

State Fair Sesqui Edition Slates Dazzling Opening

Illinois has everything, and the Sesquicentennial edition of the Illinois State Fair is setting out to prove it.

The 1968 edition of one of the world's largest expositions will officially open Friday, with a five-hour parade of bands and dignitaries. The fair gates will swing open to a dazzling array of attractions which include livestock judging, carnival, horse shows, auto racing, big name entertainment, every kind of food imaginable, rodeos, competition in just about any area you can name, and fun, fun, fun for everyone.

It's the biggest show of the year.

The parade will start at 11 a.m. from 2nd and Monroe Streets, and will feature 19 official state high school bands, 41 floats and more than 30 additional units including drill teams, mounted groups, horse drawn conveyances and mobile units.

Franklin H. Rust, general manager of the state fair, has gone all-out to add new attractions to the traditional fair

events to add that Sesquicentennial touch to Illinois' celebration year.

The only dark spot on the fair horizon seems to be the continuing strike at Illinois Bell Telephone Co., which may knock out part of the fair communications system. Officials of the striking International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Wednesday refused to install phones for the fair. Rust had said earlier, however, that the problem could be surmounted and a solution still might be worked out.

Livestock and agricultural competition, the backbone of any fair, will proceed as scheduled. An antique farm equipment show will focus on the implements that changed the Illinois plains into fertile croplands. The Farm-A-Rama building will be the center for displays of every imaginable type on interest to Illinois farmers. Housewives and the younger set will find categories of competition open in every area.

Premium awards, trophies

and ribbons for the 1968 fair will total \$1,069,995, the highest amount in the history of the fair. General premium awards will amount to \$693,295, of which harness racing will receive \$530,500. Land of Lincoln awards, given as added premiums for Illinois-bred livestock, will total \$150,000. The Horse Show, Western Show and quarter-horse racing will add another \$150,000. The Junior Department premiums will average \$25,000.

As judging goes on in all areas, exhibits of both the educational and fun type will be open all over the fairgrounds. Visitors will have a chance to ride the new skyride, stretching the half mile from gate No. 1 to the Grandstand, giving a view of goings-on from 50 to 60 feet in the air.

Another amusement addition this year is the 150-foot high, 50-foot long slide.

Small fry and old fry too will gravitate to "Happy Hollow" when the Olson Shows

Several Killed Injured

State Fair

Continued From Page One

start setting up the traditional carnival rides and attractions. Two new rides this year are "The Zipper," and the "Astro Wheel," a single ferris wheel with gondola type buckets that can be turned upside down. The 25 flatcars and coaches will arrive in Springfield Monday and the shows will start setting up. The traditional "preview night" for Happy Hollow will be Thursday.

Tickets are going rapidly for the Grandstand attractions. The Cavalcade of Music will open the fair Friday, with the Country and Western Show scheduled Saturday, Aug. 10. Veterans Day competition will hold sway at the Grandstand Sunday.

Quarterhorse racing Monday at the Grandstand will be

bigger and better than ever. At least \$50,000 in prize money will be distributed. Eight races will be held Monday night, and indications are for one of the largest crowds of any Grandstand event. In addition to the eight races, there will be an exhibition 100-yard race between a quarterhorse and a drag racer.

Tuesday night will feature the Ed Ames Revue, with the Don Adams Show moving in Wednesday and Thursday. Lawrence Welk will appear Friday and Saturday nights.

Saturday afternoon, Aug. 17, will be the National Championship Big Car Race; and on Sunday, the 100-Mile Late Model Stock Car Race.

The Lightning Four Rodeo Productions will present one

performance on Friday, Aug. 9; two performances on Saturday, Aug. 10, and three performances on Sunday, Aug. 11, on the half-mile track. Competition will be held in bareback riding; calf roping; saddle bronc riding; steer wrestling; bull riding and cowgirls barrel racing. Prize money will top \$3,000.

The National Champion Horse Show at the Coliseum will offer \$10,000 for the Governor's Five-Gaited Stake this year for the first time in the fair's history.

Contributions from show horse exhibitors across the nation have doubled this year's stake. The class will now have one of the richest five-gaited stakes in the country.

Added attractions for 1968 are the Budweiser Clydesdale Hitch and the Meisterbrau Westphalian Stallions. The So-

cety Horse Show will run Aug. 8-15 and the Western Horse Show Aug. 16-18. The Illinois State Fair has the nation's largest light horse show and the third largest western horse show.

The stage-struck performers and audience alike, will be guaranteed plenty of talent showcases at the fair. In all, eight stages will be scattered about the grounds, offering free shows by professional and better-than-average amateurs from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. Stages in the Dairy and Textile Buildings will present specialized "acts" in the form of cooking demonstrations, style shows and sewing and general homemaking exhibitions.

Indoor stages will be in operation at the Exposition Building, the Illinois Building, and at Farm-A-Rama. Outdoor stages will be used in the

area outside the Grandstand entrance, adjacent to the Poultry Building, the "Talent Stage" at the end of Main Street, the band shell and the second floor of the Junior Activities Building. Rock and Roll groups will perform nightly at the Junior Activities Building.

New attractions are to be featured at the Exposition Building, including an educational exhibit on animals, an old-fashioned drug store with its fixtures and fountains, an antique display, and expanded modern art display. For the first time, the fair will also feature an art colony in a tent.

The glittering new symbol of the fair is "Perry Mutuel," a golden horse that stands at the head of Friendship Lane, a reminder that fair funds come from pari-mutuel racing profits.

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