Yonkers hosts NYSS Mike Cohen Trot

by Frank Drucker, publicity director, Empire City at Yonkers Raceway

Yonkers, NY --- New York Sire Stakes continued downstate Tuesday night (July 29) with Yonkers Raceway hosting the $201,600 Mike Cohen Trot for 2-year-old fillies. The quintet of races honored the memory of the former Yonkers and NBC Sports publicity director, with his family and friends making winner's circle presentations.

Mike Lizzi photo

Barn Doll trotted to a 1:59.1 score in her division, the fastest NYSS mile of the night.

The opening $39,900 event saw a down-the-road Pig Hunt (George Brennan, $9.80), from post position No. 5, break the tape in a spiffy 1:59.4 with fractions of :30.2, 1:01.2 and 1:30.1. The effort matched her previous season's-best.

Frou Frou (Brett Miller), as the 7-10 favorite, lost her tow when Icy Sprite (Jason Bartlett) broke, then could not get near the winner. The final margin was a length, with Praying Gear (Jeff Gregory) third.

For third choice Pig Hunt, a daughter of Conway Hall-Chippewa Street co-owned by trainer Janice Connor and Jennifer Connor, it was her second win in four first-season starts. The exacta paid $20.20, with the triple returning $53.50.

"She shows trotting every start, so I wasn't worried about her," Brennan said. "I was able to back down the half and control the race."

Tuesday night's $40,900 second sire stakes event was a successful debut for Shaqline (Jimmy Takter, $6.20). In play early from post No. 2, she found a :30.1 opening quarter. Then Concentration (Chris Lems) grabbed the baton (1:01.2, 1:30.2), with 17-10 choice Barn Girl (Gregory) trotting in place first-up.

Concentration owned a 1-1/2 length lead into the lane, but Shaqline took to the passing lane like a veteran. She ducked in and went by, the final margin 1-1/4 lengths in 2:00.1. Cherry Crown Jewel (Dan Daley) was third, with Barn Girl winding up fourth.

For second choice Shaqline, a Credit Winner-Vivica Hall miss trained by Takter for Brixton Medical Ab, her sire stakes debut came after just one freshman race. The exacta paid $39, the triple returned $104 and the superfecta paid $439.

"She's bred to be very good," Takter said of the full-sister to $400,000-plus winner Shaq Is Back. "She had breathing issues and three surgeries. Fortunately, she had some good doctors."

The $39,900 third Cohen division saw Summer Scent (Daley, $17.40) -- from post No. 4 -- sit behind 2-1 choice Kaliska (Ray Schnittker) through fractions of :28.3, :59 and 1:29.2. Summer Scent then made her way past, winning by a half-length in a maiden-breaking 2:00.3. Third went to Duolectra (Corey Callahan).

For fourth choice Summer Scent, a Malabar Man-Summer Hit miss trained by Daley for co-owners Ann-Mari Daley and Jlrl LLC, it was that first win in five ’14 tries,. The exacta paid $16.20, with the triple returning $556.

“She keeps at it,” Dan Daley said. “She doesn’t always want to pass another horse, but she drew better tonight and that helped.”

The $40,600 fourth sire stakes event was won by an in-form, 9-10 fave Barn Doll (Gregory, $3.80). Unhurried from post No. 2, she watched as Summers Windsong (Schnittker) and Nunkeri (Callahan) took turns through fractions of :29, :59.4 and 1:30.1.

Barn Doll methodically made her move, first-up from fourth before collaring the leader early in the lane. She then edged away to beat Nunkeri by 1-1/2 lengths in 1:59.1, the night’s fastest and matching her previous life-best. Summers Windsong was third.

For Barn Doll, a Conway Hall-Headintheclouds lass co-owned by trainer Steve Pratt, Nancy Pratt and Purple Haze Stables, it was her fourth consecutive win in five seasonal starts. The exacta (two wagering choices) paid $14, with the triple returning $47.80.

“She’s a smart filly,” Gregory said. “She’s able to relax and that’s going to help her as she moves along. Tonight, when we moved, there was no one in front of her, but she can just as easily chase another.”

The evening’s statebred schedule ended in the $40,600 fifth grouping, where slight choice Stirling Debutant (Ron Pierce, $6.80) showed good speed on both ends of a first-win 2:01.2 effort.

Leaving from post No. 5, Stirling Debutant wound up sitting behind Northern Obsession (Schnittker) and that one’s weight stations of :30, 1:01.3 and 1:31.2. When Zanna Blu (Gates Brunet) attacked the leader with a bold second move, Stirling Debutant extricated herself from the cones and angled out.

She then whipped a stubborn Zanna Blu by three-quarters of length. Third went to Meshugana Miss (Jordan Stratton), with Stories To Tell (Lems) fifth placed fourth.

Stirling Debutant, a daughter of Credit Winner-Scottish Starlet co-owner by trainer Rick Zeron, Cool Cat Racing and James Walker, is now one-for-four this season. The exacta paid $51.50, the triple returned $529 and the superfecta paid $9,871.

“I spoke to Rick (Zeron) a couple of days ago, and he said if I just gave her a chance, she’d be alright,” Pierce said. “I made the (final turn) decision to take her outside, because some of these 2-year-olds get a bit skittish when you duck them inside.”

New York Sire Stakes continue Thursday night, with the $200,900 Jim Meagher Pace for 2-year-old colts/geldings).