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SUMMER QUARTER HORSE SEASON OPENS SEPT. 14

10-Day Meet Showcases “World’s Fastest Athlete”

[NOTE: Hi-res images of Quarter Horse racing at Fair Grounds available upon request.]

NEW ORLEANS (Tuesday, August 3, 2010) – For most of Fair Grounds’ modern history, New Orleans racing fans had to wait eight months between Thoroughbred seasons to get a live racing fix. But ever since the late-summer American Quarter Horse meet was established in 2008 there’s been a late-summer window for locals to savor the majesty of a post parade and the thrill of a photo finish. This year’s Quarter Horse Racing Season kicks off a 10-day stand on Tuesday, September 14, and continues Tuesdays to Saturdays through September 25.

Fair Grounds will offer 10 races per day with a first post of 12:40 p.m. CDT. General admission is free. Food and beverage specials at Grandstand concession areas include \$1.50 hamburgers and \$1.50 domestic drafts every day during live racing. The Grandstand Buffet is open Fridays to Sundays with a delectable all-you-care-to-eat buffet for only \$12.99.

Average daily overnight purses of more than \$150,000 are complemented by a rich stakes schedule worth nearly \$300,000, with added-money events scheduled for Opening Day and both Saturdays. The stakes action kicks off with a pair of Louisiana-bred juvenile stakes on Sept. 14 – the Big Easy Stakes for colts and geldings and the Belle of New Orleans Stakes for fillies. The Mid City Stakes on Sept. 18 showcases older Louisiana-breds. On Closing Day, Sept. 25, 3-year-old Louisiana-breds compete in the Treme Stakes prior to the meet’s most important event, the Fair Grounds Challenge Stakes Presented by Markel, an opportunity for top older horses to qualify for the Bank of America Challenge Championships, the Quarter Horse world’s annual stakes blowout to be hosted at Fair Grounds for the first time Nov. 19.

The excellent purses for the Quarter Horse Racing Season have once again attracted many of the sport’s top horsemen. Jockeys expected include **Alfonso Lujan**, currently the nation’s leading rider; **John Hamilton**, the track’s all-time leading Quarter Horse Racing Season rider; and other national Top 10 riders **Bobby Ransom**, **Gilbert Ortiz** and **Danny Lavergne**.

As for trainers, three of the nation’s current Top 10 by wins are expected to return: **Janet Van Bebber**, leading trainer at the inaugural Fair Grounds Quarter Horse Racing Season; **Heath Taylor**, the track’s all-time leading Quarter Horse Racing Season trainer and 2009 leading trainer; and **Kenny Roberts**, seeking his first Fair Grounds training title after consecutive seasons finishing one win behind the leader.

The American Quarter Horse, known as “The World’s Fastest Athlete” for short bursts of speed that can reach as high as 55 miles per hour, competes at sprint distances from 220 yards to 870 yards.

A PDF file of the complete 2010 Quarter Horse Racing Season Condition Book can be downloaded from the “Horsemen” page of the Fair Grounds website at FairGroundsRaceCourse.com.

2010 Quarter Horse Racing Season At a Glance

September 14-25, Tuesdays to Saturdays (10 days)

First post 12:40 p.m. daily, 10 races every day

Free Grandstand general admission

\$1.50 hamburgers and \$1.50 domestic drafts every day

Grandstand Buffet open Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. (\$12.99, all you care to eat)

More info: (504) 944-5515 or FairGroundsRaceCourse.com

2010 Quarter Horse Racing Season Stakes Schedule

Date, Race, Purse, Conditions, Distance

Tuesday, Sept. 14; **The Big Easy**; \$75,000; 2yo, La.-bred, males; 330 yards

Tuesday, Sept. 14; **The Belle of New Orleans**; \$75,000; 2yo, La.-bred, fillies; 330 yards

Saturday, Sept. 18; **The Mid City**; \$50,000; 4yo and up, La.-breds; 400 yards

Saturday, Sept. 25; **The Treme**; \$50,000; 3yo, La.-breds; 350 yards

Saturday, Sept. 25; **Fair Grounds Challenge Stakes**; \$50,000; 3yo and up; 440 yards

About Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots

Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots, the nation’s third-oldest racetrack, has been in operation since 1872. Located in New Orleans, Fair Grounds is owned by Churchill Downs Incorporated (NASDAQ Global Select Market: CHDN); it also operates a slot-machine gaming facility and 10 off-track betting parlors throughout southeast Louisiana. Fair Grounds will host its third annual Quarter Horse Racing Season Sept. 14-25 as well as Quarter Horse racing’s championship night, the Bank of America Challenge Championships, Nov. 19. The 139th Thoroughbred Racing Season will run Nov. 25, 2010-March 27, 2011, highlighted by the 98th Grade II Louisiana Derby on March 26. Information about Fair Grounds can be found online at www.FairGroundsRaceCourse.com.