

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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LOCAL STAKES WINNERS BELLA CONCHITA, KATE'S KINGDOM, OPENING BUZZ SET TO CLASH IN SATURDAY'S \$125,000 WINTERGREEN STAKES

FLORENCE, Ky. (Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2023) – The entry box was overfilled for Saturday's 37th running of the \$125,000 Wintergreen Stakes at Turfway Park where recent local stakes winners **Bella Conchita**, **Kate's Kingdom** and **Opening Buzz** were entered to face nine rivals in the extremely competitive one-mile contest.

The Wintergreen Stakes was carded as Race 5 of 8 on Saturday's program with a post time of 7:55 p.m. (all times Eastern). First post is 5:55 p.m.

One of the likely favorites in the Wintergreen is **Tommy Town Thoroughbreds'** Opening Buzz, who is a perfect 2-for-2 over the Florence oval with victories in a third-level allowance contest on Dec. 1 and the \$125,000 Wishing Well Stakes on Jan. 28. Trained by **Jonathan Wong**, Opening Buzz has yet to compete at a distance greater than seven furlongs. However, the 4-year-old California-bred has shown versatility in her six lifetime starts. In her debut on June 11 at Golden Gate Fields, Opening Buzz broke her maiden in front-running fashion and in her last two efforts the daughter of Stanford tracked from more than five lengths off the early pace. Opening Buzz will be ridden by **Walter Rodriguez** and break from post No. 3.

Among her competitors in the Wintergreen is **Dixiana Farms'** \$125,000 Likely Exchange Stakes heroine Bella Conchita. Trained by **Cherie DeVaux**, Bella Conchita upset the field of 11 fillies and mares at odds of 16-1 in the Likley Exchange, the local prep for the Wintergreen. The 5-year-old daughter of Kitten's Joy will be ridden by **Rafael Hernandez** from post 8.

Stephen Screnci, Deters Company and **Frank Taylor, et al.**'s Kate's Kingdom will attempt to avenge her last-out defeat to Bella Conchita. A 5-year-old mare by former Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII) winner **Animal Kingdom**, Kate's Kingdom was the even-money favorite in the Likely Exchange when Bella Conchita defeated her by seven lengths. Previously, Kate's Kingdom rallied from more than five lengths off the early pace to win the Dec. 11, \$125,000 My Charmer Stakes. Jockey **Jack Gilligan** will have the return mount in the Wintergreen from post 7.

Other top entrants in the Wintergreen field include **Don't Tell My Wife Stables** and **Keith Desormeaux's** \$250,000 Bourbonette Oaks winner **Candy Raid** and **Agave Racing Stable** and **Living The Dream Stables'** former Grade III winner **Burgoo Alley (IRE)**.

Here is the complete field for the Wintergreen from the rail out (with jockey and trainer): **Grand Ave Girl** (Luan Machado, Kenny McPeck); **Candy Raid** (Jose Riquelme, Keith Desormeaux); **Opening Buzz** (Rodriguez, Wong); **Tap Dancing Lady** (David Haldar, Ron Kahles); **Purrfect** (Fernando De La Cruz, Stidham); **Mejthaam** (Abel Lezcano, Jimmy Corrigan); **Kate's Kingdom** (Gilligan, Walden); **Bella Conchita** (Hernandez, DeVaux); **Burgoo Alley (IRE)** (Chris Landeros, Mike Maker); **Maybe Later** (Santiago Gonzalez, Bill Morey); **Guana Cay** (Manny Esquivel, Eric Foster); **Charges Dropped** (Joe Talamo, Michael McCarthy). Also Eligibles: **Bali Belle** (Fernando De La Cruz, Gerardo Rodriguez); **Fair Game** (Declan Cannon, Vicki Oliver).

Fans can watch and wager every race from Turfway Park on www.TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Inc.

Racing will continue Wednesday-Saturday from Turfway Park with a first post of 5:55 p.m. For more information and to make dining reservations, visit www.TurfwayPark.com.

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