

# News Release



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Contact: Kevin Kerstein  
Kentucky Racing Communications  
Churchill Downs, Ellis Park, Turfway Park  
(610) 420-6971 (mobile)  
(502) 635-4712 (office)  
[Kevin.Kerstein@KyDerby.com](mailto:Kevin.Kerstein@KyDerby.com)

## **GRADE II WINNER CANDY OVERLOAD LEADS FIELD IN \$125,000 BIG DADDY**

**FLORENCE, Ky. (Wednesday, March 8, 2023)** – Gary Barber, Wachtel Stable and Pantofel Stable’s **Candy Overload**, a former Grade II winner and recent local victor of the \$125,000 Forego Stakes, leads a field of nine sprint specialists that entered Saturday’s \$125,000 Big Daddy Stakes at Turfway Park.

The six-furlong Big Daddy is named in memory of **Rick Leigh**, the longtime racing official and racing secretary at Turfway Park. The Big Daddy was carded as Race 7 of 9 with a post time of 8:55 p.m. (all times Eastern). First post is 5:55 p.m.

Trained by **Mark Casse**, Candy Overload sprung a mild 6-1 upset against seven rivals in the Feb. 4 Forego Stakes when he rallied from just off the pace to defeat **Here Mi Song** and **Night Time** by a half-length. Prior to Candy Overload joining Casse’s Turfway Park string, the 5-year-old Ontario-bred was based at Woodbine where he was victorious in the \$175,000 Kennedy Road Stakes (GII). The 5-year-old gelded son of Reload sports a solid 17-5-5-1 record with purse earnings of \$327,758. He’ll be ridden in the Big Daddy by **Luan Machado** from post No. 8.

Among Candy Overload’s competition entered in the Big Daddy include the second and third place finishers of the Forego – **Nathan Hayden**’s **Here Mi Song** and **Blue Devil Racing Stable**’s **Night Time**.

**Here Mi Song**, trained by **Billy Stinson Jr.**, is a four-time winner from 17 starts. In the Forego, **Here Mi Song** took the lead at the head of the stretch but finished second best to Candy Overload. He’ll be ridden in the Big Daddy by **Fernando De La Cruz** from post 3.

**Night Time**, in the care of **Dale Romans**, had an eventful journey in the Forego when he jumped a shadow late and finished third. Prior to the Forego, the 6-year-old son of Majesticperfection was much the beset in a conditioned allowance contest at Turfway. Jockey **Chris Landeros** will be in the saddle from post 4.

Here is the complete field for the Big Daddy from the rail out (with jockey and trainer): **Bad Beat Brian** (Chris Emigh, Brittany Vanden Berg); **Gun It** (Rafael Hernandez, Steve Asmussen); **Here Mi Song** (De La Cruz, Stinson); **Night Time** (Landeros, Romans); **Anaconda** (Gerardo Corrales, Joe Sharp); **Pole Setter** (Thiago Canuto, Hugo Andrade); **Nobody Listens** (Joe Ramos, Tim Eggleston); **Candy Overload** (Machado, Casse); **Detroit City** (Walter Rodriguez, Jack Sisterson);

The Big Daddy holds a special significance to Turfway Park Director of Racing **Tyler Picklesimer**, who is the stepson of the late Leigh. Picklesimer followed in his stepfather’s footsteps becoming the racing secretary at both Turfway Park and Kentucky Downs and a racing steward. Picklesimer will present the trophy for the Big Daddy. Leigh passed away in 2020 at age 73.

Racing at Turfway Park will resume Thursday-Saturday with daily first posts of 5:55 p.m.

**JEFF RUBY STEAKS DAY CLOSINGS** – Nominations for all six stakes events on the March 25 Jeff Ruby Steaks Day are due Thursday.

Jeff Ruby Steaks Day will feature a spectacular afternoon of racing headlined by the 52<sup>nd</sup> \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII), a Championship Series event on the Road to the Kentucky Derby; the 41<sup>st</sup> running of the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks, a Championship Series event on the Road to the Kentucky Oaks; the 23<sup>rd</sup> running of the \$300,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Listed); the 37<sup>th</sup> running of the \$250,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes; the 41<sup>st</sup> running of the \$250,000 Latonia Stakes; and the 36<sup>th</sup> running of the \$250,000 Rushaway.

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Connections wishing to nominate their horses for Jeff Ruby Stakes Day can contact Stakes Coordinator **Jackie Herbstreit** at 859-743-4333.

Jeff Ruby Steaks Day will have a special afternoon first post of 12:45 p.m. and the Jeff Ruby Stakes will have a post time of 6:25 p.m.

Reserved dining tickets are still available for Jeff Ruby Steaks Day on [www.TurfwayPark.com](http://www.TurfwayPark.com) or Ticketmaster.

**DOWN THE STRETCH** – Jockey **Joe Rocco Jr.** is set to return Thursday at Turfway Park for the first time since breaking his hand on Dec. 9. Rocco was named on one horse Thursday and four Friday. ... Turfway Park will run a special Wednesday night program on March 15 as a makeup date following last Friday's cancellation due to strong winds. First post will be 5:55 p.m. ... Apprentice jockey **Walter Rodriguez** remained a top the rider standings with 36 victories. **Fernando De La Cruz** was in second with 31 wins followed by **Gerardo Corrales** (30), **Chris Landeros** (21) and **Luan Machado** (21). **Wesley Ward** held the lead in both the trainer and owner standings. Ward's 17 training victories were six better than **Brad Cox** (11). In the owner standings, Ward held a 6-5 lead over **Lael Stables**. ... Media members that wish to cover the Jeff Ruby Steaks on March 25 should contact Kevin Kerstein at [Kevin.Kerstein@kyderby.com](mailto:Kevin.Kerstein@kyderby.com) to arrange for credentials.

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