

Familiar faces return to Buffalo Raceway for NYSS

by Brian J. Mazurek, for Buffalo Raceway

Hamburg, NY --- With a few starts, if any, on their racing lines thus far in their young careers, it's safe to say when the 2-year-old colt and gelding pacers step onto the track at Buffalo Raceway on Wednesday night (July 8), most of them will be unknown to the fans. But the names that will be in the bikes behind the youngsters in the New York Sire Stakes, well, they should be very familiar.

It's a homecoming of sorts for some of the drivers coming to town for action on Wednesday. The old gang includes Billy Dobson, Jeff Gregory, Jim Morrill Jr., Sam Schillaci, Matt Kakaley and Ken Holliday. They all found great success during their time on the Western New York circuit but have since moved on to greener pastures. They come back to battle Buffalo Raceway's current king, Kevin Cummings, who is far and away the leading driver on the grounds with 188 victories.

The strong 12-race card gets underway at 5 p.m.

And while familiar faces will be seen around the Hamburg half-mile oval located at the Erie County Fairgrounds, there are 14 colts and geldings entered in the two Sire Stakes races, each with a purse of \$54,500. Only one has broken his maiden, that being Skip Jive, so the other 13 are looking to meet track photographer Steve Roth in the winner's circle.

The gentlemen will be gunning for the track records for their divisions of 1:55.4 for the 2-year-old colts set by He's Watching in 2013 and a 1:56.1 on the gelding side established by Roadside Delight in 2010. Buffalo Raceway has had nine track records either broken or tied in 2015 and with good weather and a fast track expected, anything is possible.

The first Sire Stakes event is the second race and features Fast N Furious ([Art Major](#)-Yankee Luck) who'll score from the rail for trainer/driver Gregory, a native of nearby Churchville, N.Y. A \$47,000 purchase at the Harrisburg yearling sale, he finished a respectable second, 3-3/4 lengths behind Skip Jive, on June 29 at Monticello.

Brigadoon ([American Ideal](#)-Armbro Agakhan) draws the two post after three sparkling qualifiers at Saratoga. He finished third at Monticello in Sire Stakes action on June 29. Brigadoon was a \$20,000 buy at Harrisburg and gets the early morning line nod at 5-2. He is trained by Cheryl McGivern, will have the services of Dobson in the sulky.

Red Roll (Roll With Joe-Red Carpet Queen) has local connections. He was a \$37,000 buy at Harrisburg and is owned by John O. Sixt of nearby Chaffee, N.Y., and is trained by Judith Blaun. Cummings gets the call on Red Roll, a second place finisher in his last start on June 29 at Monticello.

The second division of the Sire Stakes is the third race and there could be some reflection of the old days behind the starting gate as Morrill, Holliday, Dobson, Kakaley, Gregory and Cummings all get together. The only non-regular, however, is Mark MacDonald and he could be the one to beat with Skip Jive.

Winning on June 29 in the Sire Stakes at Monticello, Skip Jive ([Rock N Roll Heaven](#)-Dancinwiththestarz) pulled away for a 3-3/4 length decision over Fast N Victorious in 1:57.1. Unfortunately the Paul Kelley-trained Skip Jive, the only horse in the Sire Stakes with a pari-mutuel win thus far, drew the seven post.

Fine Diamond ([Rock N Roll Heaven](#)-Yellow Diamond), conditioned by Ron Burke, was a \$50,000 acquisition at the Lexington Selected Sale and gets the three post for Kakaley. The 3-1 morning line choice has been third in his two qualifiers and one pari-mutuel race but seeks to break the rut against the field of seven.

Joes On A Roll (Roll With Joe-Lovely Lady) starts from the advantageous two spot and looks extremely dangerous for Holliday. He put on a show in a qualifier at Northfield Park on July 2, winning by a throttled down six lengths in a sizzling 1:57.1. Owned by the Black Magic Racing Stable and trained by Todd Luther, Joes On A Roll is the second choice at 4-1.

There will also be two \$15,000 Excelsior Series 'A' divisions along with a \$6,600 event in the 'B' classification.

The first race on the card should be quite interesting as three current track record holders collide in the \$10,500 Open Trot. Entered are Winkys Pride (all-age mare and older mare), Lutetium (older gelding) and BZ Glide (3-year-old gelding) and they were assigned the five, six and seven posts, respectively.

For more information on Buffalo Raceway, including the latest news, race replays, upcoming promotions and results, go to www.buffaloraceway.com.