

The Empire Report – Monday, July 15, 2024 – Race Recap

Race 1 – TWIN B DELUXE was away in 3rd then quarter moved to command, extended his lead to the final turn and was the easiest of winners in tonight's opener. WALKINSHAW N went right to the top this week then let the winner take over, proved no match at all for his dominant rival but did safely hold the place spot.

CAUGHTINALANDSLIDE was moving from 5th on turn three, gained cover to 3/4s but had to swing wide around that one on the final turn, offering good late pace for the show spot – back-to-back sharp efforts. SAN DOMINO A found the early pocket but was back to 3rd by the quarter, came out first over to 3/4 s but never really grabbed the bit, fortunate just to hang on to 4th. GOOD INVESTMENT was outleft and away in 4th, saved ground but was no factor at all, just hanging on for a DH for 5th. GAMBLINGTERROR sat last and was never involved but did hit the wire ok, tying for 5th – not bad tonight. NOME HANOVER came out 3rd over to 3/4s into a poor flow, but was totally empty himself

Race 2 – VERDUN retook from SHAKESPEARE to the quarter, cut a solid half, picked things up even more to 3/4s but was still hit with major heat from SURFSIDE BEACH, confidently put that one away to the head of the lane and remained strong right through the wire, making it 4 in a row (and 2 for 2 here at Yonkers). JUST ENUFF STUFF came out 2nd over on the back side, tipped wide to the top of the lane then found his best stride, rallying very nicely for 2nd – strong effort off the claim. SURFSIDE BEACH pulled uncovered off turn three and took a good rush at the winner (into the fastest part of the mile), saw his strong bid repelled to the top of the lane and weakened a bit to 3rd – not a bad try! SHAKESPEARE flashed surprise speed and went right to the top, yielded back to the winner to sit the two hole trip, gapped a bit to the top of the lane and was outfinished from there. TWO FACED came out 3rd over from last (5th) to the final turn, angled widest into the lane but just wasn't able to rally this week (into a fast final half)

Race 3 – NOWHERE CREEK A went right to the top then yielded to IM A POWERPLAY A, was clear at the top of the lane and paced on by easily into the stretch, avenging last week's 2nd place finish (to the frontrunner) – he was heavily backed at the windows tonight, and surely made his supporters happy. IM A POWERPLAY A made the top off turn one then grabbed a breather to the half, rebuffed PAT STANLEY A on the final turn but could only watch the tripsitter fly by him this week in the homestretch – remains sharp, even if 2nd best tonight. ARTIST BEST left ok and ended up sitting 3rd, couldn't kick home with the top pair but safely salvaged the show spot. KOOTENAY SANTANNA got away 4th and saved ground, had his chance for 3rd but couldn't find enough to rally into that spot. GENIUS MAN came out from 5th to turn three, was a closer 2nd over to 3/4s, tipped wide on the final turn but flattened out once into the stretch. DEEP INFATUATION N floated at the start before retreating to last, never a player after that (trying to jump from 15s to 30s). PAT STANLEY N was under a big early hold as he got away in 6th, starting moving quickly from turn two and was already up near the leader by the half, continued to battle to the final turn but soon ran out of steam, and folded to last

Race 4 – KINGSVILLE made the top off turn one, was helped by the weak first over bid from LOUS SWEETREVENGE (which held up a couple of contender stuck behind him), was able to enjoy things all his own way and stayed strong to the end to pick up his 5th victory of the season, ANOTHRMASTRPIECE N had to back off hard on the first turn and drop in 4th, was hurt when caught behind a floundering rival to 3/4s and finally was able to drop back inside to the final turn, shook free into the stretch and finished strong, but ran out of racetrack before getting to the winner – definitely unlucky tonight. MIKITEEN left well and grabbed the two hole trip, was right there all the way but couldn't get to the winner in the lane, losing 2nd right at the wire – good try tonight after the disappointing mile last week. MELANION A was moving from 6th to the half and was another really hurt by the weak horse to 3/4s, dropped in 5th on the final bend then paced evenly to the wire for 4th – not bad, considering the trip. CASINO ACTION N sat last with no chance, finishing ok after the fact. LOUS SWEETREVENGE got away 3rd but continued to gap, came off the cones to 3/4s (even though he couldn't keep up to the top two) and simply never got motivated at all, hurting a couple of others as he just clogged the outer tier. LUCKBEWITHALEX hadn't raced since December and it showed

Race 5 – AMMO was helped when TIP TOP CAT didn't leave and was able to go right to the front, accelerated hard to 3/4s and avoided any pressure, felt his main foe coming at him in the lane but was able to dig in and prevail in the two horse sprint to the finish. TIP TOP CAT was lazy at the start and got away in 4th, pulled uncovered to turn three and was a closer 2nd into the hot 3rd panel, continued to rally into the stretch and narrowed the gap to the end, but

wasn't able to get to the co-favorite – the slow start definitely may have cost him a win tonight. CAPTIVATE HANOVER got away 3rd, came out 2nd over to the final turn but couldn't kick home with the top pair, beating out a couple of others for 3rd – still not at 100%. FEARFUL INTENT saved ground from 5th, shook free in the lane and kicked home well for 4th – not bad, even if an easy trip. NAUTICAL HANOVER came out from 6th off turn three then ended up 3rd over by the final bend, pacing home evenly from a tough spot. THUNDER HUNTER JOE sat 7th and was never in play, perhaps knowing that a win was coming off the bottom of his card. JAHAN HANOVER sat the two hole trip but started to unravel to the final turn, fading to 7th in a weak effort. GINGRAS BEACH always could see 'em all

Race 6 – TYPHOON BANNER N had to let POUND FOR POUND go at the quarter, found room inside for the drive home and was able to outkick a harder used ULTIMAROCA to pick up the win – he really found his from in PA recently, and brought that back with him to YR (makes it 3 in a row). ULTIMAROCA was back to 3rd at the quarter, pulled first over to turn three but could only challenge for 2nd into the very sharp 3/4s, just kept coming in the stretch and was a dead game 2nd best – he's so good right now that even tough trips don't really deter him! AMERICAN DEALER N wasn't quick enough to loop around POUND FOR POUND and had to drop in 5th, came out 2nd over to 3/4s then swung wide on the final bend, briefly looked like a winner but came up just a little light at the end, barely missing 2nd (and not far off the winner). FAMILY RECIPE got away in 6th, came out 3rd over on the final turn, followed wide then kicked home solidly to the wire for 4th – remains sharp. POUND FOR POUND avoided getting looped but had to work hard to make the top at the quarter, paced a string half before really opening the engines to 3/4s (:27.1), did keep trying into the lane but was eventually overtaken, just used a bit too hard to keep it going tonight. CADILLAC BAYAMA got away 4th, came out 2nd over but then dropped back inside to 3/4s, found himself in some stretch traffic but really only seemed to have even pace. CENTURY HEINEKEN saved ground from last, pacing home evenly from a no-chance spot. GREG THE LEG got away 7th, came out to 3/4s but had no offer

Race 7 – REAL WILLEY stepped easily around OPTICAL ILLUSION N, avoided pressure to the final turn, was put to a very animated drive in the lane and able to hold off a few pursuers, though definitely tiring! OPTICAL ILLUSION N let the winner cut this mile, had to keep waiting for room into the stretch, finally shook free but couldn't get rolling on time to get to the winner. SHINE A LIGHT easily found a spot to drop in 3rd, pulled first over from the 5/8ths but could only challenge for 2nd to the final bend, did keep trying in the lane and was able to hold on to 3rd. PURPLE POET gave SHINE A LIGHT a seat then followed him 2nd over...but just never found the stretch kick to be a bigger late player. MAXIMUS RED A saved ground from 5th to 3/4s, didn't have much room in the stretch and may have had more pace than he was able to show. THRASHER came out from last on the back side, was up to 6th on the final turn and was just too far back to be a bigger player tonight. JIMMY CONNOR B seemed to just lose interest at the back. SOUTHBEACH HANOVER was empty on the cones

Race 8 – COVERED BRIDGE made an easy lead, rattled off a sharp 3/4s then kicked home in :27.2 to seal the deal (in 1:50.4) – was well backed tonight, and a sharp winner. WHATS STANLEY GOT A happily let the winner take command off turn one, chased all the way and found enough room in the stretch to just hang on to 2nd. BACKSTREET SHADOW was brushing nicely to 3/4s (into the very fast :27 quarter) when he picked up (unwanted) cover from HIMSELF N, angled into the stretch and was sharp right to the wire, barely missing 2nd and not far off the winner – might have been even closer if he didn't have to grab up near 3/4s! HIMSELF N got away 3rd then slipped out under BACKSTREET SHADOW to 3/4s, was easily dismissed by the winner but did hold very well to the end, a close 4th behind some pretty nice horses. BIG GULP was outleft and away 4th, sat the cones and definitely looked sharp off the bad date this time. NANDOLO N was dull on the cones tonight, with no moves. NONE BETTOR A took off the gate this week and trailed all the way.

Race 9 – VANDALISM was outleft by a couple of others but got away well in 3rd, inherited the pocket to the final turn, had room in the stretch and rallied by late to score the 30-1 shocker in the finale! TAKE A CLOSER LOOK made an easy lead and opened a seat for SOUTH POINT, got tested by that tripsitter to the final turn, fought that one off into the stretch but started to look very shaky late and was collared by the longshot winner. LYONS PRIDE found a spot in 4th off turn one, came out under urging to 3/4s then picked up cover from SOUTH POINT, tipped wide on the final turn but lacked the stretch pop to be a bigger late threat. SOUTH POINT found an easy pocket early on, elected to pop out and take his shot to 3/4s, couldn't sustain his bid well enough into the lane and barely held 4th! LAZ came out from 6th on turn three, swung very wide on the final turn but flattened in the lane. HES

SPECIAL ended up following excess cover to the final turn, finishing ok after the fact. VICTOR CRUISE sat the cones in last and was no factor. DEMPSEY HANOVER was shaky early and away in 5th, turning in a total clunker