



CANTERBURY PARK

1100 Canterbury Road
Shakopee, MN 55379

Minnesota Festival of Champions Closes Canterbury Season

A day dedicated to Minnesota horses, owners, and breeders draws big fields

For Immediate Release:

Thursday, August 27, 2009

Contact: Jeff Maday
Media Relations Manager
(952) 496-6408
jmaday@canterburypark.com

Shakopee, MN -- Canterbury Park's 62-day summer race season comes to a close Sunday with the 16th renewal of the Minnesota Festival of Champions, a day of racing dedicated to horses bred in Minnesota. The final four days of live racing in 2009 begin Thursday at 7:00 pm. Post time on Friday is also 7 pm with Saturday and Sunday at 1:30 pm.

Sunday's Festival of Champions program includes 11 races, nine for thoroughbreds and two for quarter horses, with purses exceeding \$400,000. Entries were taken this morning with 90 horses expected to race including Wally's Choice in the \$35,000 Minnesota Turf Championship. Owned by Walter McNeil (better known as Wally the Beerman), his wife Joyce, and Canterbury Park's Chairman of the Board Curtis Sampson, the 8-year-old Wally's Choice is the second all time money earning Minnesota bred thoroughbred with career earnings of \$484,563.

Canterbury Park officials began the season on May 15 with fears that the economy might keep away both customers and horses. Those fears never became reality as attendance this season is up more than 4%. The number of horses per race has also held steady. "We are averaging just about the same number of horses per race this year as last year," track President Randy Sampson said. "I am pleased that the fans continue to support Minnesota racing and see this as a good value for an already over-stretched dollar."

(more)

The 2009 meet was shortened by five days to 62 compared to 2008. “We decided it would be better to keep our daily purse distribution to the horsemen at the same level as last season and running fewer days was the only way to make that happen,” Sampson said. “In light of the challenges of the economy as well as increased competition, I am very pleased with the way this year has turned out. These last four days should be a lot of fun for all of us.”

More information about Canterbury Park can be found at www.canterburypark.com or by calling 952.445.7223. General admission is \$5.00 for adults. The exception is Thursday when admission is \$1.00. Children under 18 are always admitted free. There is no charge for parking.

###