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### **Gulfstream Park to Host 2012 Claiming Crown on Opening Day**

Lexington, Ky. – Gulfstream Park in Hallandale Beach, Florida will host the 14<sup>th</sup> running of the Claiming Crown on the opening day of its 2012-2013 meet, Saturday, December 1, 2012. The 2012 event will see a significant increase in purses to \$850,000 for seven races with the individual race purses ranging from \$100,000 to \$200,000. In addition to the six Claiming Crown races conducted at the 2011 event, the Tiara for fillies and mares on the turf will return this year.

“We’re ecstatic to play host to the 14th running of the Claiming Crown on opening day December 1,” said Gulfstream Park President and General Manager Timothy Ritvo. “Horses competing in the claiming ranks are many of the toughest in the world. They’re game and they build loyal followings within the Thoroughbred community, whether with fans, owners or trainers.

“This is an important event to our chairman, Mr. Frank Stronach, and we’re very excited about kicking off our 2012-2013 season with the Claiming Crown. The management and staff at Gulfstream look forward working with the National Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association and the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association.”

“The FHBPA Board of Directors thought that the purses for the Claiming Crown had become quite outdated and stale over its 13-year history, and thus, chose to significantly increase them. The Board felt that if the Claiming Crown were to come to Gulfstream Park, it needed to be the best Claiming Crown ever,” said FHBPA Executive Director Kent Stirling. “We are proud to join with Gulfstream Park, the National HBPA and TOBA to revitalize this great day for our claiming horses. Claiming horses are the backbone of our industry and deserve to be celebrated on their day with higher purses, and what we expect to be record setting live handle and simulcasting numbers.”

“We are excited and honored that Gulfstream Park has agreed to host the 2012 Claiming Crown,” said TOBA president Dan Metzger, who also serves as chairman of Claiming Crown Limited. “The enthusiasm and purse commitment from both Gulfstream Park and the Florida HBPA has been extraordinary and we believe that this year’s event promises to be our best yet.”

“The National HBPA is extremely pleased that this year the Claiming Crown will be hosted by Gulfstream Park and the Florida HBPA. Their commitment to purses and a quality day of racing certainly elevates the Claiming Crown to a new level and will position it among the premier racing days of the year anywhere in the United States,” said Joe Santanna, President and Chairman of the National HBPA, one of the co-partners of the Claiming Crown. “The Gulfstream Park Claiming Crown races provide horsewomen and horsemen across the country with an exceptional opportunity.”

Patterned after the Breeders’ Cup, Claiming Crown was designed to reward Thoroughbred racing’s “blue-collar” horses and will offer races at varying distances on both dirt and turf.

This will mark the first time Gulfstream Park has hosted the event, which debuted at Canterbury Park in Shakopee, Minnesota in 1999. Canterbury has hosted 10 of the first 13 renewals of the event. The Claiming Crown was held at Philadelphia Park (now Parx Racing) in Bensalem, Pennsylvania in 2002, at Ellis Park in Henderson, Kentucky in 2007 and Fair Grounds Race Course and Slots in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2011.

Further details on the event’s race lineup, purse structure, nomination and entry deadline schedule and eligibility dates to be released soon.

The Claiming Crown is a partnership between the National Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association and the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association. The Claiming Crown was created to be the claiming horse owner’s Breeders’ Cup; a special racing event, created for the “average owner,” and featuring some of the most competitive horses in the country. The Claiming Crown has been held annually since 1999. For more information about Claiming Crown please visit [www.claimingcrown.com](http://www.claimingcrown.com).

TOBA, based in Lexington, Kentucky, was formed in 1961 and is a national trade organization of Thoroughbred owners and breeders. TOBA’s mission is to “improve the economics, integrity and pleasure of the sport on behalf of Thoroughbred owners and breeders.” Projects managed by TOBA include the American Graded Stakes Committee, The Racing Game, Sales Integrity Program and Claiming Crown. TOBA is the owner of The Blood-Horse Inc., and is represented on the Board of Directors of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association as a founding member. Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA) is the charitable arm of TOBA.

The National HBPA, based in Lexington, Kentucky, is the largest racing horsemen’s representative association in North America, with 30 affiliate organizations and over 30,000 member horsemen. Big Dee’s Tack & Vet Supplies, Equineline.com, Finish Line Horse Products, Inc. and Horseman Labor Solutions are proud corporate partners of the National HBPA.

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