleur de Lis is a tough race. We have a lot of respect for the fillies and mares she’ll be facing Saturday.”

The Fasig-Tipton Fleur de Lis is part of the Breeders’ Cup Dirt Dozen series, where the top three finishers will receive partial entry fees paid should they compete in the Nov. 2 Breeders’ Cup Distaff (GI) at Del Mar.

Here is the field for the Fleur de Lis from the rail out (with jockey, trainer, and morning line odds):

- **Free Like a Girl** (Corey Lanerie, Chasey Deville Pomier, 6-1)
- **Shotgun Hottie** (Paco Lopez, Cherie DeVaux, 4-1)
- **Taxed** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Randy Morse, 5-1)
- Scylla (Javier Castellano, Mott, 6-5)
- **Occult** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Chad Brown, 6-1)
- **Xigera** (Julien Leparoux, Phil Bauer, 9-2)

The Fasig-Tipton Fleur de Lis is part of a six-pack of stakes contests Saturday at Churchill Downs led by the \$1 million Stephen Foster (GI). Along with the Fleur de Lis, the phenomenal program will include the \$500,000 Wise Dan (GII), \$250,000 American Derby (Listed), \$250,000 Kelly’s Landing (Listed) and \$250,000 Tepin (Listed).

STAKES BONANZA – Closing weekend at Churchill Downs will feature 11 stakes races cumulatively worth more than \$3.85 million (six on Saturday totaling \$2.75 million and five worth \$1.1 million).

FOSTER FIELD AT A GLANCE – Combined, the nine Stephen Foster entrants have won 41 of their 139 starts (29.5%), including 21 stakes events and \$9,083,938. ... **Classic Causeway** (2022 Belmont Derby) is the lone Grade I winner in the field. ... **First Mission** (Alysheba), **Kingsbarns** (2023 Louisiana Derby), **Skippylongstocking** (Oaklawn Handicap and 2023 Charles Town Classic) and **Steal Sunshine** (Gulfstream Park Mile) are Grade II winners. ... **Disarm** (2023 Matt Winn), **Happy American** (2023 Louisiana) and **Pyrenees** (Pimlico Special) are Grade III winners. ... **Dreamlike** (runner-up in the GI Pennsylvania Derby in 2023) seeks his first stakes win. ... First Mission is ranked No. 3 on the NTRA Top Thoroughbred Poll behind **National Treasure** and **Senor Buscador**. ... Classic Causeway (11th in 2022), Disarm (4th in 2023) and Kingsbarns (14th in 2023) are Kentucky Derby alumni. ... Happy American finished third in last year’s Stephen Foster at Ellis Park behind **West Will Power** and **Rattle N Roll**.

Here is the complete field for the Stephen Foster from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds):

- **Pyrenees** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Cherie DeVaux, 12-1)
- First Mission (Geroux, Cox, 6-5)
- **Happy American** (Corey Lanerie, Neil Pessin, 30-1)
- **Disarm** (Joel Rosario, Steve Asmussen, 6-1)
- **Dreamlike** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Todd Pletcher, 10-1)
- **Classic Causeway** (Julien Leparoux, Kenny McPeck, 30-1)
- **Kingsbarns** (Luis Saez, Todd Pletcher, 6-1)
- **Steal Sunshine** (Paco Lopez, Bobby Dibona, 20-1)
- **Skippylongstocking** (Jose Ortiz, Saffie Joseph Jr., 5-2)

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FOSTER WIN AND YOU'RE IN – The 43rd running of the \$1 million Stephen Foster (Grade I) is part of the Breeders' Cup "Win and You're In" Challenge Series. The winner of the 1 1/8-mile race for 4-year-olds and up will earn a spot in the starting gate for the \$6 million Longines Breeders' Cup Classic (GI) at Del Mar on Saturday, Nov. 2. Also, the winner's entry fees to the Classic will be paid and will receive a travel stipend if based outside the state of Kentucky. The Foster is the first domestic "Win and You're In" prep race for the Classic, and has been a part of the "Win and You're In" series since 2013. Four horses have won the Stephen Foster and the Breeders' Cup Classic in the same year. **Black Tie Affair** (1991) and **Awesome Again** (1998) won both races at Churchill Downs. **Saint Liam** (2005) won his running of the Classic at Belmont Park. **Gun Runner** (2017) won his Classic at Del Mar. Additionally, Fort Larned won the Classic in 2012 at Santa Anita and returned to his home base to win the 2013 Stephen Foster.

HORSE OF THE YEAR – Four horses used victories in the Stephen Foster as part of their résumés in Horse of the Year campaigns: **Black Tie Affair** (1991), **Saint Liam** (2005), **Curlin** (2008) and **Gun Runner** (2017). In addition, two Foster runner-ups were crowned Horse of the Year: **Mineshaft** (2003) and **Wise Dan** (2012).

FOSTER STAKES RECORD – **Victory Gallop** owns the stakes and track record for 1 1/8 miles of 1:47.28 established in 1999.

FOSTER JOCKEYS – **Pat Day** and **Robby Albarado** have won the Stephen Foster three times to lead all riders. Day's Foster victories came in 1985 (Vanlandingham), 1998 (Awesome Again) and 2003 (Perfect Drift). Albarado won the race three consecutive years in 2007 (Flashy Bull), 2008 (Curlin) and 2009 (Macho Again). Jockeys in this year's field with previous Foster wins: **Florent Geroux** (2017 Gun Runner), **Brian Hernandez Jr.** (2013 Fort Larned) and **Jose Ortiz** (2021 Maxfield).

FOSTER TRAINERS – Eight trainers have won the Stephen Foster twice: **Forrest Kaelin** (1982-83 with Vodika Collins); **Jere Smith Jr.** (1994-95 with Recoup The Cash); **Pat Byrne** (1997-98 with City by Night and Awesome Again); **Mark Casse** (2011 with Pool Play and 2015 with Noble Bird); **Steve Asmussen** (2008 with Curlin and 2017 with Gun Runner); **Dallas Stewart** (2009 with Macho Again and 2019 with Seeking the Soul); **Al Stall Jr.** (2010 with Blame and 2020 with Tom's d'Etat); and **Bill Mott** (2012 with Ron the Greek and 2023 with Olympiad). Trainers in this year's field with previous Foster wins: Asmussen and **Brad Cox** (2023 West Will Power).

ENGRAVED KENTUCKY DERBY 150 TROPHIES TO BE PRESENTED SATURDAY – The connections from Team **Mystik Dan** – owners **Brent Gasaway's 4G Racing LLC, Lance Gasaway, Daniel Hamby III** and **Scott Hamby's Valley View Farm LLC**; trainer **Kenny McPeek**; jockey **Brian Hernandez Jr.**; and breeders **Lance Gasaway, Daniel Hamby** and **4G Racing LLC** – will be at Churchill Downs on Saturday to accept their newly-engraved Kentucky Derby 150 trophies for the colt's thrilling victory in America's greatest race on May 4. The ceremony in the Woodford Reserve Winner's Circle is scheduled after Race 9 at approximately 5:08 p.m. Guests in attendance will be able to take pictures with Mystik Dan's engraved Kentucky Derby 150 trophies as they'll be on display inside the Paddock Gate near the Club SI entrance from 11:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The Oaks trophy for **Thorpedo Anna** – owners **Nader Alaali's Brookdale Racing Inc., Mark Edwards, Judy B. Hicks** and **Sherri McPeek's Magdalena Racing**; trainer **McPeek**; jockey **Hernandez Jr.**; and breeder **Hicks** – also will be on display with the Derby trophies and will be presented in the winner's circle after Race 7 at approximately 4 p.m.

ALL-STAKES DERBY CITY 6 TO BE OFFERED SATURDAY – Churchill Downs will offer an all-stakes Derby City 6 Jackpot, Late Pick 5 and Late Pick 4 as part of its wagering menu Saturday. The all-stakes Derby City 6 will cover Races 7-12 starting at 3:52 p.m., which will encompass the **Wise Dan** (Race 7), **Fasig-Tipton Fleur de Lis** (Race 8), **American Derby** (Race 9), **Kelly's Landing** (Race 10), **Stephen Foster** (Race 11) and **Tepin** (Race 12). All told, there will be four Pick 5s (Races 1-5, Races 4-8, Races 6-10 and Races 8-12) and three Pick 4s (Races 2-5, Races 5-8 and Races 9-12) on the card. Both the Pick 4 and Pick 5 are 50-cent minimum bets. The Derby City 6 Jackpot is a 20-cent minimum. The jackpot carryover for a lone winning ticket was \$297,088 entering Friday's 11-race program.

LOCAL RIDERS PLAN FOR SUMMER AHEAD OF CHURCHILL DOWNS' CLOSING DAY – As Churchill Downs' Spring Meet concludes on Sunday, many local jockeys are preparing to head west to Henderson, Ky. for the summer season at Ellis Park Racing & Gaming except for the current top three in the Spring Meet standings – **Tyler Gaffalione, Jose Ortiz** and **Luis Saez** – who will shift their focus to New York for the Saratoga meet, which begins July 11.

While Gaffalione, Ortiz, and Saez will have a few quiet days before Saratoga starts, many riders are already gearing up for Ellis Park's Thursday opener.

"I always enjoy riding at Ellis, but I'll also travel this summer as usual," jockey **Florent Geroux** said. "I think a lot of us are like that now. We'll just go where business is best."

Jockeys **James Graham** and **Corey Lanerie** have made agent switches ahead of the Ellis Park season. Graham is now represented by **Ben Allen**, while **Jake Romans** will book mounts for Lanerie. Both were previously represented by **Doug Redar**.

Another agent change involves **Erik Asmussen**, whose business will now be handled by **Cody Caudill**. Asmussen will compete at both Ellis and Horseshoe Indianapolis this summer.

With three days of racing left at Churchill Downs, Gaffalione leads the standings with 44 wins, followed by Ortiz with 40. Saez is third with 28 victories, while Geroux and **Cristian Torres** are tied with 21 wins each.

“We have a great group of riders here in Kentucky,” Gaffalione said. “Day in and day out, we challenge each other with so many talented people in the room. It keeps us at our best.”

If Gaffalione maintains his lead over Ortiz, it would be his 12th title at Churchill Downs, tying **Don Brumfield** for the third-most all-time. **Pat Day** holds the most titles at Churchill Downs with 34, followed by Lanerie with 19.

DOWN THE STRETCH – Friday’s 11-race program at Churchill Downs featured a massive \$297,088 carryover in the 20-cent Derby City 6 Jackpot which spanned the final six races. Sunday’s closing day card will feature a mandatory payout in all wagers including the Derby City 6 Jackpot. ... The **Dale Romans**-trained **Keep It Easy** (\$48.58) won Thursday’s third race, the first six-furlong \$120,000 maiden special weight for 2-year-olds on the year at Churchill Downs, in 1:09.97 under **Martin Chuan**. The winner of the race has gone on to win a graded stakes event eight times in the last 18 years, including 2005 Hopeful (GI) winner **First Samurai**; 2009 Forego (GI) winner **Pyro**; 2009 Iroquois (GIII) winner **Theskyhasnolimit**; 2010 Sanford (GII) winner **Maybesomaybenot**; 2014 Dominion Day (GIII) winner **Sky Captain**; 2016 Sanford (GIII) winner **Bitumen**; 2021 Hopeful (GI) winner **Gunite**; and 2022 Saratoga Special (GII) winner **Damon’s Mound**. ... The Spring Meet finale of “**Inside Churchill Downs**” will air Friday at 6 p.m. on **ESPN Louisville** and preview Saturday and Sunday’s 11 stakes events. Join Churchill Downs’ **Darren Rogers** and **Kevin Kerstein** as they preview the weekend action with the voice of Ellis Park and Turfway Park **Tony Calo**. Listeners in the Louisville area can tune in live on **ESPN 680/105.7** and those worldwide can stream the show on www.espnlouisville.com. Following Friday’s show, Rogers and Kerstein will have a 60-day freshening before returning for the September Meet. Beginning July 12, fans are invited to listen to the “**Ky Racing Spotlight with Louie Rabaut presented by the Kentucky HBPA**” which will air during the same timeslot throughout the summer. ... For more information about the Churchill Downs Spring Meet and to purchase tickets for the remaining five days, 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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