

NY-Bred Courtly Choice wins a Meadowlands Pace elimination.

by Dave Little, for Meadowlands Media Relations

East Rutherford, NJ --- Stay Hungry and Courtly Choice were the winners of the eliminations for next week's Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace Saturday night (July 7) at The Meadowlands.



Courtly Choice took his respective elimination for the \$701,830 Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace Saturday night at The Meadowlands. Lisa photo.

"(The trip) worked out great and he got the job done," said Doug McNair, who guided Stay Hungry to victory in the first elimination. "The trips have not worked out 100 percent for him."

Until Saturday night, that is.

McNair was content to race Stay Hungry from off the pace, sitting fifth at the quarter before picking up live cover from 37-1 shot Ideal Feeling after the half, where even-money favorite Nutcracker Sweet had the lead in :55.1.

Ideal Feeling continued to make progress on the rim passing three-quarters. After the field straightened away in the stretch, McNair tipped the son of [Somebeachsomewhere](#) off his cover and Stay Hungry did the rest. He cruised to the wire, a three-quarter length winner over the pocket-sitting Hayden Hanover. Thinkbig Dreambig closed well for third, while Nutcracker Sweet and This Is The Plan finished fourth and fifth, respectively, to qualify for next week's \$701,830 final.

"He's come back well," said trainer Tony Alagna of Stay Hungry. "The five-eighths mile racing is really not his forte (he finished fourth at Pocono in the Hempt). Everything came together tonight."

As the 2-1 second choice, Stay Hungry paid \$6.40 to win. He competed the mile in a lifetime-best 1:49.

Two races later, **Courtly Choice**, supplemented to the event by his connections for \$61,690, sat third as 4-5 favorite Jimmy Freight (the other supplemental entrant) cut out fractions of :27, :54.2 and 1:22.2.

David Miller moved his horse off the rail at the five-eighths and inched closer to the leader around the far turn and still had work to do at the head of the stretch.

But he was up to the task.

Courtly Choice eased past Jimmy Freight in deep stretch and had more than enough to hold off the late rally of the pocket-sitting American History, who finished three-quarters of a length back in second. Jimmy Freight and Dorsoduro Hanover finished in a dead-heat for third while Babes Dig Me claimed the last spot in the final by finishing fifth.

"I actually got away where I expected to," said David Miller. "He felt really strong. I asked him and he paced really hard. He's got big lungs and can carry his speed."

"From last year to this year, he's really matured," said winning trainer Blake MacIntosh. "He loves to race now."

As the 2-1 second choice in the wagering, Courtly Choice returned \$6.00 to his backers. The son of [Art Major](#) hit the wire in a lifetime-best 1:48.2.

The field for the \$701,830 Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace, an open event for 3-year-olds, with post position, horse, driver, trainer and morning-line odds. The Pace takes place on Saturday (July 14) and has an approximate post time of 9:45 p.m.

POST POSITION, HORSE (DRIVER, TRAINER), ODDS

1. Stay Hungry (Doug McNair, Tony Alagna), 3-1
2. This Is The Plan (Tim Tetrick, Chris Ryder), 15-1
3. American History (Yannick Gingras, Tony Alagna), 5-1
4. Jimmy Freight (Louis-Philippe Roy, Andrew Harris), 9-2
5. Courtly Choice (David Miller, Blake MacIntosh), 5-2
6. Nutcracker Sweet (No Driver, Jimmy Takter), 15-1
7. Hayden Hanover (Andy Miller, Julie Miller), 8-1
8. Thinkbig Dreambig (Jordan Stratton, Jimmy Takter), 12-1
9. Babes Dig Me (Brett Miller, Tony Alagna), 30-1
10. Dorsoduro Hanover (Matt Kakaley, Ron Burke), 15-1