

Gingras/Burke hat trick in NYSS Clyde Hirt Pace

by Frank Drucker, publicity director, Yonkers Raceway

Yonkers, NY --- Yonkers Raceway hosted the \$200,200 New York Sire Stakes Clyde Hirt Pace on Tuesday (July 22). The event for 2-year-old fillies was contested in four \$50,050 divisions.

The dance team of trainer Ron Burke and driver Yannick Gingras competed in three of the events and won each of those.



Mike Lizzi photo

Sassa Hanover won her division in a time of 1:55.4.

Sassa Hanover, a daughter of [Rock N Roll Heaven](#)-Sayo Hanover co-owned as Burke Racing by trainer Ron Burke, Panhellenic Stable, Weaver Brusceci and Larry Karr, is two-for-two (both in NYSS). The exacta paid \$6.80, with the triple (three wagering favorites in order) returning \$12.80. With no show wagering, more than \$19,000 of the \$20,000-plus in the place pool was in support of Sassa Hanover.

The first grouping was, as advertised, a Westchester waltz for odds-on Sassa Hanover (\$2.10).

In play from post position No. 5, she pocketed Bin N Heaven (Doug McNair), then strolled through relaxed rest stops of :29.1, :59 and 1:28. A :27.4 final quarter (life-best 1:55.4) saw her end up 2-3/4 lengths better than Bin N Heaven, who herself raced very well from an outside post. Third went to Vraka Hanover (Tim Tetrick).

"I've been impressed since I baby-raced her," Gingras said. "Tonight was basically a training mile. You want to see manners and guts when they're just beginning, and she showed both."

Trainer/driver also took down the third and fourth sub-sections with favorites Band Of Angels (\$5) in a night's-fastest/life-best 1:54.4, and Bettor N Better (\$2.70) in 1:56.

"(Band Of Angels) was able to rate (:29, :58.2, 1:27.4), but a :27 last quarter here for a 2-year-old is something," Gingras said. The daughter of [Rock N Roll Heaven](#)-Time N Again defeated One Hot Majorette (Mark MacDonald) by a half-length, with Ameritime (Brent Holland) third.

"I thought Bettor N Better may have been behind the other two (Sassa Hannover and Band Of Angels) early, but she's catching up fast. I would have been just as happy sitting behind Timmy (Tetrick, driving Zip Code Envy), but it worked out with me cutting the mile," Gingras said.

Bettor N Better, a [Bettor's Delight](#)-Vanite Semalu lass, was a length better than a first-up Heavenly Bride (Brian Sears) in a life-best effort, with Zip Code Envy third.

All three of the Burke/Gingras winners are two-for-two to begin their careers, with NYSS wins here and Monticello.

Newly-minted Harness Hall of Famer David Miller and an off-the-pace Bettor Be Steppin (\$16.80) won the second NYSS event in a maiden-breaking 1:56.4. Starting from post No. 6, she held off 58-1 My Little Delight (Jason Bartlett) by a neck in a battle of closers, with Bullville Maggie (Gingras) third.

Even-money choice She's Heavenly (Mike Lachance) brushed to the lead, met pressure from Devil Child (Jimmy Whittemore), then faded to last.

"She was zigging and zagging a bit late," Miller said of Bettor B Steppin. "It was her first start on a half, and the last turn may have come up a bit quicker than she was ready for."

The daughter of [Bettor's Delight](#)-Two Steppin' Sally, trained by Joe Holloway, is owned by Val D'Or Farms, Rojan Stables and Theodore Gewertz.

New York Sire Stakes continue Thursday night, with the \$217,000 Michael Sorentino Trot for 3-year-old colts/geldings