



ARAPAHOE PARK

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## **MATCHUP OF COLORADO HORSES OF YEAR IN ASPEN STAKES**

**Aurora, CO (June 12, 2014)** – The last two Colorado-bred horses of the year are scheduled to face each other in Saturday’s Aspen Stakes at Arapahoe Park. Wally Van, Colorado’s horse of the year in 2011 and the winner of the Arapahoe Park Sprint on June 1, and Get Happy Mister, the top Colorado-bred in 2012 who has never lost in five career races at Arapahoe, are part of a field of seven entered in the 6-furlong, \$40,000 Aspen. E F Five, the winner of the Aspen last year and in 2011 and second to Wally Van in 2012, is also entered in what is shaping up to be the most talented field of Colorado-breds in Arapahoe Park’s history.

Get Happy Mister’s 2012 horse-of-the-year campaign as a 2-year-old was highlighted by a 9 1/4-length victory in the Gold Rush Futurity in 1:08.63 for 6 furlongs, stakes records for both margin of victory and time. A comeback victory for the 4-year-old owned by Annette Bishop and ridden by Michael Ziegler in an allowance race on May 26 was his first start at Arapahoe Park since the Gold Rush.

“It’s pretty nice having him back,” said trainer Kenneth “Butch” Gleason, who then compared his stable star with another top Colorado-bred he trained. “I had Moonlight Maverick, and I’ve had some other pretty good ones, but he’s probably the best.”

Wally Van, who is owned by Bill Vanlandingham and trained by Tyrone Gleason, returned to his horse-of-the-year form as a 3-year-old by reuniting with jockey Travis Wales for the first time since 2011 in his 2014 Arapahoe Park Sprint victory.

“I won three stakes in a row with him, and it’s great to get back where we left off,” Wales said.

On Saturday night, the Colorado Thoroughbred Breeders Association will announce the state’s horse of the year for 2013.

## **TOP COLORADO-BRED QUARTER HORSE FUTURITY AND DERBY**

Midori N Smoke and Lil Ms Money Bags won two of the three Arapahoe Park Quarter Horse futurities in 2013, but in order for the two fillies trained by John Hammes to make a splash as 3-year-olds in Saturday’s 350-yard, \$55,000 Lucille Rowe Derby, they will have to overcome a defeat in the May 30 trials to fastest qualifier Nifty Fury.

Hayjay, who is undefeated in three races in his young career, and fastest qualifier One Corona At a Time head the field of 10 Colorado-bred 2-year-olds for the 330-yard, \$75,000 Cherry Creek Futurity on Sunday.

In conjunction with the signature races for Colorado-bred Quarter Horses, Arapahoe Park will host the American Quarter Horse Association’s travelling Racing Aces program on Saturday. Racing ace Jennifer Hancock will join Arapahoe Park racetrack announcer Jonathan Horowitz for the first “Wagering Do’s & Donut’s” presentation of the season before Saturday’s races. During live racing,

Hancock will also be an interactive resource for fans in attendance and provide race analysis on Arapahoe Park's simulcast broadcast.

### **LADY JILA LOOKS TO RISE IN MOLLY BROWN**

Lady Jila, who went from winning \$5,000 claiming races at Arapahoe Park in 2012 to the Columbine Stakes in 2013, will try to continue her rags-to-riches story as part of a field of 10 for Sunday's Molly Brown Stakes for fillies and mares. Shipping to Colorado from New Mexico for the 6-furlong, \$40,000 stakes will be African Rose, who won the Harry Henson Handicap and El Diario Handicap in her last two starts at Sunland Park, and Andwelaughedlots, victorious in two of her last three races at allowance level. Lady Contender has won two stakes races in a row at Fonner Park in Nebraska. New Mexico-based horses have won the last two renewals of the Molly Brown with Came West in 2012 and Wizardry in 2013.