Year 9 • No. 24

SARATOGA'S DAILY NEWSPAPER ON THOROUGHBRED RACING

Thursday, August 27, 2009



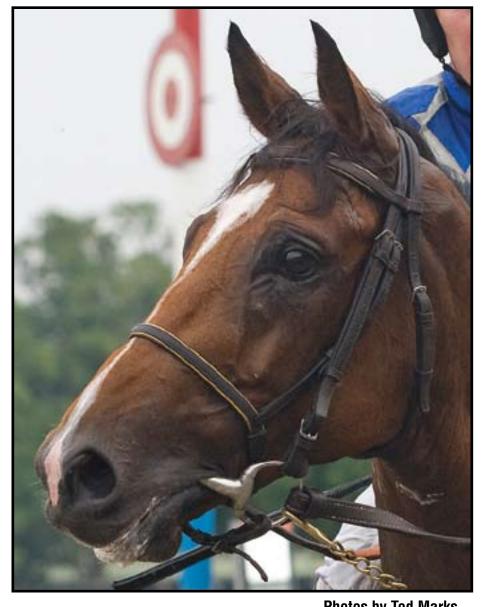
Inside

- Travers lures 7 as Mine That Bird passes
- ♦ New York Turf Writers Cup Preview
- → Dominguez wins four on Wednesday
- ◆ Thursday Entries and Handicapping



Best of luck to all of the steeplechasers at Saratoga

> · Alnoff Stable, Ground Frost & Be Certain



Photos by Tod Marks



\$1,000,000 GUARANTEED GRADED PICK 4

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

PICK 4 BEGINS WITH RACE 9

RACE 9: \$200,000 BALLSTON SPA (G2)

RACE 10: \$300,000 BALLERINA (G1)

RACE 11: \$300,000 NETJETS KING'S BISHOP (G1)

RACE 12: \$1 MILLION SHADWELL TRAVERS (G1)

FIRST LEG STARTS APPROXIMATELY 4:05 PM



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SARATÕĜA

3

Here & There at Saratoga



PSST. Trainers Bill Mott (left) and Christophe Clement share a secret after Wednesday's third race. Clement won with Khukuri, Mott was fourth with Cullinan.

Worth Repeating

"They don't cover anything else in the world, like what President Eisenhower's doing, nothing like that."

Times-Picayune writer Bob Fortus on the Saratoga Special's daily beat

"I booked it before I came."

European-based jump jockey Peter Buchanan, who came over at the beginning of the meet and has won two races, when asked if he had booked his flight home

"Long Island, man. Long Island."

Winston Heslop, on his first morning at Saratoga, when asked if he went back to Jamaica

"Some of them are OK."

Trainer Tom Voss when asked what he thought of the Turf Writers

"What's up, Superman?"

Shaun Bridgmohan to John Velazquez, after seeing the photo of Velazquez flying through the air in The Special

"I was levitating."

By the Numbers

1: Sheet on a horse of Christophe Clement's (the first sign of winter, or fall anyway) Wednesday morning.

Name of the Day

Sextant, fifth race. The 4-year-old filly is by Orientate.

Ten Carrott Nikki, second race, and City Sneakers, seventh race. The names aren't all that spectacular but they are half-sisters, each bred by Gus Schoenborn Jr., owned by Clyde Rice and trained by Linda Rice.

Weather

Today: Mostly sunny. High 74. Winds NNW at 5 to 10 mph. **Tonight**: Brr. A few clouds. Low 47.

Friday: Mostly cloudy. High in the low 70s and low in the mid 50s.

Saturday: Showers possible. High in the upper 60s and low in the mid

Sunday: A few thunderstorms. High in the low 70s and low in the upper 50s.

Quote of the Morning

"If I'd a known it was going to be a vacation, I'd have had a lot more fun."

Trainer Chip Woolley after deciding not to run Mine That Bird in the Travers

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– Lee Hills, Pulitzer Prize winner, Knight Ridder chief executive, in 1974

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Grounded Throat surgery forces Mine That Bird out of Travers

BY JOE CLANCY

Chip Woolley stabbed his right crutch at a weed in the shedrow of the Saratoga stakes barn Wednesday morning and thought about what might have been.

"Unnhh," he said, sounding like he got punched in the gut. "There's no way to describe the disappointment - no way to describe it."

An hour earlier, the trainer decided to bypass Saturday's Travers Stakes with Kentucky Derby winner Mine That Bird because of throat surgery performed Aug. 18. Woolley and owners Mark Allen and Dr. Leonard Blach made the call based on an endoscopic exam Wednesday. The exam showed significant healing and progress to the entrapped epiglottis, but also highlighted one area of concern on the left side. Woolley and the owners did not want to risk permanent damage for one race - even a race as important as the Travers.

Woolley said the area is still swollen, that it would most likely not be a longterm problem, but that the stress of a race could make things worse. The surgery, performed by Dr. Patricia Hogan at the Ruffian Equine Medical Center in Elmont, was a success. The timing, 11 days before a major race, was not.

"If this would have been a week sooner or the race a week later we might not have this doubt but here we are and

this is what we're dealing with," Woolley said. "He could have run and I feel that he would have performed up to his capabilities, but you just don't know if you would be causing more irritation to where we did the surgery and be causing him problems down the road - any time you've got inflammation, you don't know what you're going to have after the race.'

Woolley talked extensively about Mine That Bird's career, not just his one and only Travers chance. The 3-yearold son of Birdstone upset the Derby, narrowly lost the Preakness to star filly Rachel Alexandra, finished third in the Belmont Stakes and was third again in the West Virginia Derby. The \$1 million Shadwell Travers looked ideally suited to the gelding's late-running style.

"It would have been some fun to go up there and take our best swing at it," Woolley said. "It was the race post-Derby that was his very best opportunity. You're still with 3-year-olds, it's his distance, he loves it here, the whole thing. We were ready."

Based in the stakes barn most of the meet, Mine That Bird worked well Tuesday though Woolley cautioned that Wednesday's exam - and the horse's longterm future - would be the deciding factor.

See *MINE THAT BIRD* page 7 ▶



Tod Marks

Chip Woolley and Mine That Bird will miss the Travers.

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Today's Free Race Analysis

RACE #8 Saratoga, August 27, 2009

We're going to take a shot with comebacker Motor City Mama. She hasn't raced since facing tougher open mid-level Allowance foes on the dirt at Aqueduct March 25. She won that race and shows eight works since April 25 for a high percentage barn starting their first runner at the meet. She could be a stranger/danger at a price and is our HF 15a. Acquired Cat beat similar May 31 and was 2nd with this kind July 23. She's an obvious threat. Absoulute Heaven and Mohegan Sky are both exiting the Stakes ranks and merit respect. 'Heaven was a respectable 5th in the Lotsa Talc July 11, while Mohegan Sky checked in 4th in the Finney, an open Stakes event. Of the two, we think Mohegan Sky appears the more dangerous. Southside Babe was 3rd with similar July 23 and could impact the exotics again. By Today's Racing Digest

"I basically do three things, the first of which combines reading with statistical handicapping. I use the Racing Digest, which is my computer on paper, the Daily Racing Form, and a couple of independent clockers who are pretty good." Professional Handicapper James E. Allard AKA "Jimmy The Hat" - from an interview published in the March/April 2009 edition of Horse Player Magazine

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- Running lines adjusted to today's race distance and
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- only California) Running style stats and analysis
- Track Bias
- Horses to Watch (BTL)

Today's Free Fractional Charting by 70day's Racing Digest (Projected times at each point of call for today's race)

	NAME- BY ORDER OF	414	4/0	0/4	=1111011		TRK, DATE &
	<u>FINISH</u>	<u>1/4</u>	<u>1/2</u>	<u>3/4</u>	<u>FINISH</u>	<u>LF</u>	RCS BK
	(Avg This Level)	:22.1	:45.1	:56.6	01:02.8		
1	Mohegan Sky	<u>22</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>56.9</u>	01:02.8	17.8	SAR-08/09/09-1
2	Motor City Mama	22.4	45.6	57	01:03.3	17.7	AQU-02/11/09-2◆
3	La Concerto-MTO (b)	22.1	45.2	<u>56.9</u>	01:03.6	18.4	BEL-07/17/09-1
4	Absoulute Heaven	22.8	46	57.5	01:03.7	17.7	BEL-07/11/09-1
5	Smokin Sarah-MTO (a)	22.2	45.8	57.5	01:03.8	18	BEL-07/24/09-1
6	Mine Or Who's (b)	23.3	46.6	57.4	01:03.8	<u>17.2</u>	BEL-07/23/09-1
7	Acquired Cat	22.5	45.7	57	01:04.0	18.3	BEL-07/23/09-1
8	Southside Babe	23.2	46.2	58.1	01:04.1	17.9	BEL-07/23/09-1
9	Sweet Madness	23.4	46.7	57.8	01:04.5	17.8	BEL-07/23/09-1
10	Calling My Colors (a)	<u>22</u>	45.1	57.1	01:05.6	20.5	BEL-06/03/09-2
11	My Luckey Penney	22.5	46.9	59.2	01:05.8	18.9	SAR-07/30/09-1

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Magnificent 7 Quality Road, Summer Bird, Kensei lead Travers lineup

BY KAREN M. JOHNSON

A seven-horse field was drawn Wednesday for Saturday's 140th running of the \$1 million Shadwell Travers.

Missing from the field is Kentucky Derby winner Mine That Bird who was not entered in the 1 1/4-mile race after his connections were dissatisfied with his Wednesday morning endoscopic

New York Racing Association linemaker Eric Donovan installed Florida Derby and Amsterdam winner Quality Road as the 8-5 morning-line favorite. The Elusive Quality colt drew Post 4.

The field in post position order, with jockeys and odds: Hold Me Back (Julien Leparoux, 15-1), Charitable Man (Ramon Dominguez, 6-1), Warrior's Reward (Calvin Borel, 8-1), Quality Road (John Velazquez, 8-5), Our Edge (Alan Garcia, 15-1), Summer Bird (Kent Desormeaux, 3-1) and Kensei (Edgar Prado, 7-2).

The Todd Pletcher-trained Quality Road has only raced once since winning the Grade I Florida Derby in late March for his then-trainer Jimmy Jerkens. Owner Ned Evans made a switch to Pletcher earlier in the summer, and Quality Road, who battled foot problems throughout the spring, resurfaced in the Grade II Amsterdam here Aug. 3. In a dazzling performance, Quality

SARATOGA NEWS ROUNDUP

Road won the 6 1/2-furlong stakes in track-record time of 1:13.74.

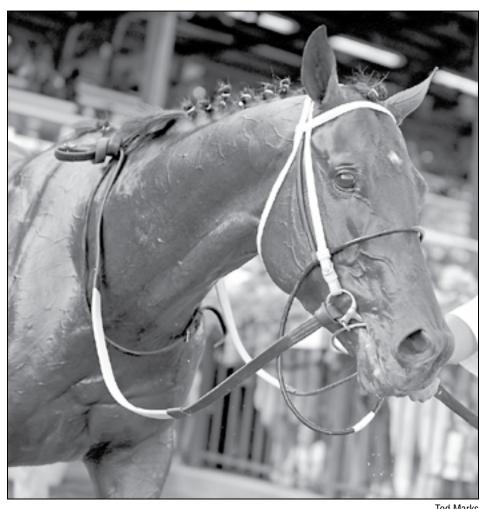
Quality Road will be asked to transition from a sprint to a two-turn race against a field that includes the Belmont Stakes winner (Summer Bird), Dwyer and Jim Dandy winner (Kensei) and Peter Pan winner (Charitable Man).

Pletcher, who did not attend the draw, said Tuesday that he didn't have a preference for a post for Quality Road, who has tactical speed.

"I don't see the post as being significant," Pletcher said. "There is plenty of run [to the first turn] and it's not a huge field. Unless for some reason the track came up extremely biased, one way or another, I don't see where post position really matters.'

The Tim Ice-trained Summer Bird comes off a second behind Preakness winner Rachel Alexandra in the Haskell. Summer Bird showed more early foot in the Haskell than he had displayed in his previous five races. Ice said the new dimension was a result of conforming to the speed-favoring Monmouth Park surface. He expects Summer Bird, owned by Drs. Kalarikkal and Vilasini Jayaraman, will revert to his old ways in the Travers.

"I think there's going to be plenty of See **NEWS** page 7 ▶



Tod Marks

Jim Dandy winner Kensei heads to the Travers as the 7-2 third choice.



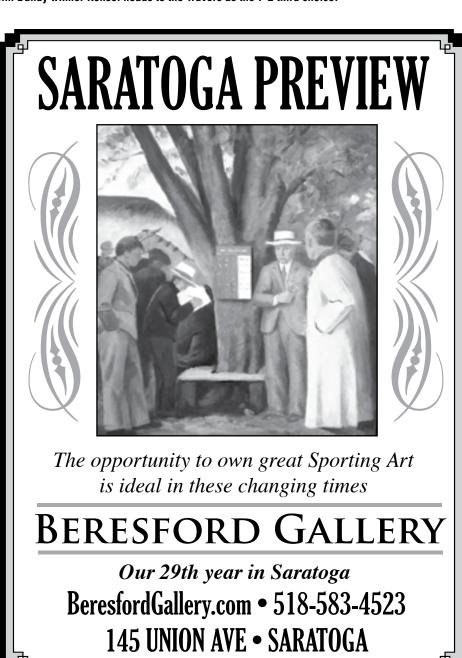
Custom Care graduate So N So won the Lucy Scribner Stakes on Monday. Congratulations Donald Newman and Tom Bush.

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News —

■ Continued from page 6

pace in the Travers where we can take our normal [spot] behind the wall of horses," Ice said.

Summer Bird will try emulating the success of his sire, Birdstone, the 2004 winner of the Travers.

Kensei, a late-developing 3-year-old with early speed, has begun to emerge from the shadow of his high-profile stablemate Rachel Alexandra. Following wins in the Dwyer and Jim Dandy, the Steve Asmussen-trained Kensei was under consideration for the Travers but wasn't declared a starter until his camp decided Rachel Alexandra would pass in favor of the Woodward Sept. 5. Kensei and Rachel Alexandra are owned by Jess Jackson's Stonestreet Stables.

Asmussen assistant Scott Blasi said the pressure to rush Kensei to some of the year's earlier big events for 3-yearolds wasn't present because they had the luxury of having Rachel Alexandra in the barn.



Blasi

"We know we got a late start with him this year and eliminated ourselves from the Triple Crown races," Blasi said. "But you know he's developed nicely in each race, and as they've gotten longer, he's gotten faster, and that seems to be im-

portant this time of year.

"The way he's matured physically and mentally with racing, it's nice to have [Rachel Alexandra] take the pressure off of him and she can take it better than anybody. But it's allowed him to be able to come around."

Trainer Kiaran McLaughlin was happy with Post 2 for Charitable Man, who was third in the Jim Dandy. McLaughlin said the inside post should enable Ramon Dominguez, who will ride William and Suzanne Warren's colt for the first time, to save ground.

With the exception of Pletcher and Nick Zito, who will saddle Our Edge, the five other trainers in this year's Travers shoot for their first win in the "Mid-Summer Derby." Zito won with Birdstone. Pletcher saddled 2005 winner Flower Alley.

The Travers will be televised on ESPN from 4:30-6 p.m. ET. Post time is 5:50 p.m.

• Track announcer Tom Durkin was expected back in the announcer's booth Friday, according to NYRA officials. Durkin has been absent for the last few days following the death of a close friend.

• The National Steeplechase Association announced last week the inaugural U.S. Steeplechase Championships Saturday, Oct. 17. The event will consist of 12 races worth \$700,000 at two existing meets on the schedule: the Far Hills Race Meet in Far Hills, N.J. and the International Gold Cup at Great Meadows in The Plains, Va.

The NSA also entered into a threeyear deal with NBC Universal Sports to televise five hours of live coverage of the event, as well as to provide online coverage, beginning at noon (Eastern). The agreement also includes coverage of additional NSA events in 2010.

Far Hills will conduct a six-race program headlined by the \$250,000 Grand National. The six races from the International Gold Cup will be highlighted by the 3 1/2-mile Gold Cup. The races will be run on an alternating basis at 20-25 minute intervals with the first race at Far Hills to begin at 12:45 p.m.

The Far Hills card will include five other stakes races in addition to the Grade I Grand National. The premier novices, 3-year-olds, and fillies and mares will all compete along with the best open hurdlers in the sport.

"For the big picture of the game it's awesome," trainer Doug Fout said. "It gives both race meets some great exposure on a day when there are two premier meets going on, not to mention gives the sport some great exposure on television, to an audience that might not normally be watching our sport."

Two of the sport's premier race callers will be on hand to call the races for Universal Sports. Mark Johnson, the renowned announcer from Europe, who now handles those duties at Churchill Downs, will be at Far Hills. Dave Johnson will handle the mic at the Gold Cup. Dave Johnson called the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes and Belmont Stakes on ABC Sports from 1987-2000.

Championship day will also mark the first time that two steeplechase venues will be simulcast and pari-mutuel wagering offered on their races. Plans are in the works for an international site to establish wagering pools and to offer betting to outlets around the globe.

As a prelude to the event, the NSA will conduct a Fall Steeplechase Festival at Monmouth Park Saturday, Sept. 26. The card will act as a preview day for the U.S. Championships.

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Mine That Bird —

■ Continued from page 5

"As a trainer it's your job to do what's right for him not what's right for yourself," he said. "You're supposed to be cautious. For me, running in this was really important but for him, in his whole career, it's probably not as important as a lot of other spots there are going to be – Breeders' Cups, possibly Dubai, he's been invited to Japan . . . he's got a lot of races in front of him."

Mine That Bird will head back to New Mexico once a flight from Newark to El Paso has been arranged via FedEx, train with Woolley's other horses and point for the Goodwood Handicap at Santa Anita Oct. 10. The Goodwood will be an ideal prep for the Breeders' Cup Classic at Santa Anita Nov. 7.

Though he's not getting the Saratoga ending he hoped for, Woolley (whose assistant trainer has been managing 20-plus horses for months) will be happy to get home.

"I haven't been home since we left for the Derby and it will be great to see all my friends that I haven't seen for a long time and hang out for a while," he said. "I'm looking forward to sleeping in my own bed, I've slept in quite a few motel rooms since we started this . . . but I wouldn't change anything. It's been phenomenal. You couldn't have drawn it up any better, other than this last little bit. I wouldn't trade it for the world."

He got the weed, roots and all.

Stirring

Mixed Up goes for Grade I sweep as Sheppard opts to run stable star

BY SEAN CLANCY

Stop the presses.

Today's New York Turf Writers Cup is not yesterday's New York Turf Writers Cup. Wednesday morning, Jonathan Sheppard planned to scratch highweight Mixed Up, leaving a field of six led by new highweight Planets Aligned. By Wednesday afternoon, Tom Voss decided to scratch Planets Aligned and Sheppard opted to run Mixed Up.

Jockeys went everywhere. Danielle Hodsdon, Sheppard's number one jockey and Mixed Up's regular pilot, switches from 136-pound featherweight Sermon Of Love to ride Mixed Up, replacing Robbie Walsh who was named originally and is nursing a bum collarbone from a fall last week. Voss' first-call jockey Peter Buchanan moves from Planets Aligned to Slip Away, also trained by Voss. Xavier Aizpuru, originally named on Slip Away, picks up Hodsdon's vacated seat aboard Sermon Of Love.

There will be a quiz at 2:06 when the flag falls for the third race, the only stakes on the card and biggest jump race of the summer. At least biggest in pres-

NY TURF WRITERS PREVIEW

tige, this year's stakes carries its lowest purse since 2004, smallest field in years and lacks clarity after the defections and changes.

At 8:30 Wednesday morning, Sheppard had all but decided not to run Mixed Up.

"I just left him in, in case there were any last-minute defections," Sheppard said, "try to hold the race together a little bit.'

Little did he know, just down the shedrow, Voss agonized over a cut on the leg of Planets Aligned.

"His leg doesn't look right, there's a cut on there. He's had a nick on the side of one leg, it wasn't sore, he galloped fine but it's got a little filling in it and he's not going to run," Voss said Wednesday evening. "There isn't anything wrong with him, though. The owner didn't like the weight, I didn't like the weight that much so we're not running."

Re-enlist Mixed Up.

"I entered to keep our options open. If something happened to Sermon Of Love or one of the others came out, I figured I'd like the chance to run," Shep-



Smithwick winner Mixed Up seeks a sweep of Saratoga's Grade I stakes.

pard said. "Planets Aligned scratching sheds a different light on things. We were going to pass, but things changed. I figured if one of the better horses came out, we'd run and if that happened I figured Dani would ride Mixed Up. Being able to get Aizpuru for Sermon Of Love is icing on the cake for that horse."

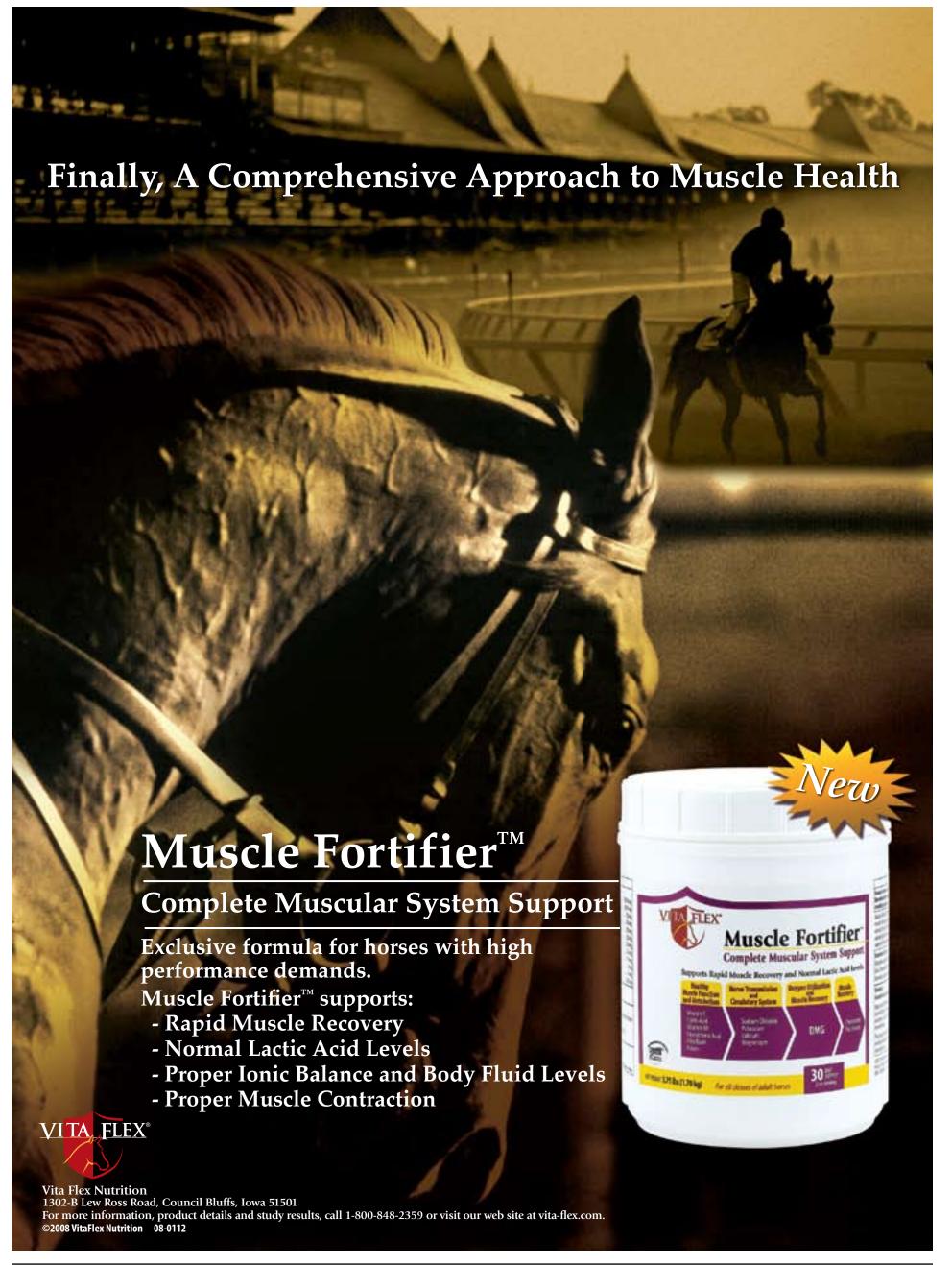
Mixed Up and Sermon Of Love represent the depth of Sheppard's stable and the lack of depth in the steeplechase horse inventory. Both are in with

Bill Pape's Mixed Up owns 11 steeplechase wins and sports a career bankroll of nearly \$700,000. The 10-year-old veteran won the A.P. Smithwick three weeks ago while carrying 146 pounds. He picks up 10 pounds from that effort, something that sunk him two years ago when running back in three weeks and picking up four pounds. It took him nearly two years to come back to form.

He won the 2006 Turf Writers (at

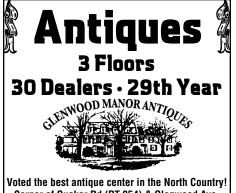
See TURF WRITERS page 12 ▶





the Powe l grid	The second second second	Brian	Pete	Gaile	John
Race #	Panagot	Nadeau	Fornatale	Fitzgerald	Shapazian
1	Lofty Banner	Lofty Banner	He's Long Gone	Lofty Banner	El Windo
	One Lucky Date	El Windo	Pletcher Entry	El Windo	Mr. Petersson
	El Windo	Longing For Malibu	Lofty Banner	He's Long Gone	Lofty Banner
2	Ten Carrot Nikki	Ten Carrot Nikki	One Way Bruce	Ten Carrot Nikki	Ten Carrot Nikki
	One Way Bruce	S.Z. Madison	Mel's Gold	Uncle Pat	One Way Bruce
	Spencerific	Uncle Pat	Uncle Pat	Spencerific	Mailbu Gardens
3	Sermon Of Love	Swagger Stick	Sermon Of Love	Planets Aligned	Mixed Up
	Planets Aligned	Sermon Of Love	Mixed Up	Sermon Of Love	Planets Aligned
	Slip Away	Mixed Up	Slip Away	Mixed Up	Slip Away
4	Lalique	Omi's Vindication	Anne Margaret	Cableknit	Cableknit
	Cableknit	Cableknit	Sure As Gold	Sure As Gold	Lalique
	Omi's Vindication	Sure As Gold	Cape Cod Carrie	Lalique	Omi's Vindication
5	Chief Export	Chief Export	Prince Woodman	Frozen Prospect	Frozen Prospect
	Frozen Prospect	Inside Info	Indian Ashton	Inside Info	Laudable
	Prince Woodman	Frozen Prospect	Rice Entry	Prince Woodman	Prince Woodman
6	Vamos A Ver	Vamos A Ver	Vamos A Ver	Vamos A Ver	King Rock
	El Commodore	El Commodore	King Rock	Ulterior Motive	Vamos A Ver
	Bigshot	Ulterior Motive	Becky's Kitten	Becky's Kitten	Becky's Kitten
7	Tobruk	City Sneakers	Woodrunner	Tobruk	Woodrunner
	Woodrunner	Onzain	Onzain	Woodrunner	City Sneakers
	Onzain	Woodrunner	Pegasus Tommy D.	Onzain	Onzain
8	Mohegan Sky	La Concerto	Absoulute Heaven	Mohegan Sky	La Concerto
	Absoulute Heaven	Absoulute Heaven	Asmussen Entry	Absoulute Heaven	Absoulute Heaven
	Motor City Mama	Mohegan Sky	Sweet Madness	Asmussen Entry	Mohegan Sky
9	William T	Inti	Risque	William T	Inti
	Risque	Maccarib Pass	Inti	Indymine	Maccarib Pass
	Inti	Risque	Maccarib Pass	Risque	William T
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THURSDAY'S DETAILED ANALYSIS

BY BRIAN NADEAU

RACE 1: LOFTY BANNER looked like a new horse when stretching out earlier in the meet and meets the same type of cast for a hot barn; not sure why he won't win off again. EL WINDO ran a solid second to the choice and could move forward off that initial two-turn try. LONGING FOR MALIBU just chased some toughies and also goes for a streaking barn.

RACE 2: I'd love to be sneaky and give you some longshot but TEN CAR-ROT NIKKI should win this race for fun. S.Z. MADISON is an interesting newcomer, if for no other reason than the others have done little to inspire. Same goes for firster UNCLE PAT; barn can pop with a firster too.

RACE 3: SWAGGER STICK gets a 14-pound shift in weight from Slip Away, who beat him in the Ferguson two-back and he might be better suited to today's 2 3/8 miles. Grinder jumped well here earlier in the meet, likes this course and has progressed nicely throughout the year. Can pull the upset at a price. After winning just once from his first 22 career starts SERMON OF LOVE has scored twice in a row, the last in a legendary run on the flat with Hodsdon aboard. Gets in light as a feather, has been prepped beautifully by the master and his confidence has never been higher. Look out. MIXED UP is a deserving favorite but won't offer any value so you're allowed to look around. He picks up 10 pounds off his win here in the A.P. Smithwick earlier in the meet. Gives Sheppard a daunting 1-2 punch, but I'll try to beat this 10-year-old legend. SLIP AWAY looks like he'll take this field as far as he can on the front end and if they let him walk on the lead he'll be dangerous. Was he exposed in the Smithwick, or did the race flow do him in? Tough call, and he has a better pace scenario, but just have a feeling he's not as effective against this kind.

RACE 4: Stabbing a bit with OMI'S VINDICATION, who shows an incompany work with Speightful Lady on July 21. That filly won her debut for Romans on Saturday. CABLEKNIT was a gate scratch earlier in the meet so it would have been nice to see a practice move in the interim. Half-sis to sprint champ Speightstown cost \$1.7 million and will take a boatload of money, but is worth trying to beat from the rail. SURE AS GOLD looks fit enough but drew a tough post and might want longer.

RACE 5: INSIDE INFO has been running against better and might get a dream run behind a quick pace. FROZEN PROSPECT is the horse to beat but will be an underlay. INDIAN ASHTON takes a suspicious drop and might get fried. If on dirt: Chief Export, Laudable, Frozen Prospect.

RACE 6: VAMOS A VER had a wide run earlier in the meet and now adds blinkers and draws inside. Expecting a breakthrough. EL COMMODORE tried a pair of sprints but now stretches out on the grass, which is what his pedigree cries for. The rail is a big advantage in these two-turn 2yo races. ULTERIOR MOTIVE starts for Pletcher, who has done quite well with 2yo turfers here over the years. If on dirt: Becky's Kitten, El Commodore, Forever Awesome.

RACE 7: CITY SNEAKERS stretches out after a pair of turf sprints and projects as the lone speed in this contentious affair. Rice's runners have been pounded at the windows lately so demand fair value (6-1?). If the top choice falters then ONZAIN might be there to pick up the pieces. Progressing nicely and finally gets off the hedge. WOODRUNNER enters off a troubled run earlier in the meet in will be in the mix. If on dirt: Knife And Fork, Marscaponi, Temore.

RACE 8: ABSOULUTE HEAVEN gets the call for the minor upset. Comes in off some longer sprints and might get first run on the closers. MOHEGAN SKY will go favored but her best runs have come on off-turf, so monitor the course condition. MOTOR CITY MAMA has been running on the main but did run well sprinting on the grass here last year. If on dirt: La Concerto, Motor City Mama, Smokin Sarah.

RACE 9: INTI takes a steep drop for a barn that spots its claimers well. MACCARIB PASS is another dropper that drew well and will be the one to fear late. RISQUE adds blinkers and is entered below his claiming price; mixed signals because he's run only twice for his new connections. If on dirt: Indymine, Inti, Burns Up The Track.

THURSDAY'S SARATOGA ENTRIES

Thursday, August 27. Post Time 1 p.m. Entries with program number, post position, jockey, trainer, and morning-line odds.

181	(1:0	00) 1 1/8 MILES 3&UP CLAIMING (\$20,000) PURSE: \$30,000
1	2	El WindoVelazquez J R Pletcher Todd A3-1
1A	4	Twisted DreamCastellano J J Pletcher Todd A3-1
2	1	Mr. PeterssonDominguez R A Badgett William Jr 9-2
3	3	Coaltown LegendEspinoza J L Feron Kathleen M 15-1
4	5	He's Long GoneLeparoux J R Maker Michael J4-1
5	6	Longing for MalibuMaragh R Weaver George6-1
6	7	Lofty BannerChavez J FContessa Gary C7-2
7	8	One Lucky DateLuzzi M J Sedlacek Roy6-1
8	9	Yankee ChiefMorales S Barrera Oscar Jr15-1

A-Coupled: El Windo and Twisted Dream Exacta, Trifecta, Pick 3 Races (1-3), Daily Double

2ND (1:33) 6 1/2 FURLONGS 3&UP MDN CLM (\$25,000) NY BRED PURSE: \$22,000

			
1	1	Mailbu GardensBermudez J E Arroyo Enrique8-1	
2	2	S. Z. MadisonMigliore RFerraro James W15-1	
3	3	Smarty KarakorumLuzzi M J Odintz Jeff12-1	
4	4	Uncle PatEspinoza J L Barbara Robert4-1	
5	5	SpencerificSamyn J L Cedano Heriberto12-1	
6	6	Mel's Gold Morales S Hertler John O12-1	
7	7	One Way BruceMaragh RLevine Bruce N3-1	
		Ten Carrot NikkiVelasquez C Rice Linda9-5	
Exa	acta,	Quinella, Trifecta, Super (.10), Pick 3 Races (2-4) Pick 4 Races (2-5),	,
Da	ily Do	uble	

3RD (2:06) NEW YORK TURF WRITERS CUP STEEPLECHASE H. (G1) 2 3/8 MILES (HURDLE) 4&UP PURSE: \$100,000

1	1	Slip Away	Aizpuru X	Voss Thomas H4-1
2	2	Sermon of Love	Hodsdon D	Sheppard Jonathan6-1
3	3	Dalucci (IRE)	Dalton B	Elliot Janet E10-1
4	4	Mixed Up	Walsh R	Sheppard Jonathan8-5
5	5	Swagger Stick	Dowling W	Fisher Jack10-1
6	6	Spy in the Sky	McVicar L	Day James M15-1
7	7			Voss Thomas H5-2
Exa	acta,	Trifecta, Super (.10)	, Pick 3 Races (3-	5), Daily Double

4TH (2:39) 5 FURLONGS FILLIES 2YO MAIDEN PURSE: \$50,000

1	1	Ćableknit	Garcia Alan	. McLaughlin Kiaran9-5
2	2	Cape Cod Carrie	Leparoux J R	. Zito Nicholas P15-1
3	3	Queen Ann	Albarado R J	. Stewart Dallas 12-1
4	4	Anne Margaret	Desormeaux K J	. Mott William I6-1
5	5	Omi's Vindication .	Theriot H J II	. Romans Dale15-1
6	6	Lalique	Lezcano J	. Jerkens James A 4-1
7	7	J Z's Revenge	Bridgmohan S X	. Asmussen Steve8-1
8	8	Sure as Gold	Velazquez J R	. Pletcher Todd A7-2
Exa	acta.	Quinella, Trifecta, Su	per (.10), Pick 3 Race	s (4-6) Pick 6 Races (4-9)
		ouble	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,

5TH (3:13) 5 1/2 FURLONGS (TURF) 3&UP CLM (\$20,000) PURSE: \$24,000

1	3	Nacascolo	ESpilioza J L	Contessa Gary C 10-1
1A	MTO	Chief Export	Maragh R	Contessa Gary C10-1
2	7	Frozen Prospect	Garcia Alan	Rice Linda3-1
2B	10	Sextant	Garcia Alan	Rice Linda3-1
3	9	Lemon Shore	Luzzi M J	Persaud Randi12-1
3C	ΑE	Can't Refuse	Castanon J L	Persaud Randi12-1
3X	MTO	Hedge Fund		Persaud Randi12-1
				Maker Michael J4-1
5	2	Prince Woodman	Dominguez R A	Klesaris Steve5-1
6	4	Morine's Victory	Medina J	Terracciano Neal30-1
7	5	Straight Romance	Maragh R	Ferraro James W15-1
8	6	Inside Info	Coa E M	Aquilino Joseph10-1
9	8	Indian Ashton	Castanon J L	Ward Wesley A5-2
Δ-0	nunl	ed: Nacascolo and Ch	nief Export	

A-Coupled: Nacascolo and Chief Export B-Coupled: Frozen Prospect and Sextant

C-Coupled: Lemon Shore and Can't Refuse and Hedge Fund

Exacta, Trifecta, Pick 3 Races (5-7), Grand Slam Races (5-8) Daily Double

6TH (3:47) 1 1/16 MILES (TURF) 2YO MAIDEN PURSE: \$51,000 5 Ulterior MotiveVelazquez J R...... Pletcher Todd A......5-1 1A MTO Forever Awesome.......Pletcher Todd A......5-1 2 El CommodoreDesormeaux K J... Mott William I.........6-1 Wow Wow Wow......Maragh R.....Lukas D Wayne12-1 King Rock......Dutrow Anthony 12-1 4 5 Paniolo......Velasquez C....... Bush Thomas M....12-1 6 Vamos a Ver.....Dominguez R A.... Motion H Graham....4-1 Bigshot......Albarado R J McPeek Ken8-1 7 8 Mint Maker.....Luzzi M J......Contessa Gary C.....8-1 Becky's Kitten.....Leparoux J R...... Ward Wesley A......3-1 A-Coupled: Ulterior Motive and Forever Awesome

Exacta, Trifecta, Super (.10), Pick 3 Races (6-8), Pick 4 Races (6-9) Daily Double

7TH (4:21) 1 MILE (INNER TURF) 3&UP ALLOW NY BRED PURSE: \$49,000

1	À	Marscaponi	.Lézcano J	Ubillo Rodrigo A20-1
1A	MTO	Temore	.Studart M	Ubillo Rodrigo A20-1
2	1	Double Domino	.Desormeaux K J	Pletcher Todd A12-1
3	2			Sciacca Gary6-1
4	3			Tagg Barclay3-1
5	5			O'Brien Leo6-1
6	6			Donk David5-1
7	7			Weaver George12-1
8				Terranova II John 20-1
9	9			Kelly Patrick J10-1
10	10	City Sneakers	.Leparoux J R	Rice Linda7-2
			•	Ortiz Paulino 020-1
12	ΑE	Her Latest Flame	.Luzzi M J	Carroll Del W II20-1
				Quick Patrick J20-1
				Fisher Linda30-1
				Contessa Gary C20-1
		ed: Marscaponi and Te		
Exa	cta, ⁻	Trifecta, Super (.10), F	Pick 3 Races (7-9),	Daily Double

8TH (4:55) 5 1/2 FURLONGS (TURF) F&M 3&UP ALLOW OC (\$50,000) NY BRED PURSE: \$50.000

DUC	IJ PUN3E. ֆᲔᲡ,ᲡᲡᲡ		
3	Calling My ColorsL	ezcano J	Chatterpaul N20-1
MTO	Smokin SarahL	ezcano J	Chatterpaul N20-1
9	Mine Or Who'sD	ominguez R A	Asmussen Steve5-1
MTO	La ConcertoP	rado É S	Asmussen Steve5-1
1	Sweet MadnessV	elasquez C	Bush Thomas M12-1
4	Absoulute HeavenV	'elazquez J R	Motion H Graham5-2
5	Mohegan SkyG	arcia Alan	Rice Linda3-1
7	Acquired CatC	oa E M	Galluscio Dominic 6-1
			Englehart Chris8-1
oupl	led: Calling My Colors ar	nd Smokin Sarah	
	3 MTO 9 MTO 1 2 4 5 6 7 8	MTO Smokin SarahL MTO La ConcertoP Sweet MadnessV Southside BabeL Absoulute HeavenV Mohegan SkyG My Luckey PenneyE Acquired Cat Motor City Mama	3 Calling My Colors Lezcano J

A-Coupled: Gailing My Colors and Smokin Sara B-Coupled: Mine Or Who's and La Concerto Exacta, Trifecta, Super (.10), Daily Double

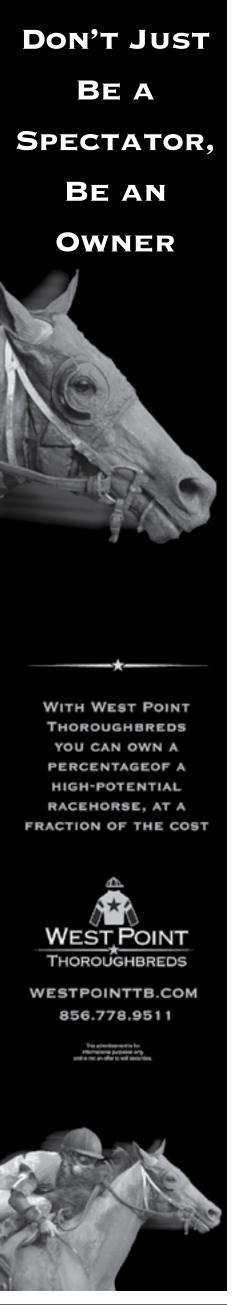
9TH (5:30) 1 MILE (INNER TURF) 3&UP CLM (\$25,000) PURSE: \$34,000

- 1		Maccallo Pass	_eparoux J n	Maker Michael J 0-1
2	2	Inti (URU)l	_uzzi M J	McLaughlin Kiaran 4-1
3	3	Lil O's Expression!	Morales S	Barrera Oscar Jr30-1
4	4	Risquel	_ezcano J	Brown Chad C3-1
5	5	Ecru Egret	Studart M	Persaud Randi30-1
6	6	Burns Up the TrackI	Dominguez R A	DiPrima Gregory 10-1
7	7	William T	/elasquez C	Dutrow Anthony 7-2
8	8	Wonderous Day	Bridgmohan S X	Terracciano Neal20-1
9	9	Indymine	Prado E S	Callejas Bernardo8-1
10	10	Manitowish Waters	Albarado R J	Scherer Merrill R8-1
Exa	cta,	Trifecta, Super (.10) Wa	agers	

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Turf Writers —

■ Continued from page 8

148 pounds) and seeks to become the first horse to win both Saratoga stakes twice.

Calvin Houghland's Sermon Of Love owns two jump wins and a career bankroll of less than \$150,000. The 6-year-old snapped a 2 1/2-year losing streak when taking an optional claimer at Penn National over jumps. Sheppard brought him to Saratoga, blew him out

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in 59 seconds over the Oklahoma turf and won a 12-furlong maiden on the turf here earlier in the meet (he ran an 80 Bever).

"He's been knocking at the door of being a little bit better horse than his form would indicate, he's at the top of his game right now and he gets in with a nice light weight, I hope he'll be competitive. Frankly, I'd be a little surprised to see him win a race like this just now but as long as he holds together, at some point he might," Sheppard said. "He's got a little bit of class which he hasn't chosen to show as often as he might have, he's always been a cheeky little horse. With these young horses, it's such a big jump to open company, if you can somehow hold them together, without abusing them just to get another year or two of seasoning, which is what we've been doing with him, running him here

On paper, the 6-year-old son of Pulpit doesn't fit with Mixed Up or Slip Away and has been beaten by the rest of the field, Dalucci, Swagger Stick and Spy In The Sky.

But Sheppard has won 12 runnings of the Turf Writers, with iron, Mistico (168 pounds) and Flatterer (164), and fluff, Bisbalense (142) and It's A Giggle (142). He's hit the board with inexplicable longshots Double Leaf, Underbidder, Willstown, Confidente, Allgrit and others. Sermon Of Love fits somewhere in the middle.

"He'd be in there with the likes of Bisbalense, he's not up there with the real class ones, but he may not be worse than some of the others that have run well in there before," Sheppard said. "He's certainly in that category, hopefully he'll get a piece of it, there are a couple of tough horses in there, I imagine Voss winning it."

That was before Voss cut his string in half.

Slip Away has risen through the claiming ranks, just how owner Ken Ramsey would have wanted.

The son of Skip Away broke his maiden last spring at High Hope before flopping in two tough spots at Saratoga last summer. Voss dropped the bomb after that. Slip Away finished second for a \$10,000 tag and then won six in a row, going from a \$15,000 claimer to a Grade III winner in the Zeke Ferguson this summer.

"I never thought he was no good but that man tells you to run them where they can win, he's hard on you, but I guess that's the way you're supposed to do it, that's what those claiming guys do anyway," Voss said earlier this summer. "He didn't run until late into his 3-year-old year, then he fell at the last fence at Colonial, and he bowed. So he was always catching up, he came back a year later and nobody had seen him, and nobody took him."

Slip Away lost his streak in the Smithwick, when he couldn't dictate the pace and wound up fourth. He's the speed today while stretching from 2 1/16 miles to 2 3/8 miles.

"He's all right," Voss said. "I don't think the distance hurts him put it that way, probably helps him, he just keeps going on the lead, if they leave him alone. He's got such a big, old long galloping stride to him, he's going faster than you think."

Jack Fisher wheels back Swagger Stick in two weeks.

The 8-year-old son of Cozzene put in his typical steady effort in the Ben Nevis, closing ground to finish third behind Dynaski and Arcadius. Neither shows up here, so Swagger Stick leads the third, fourth and fifth home from that day. Willie Dowling rides for Gil Johnston.

Recent Hall of Fame inductee Janet Elliot swings again with Cherry Knoll Farm's Dalucci. The Irish-bred won twice this spring before finishing a decent fourth in the restricted Ben Nevis. Dalucci clashed with Good Night Shirt, well, tried to clash with the two-time champion last fall but found that company too heady. This year, he's found his footing against lesser, beating Sermon Of Love while going 3 miles in soft turf in May. Bernie Dalton, former exercise rider for Kiaran McLaughlin, has the return call.

Virginia-based Jimmy Day doesn't ship to Saratoga often but has made his presence felt in two previous runnings of the Turf Writers, when finishing second with Canta Ke Brave in 2001 and Top Of The Bill in 2006.

This year's nomination, Randleston Farm's Spy In The Sky, carries similar credentials. The son of Thunder Gulch ousted Swagger Stick and Sermon Of Love in the Happy Intellectual last year at Saratoga. Since then, he's found life on the flat easier than over jumps, hitting the board in two Colonial Downs allowance races. The Gainesboroughbred 5-year-old finished fifth in the Ben Nevis. Liam McVicar takes the call.



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Settling Up

Fiddlers Afleet makes lead, hangs on to win

BY SEAN CLANCY

Mike Hushion stood alone as Fiddlers Afleet, 6-5 on the board, walked into the paddock for the Albany, Wednesday's \$150,000 9-furlong New York-bred stakes

- "You look good in here."
- "If he'll settle," Hushion said.
- "Will he settle?"

"He's tough because he'll settle in the morning great," Hushion said. "I've been fooled by them before."

About 20 minutes later, Fiddlers Afleet broke sharply from stall 4 and Ramon Dominguez made up his mind quickly. He guided Fiddlers Afleet to the rail.

Committed. Pocket Cowboys, breaking from the outside, decided to join the fray and the duo scooted around the first turn with Fiddlers Afleet leading by a half-length over the towering Pocket Cowboys. Neither horse had ever gone the distance.

When 22.83 appeared on the top of the television screen, Hushion felt "very uncomfortable." His assistant, Graham Wolfram, watching on the big screen in the clubhouse, threw up his hands and paced in a circle. Game over.

Dominguez knew they were going quicker than he wanted for Fiddlers Afleet who was jumping from 7 furlongs in his most recent start, but the coffee had been brewed, no turning back now.



Dave Harmon

Fiddlers Afleet (right) holds off Slevin late in Wednesday's Albany Stakes.

"I wasn't really thinking about a time," Dominguez said. "I was aware that it was a mile and an eighth and it was a challenge for most horses in the race, I was hoping once he made the lead he would get some sort of breather. He got a little breather, but it's not too encouraging to get a breather because your competition can't keep up with you. You know you're going fast."

After a half-mile in 46.02, Pocket Cowboys began to retreat. Second choice Legal Consent took up the chase as quickly as Pocket Cowboys fled. Fiddlers Afleet sped through three quarters in 1:10.36. Legal Consent couldn't uphold his move and then Slevin made his attack on the turn. Javier Castellano gunned the fourth-choice, tackling Fiddlers Afleet. Dominguez loose-reined Fiddlers Afleet as the duo turned for home.

Fiddlers Afleet dug in but Slevin held all the cards. Softened up through quick fractions and trying to see out an untried distance, Fiddlers Afleet should have folded. Slevin reached even terms, stuck his head in front for a moment, but Fiddlers Afleet scrounged it out to win by a comfortable neck in the end. Comfortable in the final strides, nowhere else.

When asked when it was fun, Hushion sighed.

"About a jump before the wire," he said. "He busted away from there and it was definitely not what we had talked about, it was little bit of both (rider and horse), typically Ramon doesn't have any trouble getting one to relax the right way, as cool a customer as

See **ALBANY** page 22 ▶

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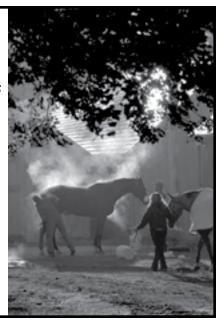
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Albany —

■ Continued from page 21

this horse is in the morning I can't believe he can't be rated better than this."

Owned by Marc Ferrell, the winner went one lap of the track in 1:49.78. Summer Share (Cornelio Velasquez) passed Legal Consent, Tall Poppi and Pocket Cowboys to finish third. Bred by Joan Simpson, Richard Gallagher and Hidden Lake Farm, Fiddlers Afleet made his second start for Hushion after a disastrous stay in California this winter. The winner has certainly climbed to the top of leaderboard in the New York-bred 3-year-old division. The son of Northern Afleet won once last year and hit the board in two New York-bred stakes last fall. Recommended to Ferrell by Jerry Brown of Thoro-Graph, Fiddlers Afleet went west in search of Triple Crown glory but flopped in three starts. Hushion got a phone call this summer about taking the horse, he won a state-bred allowance going 7 furlongs in his first start for Hushion.

"He went to California and ran on the 'plastic' as they say. Jerry was pretty convinced he was a typical horse that wasn't handling the Polytrack and needed to be east, he recommended me," Hushion said. "You know what it's like, you buy these babies and it takes forever to get them to the races, you do this, you do that and finally get them to the races as 3-year-olds and you find out



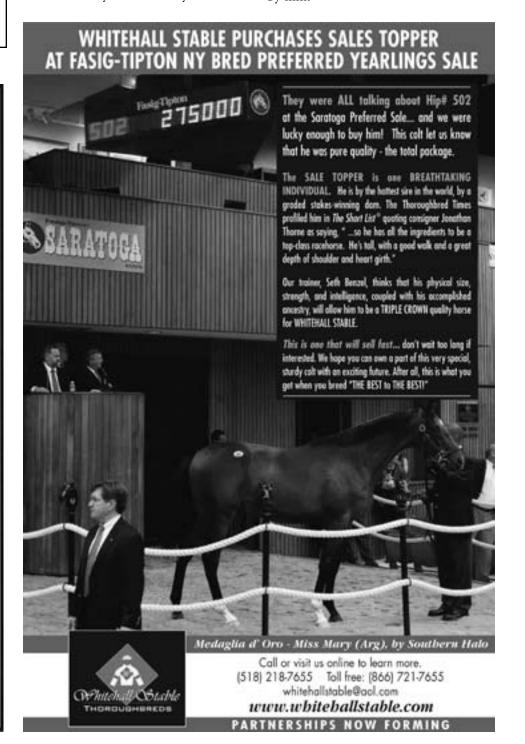
Tod Marks

Mike Hushion

they have no guts. Meanwhile, you get a phone call and somebody puts a nice horse into your barn."

Fiddlers Afleet improved his career record to 3-for-12 and more than \$200,000. He's never finished worse than third when running on the New York circuit.

"He showed a lot of courage, he dug in, and despite the pace, he galloped out pretty strong," Dominguez said. "He showed a lot of class to come back, when the other horse came to me, he had tried the whole way around, I didn't expect him to rebreak, I said to myself, 'maybe we'll have to settle for second,' but I kept riding and he kept on finding more and more. Inside the sixteenth pole, I said, 'They will not get by him.'"



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Tough Guy

Three-year-old Sumo pins stakes field

BY BRIAN NADEAU & COLIN BEAURY

Graham Motion thought aloud after watching Wednesday's Pleasant Colony Stakes. The trainer was 18 days removed from winning his first Grade I on the main track, the Whitney Handicap with Bullsbay, and five days removed from winning the Grade II Lake Placid on turf with Shared Account.

And five minutes removed from watching Sumo run off with the Pleasant Colony, Wednesday's fourth race.

"You think at the beginning of the meet and kind of wonder what you have to bring up here," he said, "and to come out to win the races we have has been pretty special."

Sumo (Jeremy Rose) added to a memorable Saratoga summer when he delivered an authoritative 5-length win in the \$70,850 race. Arthur Hancock's homebred son of Kentucky Derby winner Fusaichi Pegasus stalked early leaders Guam Typhoon and Saratoga Sinner, ranged up on their outside turning for home and powered off to a surprisingly easy win in the 9-furlong stakes. Guam Typhoon (Julien Leparoux) held second over Santana Six (John Velazquez).

"It was a gorgeous trip. One of those you always love in a big race,"

WEDNESDAY RACING RECAP

Rose said. "I looked at it on paper and thought that Saratoga Sinner might go, so when I saw him and Guam Typhoon out there I knew we were in a good spot. From that point on I was very confident and it was just a matter of waiting until the right time to let him go.'

Sumo vaulted into the Triple Crown picture with a bang-up second to General Quarters in a quick renewal of the Grade III Sam Davis Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs Feb. 14. Motion wheeled him back in the Tampa Bay Derby a month later, but Sumo finished ninth without an apparent excuse. At least on paper.

"We got him back after the Tampa race and thought that he might have displaced his palate," Motion said. "We did some small surgery a bit later, a minor throat procedure and he appeared to respond to it so we basically just threw that race out."

Motion brought Sumo back in the Grade III Barbaro at Delaware Park July 19 and he ran fourth of 11 to wireto-wire winner Our Edge (who goes in Saturday's Travers). Motion was encouraged by the run, considering Delaware played to speed that day and Sumo had an awkward beginning. The trainer



Tod Marks

Sumo laps up a stakes victory in the Pleasant Colony Stakes Wednesday.

forged on to Saratoga, still trying to find his colt's calling card.

"To be honest, I wasn't sure going in that he was a horse that wanted to go 9 furlongs because the mare Dyna Da Wyna was more of a sprinter. I felt he would be very competitive but I wasn't sure about the mile and an eighth," Motion said. "He always acted like a nice horse and the best 3-year-old I had in the barn. I haven't been overly surprised by anything he's done, but this was a breakthrough effort for sure. To win a stakes race at Saratoga is big for this horse and big for his breeder as well."

• When Senor Fuego started in the opener, a \$35,000 claimer, Don Lucarelli of Starlight Partners knew the colt wouldn't be racing under the royal blue and yellow for long. After purchasing the son of Speightstown for \$130,000 at Saratoga's Fasig-Tipton 2007 yearling sale, Lucarelli felt now was the time for Todd Pletcher to run the horse for

'Our program is about trying to develop horses that will go through their conditions and ultimately compete in

See **WEDNESDAY** page 25 ▶

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Wednesday —

■ Continued from page 24

stakes races," Lucarelli said. "We knew we would lose him, but we had a responsibility to our partners to drop the horse in this race and try to win."

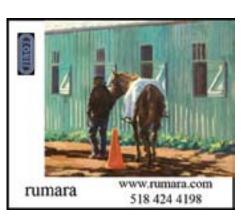
Senor Fuego (Ramon Dominguez) did his part, going straight to the lead and running off to a 9 3/4-length win in the 7-furlong sprint. Tar Beach (Robby Albarado) finished second over Web Gem (Leparoux). Trainer Mike Maker spent \$35,000 to claim the 3-year-old, who helped support a good cause in addition to Starlight.

"(Local handicapper) Mark Cusano has a Make-A-Wish program, and at the beginning of the meet he asked us if we would donate some of our earnings," Lucarelli said. "We guaranteed him a portion of our earnings no matter where we finished, but in this race we told him we would give him more than that. We also told him that we would give him a portion of Take The Points' Grade I win in the Secretariat Stakes at Arlington because it's for a good cause."

• Last year Chad Brown helped kick off Week 5 at Saratoga with a win in a \$75,000 maiden claimer for 2-year-old fillies on the turf. The horse, Maram, went on to win the inaugural running of the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf en route to an undefeated season. He only hopes his winner of this year's Week 5 maiden claimer is as good.

Brown saddled Zodiac Girl (Jose Lezcano) to a debut score in the second for St. Louis attorney Ronald Brown

Saratoga Leaders
Through August 26 Jockeys Ramon Dominguez31 Alan Garcia......29 Julien Leparoux18 Javier Castellano16 Cornelio Velasquez.....8 Jorge Chavez.....6 **Trainers** Linda Rice.....13 Todd Pletcher.....12 Barclay Tagg8 Tony Dutrow......7 Nick Zito.....6 Steve Asmussen D. Wayne Lukas6 Mike Hushion.....6



(no relation). The daughter of sprint champion Aldebaran swooped past Ms. Thanksgiving (Leparoux) late for a 3-length score. Morningsideheights (Javier Castellano) was third.

"We liked her all along and I'm certainly not saying she's going to turn into Maram, but both fillies trained similarly prior to their debuts," Chad Brown said. "It's kind of neat to win the same race two years in a row. Last year it worked out great with Maram and now we'll see what we have with this filly."

Zodiac Girl was purchased for \$45,000 this spring at Fasig-Tipton Midlantic and showed a string of solid, if unspectacular breezes for Brown, who hails from nearby Mechanicville. The former assistant to Hall of Fame trainer Bobby Frankel has proven adept at the claiming game and felt that Zodiac Girl was in the right spot.

"We entered her for \$75,000 and would have been OK if someone claimed her," Brown said. "Given what we paid for her, if someone claimed her we would have done pretty well. She's not an overly attractive horse so we felt that it was a good spot. I shuffled the deck a little bit and ran her and it worked out."

• Steve Klesaris picked the ideal debut spot for Puglisi Racing's Manhattan Miss (Ramon Dominguez) in the fifth, a 6 1/2-furlong maiden claimer for New York-bred fillies and mares.

In her career debut, the 3-yearold daughter of Kafwain broke third while Royal Valentine went to the lead through the first half-mile.

Manhattan Miss lingered off a soft pace, moved at the right time and scored by a 1 1/4 lengths over Lyrical Bobcat

(Jorge Chavez) and First Flute (Jose Espinoza).

"I knew she would be very competitive in a maiden \$25,000 claimer, and that's why she was there," Klesaris said. "She never really showed me a whole lot, but she showed me that she could be competitive where she ran today. You certainly like them to be right where they need to be. That was the number for her -25."

• Hall of Famer Wayne Lukas continued a hot meet with his 2-year-olds when Thoroughbred Legends Racing Stable's Wildcat Nation (Cornelio Velasquez) was a decisive 3 1/4-length winner of the seventh, a 5-furlong dash for juvenile colts. The pricey son of Yes It's True stalked early leaders Con-

See **WEDNESDAY** page 26 ▶

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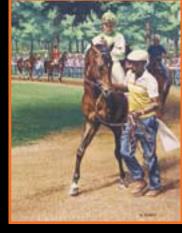
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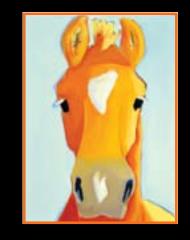
















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Wednesday —

■ Continued from page 25

demned and Tiz Brian and drew off in the stretch. Tiz Brian (Albarado) won the battle but lost the war to take second, while Strictly Society (Dominguez) closed late for third.

Lukas was an integral part of starting up Thoroughbred Legends, an expansive partnership that began buying yearlings at the 2008 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga yearling sale. Legends bought 37 horses all told and hit the track this year with Lukas and fellow Hall of Famers Bob Baffert and Nick Zito. Wildcat Nation finished a troubled eighth on Opening Day after steadying at the half-mile pole and Wednesday became the first Legends runner to score for Lukas.

"It's nice to get that first one under my belt," Lukas said. "Bob won one with Tiny Woods in California a few weeks back and now I've got one as well. We've got some awfully nice horses that we're optimistic about. Nick and I were talking about them this morning and we're excited about their talent level. But we don't have a lot of 5- and 6-furlong horses. We're trying to win some big ones with them and hopefully they'll start coming around later in the year."

• Mike Luzzi twirled his whip like a bow staff several times and stuffed it in the imaginary holster on his waist. The jockey took down five rivals in the eighth, a 1 1/16-mile starter allowance for fillies/mares on the turf, with the Gary Contessa-trained Classical Fashion. The daughter of Native Regent built

a 7-length lead early, gave it up late and then came again late to score by a nose over Sonic Sound (Lezcano), with Bella Attrice (Kent Desormeaux) third.

"Going to the lead like that wasn't the plan; she can get a little feisty. Even though the fractions were slow, she wasn't doing it easy," Luzzi said. "The only way to get her a breather is to get her to the far turn, and turn her head outside a little bit – if you watch the race head-on you can tell. This filly's got heart."

• "You got off the schneid, Seth," yelled a fan from outside the winner's circle.

The trainer turned and pumped his fist as the fan mirrored the gesture. After failing to hit the board with his first 13 runners, Seth Benzel grabbed a long-awaited win with Apple Grove (Leparoux) to cap off Wednesday in a maiden claimer on the grass for fillies and mares. Owned by Melnyk Racing Stables, Apple Grove stalked in second just off the pace for much of the 1-mile contest before taking over in the stretch for a half-length win over late charging Love For A Price (Eibar Coa) and As Promised (Chavez).

"Anytime you're here at Saratoga, it's all about getting that first win," said Benzel. "It came a little late for us, but we're just as satisfied as ever. It's a real treat, especially for an owner like Eugene Melnyk. He's given us a real opportunity this year and we take it very seriously. For a young trainer like myself – just a year and a half in the business on my own – to get the support from the Melnyk Stable is huge and we look forward to continuing it."

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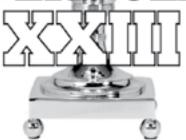


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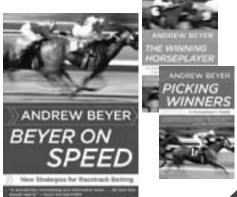


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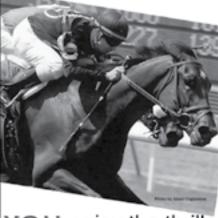


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WEDNESDAY'S SARATOGA RESULTS

Wednesday, August 26.

1ST. 7 FURLONGS. 3&UP. CLM. PURSE \$29,000. Dominguez R A 2.80 Senor Fuego 2.20 2.10 Tar Beach Albarado R J 3.60 2.80 Web Gem Leparoux J R 3.30

Finish Time: 1:22.75

Trainer: Todd Pletcher. Owner: Starlight Partners. Ch. c. 3. Speightstown-Vasquez, Coronado's Quest.

Bred by Charles Deters (Ky).

\$2 Exacta (6-4) Paid \$11.40; \$2 Trifecta (6-4-5) Paid \$27.40; \$2 Superfecta (6-4-5-8) Paid \$97.40

2ND. 1 1/16 MILES. TURF. 2YO. FILLIES. MCL. PURSE \$41,000.

Zodiac Girl Lezcano J 6.70 4.60 Ms. Thanksgiving Leparoux J R 2.50 Morningsideheights Castellano J J 4.90 Finish Time: 1:44.80

Trainer: Chad Brown. Owner: Ronald Brown. Ch. f. 2. Aldebaran-With My Blessings, Pulpit. Bred by Kirk and Deby Wycoff (Ky).

\$2 Exacta (7-8) Paid \$50.00; \$2 Quinella (7-8) Paid \$21.60; \$2 Trifecta (7-8-5) Paid \$345.00; \$2 Daily Double (6-7) Paid \$30.20; \$2 Superfecta (7-8-5-2) Paid \$2,750.00

3RD. 1 1/16 MILES. TURF. 3&UP. MCL. PURSE \$29,000.

Khukuri Maragh R 13.60 6.70 5.40 Home Field Leparoux J R 4.80 Pynaformer Samyn J L 8.50 Finish Time: 1:46.35

Trainer: Christophe Clement. Owner: Ramona Bass & Arthur Seeligson III. B. g. 3. War Chant-Accessory, Royal Academy.

Bred by Ramona Bass & Arthur Seeligson (Ky).

\$2 Exacta (7-6) Paid \$82.00; \$2 Trifecta (7-6-1) Paid \$822.00; \$2 Pick 3 (6-7-7) 3 Correct Paid \$166.50; \$2 Daily Double (7-7) Paid \$93.50; \$2 Superfecta (7-6-1-3) Paid \$1,548.00; \$2 Superfecta (7-6-1-4) Paid

4TH. 1 1/8 MILES. THE PLEASANT COLONY. 3YO. PURSE \$70,850.

3.60 3.20 Guam Typhoon Leparoux J R 2.60 2.10 Santana Six Velazquez J R 2.80

Finish Time: 1:49.53

Trainer: Graham Motion, Owner: Stone Farm.

Ch. 3. Fusaichi Pegasus-Dyna Da Wyna, Doc's Leader.

Bred by Arthur Hancock (Ky).

\$2 Exacta (4-2) Paid \$28.00; \$2 Quinella (2-4) Paid \$10.00; \$2 Trifecta (4-2-1) Paid \$65.50; \$2 Pick 3 (7-7-4) 3 Correct Paid \$454.50; \$2 Daily Double (7-4) Paid \$67.50

5TH. 6 1/2 FURLONGS. 3&UP. F&M. MCL. PURSE \$22,000.

10 Manhattan Miss Dominguez R A 8.50 3.10 Lyrical Bobcat Chavez J F 4.50 First Flute Espinoza J L

Finish Time: 1:18.33

Trainer: Steve Klesaris. Owner: Puglisi Racing. Dk. B. or Br. f. 3. Kafwain-All At Once, Touch Gold.

Bred by Empire Equines (NY).

\$2 Exacta (10-8) Paid \$61.50; \$2 Trifecta (10-8-7) Paid \$131.00; \$2 Pick 3 (7-4-10) 3 Correct Paid \$216.50; \$2 Pick 4 (7-7-4-10) 4 Correct Paid \$2,022.00; \$2 Daily Double (4-10) Paid \$37.80; \$2 Superfecta (10-8-7-4) Paid \$452.40

6TH. 1 1/16 MILES. TURF. 3&UP. F&M. CLM \$34,000.

Nedjma Dominguez R A 9.70 5.20 3.90 5.40 Blue Hill Bay Lezcano J 7.70 **Higher Incentive** Prado E S 7.40 Finish Time: 1:45.23

Trainer: Mike Hushion. Owner: Barry Schwartz.

Gr./Ro. m. 5. Royal Academy-Scented Garden, Red Ransom.

Bred by Stonewall Farm (NY).

\$2 Exacta (6-3) Paid \$62`.00; \$2 Trifecta (6-3-1) Paid \$622.00; \$2 Pick 3 (4-10-6) 3 Correct Paid \$168.00; \$2 Daily Double (10-6) Paid \$29.80; \$2 Superfecta (6-3-1-2) Paid \$4,358.00

7TH. 5 FURLONGS. 2YO. MSW. PURSE \$55,000.

Wildcat Nation Velasquez C 4.10 Tiz Brian Albarado R J 3.50 Strictly Society Dominguez R A 3.10 Finish Time:58.26

Trainer: D. Wayne Lukas. Owner: Thoroughbred Legends Racing Stable.

Ch. c. 2. Yes It's True-Scarlet Tango, French Deputy.

Bred by Reiley McDonald (Ky). \$2 Exacta (4-3) Paid \$88.00; \$2 Trifecta (4-3-8) Paid \$361.50; \$2 Daily Double (6-4) Paid \$107.00; \$2 Pick 3 (10-6-4) 3 Correct Paid \$407.50; \$2 Superfecta (4-3-8-5) Paid \$3,146.00

8TH. 1 1/16 MILES. TURF. 3&UP. F&M. ST. ALW. PURSE \$52,000.

Luzzi M J Classical Fashion 10.40 4.60 2.70 Sonic Sound Lezcano J 2.30 Desormeaux K J Bella Attrice 2.40

Finish Time: 1:45.78

Trainer: Gary Contessa. Owner: Linda McConnell.

Dk. B. or Br. f. 4. Native Regent-Fashion Review, Lively One.

Bred by John Burns (Fla).

\$2 Exacta (3-7) Paid \$27.20; \$2 Trifecta (3-7-1) Paid \$70.00; \$2 Pick 3 (6-4-3) 3 Correct Paid \$510.00; \$2 Daily Double (4-3) Paid \$120.00

9TH. 1 1/8 MILES. THE ALBANY. 3YO. NY BREDS. PURSE \$150,000.

Fiddlers Afleet Dominguez R A 3.60 2.20 Slevin Castellano J J 3.40 Summer Share Velasquez C 4.90

Finish Time: 1:49.78

Trainer: Mike Hushion, Owner: Marc Ferrell,

B. c. 3. Northern Afleet-American Tango, Quiet American. Bred by Hidden Lake Farm, Richard Gallagher and Joan Simpson (NY). \$2 Exacta (4-5) Paid \$14.20; \$2 Trifecta (4-5-1) Paid \$112.50; \$2 Grand Slam (1/3/6-3/4/8-1/3/7-4) Paid \$25.20; \$2 Pick 3 (4-3-4) 3 Correct Paid

\$231.50; \$2 Daily Double (3-4) Paid \$24.80 10TH. 1-MILE. TURF. 3&UP. MCL. \$23,000.

Apple Grove Leparoux J R 15.80 6.00 5.20 Love for a Price Coa E M 4.70 3.30 As Promised Chavez J F 1A 9.50

Finish Time: 1:39.95

Trainer: Seth Benzel. Owner: Melnyk Racing Stable.

Gr./Ro. f. 3. Take Me Out-Carino Deulce, Wolf Power (SAf).

Bred by Eugene Melnyk (NY).

\$2 Exacta (7-9) Paid \$90.00; \$2 Trifecta (7-9-1) Paid \$762.00; \$2 Superfecta (7-9-1-10) Paid \$3,538.00; \$2 Daily Double (4-7) Paid \$32.80; \$2 Pick 3 (3-4-7) 3 Correct Paid \$251.50; \$2 Pick 4 (4-3-4/7-7) 4 Correct Paid \$2,113.00; \$2 Pick 6 (10-6-4-3-4/7-7) 5 Correct Paid \$397.50; \$2 Pick 6 (10-6-4-3-4/7-7) 6 Correct Paid \$52,492.00

Track: fast. Turf: firm.

Saratoga Attendance: 15,270. Mutuel Pool: \$2,293,213.

Wednesday's Claims

1ST RACE: Senor Fuego by Mike Maker, Tar Beach by Bruce Brown for NRB Racing Stable; 2ND RACE: Ms. Thanksgiving by John Terranova for Paul Pompa Jr.; 6TH RACE: Nedjma by Gary Contessa for Michael McMahon, Choosing (IRE) by David Jacobson for Western Resources Racing.

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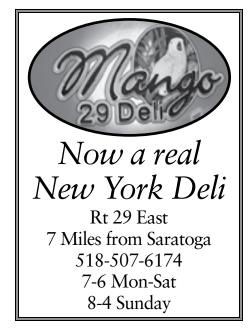
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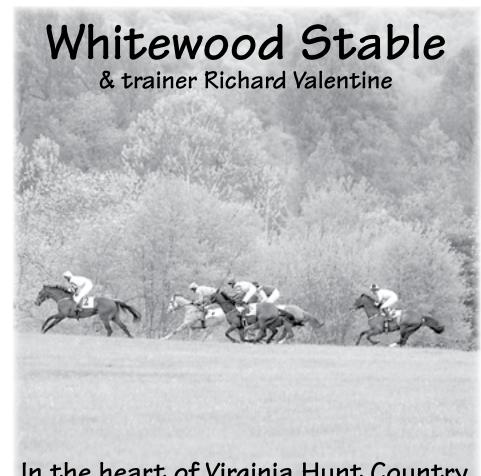
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The Annex jumps to life

The day before the New York Turf Writers Cup, Tom Voss and Jonathan Sheppard, trainers of four of the seven jumpers entered in the \$100,000 Grade I steeplechase stakes go through their morning routine at the Oklahoma An-

With a day to go, Slip Away, Planets Aligned, Mixed Up and Sermon Of Love have already been cranked and tuned for the season's biggest jump race. Wednesday is for keeping it on simmer, the boiling's over.

Voss and Sheppard take three horses to the infield turf when it opens at 8. Thinking there will be Turf Writers' action, a writer scurries across the Oklahoma dirt as Paul at the gap cracks the

whip.
"You've got a shot now," Paul says.

Voss gives final instructions to Peter Buchanan on Slip Away and Barry Watson on Dynaski (next week's winner) and Sheppard sends out Three Carat, off since March, 2008, for some extra tutelage over the two infield hurdles.

While peering from under a Belmont Park hat, Voss hassles John's Call for trying to eat grass as Slip Away gallops twice around the inside turf. Buchanan braces against the gray gelding's heavy head as he pounds the ground like he's running through a snow drift.

The Turf Writers candidate picks up speed with each passing turn.

He pulls up, turns, walks home, no problem.

Voss is happy, well, as happy as he

Danielle Hodsdon aims Three Carat at the two hurdles, he jumps like an old pro (about two months behind schedule for a start in the Turf Writers) and heads

Back at the barn, Voss checks his watch and concedes defeat in the race to get Planets Aligned to the infield turf.

"Take the tack off that horse, we're going to have to wait with him," Voss

Sheppard orchestrates his next set -Lead Us Not and Parker's Project – as his Turf Writers horses wait. Sermon Of Love, dirt all over him, leans out over his webbing. Mixed Up sleeps, head low in the front corner of his stall.

Lead Us Not and Parker's Project jump two fences and then breeze once around. Sheppard's happy with both, the Odd Couple of the Annex. Lead Us Not looks like a Warmblood, Parker's Project looks like a shortstop making a

Steve Bass and Julien Leparoux visit Sheppard's barn, talk to Hodsdon about Informed Decision's breeze. She goes much quicker than Sermon Of Love or

CUP OF COFFEE

Sean Clancy



Lead Us Not.

Hodsdon hops from an upside down muck tub and into the saddle atop a big, bay, placid gelding.

"How's that horse?"

"This horse? He's good," she says with a smile about Sermon Of Love.

At 9, Sermon Of Love and Sobee jog for three minutes around the Annex jogging trail, four times to the right, cross through the middle, four times to the left. Sermon Of Love goes like a jumper, head down, logging the miles.

At 10:27, Buchanan gallops Planets Aligned slow and balanced during the regular turf session. Braids in his mane, the Fox Ridge Farm homebred moves easy and sweet. He's a pro.

A half-mile behind Planets Aligned, Hodsdon compromises with Mixed Up, the 10-year-old veteran canters around the first time, well out from the rail. The second time, he's one wrong move from going too quickly. Ten years old and loving life.

Back at the Annex, Planets Aligned walks under Sheppard's trees. Mixed Up gets a bath. Slip Away eats hay. Sermon Of Love observes it all, he looks like a security guard at the Union Avenue gap.

"What are you doing hanging around here?" Voss asks a writer.

"Just observing these stake horses."

"Misfits," Voss mutters.

Buchanan takes off his helmet and flak jacket; smokes a cigarette and drinks the last cup of coffee. Voss sits on a bucket and fills ice boots.

Planets Aligned gets turned out in the round pen. He rolls on his right side, groaning in peacefulness. Gets up and switches sides, same groaning.

As he's getting up, Voss clucks to him. Planets Aligned, with 2 miles behind him Wednesday and 2 miles ahead of him Thursday, hops up, squeals and leaps in the air.
"You're alive," Voss says.

Reporting for this article was done Wednesday morning. Writing for this article was done Wednesday afternoon. Then everything changed by Wednesday evening. Voss scratched Planets Aligned because of a worrisome leg. Buchanan jumped to Slip Away, Xavier Aizpuru switched to Sermon Of Love and Hodsdon went to Mixed Up. Crazy game.



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