

Century Mile Racetrack and Casino reaches important milestones

New Edmonton track on target for opening in spring of 2019

The upcoming scheduled opening of live thoroughbred racing at Century Mile will help to pull many racing enthusiasts through the long Alberta winter ahead. The reality of the new one mile 'A' track offers stability and optimism for years to come for the fans, trainers, breeders and owners in the Alberta thoroughbred industry.

A recent press release from Century Casinos, Inc. (dated Nov. 2, 2018) said that "Century Casinos announced today that important milestones have been reached toward the opening of Century Mile Racetrack and Casino in south Edmonton." The release confirmed the plans for the opening of Century Mile in the spring of 2019.

"Up to 800 thoroughbred race horses will go through their daily training regimen when the stable area and racetrack will open for training in spring of 2019. The casino and the racetrack at Century Mile are scheduled for opening in April of 2019."

The statement also established that Century Casinos, Inc. and the Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA), representing the thoroughbred racehorse owners, signed a critical, long-term agreement on Oct. 26, 2018 covering the use of the racing, training and stabling facilities at Century Downs and Century Mile as well as sharing of revenues. The formal signing of the agreement took place in front of press and horse racing industry members on the second floor of the new Century Mile Racetrack and Casino building. The Century Casinos Inc. press release assured that "this agreement will be furthering horse racing in Alberta by providing continuity and sustainability."

Adrian Munro, president of the Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society, said, "With Century Mile coming on, we have long term operating agreements with a very stable track operator in Century and that stability will finally allow the industry to grow. Now is the time for breeders and owners who have lived through an unstable period to reap the benefits from their patience."

The media and industry members were recently allowed a peek preview of the new one mile Century Mile racetrack in actual use when a showcase event was staged on Oct. 26, 2018. Three thoroughbreds were galloped on the just completed track for the first time and ran a full trial lap of the oval to test the surface. As well as press, representatives from various horse racing organizations from across Alberta attended the milestone event including the Alberta Standardbred Horse Association, HBPA, Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society (Alberta Division) and Horse Racing Alberta. Geoff Smith, managing director of Century Casinos – Alberta Operations said that, "Just seeing the horses out here today, galloping down the new surface on this one mile racetrack and testing it out, it's a wonderful thing to see. I think the future is very bright for horse racing, specifically in Alberta and the Edmonton area." Exercise rider and part-time thoroughbred trainer Alivia Kettleon gave feedback after testing the new track out with a gallop on one of trainer Dale Saunders'



Dumont was one of the first thoroughbreds to test out the new Century Mile racetrack during a preview day on Oct. 26.



(Above) The view from the rooftop patio. (Bottom) Century Mile casino entrance.



horses, "The overall shape of it is nice, the horses handled it well, it's beautiful!"

For top thoroughbred trainer Tim Rycroft, Century Mile represents a dream come true.

"I've been waiting for this (a one-mile track) all my life," Rycroft said, adding he believes that Century Mile will put Alberta "on the map as far as racing goes now" and will bring in new people to the sport. He also thinks that the new one-mile track has the potential to adjust the breeding plans of some breeders as "the gene pool in our industry, that will have to change a little because you'll be looking for some distance breeding."

It has been just over two years since the announcement by Century Casinos, Inc. in September, 2016 that the company had been selected as the successful applicant by Horse Racing Alberta to own and operate the horse racing facility in the Edmonton area, now known as Century Mile. The Century Mile Racing Entertainment Centre project was approved by the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission in March of 2017. Shirley McClellan of Horse Racing



(Above) Century Mile family racetrack entrance.
(Bottom) A view of the one-mile track.



HBPA president Norm Castiglione and Geoff Smith managing director Century Mile sign agreement on Oct. 26, 2018.



Alberta said at that time that, “this decision provides security and stability for ‘A’ Track horse racing in the Edmonton area.” McClellan went on to add that, while the uncertainty in the Alberta horse racing market is compounded by the closing of Northlands on Aug. 25, 2018 which “closes a door on a long and proud period of horse racing at Northlands Park, it opens a door for a first class racing facility and growth for the Alberta horse racing and breeding industry.”

Construction on the \$65 million first-class facility, Century Mile, began in July of 2017 and has been moving steadily toward completion since then. The project will be the second horse racing track for Century Casinos, along with the successful Century Downs Racetrack & Casino located just north of Calgary which opened in 2015. Century Mile along with Century Downs will provide two new, modern facilities to showcase horse racing while contributing to the long term success of the sport.

The location of Century Mile near the Edmonton International Airport was specifically chosen to capture the south Edmonton and Leduc areas as well as being positioned next to the Queen Elizabeth II highway which is one of the most heavily used highways in western Canada. Paul Ryneveld, general manager for Century Downs and Century Mile, expressed his views to Curtis Stock in an Aug. 8, 2018 article that southwest Edmonton is where the most growth in the city is occurring and patronage of the new track will be strong as a result.

“I believe people are going to make the trip to the airport to watch horse racing. I firmly believe it will revitalize the business,” Ryneveld said.

Century Mile also has few competitors for the slot machine revenue in the airport location with the closest competitors of River Cree and Argyll Road casinos located about 30 kilometres away. Ryneveld adds that Century Mile will be “a racetrack with a casino, not the other way around!”

Century Mile will be the only one mile ‘A’ class thoroughbred track in western Canada and with the closure of Northlands Park to thoroughbred racing in August of this year, the opening of the new track near the Edmonton Airport will ensure that the entertainment and sport provided by live horse racing, that has taken place in the Edmonton area since 1885, will continue on and make horse racing better than ever. Ryneveld was quoted by Terry Jones in the Aug. 26, 2018 *Edmonton Sun* as saying, “We should see something fairly quickly towards the increase in purses. Raising the purse money will lead to the horse population improving. The whole thrill of horse ownership goes up.” Century Mile plans to continue on with the tradition of being host to the Canadian Derby next season, the biggest event in western Canadian racing. The 2019 running would mark the 90th anniversary of the prestigious race. When asked by Jones in the same Aug. 26 article whether Century can possibly replicate the 89th Derby, Ryneveld said, “that purse needs to be higher than that. I believe it needs to be \$500,000 to really attract horses.”

The only one-mile track west of Woodbine promises excitement and unsurpassed facilities for the racing industry in western Canada. Century Mile will be a high performing racetrack with a minimum of 100 race days per year and barns that will accommodate 800 stalls. The main structure of Century Mile is 88,000 square feet with 63,000 of that dedicated to horse racing, including a racing entertainment center that will provide all forms of pari-mutuel wagering and a wide variety of slots. There will also be full size restaurants and bars as well as a sports viewing lounge with an off track betting centre. The racing entertainment centre will have an entire second floor of floor to ceiling windows for an excellent view of the track as well as third and fourth floors with a rooftop patio for a perfect view of the finish line.

Smith and Ryneveld jointly expressed that, “as the economic

engines for the industry, and with Century Mile, the only “A” mile long racetrack in Western Canada, Alberta is now poised to achieve growth and sustainability while becoming a leader in horse racing in North America.”

With full funding in place for the Century Mile project, significant construction progress and an opening date scheduled, the promise of exciting and stable times ahead for the Alberta racing industry can now be upgraded to the new reality.

With files from:

Century Mile website www.centurymile.com Video produced by Greg Southam – October 26th, 2018

Century Casinos Press Releases – March 27, 2017 and Nov. 2, 2018

Aug. 6, 2018 *Construction Tour of the Century Mile site* – Curtis Stock

Horse Racing Alberta file – *Horses Hit Century Mile Racetrack* – Oct. 24, 2018

All photographs credit to: Orianna Scheck



(Above) Century Mile clubhouse restaurant.
(Left) Century Mile billboard with opening date April, 2019.
(Below) Century Mile thoroughbred race paddock.



Overview of the Century Mile Racetrack and Casino Project

- Century Mile Inc. is fully owned by Century Casinos Europe, which is a holding company within Century Casinos, Inc.'s group of companies.
- Century Mile signed the land lease with Edmonton International Airport in June 2017. It is a 20-year lease with six extensions of five years each. The size of the leased land is 101 acres.
- Century Casinos has secured full financing for the project.
- Total project costs are now estimated between CAD \$62 to \$65 million.
- Century Mile contractors and consultants:
- BR2 Architecture as architects and interior designers
 - Stantec Inc. for civil engineering;
 - Chandos Construction as general contractor;
- Superior Buildings & Design Ltd. as contractor to construct the barns.
- The planned opening date of the Racing Entertainment Centre:
 - Casino: April 1, 2019.
 - Racetrack: April 29, 2019

Racing Entertainment Centre (REC)

- The REC building is 96,667 square feet
- Main Floor - 45, 353 Slot floor capable of holding over 800+ slot machines
 - Restaurant - 150 seats
 - Off Track Betting (OTB) - 150 seats
 - Lounge - 65 seats
- Feature Bar
 - Concession
 - South elevator - Access basement, 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors
 - North Freight Elevator - Access basement, 1st and 2nd floors
 - Main Kitchen
 - Receiving
- Second Floor – 29,504 Tiered Seating Restaurant - Seats 274
 - OTB/Banquet Room - Seats 150
 - Luxury Suite A - Seats 48 plus balcony
 - Luxury Suite B - Seats 48 plus balcony

- Luxury Suite C - Seats 40 plus balcony
- Multi-Suite D - Seats 60 - Square Footage
- Bar
- Concession
- Prep Kitchen
- Public Grand Stand - Seats 300
- Public window viewing areas
- Administrative Offices/ Executive Boardroom
- Third and Fourth Floors - 5,003 square feet
 - Future Rooftop Patio
 - Judges and Announcer quarters
- Basement - 16,807 square feet
 - Jockey Quarters
 - Administrative Offices
 - Back of House Staff Facilities

Amenities/Statistics

- Land size 41 ha - 101 acres
- Length Track: 8 furlong = 1 mile = 1.6 kilometers
- Standardbred, Thoroughbred, Quarter Horse
- Two barns with 800+ stalls
 - Occupying approximately 179,000 square feet
 - Horse Racing Alberta and Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency required test barn, veterinarian space, and regulatory office
- Elevated exterior bleacher seating to accommodate over 300 guests
- Over 824 paved parking stalls with 869 additional grass parking stalls for large events
- Paddock Area
- Apron - located track level between the track and REC with F&B and wagering
- Second floor large banquet room with paddock view can be used as an OTB or event space

Surrounding Amenities

- EIA - Airport Traffic 7.8 Million in 2017
- Shuttle Service from Airport
- ETS Bus Service from Edmonton
- Premium Outlet Collection - Major Shopping Complex opened May 2, 2017
- Costco opened in autumn of 2018
- Marriot Brand Hotel opening Jan/2019
- 3000 Area Hotel Rooms