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OTRF Stakes highlight racing at Thistledown & Belterra

For immediate Release: August 9, 2018

by Kimberly Rinker, For the Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

A pair of \$75,000 stakes for Ohio-breds highlight the racing programs at both ends of the Buckeye State this weekend.

On Saturday, August 11, JACK Thistledown will host the 31st running of the Honey Jay Stakes for registered Ohio-breds, 3-year-olds and up. A competitive field of seven runners will vie over the Cleveland dirt in the six-furlong sprint as the seventh race, with a 4:40 pm, ET scheduled post time.

The following afternoon, August 12, ten 3-year-old accredited Ohio-bred Thoroughbreds will battle in the Horizon Stakes, a one mile and a sixteenth test over Belterra Park's green carpeted turf course, with a scheduled seventh race post of 4:26 pm, ET.

Rivers Run Deep has captured the last four editions of the Honey Jay Stakes and will try to cap it off with a record fifth victory this year. The Chris Hartman-trained 7-year-old son of Ready's Image has also won the \$150,000 Best of Ohio Sprint three times, in 2014, 2015 and 2016, and finished second by a whisker in 2017 to the winning Hijo de Sheltoewe. Bred by Nancy Lavrich and Walmac Farm, Rivers Run Deep has amassed \$1,156,765 from 20 wins, 11 seconds and five thirds in 42 career starts for owners James and Ywachetta Driver.

Trainer Jeff Radosevich will saddle a pair of runners in the Honey Jay—2017 Best of Ohio Sprint winner **Hijo de Sheltoewe** and the \$728,080-winning **Mo Don't No**. The latter is a multiple stakes-winning son of Uncle Mo, who won the \$75,000 Cardinal Stakes late last fall after capturing the \$150,000 Best of Ohio Endurance at Belterra on Oct. 7. Owned by Looch Racing Stable, Mo Don't know was bred by Beechwood Racing and will be trying for his second win of the season in his fifth start. Hijo de Sheltoewe, a 6-year-old Devil His Due gelding, has \$376,111 in earnings for the JR Racing Stable and has one allowance triumph to his credit this season in five starts.

Altissimo comes into the Honey Jay fresh off a trio of victories and owns a seasonal bankroll of \$113,375 for trainer Richard Zielinski and owners Nancy Lavrich and Elizabeth Rankin. This 5-year-old altered son of Noble Causeway captured the \$75,000 Gentleman Memorial Handicap on June 9 after winning the \$75,000 Babst-Palacios Memorial Handicap on April 28 by open lengths. Altissimo has garnered \$266,888 in his career from ten wins, three seconds and three thirds in 28 starts.

Bruce Tallisman's **Brown Buckeye** has five lifetime wins in as many starts, with \$101,900 earned in his brief career. This 4-year-old homebred son of Big Brown is trained by Benny Feliciano, and has found his victories at the allowance level, after breaking his maiden at Thistledown on Jun 26, 2017. Since then, Brown Buckeye has been unbeatable, and steps up into stakes company for the first time in his career.

The multiple stakes winner **Cake Pop**, with career earnings of \$299,515 and multiple allowance winner and \$102,952-earner **Spectacular Array** round out the Honey Jay field.

The lone filly, **Birdacious**, takes on nine male rivals in the wide-open Horizon Stakes. This gray daughter by Birdrun—Sweet Tessa Marie, by El Corredo broke her maiden on July 29 at Belterra after finishing a strong second in the \$75,000 Cincinnati Stakes on July 7. Trained by Pavel Matejka, Birdacious has \$43,720 in her coffers for the Preston Stables. She was bred by Robin Murphy.

Stakes winner **Mobil Solution**, a dark bay or brown gelding by Mobil has four seconds to his credit in as many tries this season for owner Gerald Silver. Trained by Jeff Radosevich, Mobil Solution fittingly captured the \$75,000 Joshua Radosevich Memorial on Dec. 2, 2017. The winner of \$118,970 in his career was bred by Mapleton Thoroughbred Farm.

Trainer William Cowans will tighten the girth on **Buster's Boy**, a Twinspired gelding who captured the \$75,000 Noonan Stakes at Mahoning Valley on April 14 for breeders Pine Ridge Farm and Jim Rumford. The grey youngster has amassed \$88,380 to date, with three wins and one third in five career starts.

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Photo Outline: Rivers Run Deep will be gunning for his fifth victory in the \$75,000 Honey Jay Stakes at Jack Thistledown on Saturday, August 11. *Photo by Jeff Zamaiko*