

SAVAGE Pacer



Ceremonial groundbreaking for harness track will be Jan. 18

Southwest Casino Corp. and MTR Gaming inc. will host a ceremonial groundbreaking for the planned harness racing track in Anoka County. The invitation-only event will take place Jan. 18.

The yet-unnamed track is a partnership between the two gaming businesses and North Metro Harness Initiative LLC. It will be located on a 178.4-acre tract of land located near the interchange of 1-35 and Lake Drive in Columbus.

Folks from the Dan Patch Historical Society have been asked for input about using Dan Patch's name and legend at the track to ensure that any references to the famous pacer will be authentic.

Among the names that have been tossed around for the track are "Dan Patch Park" and "Columbus Meadows."

Officials hope to officially break ground for the track in early spring. A spokesperson for Southwest Casino Corp. said the Jan. 18 celebration is being done, "because we're trying to get this thing off the ground as soon as possible." An actual start time for construction will depend upon the weather.

Officials had hoped to break ground in November, but were delayed by legal problems. Once construction begins, it is expected that the facility will be completed in about 13 months.