

Full card of harness races to be offered at Tioga County Fair

by Jim Mead

Owego, NY --- On opening day of the Tioga County Fair (Tuesday, July 7), harness racing begins with a 1 p.m. post time. There will be free fair admission and free grandstand admission until 5 p.m.

In addition to all of the New York Sire Stakes action, the Fair Board is pleased to announce the return of the Jim Brown Memorial Open Trot and Open Pace races. These races are just that, Open, meaning available to most amateur, older, and perhaps slower horses; the type of competition and training our late Racing Superintendent Jim Brown was dedicated to.

New this year will be the H. S. Mead Memorial Race Under Saddle, which will feature Standardbred horses being ridden rather than driven.

Continuing a relationship forged in 2014, Tioga Downs will again be in charge of track preparation and maintenance.

Harness racing and training has been held continuously on the original Owego Driving Park track since its founding in 1871. Serious flooding in 2011 led to a rebirth of the historic oval, with a major rehabilitation undertaken in 2014, assisted by local contractors and local governments, all gratis. Many say the track is as fast as it has been in recent memory.

The Owego Driving Association was formed in 1871 with the goal of establishing a track where well-to-do horsemen could indulge in the sport of fast driving. In 1899 the facility was sold to the Tioga County Agricultural Society, better known as the Tioga County Fair. After that, Dr. Marvin of Owego purchased the facility and gave it to the Village of Owego for all to enjoy, with a provision that the County Fair would be accommodated for their use. That arrangement continues until this day.

To learn more about the Tioga County Fair, which runs from July 7 through July 11, visit www.tiogacofair.com.