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MEDIA RELEASE

SBS Bank Southland on Show builds on last success

Following the success of the refreshed, revitalised and rebranded SBS Bank Southland on Show held in 2009, SBS Bank is displaying its traditional values and community support as the major sponsors again for next month's show.

Organisers have built on the success of last year's revamped event, which included a new name from the former Southland A & P Show, new dates and its new venue at the Ascot Park Raceway and are rearing to go with another two-day, action-packed event.

SBS Bank general manager agribusiness Malcolm Little said the team at SBS Bank was proud of its long history with the rural community and recognised the importance of having a presence in the community through partnership and support.

"SBS Bank has been supporting our communities since 1869 and there is nothing more community-driven than a great family day out at the local A & P Show.

"That's why the SBS Bank Southland on Show is a perfect alliance of two long-standing local organisations with a proud history of community, looking after their people and rallying town and country together."

Returning to Ascot Park Raceway on 5 and 6 March, SBS Bank Southland on Show will feature a Children's Programme on the Friday from 11am to 2pm, with great interest from several schools and early childhood centres, which had registered around 400 children to attend.

SBS Bank Southland on Show co-ordinator Juanita Thornton said livestock breeders will be out in force seeking the all-important championships awards with dairy judging being held from 1pm on the Friday and 8.30am on Saturday, along with sheep and beef judging. Equestrian competitions would be held in the arena from 8.30am both show days and the wood chopping would strike up a lot of interest from midday on Friday with several New Zealand representatives and South Island champions entered."

There would be plenty in store for the children attending with the many activities, including a fun scavenger hunt, close-up interaction with animals, face painting, a magic show and a juggler all being part of the action.

The Hokonui Gold Farming Show would broadcast live from the main grandstand between 1 and 2pm and the Great Southern Auto Muster was also making a welcome return to the show with judging starting at 5.30pm on the Friday night, followed by the official opening of the show, the presentation of the Youth Ambassador Award and some great live entertainment, including 2009 Gold Guitars winner Helen van der Linden.

"Saturday is designed as the ultimate fun family day with a welcome return to Levi the Strongman, who was an absolute hit with everyone last year – especially the kids! There will also be plenty of craft and trade stalls to visit, refreshments galore and magic shows, face painting and rides for the kids to ensure everyone is kept happy," Mrs Thornton said.

“Just to make things even more interesting this year we will be having a bit of extra fun following the Grand Parade with some Fox Terrier racing, which should be hilarious, along with giant-suited sumo wrestling, jousting and a hangi will be laid on site for the hungry to enjoy, as well as plenty of other tasty treats.”

Mrs Thornton said the number of trade exhibitors this year was excellent with the SPCA actually offering kitten adoptions on site, while the Southland Playcentre Association ensuring there was a ton of free fun for the kids.

Another special highlight for everyone would be the attendance of local para-equestrian Mark Hamil who would be putting on a display.

Entry to SBS Bank Southland on Show this year is \$8 for adults, \$2 for children aged between five and 15, and under fives get in for free.

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