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Hastings Exposition and Racing to Partner with Elite Casino Resorts To Move Racing License to Ogallala with Plans to Build \$100 Million Lake Mac Casino Resort & Racetrack

Ogallala, NE (June 20, 2023) – Hastings Exposition and Racing, Inc., submitted their 2024 racing license application to the Nebraska Racing and Gaming Commission today with plans to move their racing license to Ogallala, NE. The plan is to establish and grow a multi-track Quarter Horse racing circuit in western Nebraska. Hastings will partner with Elite Casino Resorts to invest \$100 million in a racetrack development and full-service casino resort on a proposed 174-acre site in Ogallala, Nebraska.

Brian Becker is well known in the racing industry in Nebraska and his team will run the racetrack and manage all aspects of racing. “We’ve been in the racing business for over 30 years, and the Elite family has been in the casino industry for over 30 years,” Becker said. “It was a perfect partnership to help grow the Quarter Horse racing industry by moving our racing license to western Nebraska and establish a racing circuit between Ogallala/Keith County and Gering/Scotts Bluff County where we plan the second Quarter Horse racing facility, so we can fully establish and grow Quarter Horse racing in western Nebraska similar to what the five (5) existing thoroughbred tracks have provided in central and eastern Nebraska.”

“There are over 79,000 Quarter Horses, with over 13,500 owners in Nebraska, most in western Nebraska. We look forward to highlighting the valuable role these Nebraska bred horses have played in our history and growing Quarter Horse racing in our state as well as attracting new owners and Quarter Horses from other states,” stated Brian Becker.

“The mission of the Nebraska Quarter Horse Racing Association is to promote, advance and preserve the Quarter Horse racing industry in Nebraska. We are beyond excited about the opportunity in Western Nebraska to grow Quarter Horse racing and attract Quarter Horses from the region and across the country to run in Quarter Horse Stakes Races. We fully support this move to grow our racing industry.” stated Ed Ziemba, President of the Nebraska Quarter Horse Racing Association.

The development will have a 5/8-mile racetrack with a testing and receiving barn, with a capacity for 400 stalls, a paddock viewing area, a winner’s circle, and state-of-the-art facilities to support the racing activities. The resort will include 180 hotel rooms with a pool and spa, an event center, a variety of Elite

dining options, a sportsbook with simulcasting, a large-scale travel center, and an RV park. The casino floor will include 650 slot machines, 20 live tables, and a poker room.

“We are honored to be chosen to be part of the Keith County and Ogallala communities, as well as partner with Hastings Exposition and Racing to move their existing horse racing license to western Nebraska, where the opportunity to capture out-of-state business is strong,” said Elite Casino Resorts CEO Dan Kehl. “With over 2 million-out-of-state visitors annually to the Ogallala area, this is an opportunity to grow the Quarter Horse racing and agricultural industry in western Nebraska. We look forward to this partnership and showcasing our Elite amenities in Western Nebraska.”

Mary Wilson, Executive Director of the Keith County Area Development, says, “As a tourism-heavy community, we are well-positioned to take advantage of this development and host millions of out-of-state visitors a year. The location is ideal and will further enhance the appeal of our area as a vacation destination. It’s our chance to grow Western Nebraska. We look forward to the day the first Quarter Horse race is held and when the casino resort opens its doors in Ogallala.”

Lake Mac Casino Resort & Racetrack will draw visitors from surrounding states, with Lake McConaughy already drawing over two million out-of-state visitors a year. Ogallala is rich in agricultural history; the world’s largest aquifers lie beneath these lands, which sustain much of the Midwest’s crops through irrigation and provide drinking water to the majority of the population that reside within its borders. Just like the aquifer is an oasis to the Midwest, the racetrack, resort, and casino aim to be an oasis to the people in the region and beyond, while also strengthening the agricultural tie with the addition of Quarter Horse racing.

“While the casino is still in the design stages,” Wilson says, “we are excited to have these experienced racing and casino resort leaders be part of our community. This destination will be one that all Nebraskans can be proud to call their own.”

About Hastings Exposition and Racing, Inc: Brian Becker started Hastings Exposition and Racing dba as FairPlay Park in Hastings, NE in 2004 and it was granted approval by the Nebraska Racing and Gaming Commission for a racing license in Adams County.

About KCAD (Keith County Area Development): KCAD leads activities and partners with community members to broaden and strengthen employment and commerce in Keith County. They provide forums for strategic planning, creative thinking, and collaboration. They recruit community stakeholders that have a passion for Keith County and want to assist in its progress. They strive to make our communities more attractive by promoting our strengths and confronting areas of needed improvement.