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Russell Road Back at It at Age Six April 11, 2012

(Charles Town, WV) – 2012 West Virginia bred Horse of the Year **Russell Road** will take aim at the 15th stakes win of his career as he makes his six-year-old debut against 7 others in Saturday night's \$50,000 Confucius Say at Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. Russell Road is no stranger to success on this night as 3 of his 14 stakes wins – the 2009 Blue & Gold, 2010 Springtime Handicap and 2011 Confucius Say - have come on the Charles Town Classic undercard.

Following his second victory in the \$500,000 West Virginia Breeders' Classic in October 2011, Russell Road made one more start as a five-year-old that resulted in a disappointing fourth place finish in November's A Huevo Stakes. However, that formula has proven successful once already for the gelded son of Wheaton as, in last year's race, he exited off a loss in the 2010 A Huevo and rebounded to win the Confucius Say by a half-length over Son of a Bear.

With 11 wins out of 16 career starts at Charles Town's two-turn, 7 furlong route, Russell Road, 3-to-5 on the morning line, figures to be a heavy favorite under jockey Luis Perez.

The aforementioned **Son of a Bear**, looms as the main danger to the favorite as he attempts to turn the tables on his rival who has finished in front of him in four of their five meetings. While he doesn't sport as gaudy of a record at the distance as Russell Road, Son of a Bear has been consistent, finishing worse than third just 3 times in his 12 efforts going 7 furlongs. In his last start, the Debra Ketterman trainee lost a hard fought decision by a neck to Quillian in an optional claiming allowance on March 14.

Matt McGowan has the mount on Son of a Bear on Saturday, who will break from the rail next to stable mate **Bubba Bear**.

Pagan Cat, the 19.20-to-1 upset winner of the West Virginia Onion Juice Breeders' Classic in 2011, wheels back in short rest on Saturday, just 11 days after a victory in an April 3 allowance at Charles Town. The win last out snapped a four race losing streak for Pagan Cat, who himself as amassed more than \$267,000 in career earnings, the third most behind Russell Road and Son of a Bear in the field.

Ramon Maldonado will ride Pagan Cat for trainer Jean Rofe.

In addition to the top three choices, three-year-old Primary Account will contest the Confucius Say, as will veteran campaigners Darth Tater, Proud Pluck and Confederate Silver, who finished seventh in the race last year.

Post time for the Confucius Say is scheduled for 8:15pm EST.

\$50,000 Confucius Say S. (WV)

April 14, 2012

Race 8 – Post time 8:15pm EST

3&up, 7 furlongs

PP. Horse, Jockey, Weight, Trainer

- 1. Son of a Bear, Mathew C. McGowan, 123, Debra J. Ketterman
- 2. Bubba Bear, Fredy Peltroche, 116, Debra J. Ketterman
- 3. Darth Tater, Clifford D. Dooley, 123, Christopher M. Keller
- 4. Primary Account, Richard Monterrey, 116, Crystal G. Pickett
- 5. Russell Road, Luis A. Perez, 123, James W. Casey
- 6. Proud Pluck, Matt Seifers, 123, Wayne Potts
- 7. Pagan Cat, Ramon Maldonado, 123, Jean L. Rofe
- 8. Confederate Silver, Luis A. Batista, 123, Rhea M. Pennella