

YONKERS HOSTS 219G NYSS BRUCE HAMILTON PACE

BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, NY, Monday, August 18, 2014 -- Statebred sophomore fillies took another turn downstate Monday night, with Yonkers Raceway hosting the \$219,700 New York Sire Stakes Bruce Hamilton Pace. The event annually honors the memory of the former Executive Secretary of the Harness Horse Breeders of New York, whose contributions to the success of the Empire program cannot be measured.

Many of Bruce's family and friends were on hand, enjoying the evening and making winner's circle presentation. Three divisions -- at \$72,800, \$72,800 and \$74,100 -- comprised the coterie.



Major Dancer photo: Tom Berg

Odds-on Major Dancer (George Brennan, \$3.50) just lasted in the opening event, holding off a cone-skimming It Was Fascination (Scott Zeron) by a "shrunken head" in 1:53.2. Away alertly from post position No. 2, Major Dancer—who looks anything but a professional racehorse warming up—threw down intervals of :27.4, :56.4 and 1:25.1.

Longshot Ken Doll J (Jimmy Whittemore) tried it first-up from sixth, but could not close. Major Dancer opened 2½ lengths in and out of the final turn, but needed some urging to close the sale. Southwind

Illusions (Eric Carlson) was a best-of-the-rest third.

For Major Dancer, a daughter of Art Major trained by Casie Coleman for Ontario tri-owners West Wins Stable, Mac Nichol and Adriano Sorella, it was her seventh win in a dozen seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$10,40, with the triple returning \$65.50.

"Casie (Coleman) said she's gonna hop and skip warming up," Brennan said of Major Dancer. "She said I had to get her attention, so I scored her down hard, but even that didn't seem to work.

"But has the talent and that was enough tonight."

(Major Dancer was a late lame scratch from her last scheduled NYSS start here. She worked out the next day to become eligible for the Empire Breeders, where she won her elim and was second in the final).

Driver Yannick Gingras and trainer Ron Burke won the other two Hamilton groupings, both from the pole. Jaded Dream (\$5.10) blew past a non-resistant Up Front Elizabeth (Mark MacDonald), then held off Supplemental Income (Jason Bartlett) by a nose in 1:54.4. Sweetnsinful (Whittemore) was a rallying third, while even-money fave Medusa (Tim Tim Tetric) was shuffled out from the pocket when the leader caved.

For second choice Jaded Dream, a daughter of If I Can Dream co-owned (as Burke Racing) by her trainer, Weaver Brusceci and Panhellenic Stable, she's now 3-for-13 this season. The exacta paid \$22.40, with the triple returning \$129.50.



A La Notte Hanover

photo: Tom Berg

A La Notte Hanover (\$12) reinforced the “short distance between two points” theory in the final sire stakes sojourn, taking it to the house (:29.1, :58.1, 1:26.4, 1:55). Blush Hanover (Jim Morrill Jr.), as the 4-5 choice, tried the winner from the inside but missed a head. Spreester (Dan Dube) was third, with Delightful Dragon (Dave Miller) fourth. The first four finishers were separated by a neck at the wire.

For fourth choice “A La Notte,” an Art Major miss co-owned (as Burke Racing) by here trainer, Weaver

Brusceci, Frank Baldachino and Larry Karr, it was her second win in 13 '14 tries. The exacta paid \$22, with the triple returning \$62.50.

“The first filly (Jaded Dream) went by so easily,” Gingras said. “I felt Jason (Bartlett’s) horse (Supplemental Income) right on my back, but mine du in. The other filly (A La Notte Hanover), I would have been content sitting second, but no one really left against her and she was able to get some cheap fractions.”

New York Sire Stakes continue Tuesday night, with the \$202,599 Jim Crawford Pace for 2-year-old fillies.



The Raceway's five-night-per-week live schedule continues, with first post every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:10 PM. Evening simulcasting accompanies all live programs, with afternoon simulcasting available daily.