

Mark MacDonald nabs 6,000th win in NYSS at Vernon

by John Horne, for Vernon Downs

Vernon, NY --- Mark MacDonald piloted Atlanta to a track record for freshman trotting fillies by capturing the first division of the New York Sire Stakes and getting his 6,000th career driving victory in the process at Vernon Downs on Friday night (Sept. 22).

Plunge Blue Chip (Ake Svanstedt) remained undefeated by winning the second division.

Fury Road (Chris Lems) would lead the \$55,500 first division of trotters into the first quarter in :28.3. It was short-lived when Atlanta ([Chapter Seven](#)-Hemi Blue Chip) claimed the top spot just before the top of the backstretch.

Owned by Rick Zeron Stables, Holland Racing Stable, Howard Taylor, and Brad Grant, while trained by Zeron, she would be joined by the first-over Supergirl Riley (Marcus Miller) just before the three-quarter marker. The two fillies would then have an epic battle all the way down the stretch.

Atlanta (\$7.50) would dig down deep to hold off the heavy pressure from Supergirl Riley (Muscle Mass-Crown Laurel) to set the track record in 1:54, while getting her fifth career win. All this while making win number 6,000 even sweeter for MacDonald, who would later add on win 6,001 with Padua Hanover (\$3.60).

Supergirl Riley had to settle for second with Perfect Summer K (Jimmy Whittemore) getting third.

Plunge Blue Chip (Muscle Mass-Dunk The Donato) would get her sixth win in six starts taking the \$56,500 second division.

Big Checkmate (Donald Dupont) would grab the early lead but Plunge Blue Chip (\$2.10), who is owned by Blue Chip Bloodstock Inc. and trainer/ driver Svanstedt, would take over before the first quarter and put up all the fractions of :28.3, :58, 1:27.2, and 1:55. The 2-year-old filly was in complete control and would get a career best time in beating her top rival Lima Novelty (Jason Bartlett), who came on late to finish second, 3-3/4 lengths back. Big Checkmate hung on for third.

Chris Lems would win four on the night. He got victories with Give Angel Credit (\$7.50), Sweet Thing (\$2.10), Dreams Beach Boy (\$3.30), and In The Clear (\$5.10).



Mark MacDonald won his 6,000th race behind Atlanta.



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Plunge Blue Chip won the second division in a time of 1:55.