

NARY A SURPRISE IN NYSS 169G JOE GOLDSTEIN TROT

BY Frank Drucker, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

Yonkers, NY, Tuesday, August 1, 2017—“She’s just bigger and stronger than she was last season.”

Such was Jeff Gregory’s post-mortem after Barn Bella (\$2.80) completed her Tuesday night (Aug. 1), winning the second division of Yonkers Raceway’s \$169,000 New York Sire Stakes Joe Goldstein Trot for 3-year-old fillies.

Working her way to the lead from post position No. 3 in the \$85,250 grouping, the defending frosh statebred champion made the lead from pole-sitting Maewegonow (Charlie Norris) right at a :28.2 opening quarter-mile.

After a :57.4 intermission, Southwind Tesla (Jordan Stratton) moved from sixth, making steady advances in and out of a 1:26.3 three-quarters.

Barn Bella owned a length-and-a-half-lead into the lane, then held off a stubborn ‘Tesla’ by a half-length in 1:55.3. Maewegonow safely held third.

For Barn Bella, a daughter of Conway Hall co-owned by (trainer) Steve & Nancy Pratt and Purple Haze Stables, it was her ninth win in 10 seasonal starts (lifetime 15-for-19, including 3-for-3 here). The exacta (two wagering choices) paid \$5.30, with the triple returning \$30.40.

“We’ve never rushed her out of the gate and tonight was no different,” Gregory said. “After the first turn, I just moved her and she’s the same as she’s been.”

The opening (\$83,750) sire stakes event was a public workout for pole-dancing fave Celebrity Ruth (Jason Bartlett, \$2.10). She had no issues through intervals of :29, 58.2, 1:27 and 1:56.1.

A five-length lead entering the lane was ‘only’ 3½ lengths at the wire. Heels on Wheels (George Brennan) chased the winner around the ovals, with Deli-Delite (Brian Sears) third.

For ‘Ruth,’ a unraced-at-2 daughter of Yonkers Trot winner Archangel owned by White Birch and trained by Trond Smedshammer, she’s now 4-for-8 (with four seconds) this season. The exacta paid \$3.90, a local low for the season. Triple wagering was cancelled due the short (after a scratch) five-horse field. “She was much the best and she showed it,” Bartlett said.

The evening’s sire stakes event was named for the former legendary PR man, whose clients included many in the horse-racing world. Family and friends joined in the winner’s circle presentation.