

The Empire Report – Saturday, July 20, 2024 – Race Recap

RACE 1 – KEYSTONE DASH stepped around VICTOR HIC then forced first MISSILE SEELSTER and then WAIMAC ATTACK N to eventually drop in behind him, started to really extend his lead through a hot 3/4s and and was GONE by the final turn, burying these by nearly 10 lengths in his best mile in over 2 years! WAIMAC ATTACK N was caught wide into the first turn and parked until finally making his way into the pocket on turn two, started to lose ground to 3/4s and was well back to the top of the lane...but showed some major toughness to stick it out and hang on to the place spot! VICTOR HIC was outleft and back to 4th by turn two, pulled first over to the half and took over 3rd at 3/4s, kept trying hard and was a decent 3rd, though unable to find enough to move up into 2nd. MISSILE SEELSTER took almost a quarter of a mile before getting the message that he'd have to drop in behind the winner, lost the pocket on turn two and was back to 3rd. got passed at 3/4 and was back to 4th but to his credit, did hold that spot to the end. JUST A WRANGLER followed 2nd over to the half, was left uncovered to the final turn and couldn't go on, a well beaten 5th at the wire. BLUEBIRD RECON bothered IMABEACHBOY when he ran out at the start, settled in 6th at the cones and wasn't heard from after that (placed last). IMABEACHBOY had to grab up at the start after BLUEBIRD RECON ducked out into him, was moving from the back on turn two then ended up 3rd over to the half, eventually dropped back inside and wasn't heard from after that – gets a total pass for tonight

Race 2 – URSULA BLUE CHIP went right to the top and cut some VERY soft fractions, felt the favorite coming at her into the final turn but wouldn't let that one by in the lane, finally breaking her maiden in start #40...and giving Smith both ends of tonight's early double! LADY BLUE JAY got away 3rd then pulled first over past 5/8ths, was right there as they turned for home but just refused to go by to the wire, unable to pass a horse who had lost all of her 39 previous attempts prior to tonight (no excuses)! IM ALL YOURS sat pocketed all the way, outmuscled to the wire by the top pair. GEITA gaped in 5th all the way, finding a little better life at the end (but unable to improve her position). TRISH SPEAKER got away 4th, worked out a beautiful 2nd over trip but came up empty from the top of the lane. LITTLE BET SPECIAL was uncomfortable from the start, eventually stopping completely

Race 3 – SULLIVAN was quick off the car and able to find the pocket after being caught wide briefly into the first turn, slipped out behind the challenging SMOKIN BY N to 3/4s, angled for the drive home and was able to rally by late for the victory, showing strong pace at both ends of the mile. SMOKIN BY N was outleft and away in 3rd, pulled first over from turn three and soon up to test the leader, finally put that one away at the top of the lane and battled bravely to the end...but came up 2nd best tonight. ON DAYBOO was outleft and backed off into 5th, benefited inside as three others pulled and moved up into the pocket at 3/4s, found room into the stretch and finished steadily for the show spot. KB MAC drove on early to seat the top two finishers, rated an easy half but would soon come under fire on the back side, battled to the top of the lane but then gave way, weakening to 4th. MAJOR DESIRE sat the cones in 6th, came out to the top of the lane but had only even pace from there. HURRIKANEKINGJAMES swung wide from last on the final turn, pacing home evenly while no threat. ON THE VIRG gave up a couple of holes and got away 4th, made a big mistake coming off the cones trying to follow SMOKIN BY N and quickly gapped cover, was going in reverse to the final turn and finished well back – just not good right now.

Race 4 – DANCE ON THE BEACH let BECHERS BROOK A go off turn one then watched that one park TUFFENUFTOWEARPINK, popped out at 3/4s to challenge and though it took a quarter of a mile, finally got his nose in front in the last stride! BECHERS BROOK A stepped around DANCE ON THE BEACH then was down to the quarter in :26.3 to park TUFFENUFTOWEARPINK, dismissed that one off turn three and continued to roll a very strong clip, met up with the winner to the final turn and fought all he could right to the wire, taking a very tough beat at the very end (while finishing way ahead of the others) – remains very sharp! WICHITA LINEMAN sat 3rd all the way, started to weaken to the final turn and was fortunate to hold on to the show spot, well behind the top pair. SWEET TROY sat 4th all the way, had room in the lane but couldn't find the rally to take over 3rd. FINAL CHEESERECIPE was under a big hold at the start, came out from 7th to the half and was forced to go around the retreating parked horse on the back side, never really found his good gear tonight and could only manage a 5th place check. AUSSIE HANOVER stayed glued to the cones and faced some stretch traffic – may have had more than he was able to show. COLOSSAL STRIDE A was outleft and forced to eventually retreat all the way to last after failing to find someplace to drop in – tried to rally from the back but his fate had already been sealed. TUFFENUFTOWEARPINK was caught 4 wide leaving from Post 8 and parked into the sizzling opening quarter, stuck around to turn three but began to retreat soon after that

Race 5 – WIN TOGETHER S made an easy lead and grabbed hard to try to let HANKINS HANOVER go to the quarter, had to roll on when that one couldn't generate the speed to get there and left that rival parked, enjoyed easy fractions from there and responded when roused to the top of the lane, drawing off easily in the lane to score in his stateside debut...and giving Smith his 3rd winner of the night! FULL SCALE was outleft but ended up sitting 3rd thanks to breakers and parked horses, shook free in the lane and got by the tiring tripsitter to pick up an opportunistic 2nd. STORMCLOUDFASHION was hurt by multiple leavers but got fortunate as GREEHILL VIC broke at the quarter and was able to deposit into the pocket, was still a threat to the top of the lane but fell apart in the final 1/16th of a mile, unable to even hold 2nd. STARLITCRESENTROLL elected to come out behind the tiring parked horse to race 2nd over, had to go three wide on the final turn then trotted home well enough to beat a couple of weaker ones for 4th – could have been closer late had he just stayed inside. HIGH LIFE saved ground to no avail. HANKINS HANOVER left ok but could never clear the winner to the quarter (despite the :29 quarter and the leader trying to let him go), ended up out the mile as a result and gradually started to weaken to 3/4s. GREEHILL VIC grabbed the early lead then yielded to the winner, got very hot in the pocket to the quarter and that's probably why he went offstride. CUSTOM FIT broke before the start

Race 6 – CRUISERSFOXYLADY dropped in 3rd on turn one, sat the cones through the very slow pace, found a clear rail for the drive home and flew on by the tiring leader, outkicking KISS MY CHEEK to score in her Yonkers debut. The latter sat pocketed all the way, collared the leader into the stretch but was outkicked to the wire by the rail skimming winner. OAKWOOD DYNASTY IR made an easy lead then cut yesteryear-type fractions, was still clear to the top of the lane but got passed to the wire on both sides in a very disappointing performance. SHANGHAI STAR sat the cones in 4th, angled into the lane and was pacing well at the finish. KNOCK TWICE saved ground from the back and was never in play. DUCK INTO THE NITE was moving from 5th at the half, struggled to make any gain into the slow pace and just wasn't on her game tonight. ANNELIESE HANOVER was empty at the back. SWEETSOUTHRNLASS N continues to be her own worst enemy, breaking early on yet again

Race 7 – ROCKIN JUKEBOX easily found the pocket on turn one, popped out into the sharp 3rd quarter, edged on by into the lane and delivered as the 1.5 choice – definitely got a tussle from the place horse, but able to prevail. CAPTAIN BATBOY blasted right to the top and opened a seat for the winner, hit the gas and rolled a strong 3/4s as the tripsitter came calling, battled hard right to the wire but did have to settle for 2nd best, well clear of the rest – best effort in a long time! EMINEM HANOVER was out from 5th to 3/4s, finally got by a tiring PICARD A into the lane into 3rd and held that spot to the wire, well behind the top two. BARON MICHAEL was sluggish in 4th throughout, had room between horses into the stretch but was outmuscled for the show spot – just never grabbed the bit. GILLIGANS HOOLIGAN followed EMINEM HANOVER 2nd over to 3/4s, finding only even pace in the lane. DIAMONDBEACH got away 7th and was never close. OICARD A got away 3rd, started to really lose ground on the final turn then caved even more once into the lane. TIN ROOF RAIDER A lagged at the back

Race 8 – WINDSUN RICKY stepped easily around SON A TIGER N then parked DONT JUDGE A BOOK, dismissed that one from the 5/8ths then was asked for more on the final turn, quickly repelled the tripsitter then held off two more foes to the wire, making it two in a row. INDICTABLE HANOVER got away 4th, shot inside on the final turn after a couple of others pulled, found room in the lane and finished well to win the battle for 2nd – the perfect trip definitely helped! MY ULTIMATE STAR A sat 3rd, came out on the final turn then had to go wide around SON OF TIGER N, had plenty of pace to the wire but missed out on 2nd to his ground saving rival – nice try. MY CARBON COPY N moved out from last at 3/4, rallied wide on the final turn and kicked home strong to the wire to end up 4th – good tonight. BUCHANNON HANOVER saved ground all the way, pacing home evenly for a small check. SON OF A TIGER N sat the two hole trip behind the winner, came out on the final turn but was easily dismissed, tiring badly in the lane in a surprisingly weak performance. RULE OF LAW sat 7th and was never in it. DONT JUDGE A BOOK left from Post 6, found no holes, got parked by the winner and was tiring on the back side

Race 9 – YS DO IT RIGHT dropped in 3rd on turn one, came out rushing from the 5/8ths and outbrushed the leader by the final turn, drawing off as he pleased in his 2nd straight sharp effort (since the class drop)! QUATRIN BLUE CHIP flowed the winner on the back side, was left uncovered on the final turn, kept coming in the lane and moved into 2nd, though no threat to the top one – hit board last pair after finally dropping down to 20s. ALOTBETTOR N took these down the road, got outbrushed by the winner to the final turn and was barely able to hold on to a tiring 3rd. BIG SIR angled from last into the stretch and was pacing very well late, almost getting 3rd. FOREVER FAV paced home evenly after a ground saving trip. B COOL FOOL came out from 6th on the back side but never found

his way into contention. LUCIANO N got away in the pocket, had room in the stretch (after the leader gave way) but had nothing to offer.

Race 10 – CYRUS N found a nice spot to drop in 3rd, just slipped out under BROOKDALE MIKI to come first over to 3/4s, attacked on the final turn then took over from the tiring leader into the stretch, drawing off to a dominant victory. BROOKDALE MIKI was cut loose from 4th to 3/4s but quickly 2nd over when the winner slipped out in front of him, gapped cover on the final turn, did better into the stretch and was able to rally for 2nd, but not in the same league as the winner tonight. FREE TO DREAM sat 5th, was half in/half out on the final turn then finished well late to grab 3rd at a big price. MASONS DELIGHT N had a good start to grab the pocket trip, was clear inside for the drive home but outkicked home, settling for 4th. VELOCITY KOMODO was lazy on the cones, finishing well enough for a 5th place check. UP THE CREEK made an easy lead, had things his own way for 3/4s, started to get tested by the winner on the final turn then gave way into the lane, REALLY tiring in the final 50 yards! BUCKEYE EMERY got away last and never varied

Race 11 – ITALIAN DELIGHT N took over off turn one, started to get away to the final turn and had no trouble making it 6 in a row, jogging under wraps once again...and once more, nobody dips in to claim him! YOUR BROTHER made the top then yielded to the winner, started to weaken by the final bend but was able to dig in late to hold 2nd for his new barn. ROCK THIS WAY sat 3rd all the way, unable to rally enough in the lane to move into 2nd. BRUSHING UP sat all the way and paced evenly, a no threat 4th. BETTER OFF SINGLE sat the cones at the back, pacing evenly to the wire. COIN FLIP came out on turn three but was quickly spinning his wheels, tiring to last – weak effort for his new barn

Race 12 – DEETZY was pocketed by EUPHORIA N, popped out to 3/4s and was doing the better work on the final turn, had to be kept to his task through the lane but was able to prevail in the end, building on last week's sharp try with a victory tonight. EUPHORIA N seated a pair of rivals then dropped anchor to the half (:58.2), had to pick things up to 3/4s when DEETZY came calling then looked ready to give way into the final turn, found more once into the stretch and battled back gamely, but still came up 2nd best. J M MANDAMIN N left well but had to drop in 3rd, watched the top pair battle through the final turn then took his shot into the lane, gaining to the wire but still coming up just a bit short in 3rd. THE REAL ONE saved ground to the lane, angled clear and was pacing crisply right through the wire. BRAEVIEW BONDI A sat the cones in 6th with no chance, pacing home solidly from that hopeless spot. STELLAR YANKEE gave up a couple of seats and got away 4th, came out before 3/4s but never did grab the bit., a well beaten 6th at the end. HOPNROLL HEAVEN got away 7th and never varied. MOVIN ON UP was away in last and was always well out of it