



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Competition will be smokin' on track Friday

Unlike the weather, the racing action will be smoking hot with both the Sprinter of the Year Rock'n USA and Horse of the Year Monsoon Rain set to do battle in a Friday night main event.

Sprinter of the Year, Rock'n USA, trained by Tanya Lindsay, won five straight races all at six furlongs or shorter in 2008 making Friday's five furlong distance prime pickings for the beginning of a repeat performance.

Last year at this time Lindsay had no expectations for what would become her star. "We just wanted to win a race or two," said Lindsay, "but he's doing way better than he was last year." She was referencing "the Rock's" condition when he shipped in from Woodbine.

When Rock'n USA came to Manitoba he had had a disastrous stay at Woodbine. Bad feet and unable to keep weight on, "the Rock" looked more like a pebble. "You could tell he was not happy," said Lindsay. "This year there is a definite change and confidence in the horse that is evident when he comes out of the stall."

Last year, the connections of Rock'n USA ducked the big competition early but will be stepping into the ring this year with their eye on the big prize: the Free Press Stakes on June 6.

Monsoon Rain also won five races in a row last year including the Wheat City Stakes, R. J. Speers Memorial and the Gold Cup before shipping to Woodbine to take on the grade three Durham Cup with no success.

With trainer Marty Drexler's decision to stay in Woodbine for 2009, owner Larry Carter has given the reins to trainer Chad Torevell. Coming into Friday, Monsoon Rain has posted two bullet workouts at four and five furlongs in the last two weeks.

Having won all of his races at six furlongs or longer, it appears Torevell is building the speed in last year's champion.

Who will throw the first punch in this battle? Friday Night's main event will be one you won't want to miss.

Vicky Baze here but not riding....yet!

Fourth all-time leading female rider in North America, Vicky Baze, is here at Assiniboia Downs but will she be able to ride? That is something that is still being questioned. Because of the large jockey colony in place already, Vicky Baze has to sit and wait.

"At present, due to the number of jockeys currently in the room, approval to ride here has not been granted by the Canadian Jockey's Guild," said Darren Dunn, director of operations, "As a foreign citizen, permission from the guild is required. We would welcome her addition to the jockey colony at the earliest opportunity."

Vicky would be one of only two female jockeys at Assiniboia Downs for 2009 when she gets permission. Apprentice Alyssa Harder is the lone female jockey so far.

Derby horse? Anywhere?

Looking ahead to the Golden Boy Stakes on Wednesday, June 3, will there be a local horse that will be ready? Apparently it's going to be tough as evidenced by only four entries being received for a potential 3-year-old prep race.

Frustrated local owners may have to go elsewhere to have their horses ready for the first step on the Manitoba Derby trail if the trend continues.

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