



# MEDIA ALERT

**Monday, 15 February 2016**

## **ARABIAN HORSES TO GRACE MORPHETTVILLE IN MARCH**

**WHAT:** Dubai International Arabian Races

**WHERE:** Morphettville Racecourse, Saturday, 12 March 2016

In a major coup for South Australia's horse racing industry, Morphettville Racecourse has been selected to showcase the majesty of Arabian horses and deliver racegoers a taste of Middle Eastern culture on Saturday, 12 March 2016.

South Australian Jockey Club (SAJC) Chief Executive Officer, Brenton Wilkinson, said Morphettville Racecourse was chosen by the Dubai International Arabian Races (DIAR) committee to host two Arabian horse races at the 12 March race meet to complement Shadwell Stud Australasia's sponsorship.

"Preparations are taking place for another successful Adelaide Cup and the excitement surrounding horse racing in South Australia will only be heightened by Arabian horses gracing the track two days before the Cup," he said.

"The family friendly event is a platform to promote the sport of Arabian horse racing in South Australia and showcase Middle Eastern culture, and it promises to be an exciting lead-up event to Adelaide's premier racing event - the 2016 UBET Adelaide Cup on 14 March."

The two Arabian races will be staged as part of a full day of Thoroughbred racing sponsored by Shadwell Stud Australasia.

The international racing and breeding operation has a long association with Thoroughbred racing in South Australia, dating back 30 years when AT TALAQ trained by Colin Hayes at Lindsay Park Stud in Angaston, won the 1986 Melbourne Cup,

"The event is a great way to acknowledge the long-standing relationship between Shadwell and the Hayes family, both who have played such an important part of Thoroughbred racing in South Australia over the last 30 years," Mr Wilkinson said.

The Arabian horse races have been made possible through the support of the DIAR program whose patron is His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum. HH Sheikh Hamdan is a member of the ruling family of Dubai, the United Arab Emirates Minister of Finance and the Deputy Ruler of Dubai.

He was one of the pioneers in bringing European bred Thoroughbreds to race successfully in the Southern Hemisphere, and is one of the most prominent and successful owners and breeders of Arabian racehorses in the world.

"The Arabian horse racing industry is small but growing in Australia, with many drawn to the athleticism of the horses, as well as the excitement of the racing," Mr Wilkinson said.

"Arabian horses are generally smaller than Thoroughbreds, but can carry large weights and have gentle temperaments, opening the door for a broader range of people to get involved in the sport as jockeys."

Director of Shadwell Stud Australasia, Mark Kelly, reiterated the significance of Shadwell's support of the race day in South Australia and their connection with the DIAR program.

“We are excited that the connection between Shadwell Stud Australasia and South Australia can be further developed through the sponsorship of a card of Thoroughbred racing in the lead up to the Adelaide Cup,” Mr Kelly said.

“We have invested heavily in Thoroughbred racing and breeding in South Australia for 30 years and this is a great opportunity to commemorate our significant achievements during that time. “

All the Thoroughbred races on 12 March will be named after horses that have won Group One races in Australia in the famous nominated colours of HH Sheikh Hamdan.

“It fits really nicely that HH Sheikh Hamdan is also the patron of DIAR and that this event provides the opportunity to educate more people about the Arabian breed, the sport of Arabian horse racing and the Arabic culture which underpins it.”

Mr Wilkinson said an all South Australian jockey line-up will feature in the Arabian races - the Shadwell Arabian Stallions Plate valued at \$30,000 and the UAE Arabian Plate worth \$20,000.

The races will be called by Victoria Shaw, Australia’s only professional female race caller.

Along with the Thoroughbred racing and two showcase Arabian races, other events on the day will include a ‘Cultural Marquee’ where race-goers will be given the opportunity to learn about the United Arab Emirates.

“Race-goers can sample Middle Eastern food and drinks, and experience the art of henna tattoo – all for free,” Mr Wilkinson said. “A face painter and pony rides will provide entertainment for the younger members in the crowd.”

In the lead-up to the March race meet Adelaide primary schools will be involved in an exciting community art project ‘The Arabian Rainbow Competition’.

The competition allows students to paint a life-sized fibre glass sculpture of an Arabian horse. It is hoped the project will provide school children to learn more about the Arabic culture while nurturing their creative and artistic instincts.

The finished sculptures will be display at Morpettville Racecourse on 12 March and will be judged by the committee of the DIAR, led by His Excellency Mirza Al Sayegh. The winning school will receive a cash prize of \$3000, \$2000 for second place and \$1500 for third place.

**For any further enquiries, please contact:**

Lauren Bobrige  
FULLER Brand & Communication  
[0433 422 254](tel:0433422254) / [lauren.bobrige@fuller.com.au](mailto:lauren.bobrige@fuller.com.au)