

BUSINESS TODAY

Suffolk draws \$10M horse

Track goes upscale with thoroughbred owned by Dubai prince

By SCOTT VAN VOORHIS

When Jalil, a young thoroughbred, trots onto the track at Suffolk Downs today for the annual Waquoit Stakes, he will be worth more than all the other racehorses combined.

Not to mention a good chunk of the East Boston racetrack.

Purchased three years ago for a kingly \$9.7 million by the crown prince of Dubai, the 4-year-old Jalil and jockey Rajiv Maragh will compete in the track's Waquoit Stakes and its mere \$50,000 purse.

Jalil's U.S. debut, the race at Suffolk is a first small step of a grand — though not likely money-making — plan by the Dubai royal, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, to eventually win the Kentucky Derby.

However, it is also another sign of lead Suffolk Downs owner Richard Fields' ongoing campaign to raise the profile of the once dilapidated and struggling track.

A casino developer and horse-racing enthusiast who owns a ranch in Wyoming, Fields has tapped his own extensive contacts in horse racing in a bid to



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RAISING THE STAKES: Jalil, a 4-year-old thoroughbred that a Dubai prince bought for \$9.7 million, will race today at the annual Waquoit Stakes, competing for a mere \$50,000 purse. The horse's U.S. debut here is a sign that lead Suffolk Downs owner Richard Fields wants to make the struggling track a better venue.

lure some of the sport's brightest stars to Suffolk.

It's part of a larger drive by the New York business mogul to spiff up the tired track and fill its stands with fans once again.

"It's important for what we are trying to do at Suffolk Downs that top trainers and top stables come to race

here," said Chip Tuttle, Suffolk's chief operating officer.

That effort has paid off handsomely for the track in the past year, with visits by superstar trainer Nick Zito and his horse, Commentator, and trainer Christophe Clement, among others.

If the \$9.7 million Jalil

does well today at Suffolk, he may be positioned to take part in the \$500,000 Masscap on Sept. 20.

Even if the promising young racehorse blows past his competition, it may be a long time before Sheikh Mohammed, owner of Godolphin Racing, earns back his \$9.7 million pur-

chase price.

So far, in eight races overseas, Jalil has won \$327,324. The most the son of Storm Cat can win at Suffolk today is \$30,000.

"We want to see where he fits in this country," said trainer Rick Mettee of Jalil's U.S. racing debut at Suffolk.

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