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TOP DIRT MILERS READY FOR CENTER STAGE IN HANSHIN STAKES

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, June 29, 2024) – Several of the country’s premier dirt milers are set to take center stage Sunday at Churchill Downs in a highly-anticipated 71st renewal of the \$300,000 Hanshin Stakes presented by the JRA (Listed) on closing day of the Spring Meet.

The 11-horse Hanshin field is led by last year’s winner **Zozos**, who will make the second start of his 5-year-old campaign following a game third-place effort to **Gun Pilot** and **Here Mi Song** in the Churchill Downs Stakes (GI) on Kentucky Derby Day.

“He’s shown a lot of talent throughout his career at many different distances,” trainer **Brad Cox** said. “After the start of his 3-year-old campaign when he ran in the Kentucky Derby (GI), we thought shorter distances may suit him better and he’s been very impressive in some of his one-turn races.”

Owned by **Barry and Joni Butzow**, Zozos was a three-length winner of last year’s Hanshin held at Ellis Park. His victory in the Hanshin helped vault him to a spot in the Breeders’ Cup Dirt Mile (GI) at Santa Anita where he finished a lackluster fifth.

“We were obviously disappointed with his effort in the Breeders’ Cup last year but when we got him back this winter he looked like a fresh horse again,” Cox continued. “He battled in a very fast pace in the Churchill Downs and we’re expecting another top effort out of him in the Hanshin.”

The deep field for the Hanshin also includes **Wathnan Racing’s Cagliostro** who will cut back in distance following his runner-up effort in the 1 1/8-mile Blame Stakes (GIII) four weeks ago at Churchill Downs.

“He ran well in the Blame but the distance may have gotten the best of him late,” trainer **Cherie DeVaux** said. “He’s run well in this one-turn mile at Churchill before. He’s in top form to start his year and we’re excited about him in this spot.”

Cagliostro, a two-time winner from 10 lifetime starts, has multiple graded stakes placings on his resumé including a second-place finish to **Il Miracolo** in last year’s Smarty Jones Stakes (GIII) at Parx and third-place finish to **Verifying** and **Raise Cain** in last year’s Indiana Derby (GIII) at Horseshoe Indianapolis.

Another Wathnan Racing-owned competitor entered in the Hanshin is five-time winner **Tumbarumba**. Trained by **Brian Lynch**, the multiple stakes-winning Louisiana-bred will break from the rail under jockey **Luis Saez**.

“He always gives it his all every time he runs,” Lynch said. “He’s just a cool horse. He’s ready to go after his little break following Gulfstream’s meet.”

The Hanshin Stakes is the featured race on the closing day program at Churchill Downs which will feature mandatory payouts in all wagers. First post is 12:45 p.m. (all times Eastern) and the Hanshin will go as Race 10 at 5:27 p.m. Along with the Hanshin, the 11-race program will also include the \$225,000 Bashford Manor (Listed), \$225,000 Debutante (Listed), \$175,000 Anchorage Overnight Stakes and \$175,000 Maxfield Overnight Stakes.

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

- Tumbarumba (Saez, Lynch, 10-1)
- **Frosted Grace** (Joel Rosario, Mike Maker, 6-1)
- Zozos (Florent Geroux, Cox, 3-1)
- **Injunction** (Jose Ortiz, Doug Cowans, 12-1)
- **Best Actor** (Frankie Dettori, Ed Moger Jr., 12-1)
- **Extra Anejo** (Tyler Gaffalione, Steve Asmussen, 5-1)
- **Charge It** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Todd Pletcher, 7-2)
- **Happy American** (Corey Lanerie, Neil Pessin, 30-1)
- Cagliostro (Flavien Prat, DeVaux, 6-1)
- **Raise Cain** (Luan Machado, Ben Colebrook, 20-1)
- **Three Technique** (Rafael Bejarano, Jason Cook, 15-1)

Longshot Happy American was cross-entered in Saturday's Stephen Foster (GI) but scratched from that race in favor of the Hanshin.

"It came down to seeing how much pace was in each race," Pessin said. "The Stephen Foster looked like there was not a lot of speed at all even though it's probably his better distance. There should be enough of it in the Hanshin going one-turn that would suit him better."

DOWN THE STRETCH – Saturday was the penultimate day of racing at the Churchill Downs 2024 Spring Meet and featured six stakes contests led by the \$1 million Stephen Foster (GI). First post was 12:45 p.m. Along with the tremendous day of racing, the gambling opportunities were endless including a massive \$310,881 carryover in the Derby City 6 Jackpot which was an all-stakes sequence for the last six races. ... Sunday's closing day card at Churchill Downs will feature mandatory payouts in all wagers including the Derby City 6 Jackpot. First post is 12:45 p.m. ... For more information about racing from Churchill Downs, 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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