



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Aug. 3, 2022

From: Mountaineer Casino, Racetrack & Resort

### **ASMUSSEN SEEKS ANOTHER WV DERBY VICTORY**

Hall of Fame trainer Steve Asmussen is no stranger to the West Virginia Derby, which will be run Aug. 6 at Mountaineer Casino, Racetrack & Resort. In fact, he holds the record for number of wins by a trainer in the \$500,000 Grade III event at 1 1/8 miles for 3-year-olds.

Asmussen first won the Mountaineer fixture in 2005 with Real Dandy, who was followed by Zanjero (2007), Soul Warrior (2009), Macho Macho (2012) and Tapiture (2014). The previous record for West Virginia Derby victories was held by trainer Patsy Santo, who won the race four times consecutively from 1963-66 when Mountaineer was known as Waterford Park.

This year, Asmussen will be represented by Three Chimneys Farm's King Ottoman, a homebred colt by Curlin who won the Texas Derby in late May at Lone Star Park. He is a product of the Asmussen Horse Center in Texas which is operated by the trainer's parents, Keith and Marilyn Asmussen.

King Ottoman in five starts has never raced shorter than one mile. After a third-place finish in a \$120,000 maiden race at Churchill Downs in early May, the colt was entered in the \$300,000 Texas Derby at Lone Star Park May 30. Off at 10-1 odds, the maiden won the 1 1/16-mile race by a head, which justified Asmussen's faith in the homebred.

"He's obviously a very talented horse with a great pedigree," Asmussen said after the Texas Derby and before the colt finished third in the Grade III Indiana Derby July 9. "It was great to see him put it all together in a race

that means so much to me. He handles himself extremely well and has a good level of ability. We expect him to finish off his 3-year-old year impressively and expect him to be better as an older horse.”

The Texas Derby was a key race in 2021 as it produced the one-two finishers in the West Virginia Derby. Mr. Wireless finished second in the race and then won the Indiana Derby before capturing the West Virginia Derby. Warrant won the Texas Derby by three-quarters of a length and then finished second, 1 ¼ lengths behind Mr. Wireless at Mountaineer.

Asmussen also has won his share of undercard stakes on the West Virginia Derby program. This year he has Macron in the \$75,000 Senator Robert Byrd Memorial Stakes and Silver Prospector in the \$200,000 Grade III West Virginia Governor’s Stakes.

Asmussen was not represented on West Virginia Derby day in 2021. That same afternoon at Saratoga Race Course in New York, Asmussen won the 9,446<sup>th</sup> race of his career to pass the previous North American record of 9,445 that had been held by the late Mountaineer-based trainer Dale Baird.

*For more information, contact Tom LaMarra at 859-492-8365 or at [tomlamarra@gmail.com](mailto:tomlamarra@gmail.com)*