

VERNON DOWNS

Racing

Casino & Hotel



Memorial Late Closers Introduced at Vernon Downs

Vernon Downs will offer two new Late Closing events, an Open Pace and Open Trot for New York Sired horses as a prelude to the New York Sires Stakes 2009 Night of Champions in September. The races are dedicated to the memory of two men who made great and lasting contributions to the harness racing industry in New York State, Bruce Hamilton and James Crawford. Each race will offer an estimated purse of \$65,000.

Mr. Hamilton served as the Executive Secretary of Harness Horse Breeders of New York State for 18 years. During that time he managed the New York Sire Stakes program masterfully and was able to unite the racing and breeding industries to successfully lobby for VLTs at tracks.

Mr. Crawford, a past president of the Harness Horse Breeders of New York State Association, was very active in harness racing and, along with his wife Pat, bred, raced and cared for some of the top harness horses in the industry. Jim was an honest and true lover and supporter of the sport of harness racing.

These Late Closers are scheduled for Friday, September 25, launching a weekend long celebration of the New York Sired standardbred. Vernon Downs will host the \$1.4 million NYSS Night of Champions on Saturday, September 26 and the annual yearling sale at nearby SUNY Morrisville University is set for Sunday, September 27.

Nomination to the inaugural Hamilton and Crawford Memorials will require a payment of \$1,000, due by July 15. The entry fee will be \$1,000. Information will be available on the Tioga & Vernon Downs websites or by calling the Tioga Downs Race Office at (607) 699-7688.