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Contact: Hayley McKee

Communications@wyominghorseracing.com

307.274.2493

Wyoming Horse Racing Celebrates Record Year for State's Horse Industry

CHEYENNE – As 2022 enters its final stretch, Wyoming Horse Racing LLC (WHR) is celebrating a record-setting year for Sweetwater Downs in Rock Springs– and for the horse racing industry in the state.

In 2022, the horsemen participating in horse races throughout Wyoming will receive over \$8.5 million dollars, shattering records in the state with historic levels of prize winnings, made up from purse money, and breeder award monies for horsemen. Those monies are distributed directly to the owners and breeders.

“These new revenues for purses and breeding programs are a great boost to the equine sector and rural economic development in the state,” said Live Racing General Manager and Partner Eugene Joyce of Wyoming Horse Racing. “From the beginning, this effort has been about the horses.”

Horse racing's growth has more than doubled in each of those industry segments since 2018, creating a downstream economic effect for veterinarians, feed suppliers, restaurants, hotels and many others in the communities where horse racing and breeding take place.

“It was my family's honor to reintroduce live horse racing back to Wyoming in 2011,” Joyce said. “Wyoming Horse Racing is thrilled to be a part of something that has completely revived a faltering industry in Wyoming. The sector's recovery is further strengthening our state's agriculture and tourism industries.”

The highlight of the racing season at Sweetwater Downs was Saturday, October 1, 2022, which became the richest day in the history of horse racing in the state, with WHR giving away \$297,370 in purses to the horsemen running that day. The Wyoming All Breeds Futurity, a race

competition featuring all breeds of horses, offered a purse of \$127,820 that day, which was the highest purse for any race in the past 22 years in Wyoming.

“The numbers are telling us that significant growth is taking place in the state’s horse industry,” said Nick Hughes, President of Wyoming Horse Racing. “We are meeting that growth with more than \$1,000,000 in investments into the infrastructure at Sweetwater Downs for the benefit of the horses and horsemen.” Wyoming Horse Racing committed the funding to the Sweetwater Events Complex Foundation which will go toward capital construction improvements to the facility. “We are proud of the success the industry is seeing and the legacy Wyoming Horse Racing continues to build in the state with horse racing’s bright future at the center of our efforts,” Hughes added.

In 2016, Sweetwater Downs ran its first \$100,000 race since the inception of historic horse racing. For the ninth year in a row, in 2022, WHR offered the highest purses per race for horsemen.

Wyoming Horse Racing is the proud sponsor of Sweetwater Downs races, and is committed to a responsible approach, fresh focus, a dedication to horse racing and continued stewardship and investment in the hospitality and agri-business sectors in Wyoming.

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