

Record Stakes Purses for Saratoga Meet

By Blood-Horse Staff
Courtesy BloodHorse.com



Photo: Coglianesse Photos
Saratoga

Two of the biggest days in North American racing will highlight the historic 147th meet at [Saratoga Race Course](#), which opens July 24 and runs through Sept. 7.

The \$1.25 million Travers (gr. I) is the centerpiece of a supercharged Travers Day Aug. 29, and the \$1.25 million Whitney (gr. I) anchors five stakes on Whitney Festival Day, Saturday, Aug. 8.

Overall, the 40-day meet includes 69 stakes worth a record \$18.7 million in purses. After opening weekend, racing will be conducted six days a week, Wednesdays through Mondays.

Joining the 146th running of the Travers, also known as the "Mid-Summer Derby," will be five other grade I stakes, including the 1 1/2-mile Sword Dancer Invitational on turf, for which the purse has been enhanced to \$1 million. Also added to the card and receiving purse increases are the \$750,000, 1 1/8-mile Personal Ensign for fillies and mares and the \$700,000 Forego at seven furlongs. Rounding out the grade I races on the stellar card are the \$500,000 Ballerina for fillies and mares and the \$500,000 King's Bishop, both at seven furlongs, and the grade II, \$400,000 Ballston Spa for turf fillies and mares.

"We are developing Travers Day into a national event—a mini Breeders' Cup—by increasing the purses for the Personal Ensign and the Forego," said Martin Panza, NYRA's senior vice president

of racing operations. "By including the Sword Dancer and raising the purse to \$1 million we hope to create international involvement in that race."

The traditional local prep for the Travers, the grade II, \$600,000 Jim Dandy, will be held Saturday, Aug. 1.

The 1 1/8-mile Whitney will pair with the grade I, \$500,000 Test for 3-year-old fillies atop the festival card, which also offers the grade III, \$200,000 Fasig-Tipton Waya for turf fillies and mares going 1 1/2 miles. Also on Aug. 8 are two additional turf stakes— the \$100,000 Lure at 1 1/16 miles and the \$100,000 Fasig-Tipton De La Rose at a mile for fillies and mares.

Additions to the stakes schedule include the grade II, \$250,000 Bowling Green at 1 3/8 miles on the turf on Saturday, Aug. 1, which will serve as a prep for the Sword Dancer, and two new juvenile turf stakes at 5 1/2 furlongs— the \$100,000 Bolton Landing for fillies on Wednesday, Aug. 19, and the \$100,000 Schenectady on Friday, Aug. 21.

"Both of these 2-year-old turf stakes were created with a look ahead to the Breeders' Cup," said Panza.

A prelude to the Travers will be New York Breeders' Showcase Day, which will be moved to Friday, Aug. 28, instead of on its traditional Sunday slot. The state-bred card will include six stakes, highlighted by the \$250,000 Albany for 3-year-olds going 1 1/8 miles.

For the complete 2015 stakes schedule, [click here](#).