

Sunday

PM SIMULCAST

AQUEDUCT

CHURCHILL

CHARLES TOWN

MOUNTAINEER

GOLDEN GATE

HOLLYWOOD

INSIDE

Track reports

Zaftig, winner of the Acorn this past June at Belmont, has been retired after tearing a leg ligament. **Page 12**

Opening day at Fair Grounds brought together corporate executives and Las Vegas-style showgirls. **Page 4**

Owner Ahmed Zayat, who pulled his horses out of California last year because of his dislike of the Del Mar Polytrack, is returning next week. **Page 10**

Races of the day

Sunday's Moccasin Stakes for 2-year-old fillies at Hollywood Park shapes up as a test of speed vs. class. **Page 3**

News and notes

Mast Track and Frost Giant will be joining Tin Cup Chalice as the American contingent to the Dec. 7 Japan Cup Dirt. **Page 9**

► Past performances for Sunday's Queen Elizabeth II Commemorative Cup at Kyoto follow editorial.

Paco Lopez, the leading jockey at Calder, has been barred from riding there through Jan. 2. **Page 9**



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AQUEDUCT

Rain plays major role in stakes

By David Grening

OZONE PARK, N.Y. – Though carded for the turf, Sunday's \$65,000 Pass the Tab Stakes has a better chance of being moved to Aqueduct's main track. Wet weather forced the cancellation of turf racing Thursday through Saturday at Aqueduct and more rain was forecast for Saturday.

Scheduled for 1 1/16 miles on turf, the Pass the Tab would become a one-turn mile on dirt. Such conditions would suit National Pride, who is 3 for 4 in one-turn dirt races. He is coming off a well-beaten third-place finish in the Best of Luck Stakes run over a muddy strip going two turns here on Oct. 29. National Pride did not appear comfortable racing over the off going under jockey Eibar Coa.

"Once he got to the outside, Eibar said he was going okay, but he never traveled at all like the way he did at Saratoga or the race at Belmont," said Rick Mettee, who oversees Sheikh Mohammed al-Maktoum's Godolphin Stable.

While National Pride was entered only for the main track, Preakness third-place finisher Icabad Crane was entered in the body of the field. Trainer Graham Motion said he has always wanted to try Icabad Crane on grass, but with soft turf likely, he would be happy to see the race moved to the main track.

Icabad Crane won his debut over a muddy Aqueduct main track last November. He won two of his next three starts, including the Federico Tesio at Pimlico. After finishing third in the Preakness, Icabad Crane finished eighth in the Belmont Stakes and then sixth in the Albany for New York-breds in August.

Since the Albany, Icabad Crane has been gelded, a bit of an unusual move for a stakes-winning horse that finished third in a classic.

"I guess it could be considered unusual, but was it a tough decision to make? Probably not," said Graham Motion, who trains Icabad Crane for Earle Macke. "I think Earle felt that if he was going to have a future as a racehorse we needed to figure out something, and that's what we wanted to do. We thought gelding him would settle him down a bit. I must say he's done well having had that break."

Trainer Frank Alexander plans to run Slambino whether this race is on the turf or the dirt. Slambino, who won a turf race at Saratoga at 88-1, recorded two victories in one-turn races that were moved to the dirt from the turf.

Other contenders on turf include Atwell, the Jersey Derby runner-up, and Excellent Soldier.

In a league by himself

Good Night Shirt looks to complete a perfect campaign and cap his second straight championship season in the Colonial Cup Steeplechase at Springdale Race Course in Camden, S.C. Article, page 3.