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OTRF Best of Ohio Stakes at JACK THISTLEDOWN

August 7, 2020

by Kimberly Rinker, Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

Five \$100,000 Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund Stakes (OTRF) are set to be contested on Saturday, August 8 at JACK THISTLEDOWN. The five events, featured as races Six, Seven, Eight, Nine & Ten play host to some of the Buckeye State's finest runners and multiple stakes winners as well as two fields of freshmen Ohio-breds who are neophyte stake contestants.

First up is the 29th running of the \$100,000 Best of Ohio Cleveland Kindergarten Stakes for Ohio-registered 2-year-olds (Race 6), featuring a field of seven youngsters traveling six furlongs. **Esplanande**, who captured the \$75,000 Hoover Stakes at Belterra Park on July 3 goes up against \$75,000 Tah Dah Stakes winner **Alexandria**.

Next is the 52nd running of the \$100,000 Best of Ohio Miss Ohio Stakes for Ohio-registered 2-year-old fillies with 11 slated to break from the Cleveland gate and battling at 5½ furlongs over the dirt (Race 7). Both **Esplanande** and **Alexandria** have also been entered into this event, and the decisions of their connections as to which stake to run in will be made at scratch time Saturday morning.



Liberate

The 32nd running of the \$100,000 Best of Ohio Honey Jay Stakes features ten Ohio-registered 3-year-olds and up traveling six furlongs over the Cleveland one-miler (Race 8). Multiple stakes winner **Altissimo**—who is quickly closing in on the \$800,000 plateau in career earnings—battles **Liberate**, last year's winner of the \$150,000 Juvenile Stakes and multiple stakes and \$317,399-earner **Buckeye Bullet**, as well as \$381,755-winner **Diamond Dust**.



Buckeye Bullet

A field of ten Ohio-registered fillies and mares, 3-year-olds and up will wage war in the 35th running of the \$100,000 Best of Ohio Pay The Man Stakes (Race 9). Fan favorite **Leona's Reward**, just \$40,000 shy of the one million plateau in earnings battles stakes winners **Drillit**, **Totally Obsessed**, **Grizabella**, **Cali Dream** and **Moonlit Mission** in this star-studded event contested at one and 1/8 miles on the dirt.



Leona's Reward

Finally, the 71st running of the \$100,000 Best of Ohio Governor's Buckeye Cup offers 12 Ohio-registered 3-year-olds and up a chance at garnering first prize at 1¼ miles. **Mo Dont No**, another multiple stakes winner is also closing in on \$1 million in earnings (\$987,110) and will face off with stakes winners **Mobil Solution**, **Forewarned** and **Verissimo** in this highly competitive event.