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Fair Grounds Announces Second Purse Increase

Three Louisiana Derby Day Stakes Get Boost; Overnight Purses Bumped 5%

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 5, 2011 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots announced its second purse increase of the season today, boosting overnight purses 5 percent while also increasing the prize money for three Louisiana Derby Day stakes: the Grade II New Orleans Handicap (now \$400,000, up from \$300,000), the Grade II Mervin H. Muniz Memorial Handicap (now \$350,000, up from \$300,000) and the Duncan F. Kenner Stakes (now \$150,000, up from \$100,000).

"We are pleased with the current performance of our racing, gaming and video poker businesses," track Vice President and General Manager **Eric Halstrom** said. "Revenue from all three contributes to a lucrative purse structure that attracts top stables from around the continent. We thank all of our fans from coast to coast for choosing to wager with Fair Grounds."

The overnight purse increase will go into effect with Thursday's races. Fair Grounds boosted purses 5 percent once already this season, on Jan. 6.

The March 26 Louisiana Derby Day program will be the richest day of Thoroughbred racing in Louisiana history, with six stakes now worth \$2.4 million, highlighted by the first \$1 million race ever run in New Orleans, the Grade II Louisiana Derby.

The New Orleans Handicap, won last year by **Battle Plan**, is for older horses at 1 1/18 miles. The Muniz Memorial, won last year by **Blues Street**, is for older horses at 1 1/18 miles on the Stall-Wilson turf course. The Kenner, won last year by **Cash Refund**, is for older horses at six furlongs.

Thursday will mark Day 54 of Fair Grounds' 84-day Thoroughbred Racing Season. Live racing is conducted Thursdays to Mondays through the end of February before shifting to Fridays to Mondays (plus Mardi Gras Day) in March.

About Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots

Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots, the nation's third-oldest racetrack, has been in operation since 1872. Located in New Orleans, Fair Grounds is owned by Churchill Downs Incorporated (Nasdaq:CHDN); it also operates a slot-machine gaming facility and 10 off-track betting parlors throughout southeast Louisiana. The 139th Thoroughbred Racing Season runs through March 27, 2011, highlighted by the 98th Grade II Louisiana Derby on March 26. Information about Fair Grounds can be found online at www.FairGroundsRaceCourse.com.

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