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LAS VEGAS SENTINEL

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January 1, 1981



## Greyhounds To Debut Jan. 15

The long awaited opening of Las Vegas Downs got one step closer as the greyhounds began arriving last week in preparation for the track's debut on Jan. 15.

"Everything is right on schedule," said Steven Funk, supervisor of the track's audio — visual systems. "Barring a union dispute, an earthquake or some other unforeseen disaster, the track will open on time."

Locals can get a preview of the action beginning Dec. 26, when the track will be open to visitors wishing to watch the dogs in qualifying races. Paramutuel wagering will begin on Jan. 15, with the first post-time at 8 p.m.

When completed, the facility will be the second largest operation of the

Funk family which owns the complex and six other dog tracks in Arizona.

The Phoenix location is the largest of the Funk tracks, which also include Yuma, Black Canyon, Apache, Tucson and Amado.

LV Downs will open with the nation's only track with portable turns which will come into use when throughbreds and quarter-horses start racing in 1982.

Don Lanners, the LV Downs' secretary of racing has put himself on the line to guarantee the quality of racing at the new track.

"I personally screened 70 kennels which applied, and accepted what I felt were the best 20," Lanners said.

"By best, I mean the kennels which can provide the best dogs. But before

these dogs will race, they will all be schooled to the satisfaction of the stewards. That is, the dogs will have to qualify by being checked for racing time and performance.

"We don't expect to open with a bunch of superstars, but we do expect to put on quality races. I will constantly be evaluating the kennels, and if any of them don't keep up to my standards, I will replace them."

Lanners went on to explain that even though they don't expect the cream of the greyhound racing crop to be on hand for the track's opening, he does expect the competition to get better as each kennel brings in better dogs each week, in order to out-do the other kennels.

To add extra interest for

the track's opening, Lanners revealed that one "All American Greyhound" will be on hand for opening week.

Track goers will be able to watch replays of the races on the 25 color monitors or dine in style in the 250-seat clubhouse dining area which track officials have promised to compare to any eating establishment in the area.

On opening day, the track will accommodate 3,500 patrons with clubhouse seating for 1,600. In the future, the park will seat 8,000, with the completion of the grandstands.

The greyhounds will run on a quarter-mile track and, with the moving of the turning rails, the track will be changed to a three quarter mile distance for future

horse racing action.

Many of the greyhounds have been boarded at the track since Dec. 11. The reason for the early arrivals is so that the dogs can become acclimated to the weather, noise and general surroundings of the track.

Racing greyhounds cost anywhere from \$800 to \$20,000 at one year old,

and that is before training. With 18 kennels boarding 42 dogs each on the track, the amount of money invested is tremendous.

The track is located at 7-11 Race Track Road in Henderson, just east of Boulder Highway. David J. Funk is the general manager, and Bruce Wenworth is the mutuel manager.



## PACEMAKER IMPLANTED ON JOE LOUIS' HEART

Joe Louis, former world heavyweight champion, who had been suffering from a heart irregularity, has received a pacemaker implanted on his heart, according to a Methodist Hospital spokesman in Houston, Tex.

The hospital reported Louis, 66, in good condition after the surgery.

Louis was admitted to the hospital Dec. 14 for what initially was described as a checkup.

Louis' wife, Martha flew to Houston earlier last week to be with her husband and had remained close to him during the surgery and post-operative care period. According to family sources, Louis will return to his Las Vegas residence on Jan. 3.

Louis has made periodic visits to Methodist since 1977,

when heart surgeon Dr. Michael DeBakey installed an arterial graft to correct an aneurysm.

Joe Louis emerged from a sharecropper's shack in an Alabama cotton patch to become the legendary "Brown Bomber" of the boxing ring. He held the world heavyweight championship longer than any other man in history and successfully defended his crown 25 times in 11 years.

He won the title June 22, 1937 when he knocked out James J. Braddock. At 37, Louis was matched against Rocky Marciano, who destroyed Louis in eight rounds.

His greatest moment came in his second fight with Germany's Max Schmeling, a 10-1 underdog. Schmeling had knocked Louis out in 12 rounds on June 19, 1936.



JOE LOUIS

in New York in their first meeting. They met again two years later in Yankee Stadium before a crowd of more than 70,000 fans who paid \$1,015,012.

Louis charged from his corner in the first round and hit Schmeling with a right hand to the

rib cage that staggered the German. Louis scored a knockout before the round was over and America had a new hero.

He won 68 of 71 professional bouts, 54 by knockouts, and took a job as a host at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

### Amateur Boxing Card Set at Caesars

The United States amateur boxing team has scheduled a pair of dual meets for Las Vegas in late January.

The first show will feature the U.S. vs. Yugoslavia at the Showboat on Jan. 24. The second show will be the U.S. vs. the USSR on Jan. 31 at Caesars

Palace.

Both dates are unofficial at this time, as both still need approval of the Nevada State Athletic Commission. The bouts will be sanctioned by both the AAU and NSAC, and televised nationally on a one-day basis.