

\$109,000 up for grabs in NYSS at Batavia on Wednesday

by Tim Bojarski, for Batavia Downs

Batavia, NY --- The eighth and final "regular season" visit of the New York Sire Stakes to Batavia Downs brings the 2-year-old pacing colts and geldings to Genesee County on Wednesday (Sept. 12) to compete in two divisions for a total of \$109,000. The Batavia Downs track record for 2-year-old pacing colts is 1:54.2 and that standard is definitely in danger of going down.

The NYSS events are carded in race three and five. Two \$15,000 Excelsior "A" legs will be held in races one and two. Post time for the first race is 5 p.m.

The first \$54,500 NYSS freshman pace features the top point earner in the series Melodies Major ([Art Major](#)-Hilarious) and the red hot Hickfromfrenchlick ([So Surreal](#)-My Girl's A Star) in a race that could easily rewrite the local record book.

Melodies Major has raced exclusively in NYSS events this year and has excelled, winning five out of seven. And he's been successful over every size track in the state. In his most recent outing he scored a big come-from-behind win at Vernon Downs, taking a new lifetime mark of 1:51.3 in the process. He comes in here sharp as a tack and looking forward to the final. Melodies Major is 2-1 on the morning line and leaves from post five with his regular driver Tyler Buter aboard for trainer Mark Ford.

Pushing the issue will be Hickfromfrenchlick who has won four out of his last six outings. Hickfromfrenchlick has won his last two NYSS races and like Melodies Major, took a new lifetime mark of 1:51.3 at Vernon Downs last week. The start before that he won in 1:53.3 at Yonkers, beating Melodies Major by only a half-length. He hasn't been worse than second all year and he will be a force to deal with here. Western New York native trainer/driver Ray Schnittker will be aboard from post six as the second choice at 5-2.

The second \$54,500 split has Reining Deo ([Rock N Roll Heaven](#)-Little Miss) looking to cement his spot in the NYSS final. Reining Deo is currently eighth in points but could still be knocked out in a worst-case scenario. He has been one-two-three in four NYSS starts and has a mark of 1:54.2 at Saratoga. A win would give him 142 points and a ticket to ride in the final. Trainer Brett Pelling has Jim Morrill Jr. in the bike and they have been made the 2-1 morning line favorite from post five.

JoJo's Place ([Roll With Joe](#)-Angel Place) is winless this year but has hit the board in three NYSS races. He has a very outside chance of making the final but only if he could win here. Recently he has been hampered with outside posts for the last five outings and drawing post two will definitely help. Although he finished fifth last week at Vernon, he still paced in 1:52.3 in defeat. Matt Kakaley will be driving for trainer John Butenschoen and they were made 3-1 by the track handicapper.

Major March ([Art Major](#)-March You And Me) has been a bit of a late bloomer. After winning big in an Excelsior "A" race at Saratoga in 1:54.1 by seven lengths, he stepped up to the NYSS for the last two starts and acquitted himself well. He seems to fit this field nicely and should not be overlooked given his recent outings. Trainer Linda Toscano has tabbed Drew Monti to drive and they will start from post six at 7-2.

The 2018 NYSS Consolations races which carry a total purse value of \$320,000 will be held at Batavia Downs on Friday (Sept. 21).