

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Kevin Kerstein
Kentucky Racing Communications
Churchill Downs, Ellis Park, Turfway Park
(610) 420-6971 (mobile)
(502) 635-4712 (office)
Kevin.Kerstein@KyDerby.com

BIG NAME RIDERS INVADE TURFWAY FOR SATURDAY'S \$1 MILLION SYNTHETIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

FLORENCE, Ky. (Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025) – Two of North America's most prominent riders – **Irad Ortiz Jr.** and **Flavien Prat** – are set to invade Turfway Park Racing & Gaming on Saturday for the second annual Synthetic Championships, which features four stakes contests worth a combined \$1 million in purses.

"I love it in Kentucky," Ortiz said when he came to Turfway Park to ride the Dec. 3 card. "I'm really looking forward to getting back here on Saturday."

Inaugurated in 2024, the Synthetic Championships bring together some of the top horses who have excelled on synthetic surfaces, including Grade I winner **Howard Wolowitz**, who returns to defend his title in the Holiday Cheer.

Ortiz, fresh off earning his first Churchill Downs leading rider title at the recently concluded Fall Meet, is named on horses in nine of the 10 races, including all four Synthetic Championships events. The superstar rider will fly into Northern Kentucky from his winter base at Gulfstream Park to pilot several major players: Howard Wolowitz in the \$250,000 Holiday Cheer, **Cameo Performance** in the \$250,000 Prairie Bayou, **Pondering** in the \$250,000 Holiday Inaugural and **Literate** in the \$250,000 My Charmer.

Prat will ship to Turfway from New York and has mounts in eight races, highlighted by his return aboard Grade III winner **Encino** in the Prairie Bayou. Encino won last year's John Battaglia Memorial over the Turfway Tapeta before wins at Keeneland, Horseshoe Indianapolis and Presque Isle Downs. Prat will also ride multiple graded stakes winner **Caitlinhergrtness** in the My Charmer, **Ellen Jay** in the Holiday Inaugural and **Out On Bail** in the Holiday Cheer.

The fields for Saturday's stakes contests:

The \$250,000 My Charmer presented by Claiborne Farm (Race 6, 8:25 p.m. ET)

- **Crosley** (Joe Ramos, John Langemeier)
- Caitlinhergrtness (Flavien Prat, Kevin Attard)
- Literate (Irad Ortiz Jr., Brad Cox)
- **Queens Command (IRE)** (Ryan Munger, Martin Drexler)
- **Nanabush (ARG)** (Victor Carrasco, Horacio De Paz)
- **Landed** (Walter Rodriguez, Wesley Ward)
- **Vina Arana (IRE)** (Adam Beschizza, Jack Sisterson)
- **Next Up** (Dylan Machado, Matt Sims)
- **She's Lookin Lucky** (Luan Machado, Matt Shirer)
- **Trial** (Irving Moncada, Tommy Drury Jr.)
- **Louder Than Words** (Samuel Bermudez, Anthony Granitz)

The \$250,000 Holiday Inaugural presented by Claiborne Farm (Race 7, 8:55 p.m.)

- **Ms. Tart** (Adam Beschizza, John Ennis)
- Ellen Jay (Flavien Prat, Brad Cox)
- Pondering (Irad Ortiz Jr., Brendan Walsh)
- **Lithe Spirit** (Joe Ramos, Steve Asmussen)
- **Shezafunkdrummer** (Dylan Machado, Rusty Arnold II)
- **Uphill Dance** (Irving Moncada, Rachel Halden)
- **Civetta** (Luan Machado, Brendan Walsh)
- **Gata Brazil** (Walter Rodriguez, Mike Maker)
- **Nice as Pie** (Gabe Saez, Kelsey Danner)
- **Mink's Palace** (Edgar Morales, Eddie Kenneally)
- **Niki Nine Doors** (Vincent Cheminaud, Chris Davis)
- **Girl of My Dreams** (Danny Sheehy, Anna Meah)
- **Johanny** (Vincent Cheminaud, Eoin Harty)

The \$250,000 Prairie Bayou (Listed) (Race 8, 9:25 p.m.)

- **Wagstaff** (Orlando Bocachica, Paul McEntee)
- **Horsepower** (Samuel Marin, Joe Orseno)
- Cameo Performance (Irad Ortiz Jr., Brendan Walsh)
- **Theismann** (Danny Sheehy, Peter Eurton)
- Dresden Row (Munger, Richards)
- **Best Actor** (Rodolfo Guerra, Ed Moger Jr.)
- **Quatrocento** (Julien Leparoux, Fausto Gutierrez)
- **Henro** (Joe Ramos, Chris Hartman)
- **Otago** (Adam Beschizza, Kelsey Danner)
- **Chiron** (Gabe Saez, Richie Estvanko)
- **Surly Furious** (Luan Machado, Glenn Wismer)
- Encino (Flavien Prat, Brad Cox)
- **AE. Naptown** (Victor Carrasco, Jose Magana)

The \$250,000 Holiday Cheer (Race 9, 9:55 p.m.)

- **Coming in Hot** (Edgar Morales, John Ennis)
- **Run Carson** (Adam Beschizza, Kelsey Danner)
- Howard Wolowitz (Irad Ortiz Jr., Jose D'Angelo)
- Out On Bail (Flavien Prat, Mike Maker)
- **Arrest Me Red** (Luan Machado, Wesley Ward)
- **Lucky Score** (Irving Moncada, Mark Casse)
- Roll On Big Joe (Julien Leparoux, Bob Hess Jr.)
- Nobals (Rafael Hernandez, Larry Rivelli)
- **Run Curtis Run** (Vincent Cheminaud, Mike Maker)
- **Lofty Adjudicator** (Walter Rodriguez, Anna Navarrete)
- **Joe Shiesty** (Fernando De La Cruz, Eric Foster)
- **Script** (Danny Sheehy, Rusty Arnold II)
- **AE. Incinerator** (Victor Carrasco, Jose Magana)
- **AE. Wound Up** (Flavien Prat, Librado Barocio)

Aside from the four stakes, Saturday's card offers three allowance contests with purses ranging from \$102,000-\$104,000 and three \$100,000 maiden special weights. The average field size in the body of each race is 11.6 horses.

TwinSpires will offer horseplayers a special \$1,500 Turfway Synthetic Betting Championship tournament. The live-money contest has a \$1,000 bankroll with \$500 added to the prize pool. Players will compete for cash prizes along with seats to the National Handicapping Championship or Kentucky Derby Betting Challenge. For more information, visit www.twinspires.com/tournaments.

-END-