

## The Empire Report – Thursday, April 4, 2024 – Race Recap

Race 1 – STEUBEN HANOVER was helped when IN MY DREAMS aborted his leave attempt (right to his inside) and was able to go right to the top, yielded to favored FLIP THE SWITCH and sat the two hole, edged out behind the challenging LIGHTFOOTEDLEGEND to the final turn the angled at the top of the lane, responding to Gingras urging to rally on by for the 21-1 upset! LIGHTFOOTEDLEGEND ended up sitting 3<sup>rd</sup> then pulled first over past 5/8ths, attacked the leader at 3/4s and continued to battle through the final turn, collared the favorite into the stretch but was no match late for the classy winner's late surge – big try at 14-1! FLIP THE SWITCH was outleft by the winner but soon took command, met with pressure from 3/4s but was still in charge as they turned for home, tried to battle on but just wasn't as his best tonight, giving way into the lane and seeing his 4 race winning streak halted. INN AT RODANTHE came out behind sluggish cover to 3/4s then ended up 4<sup>th</sup> over, moved wide on the final bend and had plenty of late life for 4<sup>th</sup>, not far off 3<sup>rd</sup>. ALL CHAMPY came out from 5<sup>th</sup> on turn three, gained live cover on the back side but gapped it to 3/4s, got blindsitched on the final turn then trotted evenly in the lane – needed the start off the layoff. WILLY WALTON saved ground from 4<sup>th</sup> but had no offer this week. IN MY DREAMS quickly retreated at the start to last, totally empty at the back (but at least he stayed trotting)

Race 2 – PAPPARDELLE gave TIPSY MONI a seat then followed her 2<sup>nd</sup> over to 3/4s, found his gear once into the stretch and charged home powerfully to win it. NOWS THE MOMENT took command off turn one, opened up a bit to 3/4s, still had a clear lead into the stretch but got tired late, and could only watch the winner fly by to the wire. TIPSY MONI was a bit wide early then was given a free spot by the winner off turn one, pulled first over to 3/4s but could only challenge for 2<sup>nd</sup>, stayed on gamely into the lane but had to settle for the show spot tonight. P L OSCAR earned the two hole trip, gapped a bit at 3/4s then was outkicked in the lane. I GET IT got shuffled to last then came out on the final bend, unable to gain any spots to the wire – not quite as sharp this week

Race 3 – QUALITY BUD had a good start and looked hot in the pocket to the quarter, was back to 3<sup>rd</sup> when the lead changed hands on turn two then came out behind the challenging LEVINE on the final bend, surging right at the wire to snatch the victory – he certainly seemed to benefit from the late driver switch! LEVINE was briefly wide before reaching the top then had to let GAMBLINGTERROR go on turn two, popped out to challenge on the final turn and put the winner away once into the stretch...only to get nipped late right on the money! WALKINSHAW N sat the cones at the back, kicking in strong through the lane to be a pretty close 3<sup>rd</sup> – back to back sharp tries. CAVIART SARGENT left a bit then dropped in on the first turn, was back to 4<sup>th</sup> by turn two, had room in the lane and was able to collar the tiring pacesetter for 4<sup>th</sup>, GAMBLINGTERROR dropped in 4<sup>th</sup> when others left then made a big rush that carried him to the top on turn two, paced a crisp third panel then met up with the tripsitter on the final bend, gave way into the stretch and (understandably) got very tired near the end – just used too hard this week. INDICTABLE HANOVER was off to a poor getaway in 5<sup>th</sup>, came off the cones on the back side but made no gain, never really grabbing the bit at all

Race 4 – TACHYON was aggressive tonight and made the top off turn one, yielded to CREDIT CON to the quarter to sit the two hole, popped out on the final turn and went by easily into the lane, looking strong (and safe) from start to finish! DWS POINT MAN came out from 4<sup>th</sup> to 3/4s, gained cover from the winner on the final turn, trotting strong to the wire to move up into 2<sup>nd</sup> – another good try. MISSISSIPPI STORM ended up sitting 3<sup>rd</sup>, gapped a bit on the final turn but did better once clear into the lane, trotting steadily for the show spot. CREDIT CON floated into the first turn then rushed up to take over from the eventual winner, met up with that one on the final bend then gave way into the lane, fading to 4<sup>th</sup> – he's become a bit unpredictable from start to start. WARRIOR ONE backed off early on, lagged in 5<sup>th</sup> to the final bend and just wasn't sharp at all. B NICKING broke before the start

Race 5 – TAKE A CLOSER LOOK took over from WORLD FOR TWO off turn one, rated an easy middle half under no pressure, felt the plugs come out on the final turn and was able to dig into the wire to pick up his 2<sup>nd</sup> win in his last 3 starts (with a nose loss in the other)! LAZ pulled uncovered from 4<sup>th</sup> on turn three, could only challenge for 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3/4s but kept on grinding, continued to narrow the winner's margin into the lane and was right there with him on the wire – 2 excellent tries to start off his 2024 campaign! BIG DREAM FELLA was taken off the gate this week and got away 5<sup>th</sup>, worked out a live 2<sup>nd</sup> over trip then tipped wide to the top of the lane, started to drift in the stretch and only was able to take home 3<sup>rd</sup>. WORLD FOR TWO made the early lead then yielded to the winner, didn't seem to have much room in the stretch but really didn't seem “overloaded” either. COLD CREEK FELIPE got away 3<sup>rd</sup> and sat the cones, had room between horses in the lane but lacked the pop for a better finish – not as sharp tonight.

COLAFORD BET ALINE saved ground and beat the weaker ones. WISE THINKING came out from last on the back side but could never get close enough to be a player (1<sup>st</sup> local try, for new barn). BOOM TOWN BOY was invisible from the back

Race 6 – MAXIMUS RED A ended up sitting 3<sup>rd</sup> past the quarter, was moving past the stands then left uncovered after TIN ROOF RAIDER A finally reached the lead, paced on by that one to 3/4s and suddenly had a clear lead to the top of the lane...which he easily maintained to the wire – landed on a beautiful trip and was sharp enough to easily cash in. HURRIKANEKINGJAMES followed the winner all the way, was up into 2<sup>nd</sup> on the final turn and stayed on well to the wire to be 2<sup>nd</sup> best. PAT STANLEY N joined the live flow to be 3<sup>rd</sup> over to the half, pacing home steadily for 3<sup>rd</sup> – just wasn't as sharp as last week, and unable to do more damage once into the lane. TIN ROOF RAIDER A “manufactured” some speed but had to work hard to finally take over to the half, was outbrushed by the winner to 3/4s but actually did a very nice job lasting for 4<sup>th</sup> after a very tough trip! MAJOR DESIRE stayed inside from 7<sup>th</sup>, finishing with some mild pace to beat out the others for a 5<sup>th</sup> place check. GLACIS was really stung by FOREVER FAV before reaching the lead then had to let TIN ROOF RAIDER A got to the half, was back to 3<sup>rd</sup> before 3/4s but never had a 2<sup>nd</sup> move after that. FOREVER FAV decided to be very aggressive tonight and really hurt both GLACIS and TIN ROOF RAIDER A before ending up 3<sup>rd</sup> behind them to the half...then ultimately had nothing left himself. ODDS ON PICK SIX was empty from the back

Race 7 – TEXSONG SOPRANO let a couple of leavers go then quarter moved to command, fended off UNEVERGONNAGETHIS to the top of the lane then was all out to the wire to hold off the tripsitter – was probably overbet, but able to prevail. ON HIGHER GROUND made the top and opened a seat for YANKS DUGOUT before releasing the winner, had aim in the lane with a chance to win it but just couldn't find quite enough to get by. EUROBOND came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over from 5<sup>th</sup> on turn three, gapped cover and had to work hard to 3/4s, found his best stride once into the lane and rallied solidly for 3<sup>rd</sup> – just took TOO long to kick in. UNEVERGONNAGETHIS got away 4<sup>th</sup> then pulled first over at the half, was up to test the winner at 3/4s and fought hard to the top of the lane before finally weakening. TOP ME OFF sat last, came out 3<sup>rd</sup> over behind sluggish cover to 3/4s, angled widest at the top of the lane but just wasn't nearly the sharp horse we saw last week! YANKS DUGOUT dropped into the early pocket then was back to 3<sup>rd</sup> at the quarter, sat in and came up empty in the lane

Race 8 – QUEEN OF ALL found the pocket early on, took aim once into the lane and was a “pocket rocket” winner, under her own power – back to back wins! NO MAS DRAMA made an easy lead and was able to cut a soft clip while ignoring the weakly parked CALL ME DANI, was asked for more on the final turn and was simply no match in the lane for much sharper tripsitter – good bounce-back mile. IMA DIAMOND BABE sat 3<sup>rd</sup> all the way, no match at all for the top pair but easily besting the others. THE BALLYKEEL DEAL sat 4<sup>th</sup> all the way, holding off the others while never a threat. P L NOTSONICE was moving from 7<sup>th</sup> past the stands, had to go wide around a retreating rival on the final turn and still wasn't far off 4<sup>th</sup> despite a less than stellar trip. NO TURNING BACK saved ground to no avail – struggles continue. CALL ME DANI was caught wide leaving then in no-man's land off turn one, was weakly parked from there and basically had no prayer from the start. LADY JETER always had the best view

Race 9 – JIMMY CONNOR B ended up the lone leaver and waltzed right to the lead, hit the gas to 3/4s while avoiding any pressure, drawing off easily in the lane as the much-the-best winner. GOTHIC ROCK came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over at the half, angled at the top of the lane and was able to rally late for the place spot. HEART ON MY SLEEVE quickly found himself in the winner's pocket, was fine to the top of the lane but soon started to weaken, unable to hold the place spot – no excuses, but ok. MAJOR SHOW gapped a bit in 6<sup>th</sup> to turn three, looked better by the final turn then finished very alertly to rally for 4<sup>th</sup>. HEISMAN PLAYER sat the cones and was a dull 5<sup>th</sup>. FINAL CHEESERECIPE pulled uncovered from 3<sup>rd</sup> to the half, was stuck out into the fastest part of the mile and tired without having any impact this week. VELS LETSROLL SOUTH broke before the start. ART SCENE was empty at the back