

## NYRA Releases 2015 Racing Dates

OZONE PARK, N.Y. - With the 40-day summer meet at historic Saratoga Race Course as its glittering centerpiece, the New York Racing Association has released its racing calendar for 2015, which calls for 251 days of live thoroughbred action at Aqueduct Racetrack, Belmont Park, and Saratoga.

The Saratoga meet, anchored by the Grade 1 Whitney on Saturday, August 8 and the 146th edition of the Grade 1 Travers on August 29, will begin on Friday, July 24 and conclude on Labor Day, Monday, September 7, with racing conducted six days a week, Wednesday through Monday.

Racing on the Big A's inner track, which began on December 3, will continue through March 22, 2015. In an effort to keep field sizes at a maximum in advance of Aqueduct's spring meet, racing will be conducted four days a week for four weeks - the last week of February and the first three weeks of March.

There also will be no live racing at Aqueduct from Monday, March 23, through Tuesday, March 31.

"In light of the national foal crop reduction, our goal in creating a four-day race week during this period is to increase field size and provide additional rest for our equine athletes in advance of our Aqueduct spring meet," said Martin Panza, Senior Vice President of Racing Operations for the New York Racing Association. "In essence, the March break is allowing us to create a more vibrant spring meet at the Big A."

The 19-day spring meet will be conducted on Aqueduct's main track from April 1 through April 26, kicking off with the first two Grade 1 races of the year - the \$1 million Twinspires.com Wood Memorial and the \$400,000 Carter Handicap on Saturday, April 4.

The 59-day Belmont spring/summer meet begins on Wednesday, April 29 and features the 147th running of the Grade 1, \$1.5 million Belmont Stakes on Saturday, June 6. The highlight of the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival, Belmont Stakes Day itself will offer nine additional stakes, with five stakes run on Friday, June 5, and two on Thursday, June 4. There will be no racing on Wednesday, June 3.

The Belmont spring/summer meet also will feature the second "must-see" event of the year, the internationally themed "Stars & Stripes Festival" on Saturday, July 4, with six graded stakes worth \$3.8 million. The spring/summer meet concludes on Sunday, July 19.

Later in the year, the Belmont Fall Championship meet will run 38 days from Friday, September 11 through Sunday, November 23, with "Super Saturday" scheduled for Saturday, September 26.

The racing calendar wraps up with 40 days of live racing at Aqueduct commencing on Wednesday, November 4 and running through New Year's Eve, with a five-day winter break scheduled from Monday, December 21 through Christmas Day, Friday, December 25.

The stakes schedule for the Aqueduct spring meet, Belmont Park and Saratoga will be announced in the coming days.