

HOLLYWOOD Casino®

AT CHARLES TOWN RACES

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WEST VIRGINIA BREEDERS CLASSICS® XXVII

VAN BERG ON HAND AS SPECIAL GUEST OF WEST VIRGINIA BREEDERS CLASSICS XXVII

(Charles Town, WV – October 4, 2013) – Hall of Fame trainer Jack Van Berg will be on hand at Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races on both Friday, October 18 and Saturday, October 19 to promote and conduct a book signing of his biography, *JACK, from Grit to Glory*, released earlier this year. Van Berg will be in attendance on both Friday evening and during Saturday's West Virginia Breeders' Classics XXVII to sell and sign copies of the book authored by Chris Kotulak. The 77-year old trainer of nearly 6,500 winners over his career will also be a special guest at the West Virginia Breeders' Classics XXVII Breakfast of Champions which takes place that Saturday morning at 9 A.M.

The book chronicles the life and career path of Van Berg, himself a son of a Hall of Fame trainer, from his Nebraska roots through his rise to becoming the first thoroughbred trainer to saddle 5,000 winners. After winning an Eclipse Award as the nation's top trainer in 1984, Van Berg was subsequently inducted into the National Museum of Racing Hall of Fame in 1985. To many racing fans, Van Berg is best known as the conditioner of 1987 Kentucky Derby winner and 1988 Horse of the Year Alysheba.

Following the book's release, Van Berg has embarked on a signing tour around the country to promote the tale of his storied career. So far, the reception the story has received has him more than pleased.

"People all around have been great, wherever we've gone," said Van Berg, who has already taken his book to Hollywood Park, Arlington and Saratoga amongst other places this year. "Chris (Kotulak) did a hell of a job with all of the research and facts. People didn't realize how hard I really had to work, but everything in that book is fact."

While he's never raced a horse at Charles Town, the trip to West Virginia's eastern panhandle will bring Van Berg full circle with the roots of Alysheba's career as Charles Town's current racing secretary Charlie McIntosh held the same role at Turfway Park when he brought his prized colt - then winless in two starts - down to northern Kentucky in search of his first career victory.

"I ran Alysheba at Hollywood Park in his first start and he got beat a bunch. Then we took him up to Chicago the next month where he ran second. I talked to Charlie after that and told him I wanted to bring my horse down there to Turfway to run in a maiden special and, heck, he wound up winning by almost 10."

Besides the margin of victory in the race, one other thing Van Berg remembered vividly were the words of Alysheba's rider that day, Don Brumfield.

"I remember Donnie (Brumfield) rode the horse at Turfway and got off him and told his agent Donnie Richardson that he thought Alysheba was 'just a horse'. I think he turned out to be alright."

The son of Alydar indeed turned out 'alright' notching 9 Grade I wins that included the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Breeders' Cup Classic, over a career that banked him north of \$6.5 million in earnings – a then record when he retired following his 1988 campaign. Alysheba himself took his spot in racing's Hall of Fame in 1993.

Van Berg's book signing is part of a West Virginia Breeders' Classics weekend punctuated by 9 races on Saturday totaling nearly \$1.2 million in purses, anchored by the \$500,000 West Virginia Breeders' Classic. Post time for the first race on the October 19 West Virginia Breeders' Classics card is Charles Town's normal evening post of 7:15pm EST.

The Breakfast of Champions on Saturday morning will be held on the third floor of the track's Skyline Terrace restaurant and will also include past Washington Redskins greats as it has in prior years. In addition to being available at the door, tickets to the breakfast are locally available in advance at the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races gift shop, the Bank of Charles Town, United Bank, Jefferson Security Bank of both Charles Town and Shepherdstown as well as through the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce.

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Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races

A Penn National gaming property, Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races is a world-class resort destination, offering visitors a truly Las Vegas-style gaming experience that includes 3,200 slot machines, more than 100 table games, a 50-table poker room, and both live and simulcast horse racing year round. A wide range of quality restaurants and bars are offered, including authentic Hong Kong cuisine and sushi at 9 Dragons, a 350-seat Epic Buffet, and Final Cut Steakhouse – proud recipient of the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence. The casino also offers an exciting nightlife experience including free concerts and entertainment at the H Lounge. Conveniently located about a one-hour drive from the Baltimore and DC beltways, Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races is one of the region's fastest growing gaming and entertainment destinations with more than four million visitors each year.