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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New York Sire Stakes 2019 Season Gets Underway Tonight at Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, N.Y. – The New York Sire Stakes (NYSS) and Excelsior Series begin the racing season Tuesday, May 7, at Yonkers Raceway featuring the 3-Year-Old Filly Trotters. Post Time is 6:50 p.m., with an early non-betting race at 5:30 p.m. Entries are posted at Yonkers Raceway's [website](#).

The return of 2018 NYSS champion **Winndevie** headlines the seventh race, the last of three Sire Stakes divisions. The Credit Winner filly won six of her seven races last season and boasted yearly earnings of \$227,878. Her only defeat last year came in a second-place finish to Dan Patch Award winner Woodside Charm, in a world record-setting performance at Saratoga in September. Winndevie is trained and driven by Trond Smedshammer and owned by Purple Haze Stables.

Stella Jane, trained by John Butenschoen for [Crawford Farms Racing](#), heads up the second race division and is another filly to keep an eye on. She earned \$180,841 last year, in part by closing out her sophomore campaign with a second-place finish in her Breeder Crown elimination and an upset victory in the Kindergarten Classic Final last fall. She is now seeking to post her first career Sire Stakes tally despite being a strong competitor in the series at two.

Now as a sophomore, the Crazy filly's connections say she's bigger, stronger and more certain of herself on the track, especially half-mile ovals. "I think she's grown up a decent amount and filled out a bit more," said owner Al Crawford. "John has been working with her on the half-mile and he feels she'll navigate them with no problem.

"She's been a real surprise to us and being that she's a homebred, it makes it that much better. We're looking toward the national stakes this season, including the Hambletonian Oaks, and plan to keep her in New York otherwise," said Crawford.

Stella Jane will see stiff competition in her division from **Hanna Dreamgirl**, another trotter whose connections say she filled out over the winter.

"She was a big horse at two and has grown into her body as a three-year-old," said owner Ken Jacobs. "She has a very good gait and just had a great winter training in Florida, but the Sire Stakes will be very competitive so she's going to have to show what she can do on the track."

Hanna Dreamgirl, named for the fiancé of Jacobs' grandson, raced last year for 2018 leading New York Sire Stakes trainer Linda Toscano. She is now under the tutelage of top Sire Stakes trainer George Ducharme, who stables at Vernon Downs, less than an hour away from Jacobs' hometown. The owner explained he made the shift so that the horse could be closer to his family.

This season follows a banner year for New York-bred horses, which swept the Dan Patch Awards for 2- and 3-Year-Old trotters. Earlier in the year, state-bred Atlanta became just the 14th filly to win the Hambletonian and New York trotters scored in all three Trotting Triple Crown races.

"The New York Sire Stakes featured more than its share of extraordinary talent in 2018 as we saw historic performances and new records set," said M. Kelly Young, executive director, Agriculture & NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund. "We can't wait to see what this year holds. It promises to be another exciting season as

champions return and our breeders get to see the fruit of their labors as the offspring of past champions hit the track for the first time.”

Race replays, point totals, and news updates will be available throughout the season at www.nysirestakes.com and the official NYSS [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.

About the Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund:

The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund is a public benefit corporation established in 1965 by the Laverne Law (Laws of New York, Chapter 567 of the Laws of 1965). The mission of the fund is to promote agriculture through the breeding of Standardbred horses and the conduct of equine research within the state. To carry out its legislative mission, the Fund administers the New York Sire Stakes Program. Additionally, the Fund provides assistance to county agriculture societies and contributes to the statewide 4-H program and to the Harry M. Zweig Fund for Equine Research.

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