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FINISHING ARAPAHOE PARK SEASON ON A (MILE) HIGH

Aurora, CO (August 11, 2016) – The \$100,000 Gold Rush Futurity, which is Colorado’s richest race for Thoroughbreds, and the \$115,830 Mile High Futurity for Quarter Horses highlight the final day of Arapahoe Park’s 2016 season on Sunday.

Gold Rush Futurity

The six-furlong Gold Rush Futurity has attracted a field of nine 2-year-olds made up of Colorado’s best and stakes winners from out-of-state. Arapahoe Park stakes winners in the race are Way Out West (CTBA Futurity and Silver Cup Futurity) and Galactic Princess (Arapahoe Park Debutante).

“I think there’s a lot of home-court advantage here,” said Tyrone Gleason, the trainer of Way Out West. “You see a lot of horses that ship in that don’t get there.”

But one of the shippers, the undefeated Crosscheck Carlos, has connections that are familiar with success in Colorado. One of the owners of the California-based winner of the \$100,000 D. S. Shine Young Futurity at Evangeline Downs in Louisiana is Colorado Avalanche defenseman Erik Johnson.

“He’s really handled everything well for a 2-year-old,” Johnson said. “We flew him from L.A. to Lexington and vanned him down to Evangeline. [He] won in the slop there by a head. We shipped him back [to California]. We’re going to ship him out here. All signs point to him firing, hopefully going three-for-three.”

No filly has ever won the Gold Rush Futurity since the race moved from Centennial Race Track to Arapahoe Park in 1984. Stratagem and Ms. Battlefield finished second and third, respectively, in 2014.

However, as mares like Tepin and Beholder have shown the ability to defeat male horses nationally, a strong group of fillies will try the Gold Rush, including stakes winners Galactic Princess, Bling On the Music, and McKenzie Honey.

Galactic Princess rocketed past her competition in the Arapahoe Park Debutante on July 30, winning by a larger margin (three lengths) and a faster 5 1/2-furlong time (1:05.00) than Way Out West did in the Silver Cup Futurity for male horses on the same day.

Bling On the Music dominated the \$93,000 Texas Thoroughbred Association Sales Futurity at Lone Star Park by 8 1/2 lengths on July 9. She is owned by Danny Keene's Keene Thoroughbreds, who shipped Texas Chrome to win the 2015 Gold Rush.

McKenzie Honey defeated male horses in the \$53,000 Arizona Thoroughbred Breeders Association Spring Sales Stakes at Turf Paradise on May 8.

"I think at this time of the year, as 2-year-olds, sometimes the fillies can be just as mature," said Mark Hillman, breeder and owner of Galactic Princess.

Mile High Futurity

The 400-yard Mile High Futurity for 2-year-olds includes the winners of Arapahoe Park's previous futurity races this season—In Kuh Hoots and Bout Tree Fiddy. In Kuh Hoots was a 23-1 upset winner of the \$78,000 Cherry Creek Futurity for Colorado-breds for jockey Alfredo Triana Jr. and trainer John Hammes on June 5.

"From the break, third jump, he just got rolling real quick and just kept on," Triana Jr. said. "He finished strong, and I think he'll like the distance in the 400[-yard] and 440[-yard] races."

Bout Tree Fiddy captured the \$117,000 Rocky Mountain Futurity ridden by jockey Russell Vicchilli for trainer Tomey Swan on July 10.

"He's been an excellent student," co-breeder and co-owner Pat Swan said. "He's becoming faster and faster."

However, both In Kuh Hoots and Bout Tree Fiddy just squeezed into the Mile High Futurity finals with third-place finishes in trial races on July 29.

Trainer Jay Pitcher saddled the two fastest Mile High Futurity qualifiers, Tilt James and Alegendinmytime. Both horses began their careers with races in Utah and Idaho and were most recently training in Wyoming before shipping to Colorado.