



NEW ZEALAND SIREs' STAKES BOARD

Big Brands Kick Off Southern Harness Racing Stakes Season

The Southern harness racing stakes season is set to launch in style this weekend at Winton, thanks to a collaborative effort between **Southern Bred Southern Reared (SBSR)**, **Diamond Creek Farm**, and the **Caduceus Club**.

The Southern Bred Southern Reared group of Standardbred breeders might have time to enjoy a well-earned break in the sponsor's tent and watch the action on the track, having spent months preparing their progeny for the upcoming **NZB Standardbred Yearling Sales** in Christchurch.

Diamond Creek Farm, meanwhile, has been managing the return of their stable of stallions to the Northern Hemisphere following a successful breeding season in New Zealand. Both groups' continued commitment to the sport is evident in their sponsorship of this weekend's feature event—the **\$30,000 SBSR/Diamond Creek Farm/Caduceus Three-Year-Old Filly Sorority**.

A highlight of the **Wairio Trotting Club's** meeting on Sunday, the 'Sorority' stakes race provides an opportunity for ambitious three-year-old fillies and their connections to race over a mile on one of New Zealand's fastest tracks, vying for a strong start to what could be the most pivotal season of their racing careers.

The Caduceus Club has been instrumental in launching this race, furthering its mission to expand the reach of its **Auckland Trotting Club-based series** across New Zealand. **Martin Pierson**, Executive of the series administrator for the New Zealand Sires' Stakes, is encouraged by the enthusiasm surrounding the new event.

"It's early days for this race and its counterpart, the Caduceus Prelude, which took place in August. However, we hope to establish a strong foundation this year and next, ensuring more opportunities for eligible horses and bolstering the stakes race calendar," said Pierson.

The Sorority race is restricted to fillies who have yet to win a **Group One** event or earn **\$100,000** in stakes money. However, Sunday's winner will receive first preference for the **Group 2 Caduceus Fillies Final** at Auckland's Alexandra Park on **March 14th**.

"Local filly Chicago Sky, along with Canterbury-based contenders One For Jay, Caught The Eye, and Mythical, have all paid into the Caduceus Series. Should one of them claim victory, they will secure a coveted spot in the Alexandra Park Final. With favorable weather, we could see an impressive mile time recorded," Pierson added.

The Sorority race marks the beginning of an exciting stakes season in the southern region, culminating in the prestigious **Diamonds Day at Invercargill** on **April 27th**.