

JL Cruze leads Tuesday Weiss winners at Pocono

from PHHA and Pocono Downs at Mohegan Sun

Wilkes-Barre, PA --- JL Cruze was once again on "cruze" control Tuesday night (April 14) at The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono, winning his \$15,000 division of the fourth and final preliminary leg of the Bobby Weiss Series for male trotters in 1:52.4.



Curtis Salonick photo

JL Cruze romped to an easy win in the final leg of the Bobby Weiss Series Tuesday night at The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono.

JL and "JC" – Hall of Fame driver John Campbell – moved rapidly from fourth nearing the quarter to take over the lead from main challenger Opulent Yankee under the wire the first time, and the triumphant [Crazed](#) gelding was not threatened from there, sprinting home in 55.4 – 27.2 to keep the game Opulent Yankee 1-1/4 lengths at bay at the finish.

JL Cruze, a winner of over \$140,000 already this season, is now perfect in two Weiss starts for trainer Eric Ell and owners Ken Wood, Bill Dittmar Jr., and Steve Iaquina, and already has 10 wins in but 12 seasonal starts. With no show wagering, JL Cruze attracted \$8,329 in a \$9,658 place pool, but the real value may have been the JL Cruze-Opulent Yankee exacta, which was a big overlay at \$3.20.

In the other Weiss section for this class, the Holiday Road colt Holiday My Way not only recorded his first Weiss score, but he also broke his maiden, and in fine fashion with a 1:56.2 personal mark. Trained by Shawn Simons and driven by his dad, "The Trot Man" Mike Simons, Holiday My Way made an early move to the lead and went on to win for Rick and Regina Beinhauer and the T L P Stable.

Tuesday's Pocono card also featured the last prelim round for pacing females (both of these \$30,000 Championships will be next Tuesday). The first section saw The Beach Nextdoor win her third straight in Weiss competition, with the Somebeachsomewhere mare shading 27.2 in the final panel to equal her lifetime mark of 1:53 as a "pocket rocket." Jim Morrill Jr. was again in the sulky for trainer Brewer Adams and owners Adams Racing LLC and Brian Clark.

Like The Beach Nextdoor, Donttelleruss used rallying tactics from the two-hole in the other cut, gaining into the 27.2 kicker to win in 1:53.3 over her stablemate in the Ron Burke barn, Allthatjazz De Vie, marking the second straight week that that pair has finished 1-2. The victorious mare by Panspacificflight was driven by Andrew McCarthy for the Burke Racing Stable, Weaver Brussemi, Lawrence Kerr, and Frank Baldachino.

The field has been drawn for the first of the Weiss Series Finals, this Saturday's \$30,000 event for pacing males, and while two major contenders benefited from the draw, one suffered the unkindest luck of all.

Getting the rail was YS Lotus, who responded to getting a full week off last Saturday by pacing to a lifetime best of 1:50.2 for driver Simon and trainer/brother Rene Allard (who teamed for seven victories on the Pocono card last Saturday). Prior to that win, "YS" had

started six times in 18 days, competing in both the Weiss and the Sagamore Hill Series at Yonkers, but the extra racing seems to have only honed the gelding to a career edge.

The other Weiss winner last week is Major Uptrend, making him two-for-two in the series, and he seems quite likely to be the betting favorite for trainer Ron Burke and driver Matt Kakaley. The Major won in "only" 1:51.3 last week, but it was from the difficult post eight, and he has been very versatile and consistent on the bigger-sized tracks in 2015.

The "unlucky" Weiss finalist is Victory At Last, who had posted victories in each of the first three prelims, but had to settle for second behind Major Uptrend last week. Also a member of the Burke stable, Victory For Last is "stuck behind the 8-ball" for Saturday's Championship.