

Guardian Angel AS favored in \$175,000 Cleveland Trotting Classic

by Ayers Ratliff, for Northfield Park

Northfield, OH — Northeast Ohio's premier trotting race, the Cleveland Trotting Classic, will go to post Saturday (June 29) at MGM Northfield Park. This will be the fifth edition of the Classic and it carries a purse of \$175,000.

The Grand Circuit event has again attracted the best veteran trotters in North America. It has been slated as the 12th event on a 16-race program. First race post time is 6 p.m.



Guardian Angel AS drew the rail and has been named the 2-1 morning line favorite. Lisa photo.

Guardian Angel AS drew the rail and has been named the 2-1 morning line favorite by Northfield Park Executive Vice President of Racing and Simulcasting Dave Bianconi. The favored trotter will try to deny last year's winner, Marion Marauder, in his attempt at defending his title.

Guardian Angel AS goes to the gate in Saturday's feature, putting his three-race win streak on the line. His trio of wins includes the \$100,000 Maxie Lee Invitational at Harrah's Philadelphia. Trainer Anette Lorentzon calls upon Yonkers standout Jason Bartlett to drive.

Marion Marauder, winner of the 2018 Cleveland Trotting Classic, drew post five and has been named the 7-2 second choice. The 6-year-old stallion attempts to be a repeat winner in this event and looks to add to his \$3.1 million bankroll for trainer Paula Wellwood. Marion Marauder, the 2016 Trotting Triple Crown champion, will be handled by Canadian superstar Scott Zeron.

Local driving standouts Aaron Merriman and Ronnie Wrenn Jr have both received assignments in this year's field. Wrenn begins from post six with Canadian sensation Musical Rhythm, a winner of six consecutive races and almost \$700,000 in lifetime earnings. Merriman drives Plunge Blue Chip from the eight hole. This trotter has more

than \$1 million in lifetime earnings and carries a 1:49.4 lifetime mark, the fastest in the race.

\$175,000 Cleveland Trotting Classic

Post-Horse-Driver-Trainer-M/L

- 1-Guardian Angel As-Jason Bartlett-Anette Lorentzon-2/1
- 2-Weslynn Dancer-Dave Palone-Richard Banca-6/1
- 3-Emoticon Hanover-Jody Jamieson-Luc Blais-8/1
- 4-Pinkman-Brett Miller-Per Engblom-4/1
- 5-Marion Marauder-Scott Zeron-Paula Wellwood-7/2
- 6-Musical Rhythm-Ronnie Wrenn Jr.-Benoit Baillargeon-10/1
- 7-Dayson-Chris Page-Ron Burke-15/1
- 8-Plunge Blue Chip-Aaron Merriman-Ake Svanstedt-12/1

This year's Classic program undercard is highlighted by two \$50,000 Ohio Sires Stakes divisions for sophomore pacing colts, three \$25,000 late closer series finals, and two Open events. A \$10,000 guaranteed Pick-4 pool begins in race 11. Three of the four races in the guaranteed Pick-4 are comprised of the Opens and the Trotting Classic.

Beginning at 5 p.m., the first 1,000 guests will receive a coupon good for one Northfield Park ball cap, one \$2 match play and one free live program good any Friday evening through Sept. 29. These coupons will be distributed until 9 p.m. or while supplies last to all guests 18 years of age or older, strictly limited to one per person.

In addition to superior racing action, the night will also offer guests a buffet in Lady Luck's clubhouse dining room. The buffet is \$19.95. Reservations are preferred and can be made by calling 330.467.4101.

Those who want to be close to all of the racing action can stop by the grandstand apron for an array of free fanfare activities. These include Northeast Ohio's food trucks from 6-9 p.m. and live music by Time Trax on the outdoor apron from 6-9 p.m. Guests can try their luck at ball toss from 7-8 p.m. and the Northfield Park putting challenge from 8:30-9:30 p.m. where you can win cash and prizes.

Admission and parking are always free at Northfield Park.