

New York Night of Champions races drawn

by Frank Drucker, Publicity Director, Empire City at Yonkers Raceway

Yonkers, NY --- Post positions have been drawn for Saturday's (Sept. 22) \$1.8 million New York Night of Champions, with Yonkers Raceway again hosting the 29th edition of the Empire State's richest night of racing.

Eight \$225,000 sire stakes finals, each sponsored by a prominent breeding farm or organization, feature the best 2- and 3-year-olds of both sexes and gaits.

Here's a hot-off-the-presses thumbnail of the divisions, which go as races two through nine during the dozen-race card. First post is the usual evening standard of 6:50 p.m.

Second race (Crawford Farms 2-Year-Old Filly Trot): Division points leader Winndevie (Trond Smedshammer, post three) won her first five seasonal starts before a second-place finish at Saratoga. The daughter of [Credit Winner](#), trained by her driver for owner Purple Haze Stables, won twice here, as did Conway Kellyanne (Charlie Norris, post five). Amal Hall (Andy Miller, post six) has three wins and four seconds in her seven tries, while Quincy Blue Chip (Jim Morrill Jr., post seven) has been board-certified in all seven starts (four wins, two seconds, one third). She has earned \$125,712, making her the richest lass among the octet.

Third race (Agriculture and NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund 2-Year-Old Colt/Gelding Trot): Gimpanzee (Brian Sears, post five) has been more untouchable than Eliot Ness, as in six-for-six (\$166,358) by a combined margin of 23-1/4 lengths. The son of [Chapter Seven](#) is trained by Marcus Melander for Delray Beach co-owners Courant Inc. and S R F Stable. Gimpanzee enters off a handy win here, as does Thunder (Jason Bartlett, post three). The son of [Conway Hall](#) has won half of his eight seasonal efforts, with all the wins in his last five tries. Chip Chip Conway (Jim Taggart Jr., post eight) has hit the board in seven of his nine tries this season.

Fourth race (Agriculture and NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund 2-Year-Old Colt/Gelding Pace): Melodie's Major (Tyler Buter, post one) has won just about everything this season (eight starts, six wins, one second, \$166,433), including the draw for the statebred finale. The [Art Major](#) colt is trained by Mark Ford for owner Martin Scharf. Hickfromfrenchlick (Tim Tetrick, post six) has the \$100,000 final of the Lawrence B. Sheppard Pace here leading his four-for-six resume. Major Blake (Bartlett, post eight) has won thrice in his five tries.

Fifth race (Winbak Farm 2-Year-Old Filly Pace): So Awesome (Tetrick, post six) led the points parade, winning four races (two here) during her frosh foray (\$176,190). The [So Surreal](#) miss is trained by Scott DiDomenico for owner William Hartt. St Somewhere (George Brennan, post two) strung together three consecutive NYSS wins in July, also with a pair here. Moneyshot Hanover (Buter, post three) tried her luck in open company north of the border after a pair of statebred wins.

Sixth race (Allerage Farm 3-Year-Old Filly Trot): All-age track-record holder (1:53.1) Plunge Blue Chip (Ake Svanstedt, post two) has been a beast all season (10 starts, five wins, three seconds, two thirds, \$372,601). She did throw down the new record in the \$129,014 Hudson two starts ago, then won a Saratoga NYSS event by seven-and-change widening lengths. One of her rare poor performances came in last season's statebred finale,

however. Svanstedt trains for himself, Blue Chip Bloodstock, Little E, Tomas Andersson and Rick Zeron Stables. Lucky Ava (Bartlett, post four) did upset to become the frosh champ a season ago and has five wins among her 10-for-11 board finishes this time around. Repentance (Tetrick, post eight) has won her last three tries, a pair in NYSS and a division of the Woodbine Mohawk Park Simcoe.

Seventh race (Cameo Hills Farm 3-Year-Old Filly Pace): 'Defending' champ Alexis Dream (Morrill Jr., post three) has not lost a step (\$228,000-plus last season, \$230,000-plus this season). The daughter of [American Ideal](#) is co-owned by West Wins Stable, Jim Fielding J. Robert Darrow and Kevin McKinlay and trained by Casie Coleman. The \$112,904 Lady Maud here earlier this month was one of her four seasonal wins. Wisdom Tree (Tetrick, post four), the group's point leader, has been vicious this season, as in 10 wins and a second in a baker's dozen tries (\$274,851). Newsday (Jordan Stratton, post one) owns a pair of local sire stakes wins.

Eighth race (Morrisville College Equine Institute 3-Year-Old Colt/Gelding Trot): With Yonkers Trot winner Six Pack AWOL, runner-up Helpisontheway (Morrill Jr., post four) becomes one of the targets. The [Chapter Seven](#) colt, trained by Linda Toscano for co-owners Camelot Stable, The Bay's Stable and Little E, has six wins and four seconds in his 12 '18 tries (\$355,275). He had four wins in a row earlier this season. Winning Shadow (Mike Simons, post three) has five wins this season, while The Veteran (Stratton, post eight) has six wins and more than \$194,000 this season despite drawing poorly more than once.

Ninth race (Blue Chip Farms 3-Year-Old Colt/Gelding Pace): No one has exactly stepped up and grabbed the baton in the state's glamour division, Springsteen (Sears, post one) won a draw-time tiebreaker to get into this race, then won the draw. Thrice a winner in a dozen seasonal starts (\$346,729), the [Rock N Roll Heaven](#) colt has been tough to figure. Rene Allard co-owns with Bruce Soulsby, Alan Weisenberg and Kapildeo Singh and trains. Ghost Dance (Morrill Jr., post five) enters with consecutive statebred wins, while Rockapelo (Bartlett, post four) has hit the board in nine of his 12 '18 efforts.