

It's Ladies Night at Yonkers Raceway as Blue Chip Matchmaker begins

by Frank Drucker, Publicity Director, for Empire City at Yonkers Raceway

Yonkers, NY --- Yonkers Raceway's Blue Chip Matchmaker for high-end pacing mares began Friday night (March 17), with a trio of \$40,000 divisions. The opening event saw odds-on choice Shesjustadelight N (Ron Cushing, \$3.60) parlay a perfect pocket trip into a handy, 1:53 victory.



Mike Lizzi photo

Shesjustadelight N collects her 13th victory from 15 trips to the post in North America in the first round of the Blue Chip Matchmaker Series.

Zeron) rallied for third at 48-1, with 110-1 shot Quick Draft A (Mark MacDonald) and Tessa Seelster (George Brennan) rounding out the payees.

Winning the draw, Shesjustadelight N watched as Empress Deo (Matt Kakaley) grabbed the lead before a :27.1 opening quarter-mile. Then, along came American Girl (Tim Tetrick), who eschewed a three-hole only to get hung for her troubles by Empress Deo.

It was a :55.2 intermission and 1:23.4 three-quarters, with American Girl eventually backing away. While that was transpiring, Shesjustadelight N was enjoying the show, awaiting her close-up. Empress Deo owned a 1-1/2 length lead into the lane, but the fave was ready.

Shesjustadelight N edged inside, defeating the Empress by 1-3/4 lengths. Change the Rulz N (Scott

"She's just super handy and I couldn't have asked for a better trip," Cushing said. "I was a bit surprised Tim (Tetrick) didn't take the seat behind me, but it ended up working out for us.

"It's always good when you can just a win in this series without using a horse hard, so we're going to take it."

For Shesjustadelight N, a 7-year-old Down Under daughter of Bettor's Delight co-owned by her driver & Kevin Sywyk and trained by Heidi Gibbs, it was her first win in three seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$17.80, with the triple returning \$109.50.

Friday night's second Matchmaker grouping saw another odds-on number, Mach It A Par (Jason Bartlett, \$3.20) prevail, though not without some angst.

Away third from post position two, Mach It A Par quarter-moved around Bedroomconfessions (Zeron), taking over right after a :28.1 first two furlongs, There were very soft fractions after that (:57.3, 1:26), with Betabcool N (MacDonald) trying it first-up from fourth.

Mach It A Par owned a 1-1/2 length lead in and out of the final turn, then was all out to hold off Bedroomconfessions by a nose in 1:53.2. Betabcool N held for a credible third, with Mackenzie A (Jordan Stratton) ad Krispy Apple (Brett Miller) settling for the remainder.

For Mach It A Par, a 7-year-old daughter of Mach Three co-owned by D'Elegance Stable IX, Carmen Iannacone, Gandolfo & T L P Stables and trained by Richard Banca, it was her second win in four seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$5.10, with the triple returning \$16.20.

The first round's final foray offered the fast female, as Regil Elektra (Bartlett, \$8.40) lasted on the lead in a seasonal best 1:52.4. From post three, she hooved her way (:28.2, :57.1, 1:24.3). Regil Elektra had a length lead into the lane, then whipped a crisp rally of 22-1 Hidden Land by a half-length.

Third went to a pocketed Lispatty (MacDonald), with a first-up Medusa (Kakaley) and Diva's Image (Joe Bongiorno) grabbing the minors. Nike Franco N (Tetrick), locally debuting as the 9-10 favorite, gapped second-over and wound up seventh.

For second choice Regil Elektra, a 7-year-old daughter of Mach Three owned by Fred Monteleone Stable and trained by Keith Armer, it was her third win in six '17 starts. The exacta paid \$133.50, with the triple returning \$374.

"The open draws are so big in these series, and both (Mach It A Par and Regil Elektra) had good posts, so I had to leave with them," Bartlett said. "Mach It A Par isn't a front-end sort of mare, but I thought she was good in the last quarter when she had to be. Regil Elektra won the Open Handicap here last Friday when it was cold, and she was there again."

The Matchmaker, as well as the Saturday night (March 18) George Morton Levy Memorial Pacing Series, offer five preliminary rounds, leading to a finale, set for Saturday (April 22).