



## CANTERBURY PARK

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1100 Canterbury Road  
Shakopee, MN 55379

# Canterbury Park's Horse Racing Season Begins May 5

*Start coincides with Kentucky Derby weekend; 67-day schedule runs through Sept. 16*

### ***For Immediate Release:***

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Shakopee, Minn. -- Canterbury Park will begin its 67-day horse racing season Friday, May 5, two weeks earlier than it has for the past eight years. Post time for the first race will be 4:00 p.m. Racing will also be held Saturday, May 6, coinciding with the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs, a day that traditionally attracts more wagering dollars than any other at the Shakopee, Minn. racetrack. Canterbury's Saturday post time will be 1:45 p.m. The Kentucky Derby is scheduled to be run at 5:45 p.m.

"Combining live racing with the spectacle that is the Kentucky Derby is the ideal situation," company president Randy Sampson said. "Derby Day is often the one day that the casual sports fan and excitement seeker comes to the racetrack, many for the first time. Introducing them to live racing will only enhance their experience and encourage another visit; and existing fans love the added action a live racing program offers," Sampson said.

From 2005 to 2008 the meet opener was held on Kentucky Derby weekend and produced some of the largest crowds at Canterbury Park, including 18,230 on 2008 Kentucky Derby Day and 17,111 in 2006. Sampson is expecting a similar crowd in 2017. Canterbury offers year-round simulcast wagering, which allows betting on tracks from the United States and internationally. Kentucky Derby Day accounts for more wagering than any other day at Canterbury. Wagering is expected to exceed \$1.8 million this year. Advance wagering on the Kentucky Derby will be available beginning May 4.

Weeknight racing in 2017, excluding May 5, begins at 6:30 p.m. Racing on weekends and holidays will begin at 12:45 p.m. with a few exceptions. Saturdays, May 6 and 20, and June 10 will have 1:45 p.m. post times in conjunction with the Triple Crown races. The July 3 racing program will begin at 4:00 p.m. followed by the annual Fireworks Spectacular and live music at dusk. Saturday, Aug. 26, the date of the \$200,000 Mystic Lake Derby, Canterbury's richest race, will have a 6:00 p.m. first post.

Last week, Canterbury unveiled its promotional calendar which includes popular favorites such as Extreme Race Day on July 15, where ostriches, zebras, camels take to the track, and the July 29 Corgi Races & Cupcake Festival. New events have also been added to enhance the race day including the expansion of the annual beerfest to a Beer, Burgers, and Bacon Festival which will be held in the track infield during live racing Aug. 5, and a Street Art Festival Aug. 12 and 13 that will feature the work of local and regional artists.

"We continue to grow our successful promotions each season and also try new events that complement racing to give our guests great entertainment value and provide them with reasons to visit multiple times each year," Sampson said. "There are events on the calendar that are great for family outings as well as some that are geared towards adults." In 2016, Canterbury averaged nearly 7,000 in attendance daily.

It was recently announced that Big Thrill Factory will open a version of its popular entertainment venue called "Little" Big Thrill Factory at Canterbury in late May. The new indoor-outdoor space, which will operate on live racing days, will offer an edited assortment of amusements for all ages including arcade games, miniature bowling, and a wipeout trampoline.

Fridays during the meet feature Minnesota's Biggest Happy Hour with live music on the Mystic Lake Music Stage. Sundays are Pepsi Family Day with free pony rides, face painting, and a petting zoo. The popular 'Buck Night' promotion returns again in 2017 when Thursday night racing begins June 8. Specials include \$1 general admission and other \$1, \$2 and \$3 beverage and food offers.

General admission to Canterbury Park is \$7, with an additional charge for indoor, reserved seating. There are 11 designated Premium Days when general admission is \$9. Children 17 and under are admitted free. General parking is free. For additional information and to purchase tickets, call the Canterbury Box Office at (952) 445-7224 or visit [www.canterburypark.com](http://www.canterburypark.com) . The live race meet runs through Sept. 16.

Live Race Dates: May 5 through Sept. 16

*Racing Days and Times*

Thursdays beginning June 8 - 6:30 p.m.

Fridays – 6:30 p.m. except May 5 at 4:00 p.m.

Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays – 12:45 p.m. except May 6, 20 and June 10 at 1:45 p.m. and Aug. 26 at 6:00 p.m.

July 3 – Special 4:00 p.m. post time

**Significant Dates**

Friday, May 5 – Opening Night with 4:00 p.m. racing

Saturday, May 6\* - Kentucky Derby Day. Live racing begins at 1:45 p.m.

Monday, May 29\* – Memorial Day racing at 12:45 p.m. featuring the Running of the Bulldogs.

Saturday, June 10\* - Belmont Stakes Block Party with Twin Cities food trucks and live music by GB Leighton. Sportbag giveaway.

Sunday, June 18\* – Father’s Day – Super Dads and Superheroes – Mug giveaway.

Monday, July 3\* – 4:00 p.m. racing. Fireworks Spectacular and live music presented by Kwik Trip after the races.

Monday, July 4\* - Independence Day with free Hormel hot dogs and a wiener and corgi dog race.

Saturday, July 15\* – Extreme Race Day with camel, ostrich, and zebra races.

Saturday, July 29\* - Corgi Races & Cupcake Festival

Saturday, August 5 – Beer, Burger & Bacon Festival

Saturday and Sunday, August 12 and 13 – Street Art Festival featuring graffiti, chalk and other unique art from local and regional artists.

Sunday, August 20\* – Minnesota Festival of Champions – the best state-bred horses compete for more than \$600,000 in purses. T-shirt giveaway to first 4,000 adults.

Saturday, August 26\*- Mystic Lake Derby Day with Indian Horse Relay, Indian Market, and \$200,000 Mystic Lake Derby.

Monday, Sept. 4\* – Labor Day Wiener Dog Wars.

Saturday, Sept. 16 – Final day of live racing.

\*indicates Premium Day

### **About Canterbury Park**

Visit Canterbury Park in RiverSouth—Land of Big Fun! RiverSouth<sup>SM</sup> is a collaboration promoting premier entertainment destinations just minutes south of Minneapolis. With four of Minnesota's biggest attractions just four miles apart, there's fun around every bend. Partners include Canterbury Park, Mystic Lake Casino Hotel, Valleyfair, and the Renaissance Festival. The suburban Minneapolis racetrack originally opened in 1985 as Canterbury Downs but closed shortly after the 1992 season concluded. Randy Sampson, his father Curtis, and businessman Dale Schenian purchased the track and surrounding property in 1994 and re-opened for simulcast racing in May of that year. With a new name, Canterbury Park, and a business plan that included year-round simulcasting, special events, and the notion of land development in the future, live horse racing returned to the state in the summer of 1995. This year marks the 23rd live racing season under the current ownership.

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