

FREE

The SARATOGA Special



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SARATOGA'S DAILY NEWSPAPER ON THOROUGHBRED RACING

Friday, August 24, 2007



Tod Marks

Wait A While and Garrett Gomez flash to the finish line with an emphatic win in Thursday's Ballston Spa.

Worth The Wait

Champion delivers knockout punch for Pletcher barn

BY SEAN CLANCY

Todd Pletcher's back.

The five-time defending Saratoga training champion started the meet slowly, winning nine races. Then he stalled like a trawler in low tide, losing 30 consecutive races to fall nine wins behind meet leader Bill Mott.

Arindel Farm's Wait A While has a knack for doing the dramatic, and she came through like an ice pack to a sore knee, blowing away a deep field in the Grade II Ballston Spa Handicap. Last year's champion 3-year-old filly lagged in fifth under Garrett Gomez before launching a wide rally to score by a cool 2 1/4 lengths over Christophe Clement barnmates Vacare and Meribel. My Typhoon, the 7-5 favorite, ranged into the picture in the stretch but faded to finish sixth. Wait A While finished the 1 1/16 mile in 1:40, less than 1/5 of a second off the course record set in 2005 by male turf champion Leroidesanimaux.

Since focusing on the grass last summer, Wait A While has done little wrong, winning four of



Wait A While

six on the surface. The daughter of Maria's Mon streaked through the American Oaks, Lake Placid and Yellow Ribbon in 2006 before finishing fourth in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf, 4 1/4 lengths behind her elders Ouija Board, Film Maker and Honey Ryder. This year, she won her 4-year-old debut, the Honey Fox at Gulfstream Park, then failed the Polytrack experiment at Keeneland, flopping behind My Typhoon in the off-the-turf Jenny Wiley. In June, Wait A While finished second in the Just A Game after allowing My Typhoon to stroll on the lead through a first quarter in 25 seconds and a half in 49.

Pletcher then decided to dodge My Typhoon and go for the \$1 million Cash Call Mile in California. Wait A While flew west and landed with a fever. She skipped the race, returned east and left Pletcher with little choice but to take aim at the Ballston Spa. Perfect plan.

See **BALLSTON SPA** page 10 ►

PERSONAL ENSIGN PREVIEW

Shake it Up

Frankel filly ready for a Grade I test

BY BRIAN NADEAU

With the Breeders' Cup an ever-closer iceberg on the horizon many trainers have begun to play it safe, charting a course for calmer waters with the hopes of getting their charges to racing's biggest date in the best possible form.

Kindly let Bobby Frankel off the boat.

Today, Frankel sends out Frank Stronach's homebred Sugar Shake in the Grade I, \$400,000 Personal Ensign with only one goal in mind; victory.

"You know what, everybody worries about the Breeders' Cup and they pass races now that they could win. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," Frankel said. "If I could win these races now I would be happy and I'll worry about the Breeders' Cup later. Strawberries today, jam tomorrow."



Bobby Frankel

Robert Frost he may not be, but Frankel knows what he's talking about. And it's the "strawberries today" ideology that stamps Sugar Shake as a major player in the 10-furlong Personal Ensign.

The 4-year-old daughter of Awesome Again blossomed over the winter at Santa Anita, where she was stretched out to two turns for a pair of stakes scores; the Grade II El Encino and the Grade I Santa Maria Handicap. Racing on the lead in both races, she proved her mettle in the lane, battling gamely under David Flores to pull away late in both wins.

Frankel gave Sugar Shake a brief freshening after she spiked a temperature and shipped her to Belmont Park for the Grade II Shuvee Handicap at a one-turn mile. Racing on the lead and to the inside of Personal Ensign rival

See **PERSONAL ENSIGN** page 2 ►

INSIDE: ENTRIES AND HANDICAPPING • THURSDAY RACING RECAP • HERE & THERE IN SARATOGA

Personal Ensign —

■ Continued from page 1

Teammate, Sugar Shake wilted late and lost to her by a half-length.

Frankel's filly exited the race with a minor ankle issue, got some time off and was pointed to today's race. In last year's Grade I Coaching Club American Oaks — her only previous try at 1 1/4 miles — Sugar Shake caught a sloppy track and was beaten nearly 24 lengths.

Frankel isn't concerned about the distance, or much else for that matter.

"She likes two turns. She's got a good post and we will probably put her on the lead. I think she'll be all right. I think the reason she got beat at a mile and a quarter was the slop," Frankel said. "She's giving away weight (from 4 to 6 pounds) but there is nothing we can do; she won a Grade I."

Rafael Bejarano, who's been aboard twice before, gets the call today.

Todd Pletcher's powerful stable has two chances to take its second Grade I of the meet when he sends out Indian Vale and Unbridled Belle. Both come off a run the Grade II Delaware Handicap; naturally, only one is coming off a win.

A Eugene Melnyk homebred, Indian Vale was sent off at 9-10 in the Del Cap, based largely off of her convincing score in the Grade II Fleur de Lis at Churchill Downs June 16. She broke in good order under regular rider John Velazquez but never seemed comfortable, eventually checking in fifth, beaten 9 1/4 lengths.

"Any time you don't run well at Delaware you say it was because of the track; that is the obvious excuse," Pletcher said. "Indian Vale is 2-for-2 at Saratoga. She won first time back, then caught a sloppy track and then she won the Fleur de Lis, so we throw out the Delaware race and here we are."

She returns to the Spa with several things in her favor, most notably that spotless record over the track.



Sugar Shake checks out the Saratoga paddock Wednesday afternoon.

Tod Marks

It doesn't hurt that her mom, Marley Vale, won the Test here in 1999.

Pletcher compared Indian Vale's pace-pressing style to his former trainee Fleet Indian, who won the Personal Ensign last year on her way to an Eclipse Award.

"I think what she does really well is continue those 12-second (furlongs) over and over again," Pletcher said. "She is 6-for-6 at a mile and an eighth but I don't think a mile and a quarter is a problem for her. With her pedigree, a Grade I would be huge."

The beneficiary of Indian Vale's sub-par effort in the Del Cap was Unbridled Belle — Pletcher's "other" filly.

That tag didn't last long. The performance she put on for First State railbirds was far from second string.

Stalking in third under Ramon Dominguez (who returns today), Unbridled Belle moved powerfully to the lead turning for home and widened under a drive to score by an impressive 7 3/4 lengths. In just her second start of the year after a sophomore campaign that saw her as a fringe player in several Grade I attempts, Unbridled Belle captured her first graded stakes.

Owned by Team Valor Stables, the 4-year-old daughter of Broken Vow may be coming into her own, or she may just be another horse with an affinity for the Delaware surface (she's 3-for-4 at Del Park, 1-for-7 everywhere else).

Perhaps both.

Regardless, he trainer is excited.

"We will find out if she is as good away from Dela-

ware as she is at Delaware," Pletcher said. "She's been training great and has been a solid horse in her two starts this year; she is an improved filly from last year but we will have to see if she can duplicate that kind of effort."

Hall of Fame trainer Allen Jerkens hunts big game in the Personal Ensign with the double-barreled threat of Teammate and Miss Shop. Neither would be an upset of epic proportion, but either would be a bit of a surprise.

Joseph Allen's Teammate started her 4-year-old season in fine fashion, taking a Belmont Park allowance and then the Grade II Shuvee over Sugar Shake. Things haven't been quite so smooth since, however, as Teammate has struggled in two Grade I assignments: the June 16 Ogden Phipps at Belmont and the Go For Wand here July 28. Last year she was a game second to the ill-fated Pine Island in the Alabama over this course and distance, an effort that marks here as a factor today.

"She ran probably her best race up here last year to Pine Island in the Alabama. She ran extra-good that day and I think if she comes back with that effort on Friday she should at least be right up there," Jerkens said. "I don't know if she likes two turns better or not; she just needs to be on her game, that's all. She ran good at Belmont too, so she doesn't mind the one-turn either."

Cornelio Velasquez, who has ridden Teammate in 14 of her last 15 starts, has the return call.

Miss Shop's closing style complements her barnmate Teammate, who does her best running on or near the lead. A Hobeau Farm homebred, Miss Shop has struggled to find her top form since she romped in Gulfstream Park's Grade II Rampart Handicap in March. In the Go For Wand, Miss Shop finished second to Frankel and Stronach's other star filly

See **PERSONAL ENSIGN** page 3 ►



Tod Marks

Miss Shop comes back for her second Saratoga start of 2007.



Tod Marks

Teammate could be a pace factor in the Personal Ensign.

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"Bay Head" by John Thomas Berry

Personal Ensign —

■ Continued from page 2

Ginger Punch, though beaten 6 lengths. With the prospect of a quicker pace today, she could be a stretch threat under Javier Castellano.

Jerkens talked a bit of strategy as well as assessing the condition of his two fillies as they come into the Personal Ensign. He was also quick to point out that — like Frankel — he is not looking past the race.

“I don’t know if they will move forward off the Go For Wand, they seem to be doing about the same as they were last time,” Jerkens said. “I’ll just leave the trip to the jockeys. Teammate doesn’t have to be in front. I’ll leave it up to them and hope for the best. I think this is a spot that you try to win. I’m just going to hope to be lucky enough to win here and then look forward. If you are lucky enough to win a Grade I at Saratoga I that’s pretty good.”

Bruce Levine goes for the big one with Lila Paige. Sent off

at over 56-1 in the Del Cap she finished second behind Unbridled Belle. Levine opted for Delaware based on the purse value.

“There was a race at Monmouth that was \$36,000 to the winner,” he said. “We could have been fourth at Delaware and made 60. Two-hundred thousand later, here we are. It was a pretty big thrill to be second in a million-dollar race with a horse you claimed.”

Lila Paige thrived at the 1 1/4-mile distance at Delaware, and should be all set for a repeat — and a chance at a valuable Grade I placing.

“It’s almost like a gimmick to me,” said Levine, who claimed Lila Paige for \$60,000 in April. “A mile and an eighth she’s so-so; a mile and a quarter she excels. Basically we’d be thrilled to be third and get the Grade I placing. She’s got that running style, so hopefully she’ll make a run and pick a few off.”

Owned by Chris Coleman, the 6-year-old daughter of Cryptoclearance is 2-for-3 lifetime at the Spa. Eibar Coa picks up the mount.

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Where Are They Now?

The 2006 Personal Ensign Fleet Indian



Tod Marks

The Special takes a look back at the Saratoga stakes winners of last year, and what's happened in their lives since they found glory at the Spa.

When Paul Saylor purchased her in January for \$290,000, his expectations were modest. The results, however, were extraordinary. Entering the year on a nominal two-race win streak, the New York-bred daughter of Indian Charlie rattled off four straight stakes scores to start her 5-year-old campaign. She stretched the mark to seven with an emphatic 4 1/4-length win in the Personal Ensign, her first Grade I, then stamped her resume with even more black type by taking the Beldame in October. But her remarkable run ended, as she pulled a left-front suspensory ligament in the Breeders' Cup Distaff, which had already been marked as her final race. Retired and recovered now, she resides at Taylor Made Farm, and is in foal to Storm Cat. Of her \$1,704,513 career bankroll, she piled up \$1,473,720 in 2006, which ended with her collecting an Eclipse Award as Champion Older Female, as well as New York-bred Horse of the Year honors. And if you're a fan, she goes up for sale at Keeneland November.

Who's Next?

History For Sale

Just two weeks ago Barn 7 at the Fasig Tipton Sales Grounds bustled with activity for the yearling sales. The dominant Taylor Made consignment stabled there, as did consignments from Lane's End, Denali Stud and Three Chimneys.

Now all 96 stalls in the green barn are empty and locked, although the distinct smell of horse lingers. The once meticulously groomed area is littered with branches, leaves and trash. Above many of the stalls are small plaques with the names of horses who went on to accomplish great things.

Some stalls were used by top sires. Danzig fathered multiple champions, Breeders' Cup winners and leading sires. Hoist The Flag was a champion on the track and in the shed. Niniski was a Group I winner in Europe and a chef de race stallion. Northern Taste led the sire charts 11 times in Japan. Miswaki produced 97 stakes winners. Unbridled's Song is one of the most popular stallions at stud today.

Champion fillies and mares graced these stalls as well. Mrs. Penny dominated European racing. De La Rose and Dearly Precious earned championships in the United States. Multiple Grade I winner Stella Madrid called Barn 7 home, for a few days anyway. Flamenco Wave won a Group I race and produced three Group I winners as a broodmare.

Barn 7 also housed classy colts including Belmont Stakes winner Colonial Affair and A P Valentine, who placed in the Preakness and Belmont. Northern Tempest was 2-year-old champion in Italy. Unaccounted For returned to Saratoga to win the Whitney and Jim Dandy. Interco won the Santa Anita Handicap and three other Grade I races.

Now it's time to wait and see if the most recent inhabitants live up to their predecessors.

— Alysse Jacobs



Alysse Jacobs

Fasig-Tipton's Barn 7 awaits its next residents.

Worth Repeating

Wayne Lukas to Dave Donk, after seeing him at the Western-themed benefit for the Anna House: "I didn't recognize you in a cowboy hat."

Donk: "You wouldn't."

"I didn't know what else to do, I kind of wanted to thank him for staying on his feet."

Jockey Xavier Aizpuru about patting Rum Squall after the horse bobbled in yesterday's jump race.

"It's deep, if a guy says he can't find a good rider here, he's running a BAD horse."

Jocks' agent Mike Kelly

"I don't want to ride Chip when he's going for his 200th winner, I want to ride him when he's going for his 203rd."

Owner Charley Strittmatter, about steeplechase jockey Chip Miller who won his 200th race yesterday; his 203rd will put him ahead of his sister Blythe.

"Why, you need a ride to the track? Come on, let's go."

A guest at the Mariott Courtyard, when a *Special* reporter approached him outside the hotel and asked, "Excuse me, sir, are you a handicapper?"

"Didn't have to go very far for this interview, did you?"

Trainer Bruce Levine, who lives next door to *The Special*, on a driveway conversation about Lila Paige for the Personal Ensign preview

"With this new style, you're going to be in the winner's circle tomorrow."

Mimi Voss' hairstylist, Wednesday. Voss' husband Tom won Thursday's jump race to get his first victory of the meet

Take A Number

1: Guy who told *The Special's* Joe Clancy he "did a nice job on the house" while walking past the recently renovated office Thursday afternoon. Thanks, but we're just here for the summer.

1: Would-be racegoer who asked about "reserved seats for the Travers" in the Holiday Inn parking lot Thursday afternoon. Good luck, buddy.

9:30: Time jump jockey Chip Miller entered the Saratoga sweat box Thursday morning to tack 150 pounds on Planets Aligned. He left at 11:30.

Name of the Day

Sneaky Girl, fourth race. By Snuck In out of Diplomatic Girl. There are a few of these around every racetrack.

Weather

Today: A few isolated thunderstorms developing during the afternoon. Hot. High near 90. Winds SSW at 10 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 30 percent.

Tonight: Partly cloudy with a slight chance of thunderstorms. Humid. Low near 70. Winds SSW at 5 to 10 mph. Chance of rain 30 percent.

Travers Day: Isolated thunderstorms. Highs in the low 90s and lows in the upper 60s.

Sunday: Times of sun and clouds. Highs in the low 80s and lows in the upper 50s.

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Dave Harmon

Altesse (right) and Leo's Pegasus (second from right) exit the Banshee Breeze to run today in the Heavenly Prize Stakes.

Staying over for a stakes

Field of 5 a puzzle for hotel guests

BY JIM MULVIHILL

HEAVENLY PRIZE STAKES PREVIEW

There's nothing like a Travers week stakes race at Saratoga to make the heart of a true racing fan beat a little faster. In addition to the Mid-Summer Derby, the lineup includes the King's Bishop, the Ballerina, the Personal Ensign, and, of course, the Marriott Courtyard.

Today's fifth running (that's according to the hotel manager) of the Marriott Courtyard (or the Heavenly Prize Stakes, depending on whether you go by the NYRA program or *Daily Racing Form*) is for non-winners of an open sweepstakes since Feb. 1.

The contest didn't fill as originally written, for non-winners of an open stakes in 2007, so the racing office made an adjustment to entice A True Pussycat, the 5-2 morning line second choice who won the Lady On The Run Stakes at Aqueduct Jan. 31.

At 9 furlongs, the Marriott Courtyard is the third race of the day and could be a steppingstone to upcoming Grade I stakes at Belmont next month, such as the Ruffian and the Beldame.

For insight into this race, *The Special* decided not to bother the usual horsemen who have already been so gracious with their time and comments this season. Instead, we harassed guests at the Marriott Courtyard, most of whom were unaware that their room rates were helping sponsor an especially contentious race between five solid females.

Altesse, the morning-line favorite, not to mention the top pick of *Special* handicapper Pete Fornatale, is a filly who could be on her way to testing graded stakes company after finishing second in the Banshee Breeze to Lady Joanne, who went on to win the Ala-

bama last weekend. Altesse is the consensus choice among guests at the Marriott Courtyard.

"You have to go with the 2 because of Johnny Velazquez," said Jack Costello, a retired guidance counselor from Cambridge, Mass. "I just like him. Some of these other guys I don't even know; you don't hear as much about them."

The presence of Velazquez, a three-time leading rider at Saratoga, attracted the attention of several Marriott Courtyards.

"I like Shug McGaughey's horse," said Mark Isabelle, a Miami resident with 20 years of handicapping experience. "She ran a nice race last time, Johnny V is up, and she's by A.P. Indy and I love A.P. Indy horses."

Isabelle also pointed to breeding as a reason not to invest in the chances of A True Pussycat, by the millionaire sprinter Yes It's True.

"I don't know about Yes It's True in here," he said. "This filly won at a mile, but this distance, I'm guessing she's second-best."

A True Pussycat finished third to Fantastic Shirl in the restricted De La Rose Stakes here Aug. 1. The 4-year-old has earned nearly \$250,000 in an impressive 29 starts.

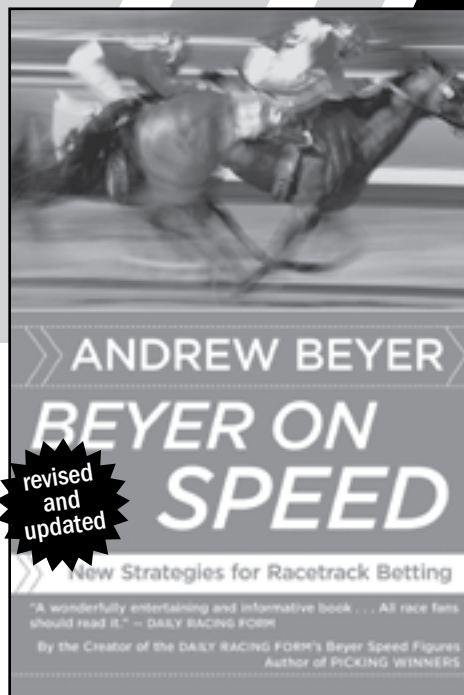
Trainer Neil Howard will start two in the Marriott Courtyard/Heavenly Prize. One, Soul Search, finished within a few lengths of some of the best fillies around over the past two years, including Fleet Indian, Asi Siempre and Brownie Points. On opening weekend she finished 10 lengths behind Ginger

See **HEAVENLY PRIZE** page 7 ►

"Where winning begins"

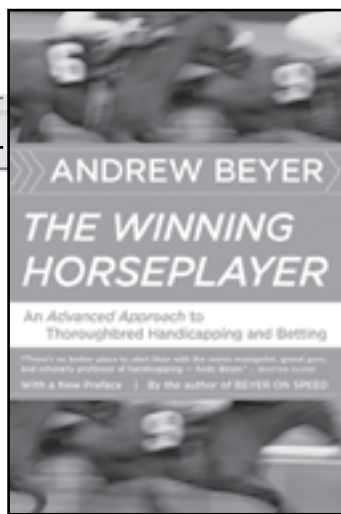
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—Dan Illman, handicapping editor, *Daily Racing Form*, drf.com



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Heavenly Prize —

■ Continued from page 6

Punch in the Grade I Go For Wand.

"She didn't do too well last time, but she gets (jockey Garrett) Gomez and an easier spot," said Isabelle, who seemed to be talking himself into a 2-3-4 tri box.

Howard also sends out Leo's Pegasus, a Fusaichi Pegasus filly that was third in last month's Banshee Breeze.

"She seems to be in the money almost all the time, and I like that she's breaking from the outside," said Bill White of Cape Cod, who also admired the company she's been keeping. "Lady Joanne won the Alabama, and Altesse was second, so these are nice horses."

The Marriott Courtyard/Heavenly Prize is so competitive that the longest shot on the morning line, Tap Gold, is projected at 5-1. That price could end up even shorter if the percentage of Jerseyites at the track is as high as it is at the Marriott.

"Eight times out of nine she's been in the money," noted Monmouth Park regular Jack Halleran. "Mark Hennig runs a lot of horses at Monmouth and I like Edgar Prado. In this type of race, I prefer horses that aren't coming out of all the optional claiming races, but have more stakes experience. But in this case I've got to stick with the Monmouth horse."

Tap Gold ran second in Monmouth's \$100,000 Lady's Secret and won an allowance/claiming event there in July. Halleran and his buddy Tom Sullivan, a pair of self-proclaimed "railrats" from

the Jersey Shore, added that if Monmouth's second-leading rider Eddie Castro were to win Thursday's Ballston Spa on My Typhoon, they'll be ready to parlay their proceeds to Tap Gold.

Sorry guys, but don't give up your hotel rooms.

None of the handicappers interviewed were more confident than Tom Tempesta, a Bostonian who insists on being referred to by his nickname, Goumba.

"Tap Gold is going to win that race," Goumba said. "She's in shape right now, and Prado is well overdue for a win. She's in shape and you know she's going to be there."

Goumba and Costello are among a group of friends paying \$160 per night at the Marriott Courtyard thanks to a special rate for government employees. "Let me tell you, this is a great place," Costello said. "That's about \$200 per night we save that we can use on gambling."

No matter who wins today's third race, at least somebody at the Marriott Courtyard will go to bed a winner.

...

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The Power Grid				
				
Race #				
1	Sky Dragon Cardiff Road Tee With The Tiger	Sky Dragon Tee With the Tiger Brian's Cat Can Do	Cardiff Road Sky Dragon Tee With The Tiger	Refined Royalty Brian's Cat Can Do Storm Beat
2	Delta Weekend Equally Palace Secret	Libor Rate Delta Weekend Palace Secret	Delta Weekend Palace Secret Libor Rate	Cato Major Passionate Miss Libor Rate
3	Altesse A True Pussycat Soul Search	Altesse A True Pussycat Tap Gold	A True Pussycat Altesse Leo's Pegasus	Tap Gold A True Pussycat Leo's Pegasus
4	Survived Miss Buddhafull Jocassee	Miss Buddhafull Absoulute Heaven Michaela's Angel	Miss Buddhafull Rice Entry Pasqualina	Pasqualina Cagey Girl Michaela's Angel
5	Artytheonemanparty B B Frank Brave And Skillful	Artytheonemanparty Fuffy B B Frank	Philharmonic Artytheonemanparty Brave And Skillful	Artytheonemanparty Southern Soprano Lava Cat
6	Prime Obsession Kid Doc Pure Tantrum	Prime Obsession Pure Tantrum Kid Doc	PureTantrum Prime Obsession Lyke A Hurricane	Lyke A Hurricane Pure Tantrum Prime Obsession
7	I'm A Numbers Guy Premium Wine Smash 'Em Sammy	I'm A Numbers Guy Smash Em Sammy Whistlin'	Premium Wine I'm A Numbers Guy Smash 'Em Sammy	Phillip X. I'm A Numbers Guy Smash 'Em Sammy
8	Storm Boot Gold Macklenin Johnny Hollywood	Pegase Jem Storm Boot Gold R Loyal Man	R Loyal Man Megatrend Storm Boot Gold	R Loyal Man P. J. Indy Storm Boot Gold
9	Teammate Sugar Shake Miss Shop	Unbridled Belle Lila Paige Sugar Shake	Indian Vale Unbridled Belle Miss Shop	Lila Paige Teammate Indian Vale
10	Executive Fleet Tahoe Warrior Champchu	Executive Fleet Moonshiner Tahoe Warrior	Royal Electrician Tahoe Warrior Executive Fleet	Moonshiner Tuffy Gold Tahoe Warrior
To Date:	48/208	50/208	56/208	28/208

Detailed Analysis

RACE 1: SKY DRAGON is a real threat if he can just run back to that last race. He's got an inside draw once again and maybe the low-profile connections mean a slightly better price than that competitive figure suggests. Cornelio Velasquez ends up on CARDIFF ROAD, who's had excuses recently. The last was taken off the turf and the run before at Colonial Downs was a troublefest. TEE WITH THE TIGER has done some OK work going long on the grass. He's been sprinting recently, but Eibar Coa stays aboard for the route.

RACE 2: DELTA WEEKEND made a nice middle move and was beaten less than 2 lengths earlier in the meet. That experience edge makes her the choice, at least before we perform our customary tote and paddock inspections. EQUALLY is an intriguing filly sent out by super-hot connections. PALACE SECRET shows a nice work over the Oklahoma track and has some pedigree appeal as well.

RACE 3: ALTESSE is bred to relish the distance and has a nifty bit of form, finishing just 3 1/4 lengths behind the Alabama winner last time. I'm not certain that A TRUE PUSSYCAT really wants 9 panels but with a local turf race to her credit there's a chance she'll be fit enough. SOUL SEARCH has a chance to wake up at a price. Her last few can be explained away, and she did finish third in the Gr. I Personal Ensign here last year.

RACE 4: SURVIVED could be dangerous if she gets in off the AE list, despite the potentially tricky post. She wasn't disgraced two back in the Gr. III Sands Point and this is a much easier spot. MISS BUDDHAFULL is another I'll use; it looks like there will be plenty of pace to set up her late run. JOCASSEE goes for a tag and a repeat of her maiden-breaking performance would make her very dangerous.

RACE 5: Despite what the numbers say, Rick Violette can have them firing first out, and ARTYTHEONEMANPARTY has pedigree appeal as well. A few of the freshman entered for a \$75,000 tag cost a bit more than that, which does raise the eyebrows. Still, both B B FRANK and

Brave And Skillful merit consideration. The former has the home-field advantage angle and Nick Zito, whose firsters win here; the latter is by win-early sire Silver Deputy.

RACE 6: PRIME OBSESSION improved last time with the blinkers despite getting into trouble; another who'll be on all my tickets. KID DOC was second a nose in a live heat; could move up in his second start of the meet. PURE TANTRUM was well-backed and ran well after a touch of trouble in his debut; normal second-out improvement would make him very dangerous.

RACE 7: I'M A NUMBERS GUY rates another chance after facing stakes company, and today's race could set up nicely for him. PREMIUM WINE has never been out of the exacta and his early foot is a powerful weapon. SMASH 'EM SAMMY could be the beneficiary if a quick pace develops. He ran well at this distance against better earlier in the meet.

RACE 8: STORM BOOT GOLD has a right to improve in his second start of the meet. He wired them last time but still has some big races to run back to. MACKLENIN has improved upon arriving in Saratoga before; this tactical fellow fits with these. JOHNNY HOLLYWOOD was close to the top one last time and rates a long look if he draws in.

RACE 9: TEAMMATE ran one of her best races here in last year's Alabama at today's distance; could pull the upset if she can rate and pounce. SUGAR SHAKE looms as another threat, especially if she can somehow put everyone to sleep on the lead. Her breeding suggests she can handle 10 panels; the CCA Oaks – the only time she stretched as far, and the only time she tired – was a muddy throw-out. There's a scenario where MISS SHOP could get plenty of pace to set up her late run; she was a game second in the Gr. I Go For Wand at this meeting but still could get overlooked.

RACE 10: EXECUTIVE FLEET's last couple of dirt tries would win this; looks like a possible single in the finale. TAHOE WARRIOR appears to be rounding into form and was in the hunt with a shot last time at a slightly longer distance. CHAMPCHU's last one-turn race suggests he fits with these and he should be plenty fit off the cutback.

– Pete Fornatale

Friday's Saratoga Entries

Friday, Aug. 24. Post Time 1 p.m. Entries with program number, post position, jockey, trainer, and morning-line odds.

1ST (1:00) 1 MILE. TURF. 3&UP. NY BRED. MSW. PURSE \$57,000.

1	1	Sky Dragon	Rojas R I	Cedano Heriberto	9-2
2	2	Brian's Cat Can Do.....	Dominguez R A	Contessa Gary	7-2
3	3	Cardiff Road	Velasquez C	DiSanto Glenn	4-1
4	4	Silver James.....	Samyn J L	Odintz Jeff	20-1
5	5	Tee With the Tiger	Coa E M	Carroll II Del	3-1
6	6	Bulle Rock	Bridgmohan S X	Bowers John	20-1
7	7	Storm Beat	Bracetty J A	Barker Edward	20-1
8	8	Galaxy Express.....	Hill C	Schettino Dominick	6-1
9	9	Refined Royalty	Castellano J J	De Stefano Jr John	12-1
10	MTO	Will Never Bend.....	Bracetty J A	Kelly Pat	12-1

Exacta, Trifecta, Daily Double

2ND (1:32) 5 1/2 FURLONGS. TURF. FILLIES. 2YO. MSW. PURSE \$62,000.

1	6	Equally	Desormeaux K J	Mott Bill	5-2
1A	MTO	Elle Society	No rider	Mott Bill	5-2
2	7	Libor Rate	Dominguez R A	Contessa Gary	5-1
2B	MTO	Tinted Moon	Coa E M	Contessa Gary	5-1
3	1	Bluegrass Girl.....	Garcia Alan	Sanders Jamie	8-1
4	2	Palace Secret.....	Castellano J J	Arnold Rusty	9-2
5	3	Delta Weekend	Gomez G K	Alexander Frank	3-1
6	4	Blairstown	Hill C	Martin Carlos	12-1
7	5	Cato Major.....	Velasquez C	Kimmel John	10-1
8	8	Passionate Miss	Leparoux J R	Jolley Leroy	15-1
9	MTO	False Pretense	Gomez G K	Violette Rick	2-1
10	MTO	Carnival City	Velasquez C	Lukas Wayne	5-1

A-Coupled: Equally and Elle Society

B-Coupled: Libor Rate and Tinted Moon

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Pick 3 (2-4), Pick 4 (2-5)

3RD (2:04) THE HEAVENLY PRIZE. 1 1/8 MILES. F&M. 3&UP. PURSE \$80,000.

1	1	Tap Gold	Prado E S	Hennig Mark	5-1
2	2	Altesse	Velasquez J R	McGaughey Shug	2-1
3	3	A True Pussycat.....	Garcia Alan	Bush Tom	5-2
4	4	Soul Search	Gomez G K	Howard Neil	7-2
5	5	Leo's Pegasus	Bridgmohan S X	Howard Neil	4-1

Exacta, Trifecta, Pick 3 (3-5)

4TH (2:36) 1 MILE. TURF. FILLIES. 3YO. CLAIMING 45,000. PURSE \$47,000.

1	9	Dressed to Win.....	Velasquez C	Rice Linda	7-2
1A	10	Absolute Heaven	Garcia Alan	Rice Linda	7-2
2	1	Pasqualina	Dominguez R A	Galluscio Dominic	6-1
3	2	Michaela's Angel	Beckner D V	Farro Patricia	15-1
4	3	Bourne First.....	Chavez J F	Contessa Gary	10-1
5	4	Cagey Girl.....	Desormeaux K J	Duggan David	4-1
6	5	Pure White	Bridgmohan S X	Russo Sal	15-1
7	6	Jocassee	Velasquez J R	Pletcher Todd	3-1
8	7	Sneaky Girl	Hill C	Ortiz Paulino	12-1
9	8	Miss Buddhafull	Coa E M	Friedman Mitchell	5-1
10	AE	Survived	Samyn J L	Jerkens Allen	2-1
11	MTO	Mustang Cali	No rider	Ritvo Tim	6-1

A-Coupled: Dressed to Win and Absolute Heaven

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Pick 3 (4-6)

5TH (3:08) 6 FURLONGS. 2YO. MDN CLM 75,000. PURSE \$40,000.

1	5	Glowing Image	Coa E M	Contessa Gary	9-2
1A	8	Indian Brave	Dominguez R A	Contessa Gary	9-2
2	1	Lava Cat	Rojas R I	Arroyo Enrique	8-1
3	2	B B Frank.....	Leparoux J R	Zito Nick	5-1
4	3	Fuffy	Bejarano R	Sanders Jamie	5-1
5	4	Southern Soprano	Garcia Alan	Sciacca Gary	15-1
6	6	Arthytheonemanparty	Gomez G K	Violette Rick	7-2
7	7	Brave and Skillful	Desormeaux K J	Mott Bill	3-1
8	9	Philharmonic	Luzzi M J	Weaver George	10-1

A-Coupled: Glowing Image and Indian Brave

Exacta, Trifecta, Pick 3 (5-7), Pick 6 (5-10)

6TH (3:41) 5 1/2 FURLONGS. TURF. 3&UP. NY BRED. MSW. PURSE \$56,000.

1	1	Raffie's Deer	Garcia Alan	Toner Jimmy	6-1
2	2	Pure Tantrum	Prado E S	Badgett Billy	3-1
3	3	Kid Doc	Desormeaux K J	O'Brien Colum	4-1
4	4	Watson I Need You.....	Chavez J F	Turner Billy	20-1
5	5	Prime Obsession	Velasquez C	Imperio Joseph	7-2
6	6	Aly's Tough.....	Hill C	DiSanto Glenn	15-1
7	7	Lyke a Hurricane	Coa E M	Levine Bruce	8-1
8	8	Another Hades.....	Dominguez R A	DeMola Joseph	5-1
9	9	Autumn of My Years.....	Rojas R I	Schettino Dominick	20-1
10	AE	Legal Tender.....	Bejarano R	Samaniego Beatrice	5-1
11	MTO	True Rock N Roll	Velasquez C	Streicher Kenneth	6-1
12	MTO	Golden Caesar	No rider	Kelly Pat	5-1

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pick 3 (6-8), Grand Slam (6-9), Daily Double

7TH (4:14) 6 1/2 FURLONGS. 3&UP. NY BRED. ALW/OPT CLM 30,000. PURSE \$63,000.

1	3	Run With the Lark	Desormeaux K J	Schosberg Rick	12-1
1A	4	Calculator	Velasquez C	Schosberg Rick	12-1
2	1	Fifty Frame	Hill C	Russo Frank	15-1
3	2	I'm a Numbers Guy	Prado E S	Ritchey Tim	3-1
4	5	Smash 'Em Sammy	Castellano J J	Schwartz Scott	8-1
5	6	Baxter	Gomez G K	Hertler John	12-1
6	7	Prince of Peace	Leparoux J R	Miceli Michael	20-1
7	8	Phillip X	Velasquez J R	Carroll II Del	15-1
8	9	Premium Wine	Dominguez R A	Dutrow Tony	9-2
9	10	Ferocious Won	Bridgmohan S X	Dutrow Richard	6-1
10	11	Trick Meeting	Bejarano R	Hough Stan	20-1
11	12	Whistlin'	Coa E M	Contessa Gary	5-1
12	13	Kiss the Cruiser	Garcia Alan	Duggan David	20-1
13	AE	Senor Freddie	Coa E M	Conway Jr Daniel	20-1

A-Coupled: Run With the Lark and Calculator

Exacta, Trifecta, Pick 4 (7-10)

8TH (4:47) 5 1/2 FURLONGS. TURF. 4&UP. CLAIMING 35,000. PURSE \$45,000.

1	1	R Loyal Man	Prado E S	Dutrow Richard	2-1
1A	5	King of Jazz	Desormeaux K J	Dutrow Richard	2-1
2	2	Megatrend	Rojas R I	Sciacca Gary	15-1
3	3	P. J. Indy	Dominguez R A	Bailes Robert	15-1
4	4	Acclimate	Luzzi M J	Arroyo Enrique	10-1
5	6	Storm Boot Gold	Coa E M	Contessa Gary	5-2
6	7	Pegase Jem (FR)	Bejarano R	Galluscio Dominic	5-1
7	8	Macklenin	Velasquez J R	Romans Dale	6-1
8	9	Auto City	Velasquez C	Englehart Chris	8-1
9	AE	Johnny Hollywood	Garcia Alan	Hammett Jody	9-2
10	MTO	Farno	Bejarano R	Bond James	5-1
11	MTO	Time to Grow Up	No rider	Schosberg Rick	6-1
12	MTO	Graynumberfive	No rider	Gyarmati Leah	12-1

A-Coupled: R Loyal Man and King of Jazz

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pick 3 (8-10)

9TH (5:20) THE PERSONAL ENSIGN (GR. I). 1 1/4 MILES. F&M. 3&UP. PURSE \$400,000.

1	1	Sugar Shake	Bejarano R	Frankel Bobby	7-2
2	2	Unbridled Belle	Dominguez R A	Pletcher Todd	5-2
3	3	Lila Paige	Coa E M	Levine Bruce	15-1
4	4	Teammate	Velasquez C	Jerkens Allen	6-1
5	5	Miss Shop	Castellano J J	Jerkens Allen	5-1
6	6	Indian Vale	Velasquez J R	Pletcher Todd	2-1

Exacta, Trifecta, Daily Double

10TH (5:52) 6 1/2 FURLONGS. 3&UP. CLAIMING 25,000. PURSE \$27,000.

1	1	Royal Electrician	Garcia Alan	D'Alessandro Ralph	12-1
2	2	Tough and Easy	Samyn J L	O'Brien Keith	30-1
3	3	Tuffy Gold	Luzzi M J	Kelly Pat	20-1
4	4	Six Gun	Bracetty J A	Dunham Bob	20-1
5	5	Executive Fleet	Desormeaux K J	Rice Linda	5-2
6	6	Tahoe Warrior	Velasquez J R	Weaver George	4-1
7	7	Ocean Forest	Coa E M	Contessa Gary	8-1
8	8	Champchu	Velasquez C	Schosberg Rick	5-1
9	9	Irish Brian	Rojas R I	Arroyo Enrique	20-1
10	10	Moonshiner	Dominguez R A	Lake Scott	10-1
11	11	Joe On the Go	Chavez J F	Badgett Billy	15-1
12	12	Coach Kent	Hill C	Russo Frank	10-1

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta

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Ballston Spa —

■ Continued from page 6

"It's hard to make a case that that was a good thing. Ship all the way out there for a million-dollar race on a turf course she's run well on . . . you hate to miss it, but by the same token, some things you can't control. We shipped her out there twice last year without any problems," Pletcher said. "We circled this on the calendar and then watched the weather all week because she likes firm ground. It's nice to see her come back and perform the way she's capable of."

Starting with the Sands Point in the slop, Wait A While won four consecutive graded stakes last year by 4 1/2 lengths or better, applying her stalking speed and finishing kick to decimate anything in her age group and most older rivals as well. She went 5-for-9 last year, collecting more than \$1.2 million. What could go right went right. Not this year.

"It's been frustrating because she came back and beat Precious Kitten the first time back and Precious Kitten since then has gone on and won a Grade I," Pletcher said. "Then we're sitting at Keeneland and it rains like crazy all morning — I make the decision at about 11:30 that I'm going to scratch and go to California for a stake that weekend. About 30 minutes later, they call and say we're off the turf. Now, you've got a filly who's never run on the Polytrack but she runs great on the slop, she works really well on the Polytrack, 'Let's go ahead and run.' She hated it. That's a throw out."



Dave Harmon

Wait A While (right) sprints away from the field in Thursday's Ballston Spa.

Wait A While owns wins on the dirt, the slop and the turf. She won't get another chance at Polytrack. As soon as that race was over, Pletcher circled the Just A Game at Belmont Park on Belmont Stakes Day. Another bump

"We probably didn't give My Typhoon enough credit," Pletcher said. "We sit back and the next thing we know they go 25 and 49 and My Typhoon flies home."

After two successful trips to California last year, Wait A While hopped on the plane to California for the Cash Call Mile in early July. She arrived with a 102 temperature, forcing Pletcher to treat her and scratch. Pletcher sent her to Churchill Downs where she trained until shipping to Saratoga in time for one half-mile breeze, a 48 1/5-second drill over the Oklahoma turf Aug. 17.

"She was training very well but when you catch a horse like My Typhoon who's on a hot streak, you're always concerned but this was more than a two-horse race," Pletcher said. "You look at Vacare's record and Meribel's record, there are some good fillies in there from top to bottom. But when she's on her A game, she's hard to beat. She's 8/100ths

off the track record off slow fractions, she's as good as she's ever been."

Wait A While has never been easy. She suffered through gate issues for most of her career and trains aggressively. Pletcher and his crew have worked hard to try to get her to relax. At about 4:51 Thursday afternoon, Pletcher was worried they had gone overboard.

"I was little concerned down the backside because she was so relaxed, last year she was a little more aggressive, just maturity on her part. We tried to teach her that, it's taken a while to kick in but now it looks like it's taken hold," Pletcher said. "She's always very forward in her training. But those kind, you go along and you're like, 'Man, I wish she'd relax, I wish she'd relax,' then you look at the five-eighths pole and she's relaxed, you're thinking she's too relaxed. But it's a good thing when you see her kick like that."

Pletcher is now faced with another tough question; return to California for the Yellow Ribbon Sept. 29, which she won last year, or look for something on the East Coast in preparation for the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf.

Now about that slump . . .

"I thought we were in a slump two weeks ago, when we were 9-for-48 or something. Then you look up and you lose another 30 in a row, it's like, 'That wasn't a slump, this is a slump,' " Pletcher said. "You get a couple of unlucky trips here and there, then you get a couple of horses that aren't good enough for the spots you're running them in and you're in a slump. Someone asked me the other day, 'How do you deal with slumps?' I said, 'I don't know, this is the first one I've been in.' There's only one way to handle them, go to work every day, keep your chin up, keep working hard."

Pletcher was proactive in trying to figure out the problem. Was it bad luck? Was it simply timing? Or was there something wrong with the program?

"About two weeks, I picked out 12 random horses here and 12 random horses at Belmont and ran bloods on them, just trying to make sure the feeding program or something isn't slipping through the cracks. It all checked out," Pletcher said. "It's no fun. If it was Belmont or Aqueduct, it wouldn't be as big a deal, but here, it hurts a little more. You know, five (titles) in a row takes a long time to get there, you have one bad meeting and the streak's over."

Pletcher might be weathering a slump but he's not discounting the man at the top of the heap either.

"It's certainly no surprise that Bill Mott is winning races," Pletcher said. "He's been in the Hall of Fame longer than I've been training. I can appreciate the hard work and the job he does. I'd at least like to have a competitive meet where he'd have to sweat it a little."

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Miller time

Jump jockey reaches milestone with win aboard Planets Aligned

BY JOE CLANCY

THURSDAY RACING

Since May, a sign with Chip Miller's name and a big 200 has traveled the National Steeplechase Association circuit – the sign went to Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Maryland and Virginia.

Thursday at Saratoga the sign finally shed its brown-paper wrapper, landing in Miller's lap as the jockey rode Planets Aligned into the winner's circle after winning the \$70,000 Mickey Walsh Memorial novice hurdle stakes. The opener drew a field of seven, but wound up a one-man show as Miller moved from third to first after the last fence. Owned by Fox Ridge Farm and trained by Tom Voss, Planets Aligned didn't get to the front until the final 100 yards or so but won by 1 1/4 lengths. Rum Squall finished second with Gigger third in 4:40.78 for the 2 3/8 miles.

The winner settled off the early pace of Bold Turn and Gigger, and had one horse beaten with a circuit remaining. Down the backstretch the final time, Planets Aligned was fourth behind Bold Turn, Gigger and Rum Squall. Miller blew his cover by peeking under his legs at what was behind him – there was

little but stragglers.

"I didn't realize we were second-to-last with a turn to go but he was comfortable," said Miller. "I was riding to get the trip. The way he ran last time (sixth under Rob Massey in a similar race three weeks earlier). I was being careful. I didn't want to be too aggressive or get there too soon."

Planets Aligned glided around the turn, waited for a seam to open after the last fence and accelerated past Gigger and Rum Squall to win for the second time in five jump starts (all this year). The Fox Ridge homebred, who won on the flat here last summer for Pat Kelly, went over the \$200,000 mark in lifetime earnings.

His jockey, 37, became just the eighth to win 200 North American jump races – a feat that rivals the seven jockeys to have won 7,000 North American flat races.

"Unfortunately, I've been thinking about it all summer because we don't ride much and I've been at 199 for a while," said Miller, who got his 199th win May 19. "I never counted numbers,



Tod Marks

Planets Aligned (Chip Miller) sprints for the finish line in Thursday's steeplechase.

never counted how many races I had in a year, 10 years, whatever. But this makes me think of how long I've been doing it, makes me think of the horses, and the experiences I've had. I've been riding here for 15 years and to pass that much time with people means something. You read that you're the eighth jockey to do it and you have to think about it. Wow, that's something. It's not for me to say what it means. You win them one at a time."

Miller began riding in 1991 and has long battled to stay light enough to ride races. Voss called about riding Planets Aligned this week, and Miller (who lives

in Pennsylvania and flew up for the ride Thursday morning) almost wanted to pass – almost.

"It's hard for me, hard to keep the weight off, hard to go to yoga, hard to not miss a run, harder to miss a meal," said Miller, who tacked 150 (2 pounds over). "I got up at 4 o'clock in the morning to do this. I thought 'I'm old, why am I doing this?' I love to do it, and that's why I do it, but a part of me would have been happy if he got somebody else to ride him. Of course, then I ride the horse, don't make a mistake and here I am."

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Long Road

Patience pays off for DiSanto, filly with maiden score on Saratoga turf

BY BRIAN NADEAU

Sometimes a name means a lot. Longingfortheone (\$11.20) won the fifth race, a turf sprint for maiden state-breds, in her fifth career start. But the filly's progress to the winner's circle was part of an even longer journey. Just ask winning trainer Glenn DiSanto.

"I bred this filly as well, so it is extra-special. I bred her mother (Longing To Be) too," he said. "Her mother got kicked as a baby and this is the first one we've had out of her to make it to the races. Another one was born with curvature of the spine; just a whole bunch of things."

DiSanto got Longingfortheone to the track, then got her to the winner's circle. The trainer was a popular figure there, joined by owners Summit View Farm, Birchwood Racing Stable and Sportsmen Stable, along with a host of well-wishers.

Longingfortheone was making her second start of the year, after a neck finish in her seasonal debut here Aug. 5. Thursday, Channing Hill gunned the daughter of Abaginone to the front immediately, and Longingfortheone did

THURSDAY RACING RECAP

the rest, going gate-to-wire to defeat Sultry Sue by 1 1/2 lengths.

"Turf has been the key," DiSanto said. She just wants to go; she only knows one way to run. She has a horse to the inside so she likes to drift out so we always have to train her with a pony."

- The tote board has been a good guide of late, and it gave the green light to Barclay Tagg's first-time starter Big Truck in the second race, a state-bred dash for freshman maidens. Sent off as the odds-on favorite, the son of hot first-year sire Hook And Ladder didn't disappoint as he broke running under Ramon Dominguez and assumed command through a half-mile in 45.74 seconds. Dominguez was a happy passenger as Big Truck widened his advantage as the field approached the stretch. The margin at the wire was 6 1/2 lengths over Post Exchange.

Thanks to assistant Robin Smullen, Tagg knew his horse was live long before the totalizer did.

"The first time Robin got on him



Tod Marks

Longingfortheone (3) pulls away late to win Thursday's fifth for breeder/trainer Glenn DiSanto.

she told me that this horse was special. He's a really good mover and everything else," Tagg said. "The Hook And Ladders have really been running well early in the year. Coming in Hook And Ladder had won with five of his first 15 starters, so I guess we boosted that percentage a little bit today."

- The only two horses who had ever met the starter in the afternoon put on quite a performance in the third, a maid-

en dash on the Mellon Turf Course. Ya Think for trainer George Weaver and Attention for meet-leading trainer Bill Mott went at it like salty veterans for the entire 5 1/2 furlongs, with Weaver's charge pulling away by a half-length late. It was the trainer's third win after beginning the meet 0-for-19.

Ya Think had made two previous starts, the last being a mile and a six-

See **THURSDAY** page 13 ►

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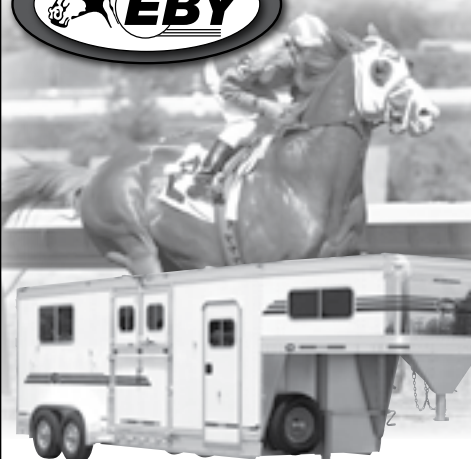
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Thursday —

■ Continued from page 12

teenth over the turf here Aug. 3. That foundation proved to be key. Garrett Gomez had Ya Think on the lead for the first 3 furlongs before Kent Desormeaux and At Attention put their nose in front turning for home. At Attention looked like he was going to draw off as he hit the eighth-pole. And then Gomez went to work. Calling on Ya Think fought back and actually drew clear at the wire.

"I had plenty of horse. When I turned for home he was actually starting to relax. The horse had already run a couple of times so I knew I could get him to relax for me. Just when we turned for home Desormeaux tried to catch my horse sleeping and go early but he hit the gas and I still had some left," Gomez said. "It's one of those things where you time the gas and those two horses were pretty close together except he had his accelerator a little early and my little horse kicked in late. He had a couple races under his belt so he had a little more bottom and racing experience; especially with a route race under his belt."

• Pizza (\$5.70) came to the fourth with several things in her favor: she was dropping to face maiden-claimers, returning to the main track after a disappointing turf try and getting blinkers for the first time. But perhaps the most important factor was that Cornelio Velasquez saw fit to ride; he used his Midas touch to guide the 3-year-old filly

home to an easy 3 1/4 length victory.

Trained by Scott Everett for Peter Callahan, Pizza had been off since May 6 when the daughter of Buddha finished 10th of 12 after a mile on the Belmont Park turf. Thursday she was put into the race immediately by Velasquez, pressing the pace of Flirty Karakorum. Velasquez turned up the pressure turning for home and Pizza bounded clear inside the eighth-pole to defeat Can't Bluff Mulvey.

• Extreme Supreme (\$7.50) showed his affinity for the racetrack and Thursday's 9-furlong distance when he was up late under Velasquez to win the sixth, an allowance/optional claimer. Owned by John Oxley, Extreme Supreme improved to 2-for-3 at the Spa and 3-for-5 lifetime at 9 furlongs.

With Three In The Bag ensuring a fast pace while free-wheeling on the lead, Velasquez had Extreme Supreme stalking in third position, about 4 lengths from the front. As Three In The Bag began to wilt from the early pace, Velasquez guided Extreme Supreme to the outside nearing the eighth-pole and they scampered clear to cross the line three-quarters of a length in front of the charging Deputy Indy.

Velasquez's riding double pushed his total to 31 wins at the meet, moving him into a tie with Desormeaux atop the Saratoga jockey board.

• Scott Schwartz has made the most of a limited amount of starters this summer at the Spa. The trend continued when Metro Meteor (\$8.70) scraped the

See **THURSDAY** page 14 ►

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Thursday —

■ Continued from page 13

rail for a thrilling victory under Rafael Bejarano. The win was Schwartz's third from only nine starters.

Metro Meteor, claimed for \$50,000 by Schwartz and California Dreamin' after running third in a Belmont allowance race June 30, improved after running third here Aug. 2.

"I claimed this horse specifically for Saratoga, as I knew he likes this turf course. It was perfect time too, as he was out of jail by the time the meet started," Schwartz said. "He happened to run into a buzz-saw (Southern Prince) last time, but he ran well; he ran his race. The turf was hard and the other horse didn't stop; circumstances were against him that day."

Things played more to Metro Meteor's style yesterday and Bejarano had the son of City Zip sitting off a quick and contested pace. Making his move turning for home, Bejarano and Metro Meteor stayed glued to the rail as Citifest and Storm N Lightning streaked past the eighth-pole. Threading the string delicately through the eye of the needle, Bejarano snuck through on the inside of Citifest and Metro Meteor got up to score by a neck.

"No, I didn't think he was going to get through there," Schwartz said afterward. "But I'll tell you something — if you watch his races, he has finished about three or four times where the last 50 yards he just takes off. You think he's not going to get up and all of a sudden he goes from nothing to winning. Rafael



Tod Marks

Big Truck looks like the Big Horse while flashing across the finish line in Thursday's second.

didn't do anything wrong the last time, he just didn't get there; that other horse opened up 7 lengths and never stopped. Today he ran dynamite and Rafael gave him a great ride. What more can you ask for?"

- Some at the race course missed the nightcap, eager perhaps to avoid the oncoming storm and get an early start at sunny Del Mar. Greg DiPrima wouldn't have missed it for the world.

The trainer stayed on to see his filly Judge's Pride (\$67.50) wire the ninth, breaking her maiden in her 10th career start. Apprentice Jose Bracetty put

Judge's Pride immediately on the engine and they opened up 5 1/2 lengths on the field. After speeding a half-mile in 45.56 few, if any, thought the nearly 33-1 shot would sustain the furious pace.

But as Bracetty and Judge's Pride streaked past the eighth-pole with a 2 1/2 length lead it was quite clear they meant business. They maintained that advantage on the wire over favored Too Much Zip.

Owned by MiStars Stables, Judge's Pride had never finished closer than 12 lengths to the leader. The sudden reversal of form made DiPrima's day extra special.

"This is my first win here. It just feels great," DiPrima said. "We had the bug on so the plan today was to just go to the front and see how far we can go. We had been training her on the grass a little bit and she seemed to really like it. The turf course was hard and seemed to be playing to speed, so that was the plan and it worked out. I worked with Frank LaBocchetta Jr. for seven years and his dad before that. This is my first summer up here with a string of horses; usually I stayed back downstate with the horses when they opened up here. This is a dream come true; winning at Saratoga, it doesn't get any better."

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Saratoga Results

THURSDAY, AUGUST 23

1ST. MICHAEL G. WALSH NOVICE. 2 3/8 MILES. HURDLE. 4&UP. PURSE \$67,900.

3	Planets Aligned	Miller Chip	17.00	8.40	5.50
5	Rum Squall	Aizpuru X		3.70	3.00
7	Gigger	Murphy Cyril			6.30

Finish Time: 4:40.78

Trainer: Tom Voss. Owner: Fox Ridge Farm.
Ch.g.6 Gold Fever-Flying Minister, Deputy Minister.
Bred by Fox Ridge Farm (KY).

\$2 Exacta 3-5 Paid \$54.00; \$2 Trifecta 3-5-7 Paid \$457.00

2ND. 6 1/2 FURLONGS. 2YO. NY BRED. MSW. PURSE \$56,000.

2	Big Truck	Dominguez R A	3.30	2.60	2.10
5	Post Exchange	Garcia Alan		3.70	2.70
4	Cape of Storms	Bejarano R			2.30

Finish Time: 1:17.65

Trainer: Barclay Tagg. Owner: Eric Fein.
B.c.2 Hook and Ladder-Just a Ginny, Go for Gin.
Bred by A. Lakin & Sons (NY).

\$2 Exacta 2-5 Paid \$13.00; \$2 Quinella 2-5 Paid \$9.00; \$2 Trifecta 2-5-4 Paid \$25.40; \$2 Daily Double (3-2) Paid \$41.80; \$2 Consolation Double (3-6) Paid \$16.40

3RD. 5 1/2 FURLONGS. TURF. 2YO. MSW. PURSE \$62,000.

7	Ya Think	Gomez G K	10.00	4.90	3.40
9	At Attention	Desormeaux K J		3.70	2.80
1	Veiled Prophet	Bejarano R			4.30

Finish Time: 1:03.86

Trainer: George Weaver. Owner: Edgewood Farm.
Ch.c.2 Broken Vow-Cable News, Known Fact.
Bred by Christopher Elser (KY).

\$2 Exacta 7-9 Paid \$37.80; \$2 Trifecta 7-9-1 Paid \$200.00; \$2 Daily Double (2-7) Paid \$30.80

4TH. 7 FURLONGS. F&M. 3&UP. MDN CLM 40,000. PURSE \$25,000.

6	Pizza	Velasquez C	5.70	3.90	2.90
7	Can't Bluff Mulvey	Garcia Alan		20.60	8.70
9	Astoria Sweetheart	Prado E S			2.80

Finish Time: 1:23.89

Trainer: Scott Everett. Owner: Peter Callahan.
Ch.f.3 Buddha-Mt. Cuba, Forty Niner.
Bred by Rosilyn Polan (KY).

\$2 Exacta 6-7 Paid \$115.00; \$2 Quinella 6-7 Paid \$60.50; \$2 Trifecta 6-7-9 Paid \$421.50; \$2 Pick 3 (2-7-6) 3 Correct Paid \$94.50

How We Did

RACE 1: Top pick ran third, third pick won.

RACE 2: Big Truck cruised home to a \$3.30 win. Second pick scratched and third pick finished second.

RACE 3: Third pick won.

RACE 4: Pizza served up a \$5.70 win. Second pick was third.

RACE 5: Second pick finished, well, second.

RACE 6: Thanks to an entry, we had four runners set to go.

By post, we had one. He didn't hit the board.

RACE 7: Metro Meteor fired off a \$8.70 win. Third pick ran third.

RACE 8: Second pick ran third and third pick won.

RACE 9: Top pick scratched, second pick ran second.

SEASON TOTALS: 57 wins by top selection in 235 races.

Average win payoff \$6.76.

How We Did summarizes the performance of
The Special's handicappers in the "Detailed Analysis" section.

5TH. 5 1/2 FURLONGS. TURF. F&M. 3&UP. NY BRED. MSW. PURSE \$56,000.

3	Longingfortheone	Hill C	11.20	5.00	4.00
8	Sultry Sue	Velasquez C		4.30	3.20
5	Miss Annie M	Chavez J F			5.50

Finish Time: 1:04.43

Trainer: Glann DiSanto. Owner: Summit View Farm,
Birchwood Racing Stable & Sportsmen Stable.
Ch.f.3 Abaginone-Longing to Be, Belong to Me.
Bred by Glenn DiSanto (NY).

\$2 Exacta 3-8 Paid \$35.60; \$2 Trifecta 3-8-5 Paid \$229.50; \$2 Pick 3 (7-6-3) 3 Correct Paid \$220.00

6TH. 1 1/8 MILES. 3&UP. AOC 50,000. PURSE \$70,000.

7	Extreme Supreme	Velasquez C	7.50	4.40	3.10
6	Deputy Indy	Castellano J J		6.30	3.20
5	Smokeyjonesutton	Leparoux J R			2.70

Finish Time: 1:50.21

Trainer: John Ward. Owner: John Oxley.
B.c.4 Deputy Minister-Low Tolerance, Proud Truth.
Bred by Darby Dan Stables (KY).

\$2 Exacta 7-6 Paid \$53.50; \$2 Trifecta 7-6-5 Paid \$132.50; \$2 Pick 3 (6-3-7) 3 Correct Paid \$164.00; \$2 Pick 4 (7-6-3-7) 4 Correct Paid \$957.00

7TH. 5 1/2 FURLONGS. TURF. 3&UP. NY BRED. AOC 50,000. PURSE \$63,000.

7	Metro Meteor	Bejarano R	8.70	4.10	3.00
6	Citifest	Ponce J		8.20	4.90
9	Storm N Lightning	Desormeaux K J			3.20

Finish Time: 1:02.56

Trainer: Scott Schwartz.-Owner: California Dreamin' Stables.
B.g.4 City Zip-Here Comes Nikki, The Prime Minister.
Bred by Gus Schoenborn Jr. (NY).

\$2 Exacta 7-6 Paid \$57.00; \$2 Trifecta 7-6-9 Paid \$153.00; \$2 Daily Double (7-7) Paid \$35.40; \$2 Pick 3 (3-7-7) 3 Correct Paid \$239.00; \$2 Superfecta 7-6-9-8 Paid \$636.00

8TH. THE BALLSTON SPA (GR. II). 1 1/16 MILES. TURF. F&M. 3&UP. PURSE \$200,000.

7	Wait a While	Gomez G K	8.00	4.50	3.30
2	Vacare	Prado E S		4.80	3.50
1	Meribel	Velazquez J R			4.40

Finish Time: 1:40.00

Trainer: Todd Pletcher. Owner: Arindel Farm.
Gr./Ro.f.4 Maria's Mon-Flirtatious, A.P. Indy.
Bred by Will Farish & Temple Webber Jr. (KY).

\$2 Exacta 7-2 Paid \$37.80; \$2 Trifecta 7-2-1 Paid \$133.00; \$2 Grand Slam (3/5/8-5/6/7-6/7/9-7) Paid \$43.00

9TH. 5 1/2 FURLONGS. TURF. F&M. 3&UP. NY BRED. MSW. PURSE \$56,000.

9	Judge's Pride	Bracetty J A	67.50	17.00	8.80
1	Too Much Zip	Coa E M		3.40	2.90
6	Mia	Arroyo N Jr			5.00

Finish Time: 1:03.89

Trainer: Gregory DiPrima. Owner: Mi Star Stables.
Dk.B./Br.f.3 Judge T C-Augusta's Pride, Line In The Sand.
Bred by Sez Who Thoroughbreds (NY).

\$2 Exacta 9-1 Paid \$217.50; \$2 Trifecta 9-1-6 Paid \$1,166.00; \$2 Superfecta 9-1-6-5 Paid \$3,213.00; \$2 Daily Double (7-9) Paid \$383.50; \$2 Pick 3 (7-7-9) 3 Correct Paid \$1,599.00; \$2 Pick 4 (7-7-7-9) 4 Correct Paid \$8,377.00; \$2 Pick 6 (6-3-7-7-9) 6 Correct Paid \$53,717.00, 5 Correct Paid \$210.50

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Jockeys

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Cornelio Velasquez	31	Xavier Aizpuru	2
Garrett Gomez	21	Jose Bracetty	2
Javier Castellano	20	Eddie Castro	2
Edgar Prado	20	Danielle Hodsdon	2
Ramon Dominguez	17	Mario Pino	2
John Velazquez	17	Roberto Alvarado	1
Rafael Bejarano	15	Norberto Arroyo Jr	1
Eibar Coa	15	Jorge Chavez	1
Alan Garcia	11	Fernando Jara	1
Shaun Bridgmohan	9	Carlos Marquez Jr	1
Calvin Borel	8	Chip Miller	1
Julien Leparoux	6	Corey Nakatani	1
Channing Hill	5	Raul Rojas	1

Trainers

Bill Mott	18	Bruce Levine	2
Gary Contessa	11	Graham Motion	2
Todd Pletcher	10	Atreo Persaud	2
Richard Dutrow	9	Jonathan Sheppard	2
Tom Bush	8	Al Stall Jr	2
Steve Asmussen	6	Dallas Stewart	2
Stan Hough	6	John Ward	2
Kiaran McLaughlin	6	Ronny Werner	2
Barclay Tagg	6	Frank Alexander	1
Christophe Clement	5	William Allyn	1
Dominic Galluscio	5	Rusty Arnold	1
Linda Rice	5	Enrique Arroyo	1
Saeed bin Suroor	4	Bobby Barbara	1
Tony Dutrow	4	John Destefano Jr	1
Bobby Frankel	4	Gregory DiPrima	1
John Kimmel	4	Glenn DiSanto	1
Rick Violette	4	Chris Englehart	1
Nick Zito	4	Scott Everett	1
Charlton Baker	3	Jack Fisher	1
Patrick Biancone	3	Gary Gullo	1
Wally Dollase	3	Leah Gyarmati	1
David Donk	3	John Hertler	1
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Neil Howard	3	David Jacobson	1
Mike Hushion	3	Leroy Jolley	1
Jimmy Jerkens	3	Scott Lake	1
Pat Kelly	3	Michael Lauer	1
Steve Klesaris	3	Wayne Lukas	1
Carlos Martin	3	Shug McGaughey	1
Michael Matz	3	Mike Miceli	1
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Angel Penna	3	Jeff Odintz	1
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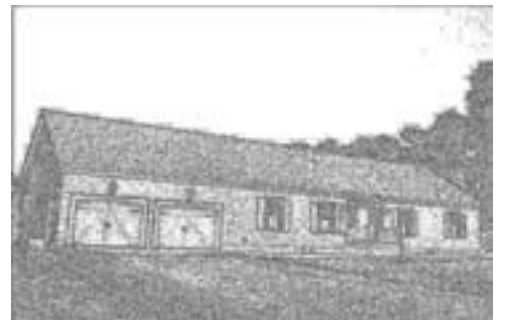
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Magic time

Daughter of race's namesake gets chance at stardom in Victory Ride

BY KAREN JOHNSON

If screenwriters controlled the outcome of Saturday's Victory Ride Stakes, the ending would surely be magical.

For among the entrants in the \$100,000 stakes is Magical Ride, the first foal out of Victory Ride, who won the Grade I Test here in 2001.

Victory Ride's career reads like a screenplay.

She dazzled in her first two starts, winning them by a combined margin of 21 1/2 lengths, lost the Acorn by a head to Forest Secrets, then bounced back to score in the biggest race of her life.

But a few weeks after winning the Test over Xtra Heat – the champion 3-year-old filly of 2001 – Victory Ride was sidelined with a potentially career-ending injury. She suffered a lateral condylar fracture of her right-front cannon bone during a workout. Dr. Larry Bramlage inserted two permanent screws to repair the damage.

Owner G. Watts Humphrey Jr. and trainer Rusty Arnold brought the filly back to the track in April 2002 and she raced five times that year.

The daughter of Seeking The Gold

won her return race in the Madison Stakes at Keeneland. She also won the Omnibus Stakes at Monmouth Park and suffered three losses. After finishing third in the Churchill Downs Distaff in November, Victory Ride was retired with \$390,391 in earnings and a record of 5-1-2 from nine starts. Humphrey bred her to Storm Cat the following year.

"She was the best horse I had my hands on," Arnold said outside his barn Tuesday morning. "I was glad to have her back, but she wasn't the same horse. I think people didn't realize how good she was because they were not looking back at the 3-for-4 record she had as a 3-year-old."

"She came back and won her first race in the Madison, but she didn't have that same run," he added. "We ran her in the Shuvee next and she was third and we almost quit on her then, but we had missed the breeding season. She won easy in New Jersey, but still she wasn't the same."

Arnold and Humphrey have enjoyed a more than 15-year relationship, almost a rarity in an industry where the owner-trainer relationship sometimes



Tod Marks

Magical Ride runs Saturday in a race named for her mother, Victory Ride.

operates on a revolving-door basis. Arnold respected the fact, and thought it was very sporting, that Humphrey brought Victory Ride back to the races, especially when early retirements, particularly when injuries are involved, are not uncommon.

"He was great; he could have brought her right to the breeding shed," Arnold said.

Humphrey, who bought Victory Ride as a yearling at auction for \$475,000, said, "We loved racing her and we

wanted to give her the chance, which she never got, to prove how good she was."

NYRA introduced the Victory Ride, a 6-furlong sprint for 3-year-old fillies, in 2003. Today, it's a Grade III event on the Travers Day undercard.

Of course, the proverbial icing on the cake to this story would be a win by Magical Ride, the product of that first mating with Storm Cat. The filly, who goes out for the same connections as

See **VICTORY RIDE** page 21 ►

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Victory Ride —

■ Continued from page 20

her dam, is not without a chance.

Though she seeks her first stakes victory Saturday, Magical Ride has won twice in seven starts and looked professional winning those races. Last year at Saratoga, Magical Ride finished third behind Octave in the Grade II Adirondack after setting a pressured pace.

"She has had a few more issues than her mother," Arnold said. "She has foot issues and Victory Ride never had a problem until she got hurt. She was just a dream to train."

Had Victory Ride's first foal been a colt, Humphrey would have sold the foal, as is his practice. He races the fillies, but nearly always sells the colts, if the price is right. Victory Ride's second foal, a full-brother to Magical Ride, went for \$1.5 million at Keeneland.

All of Humphrey's pregnant mares undergo an ultrasound about 60 days into their pregnancies to determine the sex of the foal. So it was somewhat of a surprise when Victory Ride dropped a filly.

"We thought, although we weren't sure, that it was a colt," Humphrey said.

But the script called for a filly.

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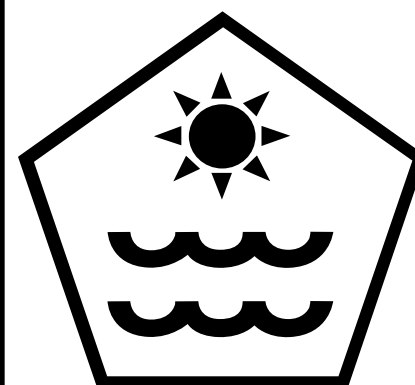
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Expressionism

New York sire Western Expression proves popular at Saratoga 2007

BY FRANCES KARON

PEDIGREE ANALYSIS

Ten days to go and there's not an inch between them. While Cornelio Velasquez and Kent Desormeaux slug it out for the jockey title, there's a fight just as tight (and far more surprising) on the undercard. Each with five wins to his name, the battle for the meet's top sire is tied between Rahy and . . . Western Expression?

The hometown kid has a shot at the belt.

The nice part about Western Expression is that he's a New Yorker, which means his runners were conceived a short gallop from the racecourse. Granted, many of these races have been against fellow New York-breds, but wasn't Funny Cide a New York-bred?

If there was a tie-breaker, Western Expression's two stakes winners would give him the edge. The only stallion with more than one individual black-type winner, he's sired Square Dancing (Aug. 2), Western Sweep (Aug. 6), Thunderestimate (in the Cab Calloway Aug. 8), Whateverwillbwillb (Aug. 17) and Stunt Man (in the Albany Aug. 22).

Western Expression was a ready-made sire prospect from birth; all he

needed was to show a little racetrack ability. While he didn't exactly develop much of a cult following with three wins (at 6 and 7 furlongs) in 16 tries at 3 and 4, he hit the board 50 percent of the time. He was a head shy of being a Grade I winner, running second in the Carter Handicap at Aqueduct for his sole black type.

In 2001, Western Expression retired to Highcliff Farm in Delanson, initially standing for \$10,000 (now \$5,000). His sire Gone West has plenty of proof in the sire-of-sires department: Elusive Quality, Mr. Greeley, Grand Slam and the brothers Zafonic and Zamindar. Local breeders were already familiar with his female family. In New York alone, his year-younger half-brother King Cugat had won the Jamaica Handicap and would win – while the first mares were in foal to Western Expression – the Bowling Green Handicap. That year, he ran second in Saratoga's Sword Dancer and Belmont's Turf Classic Invitational and Manhattan Handicaps, as well as the Turf Classic at Churchill Downs – all Grade I.

Western Expression's dam Tricky



Tod Marks

Stunt Man gives sire Western Expression his fifth winner of the meet in Wednesday's Albany.

Game was a full-sister to another New York sire, Jamaica winner Stacked Pack, who sired a few stakes winners from his base at McMahon of Saratoga.

The real jewel in this crown is Tricky Game's half-brother Seeking The Gold, one of the world's best sires. Another half-brother is Fast Play, a Grade I winner who, as of the 2006 stud season, has also found his way to New York, where he stands at Questroyal at Liberty for \$3,500. A full sister to Tricky Game

(Gambling Fool) produced the good Japanese horse Zafolia by Gone West.

Broadway, the third dam of Western Expression, produced champion Queen Of The Stage and her full-brother Reviewer, immortalized as the sire of Ruffian.

By all signs, Western Expression has developed into a good servant to the New York program. Recently, he's been

See **PEDIGREE** page 23 ►

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#177 MINESHAFT filly
#243 RAHY colt

TUESDAY, Sept 11

#262 AWESOME AGAIN colt
#291 GIANT'S CAUSEWAY colt
#302 STORM CAT colt
#330 RAHY colt

Pedigree —

■ Continued from page 22

represented by two first-time stakes winners: Thunderestimate, who notched a win in the Cab Calloway, and Stunt Man, winner of Wednesday's Albany. Although he has only one previous stakes winner in four crops of racing age, he has 11 stakes horses from 116 starters. The bragging rights to leading New York sire belong to his barnmate Catienus, but Western Expression has them all licked when it comes to winner's circle photos at Saratoga over the last month.

Stunt Man is bred on a clever cross that has been effective with Gone West. The gelding's dam Beribboned is from the Bold Ruler line (as is Gone West's dam), and Gone West has sired the likes of Speightstown, West By West, Grand Slam and Mr. Greeley (whose broodmare sire is, coincidentally, Reviewer) among many with multiples of Bold Ruler.

Some clear patterns have begun to emerge in Western Ex-

pression's stakes horses, and a student of Gone West will recognize similarities. Stunt Man has a duplication of the mare Tamerett, as do two black-type placers. The male lines of Ribot and Roberto also feature prominently. Thunderestimate is one of two stakes-quality Western Expressions with a dam by Wild Again.

The cross that has really been potent with Gone West is Northern Dancer, and Western Expression's third stakes winner is bred in this way (through Nureyev).

One of Western Expression's first crop stakes horses, Western Galaxy, has an interesting inbreeding scheme: her broodmare sire Galaxy Guide is by a son of Buckpasser (4x4) out of a mare by Reviewer, with Broadway at 4x5. There will be plenty of opportunities

The potential good news for fans of Western Expression is that Stunt Man and Thunderestimate have some full siblings coming along, all fillies: a yearling in the case of Thunderestimate, and a 2-year-old (Yosa Bell), yearling and foal for Stunt Man.

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NYRA hires Handel for executive position

The New York Racing Association announced Thursday the appointment of Hal Handel to the position of executive vice president and chief operating officer, effective Sept. 10.

Handel, 60, departs Greenwood Racing of Bensalem, Pa., where he has been chief executive officer since 1998. In that role, he oversaw the renovation of Philadelphia Park's grandstand in 2000 and the development of New Jersey's first off-track wagering facility, which opened in Vineland in 2007.

Previously, he held leadership roles at the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority's Meadowlands and Monmouth Park, where he was general manager from 1986 to 1991 and executive vice president and chief operating officer from 1991 to 1998. During his tenure he facilitated the transition in 1986 of Monmouth Park from a public company to a state-owned racetrack operated by the NJSEA. Handel also furthered development of the Hambletonian at the Meadowlands and Haskell Invitational at Monmouth Park into benchmark racing events.

A graduate of Rutgers University, Handel earned his law degree at Seton Hall University in 1972. During his four years as deputy attorney general for the state of New Jersey Organized Crime & Special Prosecutions Unit, Handel supervised the investigation of the Tony Ciulla race fixing case. Handel joined the New Jersey Racing Commission in 1977, serving first as counsel, then

deputy director and finally as executive director from 1983 to 1986.

Handel has served in a variety of other leadership roles in horse racing as well. He was formerly a trustee of the American Horse Council, chairman of the Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau, director of Harness Tracks of America and has been a director of the Thoroughbred Racing Associations since 1986, including a two-year term as the organization's president.

Handel's wife, Sheila, is a licensed diabetes educator and registered nurse at Princeton Medical Center. Their son, Matt, is a senior at Haverford College in Haverford, Pa. The Handels have residences in Cranbury, N.J., and New York City.

— Edited NYRA press release



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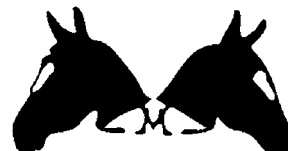


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Travers Trivia

Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it, and those who do not heed Travers history are destined to eat it – at the windows, that is.
A few Travers tidbits:

- The last 2-year-old champion to run in the Travers was Fly So Free, who finished third in the 1991 renewal won by Corporate Report.

- Of the 14 2-year-old champions to run in the Travers, eight have won.

- Of the 21 Kentucky Derby winners to run in the Travers, only nine have won, including Thunder Gulch, the most recent to attempt the feat, in 1995.

- The last two Travers winners, Bernardini and Flower Alley, won the Jim Dandy as their prep race.

- In the last 104 runnings of the Travers, the favorite has won 46 times, a 44-percent clip.

- Of the 51 favorites that were odds-on, 34 came through, a 67-percent clip. The most recent odds-on favorite to lose was Brian's Time, who finished third in 1988 at even money. Since then, six odds-on favorites have delivered: Easy Goer, Holy Bull, Thunder Gulch, Point Given, Medaglia d'Oro and Bernardini.

- Only one Travers starter has managed to set the opening fraction for 6 furlongs in 1:10 or less and still win – Man o' War in 1929.

- The most common winning post positions in Travers history are post No. 2 (occupied today by C P West) and post No. 4 (Street Sense), with 19 winners each.

- Seventeen owners have won multiple runnings of the Travers. In today's race, James Tafel, owner of Street Sense, has a previous victory, with Unshaded in 2000, and the Phipps Stable of Ogden Mills Phipps won with Rhythm in 1990.

- Eighteen trainers have won multiple runnings of the Travers, including Shug McGaughey, trainer of Sightseeing in today's race, who has three: Easy Goer in 1989, Rhythm in 1990 and Coronado's Quest in

1998. Two other trainers could add themselves to the list of multiple winners today – Nick Zito, who won with Birdstone in 2004, and Carl Nafzger, who won with Unshaded in 2000.

- The only jockey in this year's Travers to win the race is Edgar Prado, who scored with Birdstone in 2004, one of his seven career Travers mounts. Four of this year's seven riders make their Travers debuts: Julien Leparoux, Calvin Borel, Robby Albarado and Kent Desormeaux.

- Nine Travers winners have been named Horse of the Year, the most recent being Point Given, who never raced again following his victory in the 2001 Mid-Summer Derby.

– Compiled from NYRA press notes



The field for the 138th Travers Stakes, to be run Saturday, was drawn Wednesday at Saratoga Race Course.

PP	Horse	Owner	Trainer	Jockey	M/L Odds
1	Helsinki	Four Roses Thoroughbreds	Nick Zito	Julien Leparoux	20-1
2	C P West	Robert LaPenta	Nick Zito	Cornelio Velasquez	5-1
3	For You Reppo	Trident Stable and Carl Gessler	Helen Pitts	Garrett Gomez	20-1
4	Street Sense	Jim Tafel	Carl Nafzger	Calvin Borel	3-5
5	Grasshopper	Will Farish	Neil Howard	Robby Albarado	8-1
6	Loose Leaf	Steve and Stan Kaplan	Ken McPeck	Kent Desormeaux	12-1
7	Sightseeing	Phipps Stable	Shug McGaughey	Edgar Prado	6-1

Post Time: 5:40 p.m. Race 9 of 12. Distance: 1 1/4 miles. All Starters carry 126 pounds.



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Hill Climbing

Channing Hill high-fived an old man, picked up two of Shaun Bridgmohan's children and gave away a pair of goggles before finally landing at the jocks' room after the fifth race. That's when the 20-year-old jockey summed up the thought process of winning.

"I was thinking, 'wire, wire, wire, wire.'"

The wire didn't disappoint, as Hill guided Longingfortheone to a front-running victory in yesterday's fifth, a 5 1/2-furlong turf sprint for New York-bred fillies. The 3-year-old filly rattled on the lead, turned for home in command and then hung on the last furlong for a 1 1/2-length victory. It was Hill's fifth triumph at the meet. Doesn't sound like many?

If your record haul in two years of competing at the Spa is three, then five (with 10 days to go) is huge.

"It feels good, especially now, five wins came a little quick. Last year, it seemed like I was working, working, working and one came and I was happy with one. Believe me, last year I was ecstatic with one win – it was a horse for Timmy Hills, a second-time starter. When two came, I was like, 'wow, two wins,' then three came . . ."

On Wednesday, Hill turned 20. He looks 12.

He works hard, he respects his career, he feels fortunate to be riding at Saratoga – traits usually learned the hard way. Well, Hill did learn them the hard way while growing up in Nebraska. His parents divorced, and at 12, he moved in with his dad.

"I started galloping horses – well, getting run off – when I was 12 years old at the farm in Columbus. I had to get up every morning and get on horses. They didn't put me on easy ones either, they put me on some tough son of a guns. That's how you learn,"

CUP OF COFFEE

By Sean Clancy

Hill said. "I been raised on the racetrack. They give you a lot of responsibility, especially at the smaller tracks. You see a lot of kids, 13 years old, they're walking the horse to the paddock, saddling the horse. A lot of maturity comes from being on the racetrack for so long. I'm 20 but I feel like I'm 35."

Hill rode his first race around a bull-ring track in Nebraska, a few days after his 16th birthday, then went back to high school. He won his first race in June 2004 at Prairie Meadows. When Bridgmohan went to Prairie Meadows to ride Swingforthe fences in the Iowa Derby, agent Matt Muzikar watched Hill win two races and told him to come to New York. Hill said he'd be there, but he needed to graduate high school first. He graduated early and arrived in New York the next day. He quickly hit it off with trainers, becoming leading apprentice in New York in 2005, and finishing second in the Eclipse voting behind Emma-Jayne Wilson. Last year, he won 76 races in New York. This year, he's already won 61, and did he mention, five, at Saratoga? Nah, Hill wouldn't, he's too humble to tell just anyone.

"Coming into this Saratoga, I wanted to beat three, just for myself. Coming here and winning races, I don't get the full grasp until I talk to people from back home," Hill said. "When I talk to someone from home and they say, 'We just won the stake for \$15,000.' I say, 'Wow, that's great. Way to go.' When I was riding there, I ran second in the Nebraska Derby, I was like, 'Wow, I run second in the Nebraska Derby.' The horse ended up being a \$12,000 claimer. I think, anywhere you win a race, it's special.

Especially here."

Hill's father, Allen, rode races throughout the Midwest. He won the Black Eyed Susan with My Juliet. He taught his son well.

"My dad's one of a kind. Apart from being my dad, he's my best friend. He raised me, he sat me down sometimes and told me when I was doing something crazy, but most of the time he treated me like a friend more than a son," Hill said. "I could tell my dad anything. I could call him right now and tell him absolutely anything. Me and my dad are so competitive with each other it's unreal. When we used to work horses together, we'd bump each other, cut each other off. When I was little, we used to race to the grocery store – he tripped me one day, never even looked back. That's how I was raised, you've got to get up and go back at it."

Hill has been doing that since he was 12, galloping horses before school and thinking about one thing, being a jockey. He didn't have much choice, it's all he knew, all he wanted to know.

"This horse used to run off with me every day. My dad would say, 'You better get on him today, hopefully you can hold him.' I would tremble to get on this horse," Hill recalled. "One day, I didn't tighten my girth, I went to pull on him and my saddle went right underneath him. I went into the ground like a lawn dart. My dad said, 'Are you all right? Then get up and walk.' Then he yells at me for walking through the corn in the infield. That's how I was raised, but I'm so happy I was raised that way. You see somebody break their pinkie toe and they don't ride for two weeks. I was raised that you better be halfway dying to take off."

Hill and his agent Joe DiAngelo don't take off. Hill is usually on a horse of Mike Hushion's first thing in the morning.

"This is what I love to do, this is what drives me, to be out there and win races," Hill said. "That's why I'm up every morning, trying to work as many horses as I can, just to show people I want to be here."

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