

**DOWNSTATE SIRE STAKES SEASON BEGINS WITH MONDAY'S**  
**169G HUGH GRANT PACE**  
**BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway**

YONKERS, NY, Wednesday, July 5, 2017—Not wasting any time, Empire State's glamour boys begin the downstate New York Sire Stakes season Monday night (July 10<sup>th</sup>), with Yonkers Raceway hosting the \$169,500 Hugh Grant Pace.

A quartet of divisions—going as races 2,4,5 and 6—highlight the dozen-race card, with the usual evening first post of 7:10 PM.

The opening (\$42,975) event appears up for grabs, with Manattack (Chris Lems, post 4) and America's Fleet (Jason Bartlett, post 5) each owning second-place finishes in sire stakes competition. What's Going On (Scott Zeron, post 6) is trying to regain some of the \$172,000 freshman form.

The second (\$42,175) grouping figures to go through Funknwaffles (Corey Callahan, post 3), looming the shortest price of the state races. The American Ideal gelding, trained by John Butenschoen for owner Crawford Racing, chased home division-dominating Fear the Dragon in last Saturday's half-million-dollar Hempt Memorial (Pocono). Funknwaffles was a handy NYSS winner at Vernon after finishing third locally in late May's \$300,000 Art Rooney Pace.

Statebred division three (\$42,175) sees Heaven's Gait (Dave Miller, post 1) hit town off his win in the \$75,000 consolation of the Hempt. The Rock N Roll Heaven colt, owned by John Cummins and trained by Nicholas Devita, has a spiffy 1:49 NYSS win (Vernon) to his credit.

American Wiggle (Zeron, post 2) threw down a 36-1 NYSS upset (Vernon, life-best 1:51) two starts ago, while Serious Major (Jim Morrill Jr., post 6) has a win and a second (both at odds-on) in his two sire stakes tries. He goes out for his third different trainer (Brian Brown, Chris Ryder, Ron Burke) in as many starts.

Twin B Cowboy (Mark MacDonald, post 4) owns a pair of thirds in sire stakes competition this season.

Monday night's final (\$42,175) Empire excursion features In a Single Bound (Billy Dobson, post 3), the Roll with Joe gelding eyeing a third consecutive (NYSS) victory and a sixth win in eight seasonal starts.