

NY-Bred Atlanta wins 53rd Kentucky Filly Futurity

Sunday, October 07, 2018 - by Ray Cotolo, for Red Mile

Lexington, KY --- After finishing second in the first heat to Plunge Blue Chip in a world record equaling mile, Hambletonian winner Atlanta took command early and drew clear of her competition to take the \$224,000 second heat of the 53rd Kentucky Filly Futurity, sponsored by the [Father Patrick](#) Syndicate and Diamond Creek Farms, in 1:51.1. on Sunday (Oct. 7) at Red Mile.

Plunge Blue Chip, the Ake Svanstedt-trained [Muscle Mass](#) filly, bested Atlanta in the first heat of the Filly Futurity, sprinting to victory at the wire to equal her 1:49.4 world record. Atlanta, setting the first quarter in :28.2, yielded the lead to Manchego, leaving from post eight, and sat as she sped to the half in :54.4 and three-quarters in 1:22.4.

Driver Scott Zeron angled Atlanta out of the pocket into the stretch and overtook Manchego with ease but could not withstand Plunge Blue Chip's three-wide stretch bid through the wire, settling for second. Manchego, faltering in third, scratched out of the final while Piranha Fury and Top Expectations advanced.



Atlanta defeats Seviyorum to capture the 53rd edition of the Kentucky Filly Futurity.

Plunge Blue Chip, a \$7.40 winner, races for Ake Svanstedt, Blue Chip Bloodstock, Tomas Andersson and Rick Zeron Stables. She won her 16th race from 22 starts, earning \$913,791.

Following the second place effort, trainer Rick Zeron decided, despite hesitation, to pull Atlanta's shoes.

"Everybody I noticed today was pulling shoes and I didn't want to pull the shoes and race her two heats. So I said to Scott 'If you can get us through the first heat and get into the final I'll pull the shoes off her.' [Trainer] George Ducharme came by and gave me a perfect set of bell boots for her because we didn't have any."

Scott Zeron sent the [Chapter Seven](#) filly for the lead in the final while Plunge Blue Chip tucked into the pocket ahead of Lily Stride trotting into third. By the quarter in :28.2, Atlanta faced no pressure and rated to the half in :56.1. Plunge Blue Chip continued to track from the pocket.

Atlanta's lead opened rounding the final turn as Plunge Blue Chip hit a wall and faded at the pylons, forcing the backfield wide. Seviyorum, pulling first-over past the half, rushed into second with about a three-length deficit past the 1:24.3 third-quarter and continued to gain ground chasing through the stretch. Atlanta remained strong on the lead and hit the wire a length in front of Seviyorum at the wire. Nixie Volo closed for third and Top Expectations took fourth.

"[Pulling the shoes] worked out so well," Rick Zeron said after the race, "And when Scott called on her around the last turn, I was in the paddock. Gone."

"For him, it was a big move to make," Scott Zeron said. "But he was confident talking over it with me and we put some bell boots on her—I really think that helped her just that little bit more."

Winning her seventh race from 11 starts this year and her 11th from 21 overall, Atlanta surpassed \$1 million in earnings for owner-trainer Rick Zeron along with partners Crawford Farms, Holland Racing Stable, Howard Taylor and Brad Grant. She paid \$4.20 to win.