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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 11, 2019

Hickfromfrenchlick Named USTA District 8 Horse of the Year

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. – 3-year-old pacing colt Hickfromfrenchlick has been named the United States Trotting Association District 8 Horse of the Year. The award was presented to trainer Ray Schnittker at Sunday's New York Sire Stakes (NYSS) & USTA District 8 Annual Awards Banquet.

The So Surreal-My Girl's A Star colt has earned \$500,136 this year and won 11 of his 15 starts. His sophomore season featured wins on the New York Night of Champions and in the Empire Breeders Classic. Bred by Steve Jones, he has banked \$638,677 lifetime for owners Ray Schnittker, Nolamaura Racing and Thomas Spatorico.

Tyler Buter was also honored at the banquet as USTA District 8 Pari-Mutuel Driver of the Year. Buter is about to cross the career milestone of \$40 million in earnings and has solidified himself as a leading driver on the New York circuit as well as the Grand Circuit. As the regular driver of American Mercury this season, Buter won the \$500,000 Messenger Stakes and five legs of the NYSS. The pair was also third in the Little Brown Jug. So far in 2019 the driver has recorded \$5.27 million in earnings and 313 trips to the winner's circle.

George Ducharme took home the USTA District 8 Trainer of the Year award. He had a career-best season with \$1.9 million in earnings and 94 training victories. He also had the leading money-winning stable at his home track of Vernon Downs. In addition to earning more than \$700,000 in the NYSS and starting three finalists on the Night of Champions, he won four Massachusetts Sire Stakes finals this year.

Other honorees at the event were Claude Huckabone Jr., who was named both County Fair Driver and Trainer of the Year; Jason Bartlett as NYSS Driver of the Year for leading the series in earnings; Trond Smedshammer as NYSS Trainer of the Year; and Winbak Farm as NYSS Breeder of the Year.

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

The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund (the 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 races, Excelsior/State Fair Series races, and County Fair Races.

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