

The Empire Report – Thursday, April 9, 2024 – Race Recap

Race 1 – DOWNRIGHTDELICIOUS followed KINGSVILLE off turn three to race 2nd over, angled off cover at the top of the lane and just blew right on by powerfully for the win...despite having missed a month (after a sick scratch) and making only his 2nd start of the year – his barn has just been beyond scary lately! KINGSVILLE came out from 6th off turn three and began a long first over bid, got up to the leader by the final turn then collared that tiring rival as they turned for home, a dead game 2nd best after the scary winner flew on by – went a BIG mile, and probably deserved a better fate! POINTOMYGRANSON drove on to seat ROCK THE BELLES off turn one then stung MOONSHINE KISSES before yielding for the two hole trip, was behind that tiring leader at the head of the lane, shook free from 4th once into the lane and did finish well for 3rd after losing any real chance. MOONSHINE KISSES was caught wide early and stung a bit before finally reaching the top, felt pressure building to the final turn and was clearly all done once into the homestretch, only able to last for 4th. ROCK THE BELLES left well but was pocketed off turn one then back to 3rd at the quarter, found room into the lane but had only even pace to the wire. YOROKOBI N got away 4th and sat in, got caught in a bad shuffle and lost any chance. BLANK STARE came out 3rd over from last to 3/4s, unable to have any impact from back there. DUVAL STREET gapped in 5th to the half, got shuffled back to last then paced home evenly at the back

Race 2 – ONEDERFULBEACH had to back off and drop in 4th, came out 2nd over and sat just off a hot battle up front, took aim in the stretch and was able to rally on by, bolstered by the perfect trip! TWIN B ALLURE came out first over from turn three and was soon engaged in a long battle with BADDITUDE, finally put that one away into the stretch but couldn't hold off the winner...for whom SHE did all the heavy lifting – nice effort! ON THE MONEY GB was able to slip out 3rd over to 3/4s, angled into the stretch and rallied nicely to the wire for 3rd – ended up with a nice trip, and finished well once more. BADDITUDE broke briefly in the first turn as she was getting the lead, regrouped and was able to rush up and take over to the quarter, grabbed a mild half but soon came under heavy fire from TWIN B ALLURE, fought that one a long way and only went down grudgingly at the end – just used too hard tonight, after the early trouble. COMMANDER CATHY N saved ground from 6th, shook free into the lane and offered some mild pace at the end. IRON MISTRESS held the lead as BADDITUDE made that early break but then still had to let her go to the quarter, found room at the cones into the lane but was clearly outkicked home with no real excuses. LA BELLA VITA N came out from last on turn three then ended up 4th over to 3/4s, failing to have any impact tonight (8 hole off bad date). ROCKNROLL ANNIE was empty from the back

Race 3 – TERACITA had to back off when SAUBLE DELIGHTFUL left, came out to turn three then was sent wide to the final turn, had a lot of work to do but was able to keep coming through the lane, and got up right before the wire! SPITTING IMAGE was sitting 3rd by the quarter, pulled first over from turn three and rushed up after the leader, looked like she was going to by but could never clear her stubborn foe, finally took over for good into the lane and dug in right to the wire, only to take a brutal beat in the last step – was very close to making it two in a row! JUST ROSAS LUCK stung SAUBLE DELIGHTFUL for most of the opening quarter before yielding, watched a major battle in front of her to ¾ and then into the final turn, found room inside for the drive home and did finish well, but was outmuscled by the top pair – nice effort, especially after being used hard early on. CALLMEQUEENBEE A came out from last to the final turn, finishing steadily for 4th – remains solid. SAUBLE DELIGHTFUL lacked any “real speed” but was finally able to take over at the quarter, took on major heat from SPITTING IMAGE to 3/4s and was all out to cling to her rail position to and through the final turn, did succumb once into the lane and tired to 5th – that opening quarter really did her in. CORAL BELLA got shuffled inside, was in tight with EXCITING TIMES A on the final turn but showed little once into the stretch. EXCITING TIMES A was out 2nd over from turn three, gapped her very live cover to 3/4s and was all done by the final turn – Yonkers woes continue

Race 4 – ANOTHRMASTRPIECE N was fast off the car and right to the top, carved out his own honest 3/4s, extended his advantage to the top of the lane and had no trouble picking up his 3rd straight (odds-on) victory! NAUTICAL HANOVER was outleft and backed away to 4th, tipped wide to the top of the lane then charged home through the final 1/8th of a mile, moving into 2nd and even denting the winner's margin a bit – sharp tonight! FAMILY RECIPE sat pocketed right from the start, lost some ground to the top of the lane then lost the place spot once into the homestretch. GINGRAS BEACH got away 3rd, came out on the final turn but really had no offer in a mile a bit quicker than he's comfortable with. ORLANDO BLUE A went around a struggling foe to 3/4s, saved ground and paced home evenly from a tough spot – really wasn't bad. SPEED MAN N sat last, had to go around a

troubled rival on turn two and never was able to get close to the action. RULE OF LAW struggled right from the start for his new connections

Race 5 – PRINCESS ARONA made an instant lead then stole a very easy half, had things all her own way and proved the easiest of winners, turning in her best effort, by far, in some time. PLEASURE SEEKER found herself in the winner's pocket very quickly, chased well throughout but was simply no match for her very sharp foe – very solid herself! BETTOR B SAWYER sat the cones in 3rd, was no threat to the top pair but easily held the show spot. AINTNOHOLLABACKGRL came out first over from 4th past 5/8ths, was unable to put in the same strong bid as last week and could only take home a 4th place check tonight. SUNSET SOPH saved ground from 6th, finishing up solidly in the lane to be not far off the 4th slot. ACEFOURTYFOUR ALEX tried to follow 2nd over to 3/4s, but was empty by the final turn. BLUEBIRD GRAF struggles at the back – new barn still having no luck with her

Race 6 – FIREARM made the top and drove on to seat YANKEE CLOUT, let IDEAL PAR go then was soon sitting 3rd, came off the cones on the final turn then angled into the stretch, rolling on by the leaders to score the 15-1 upset in his season debut – he was 0 for 10 as a 2YO, but now 1 for 1 to start his 3YO campaign. YANKEE CLOUT was forced to drop in behind the eventual winner then was back to 4th by the quarter, saved ground to the lane then found himself a seam, finishing with good pace for 2nd (thanks to an excellent drive) – sharp upon returning from Canada. IDEAL PAR kept going until taking over from the winner to the quarter then yielded to the heavy favorite, popped out to the top of the lane and did go by the tiring leader, but was outkicked home by the top pair. SKIFROMTHETOP IR was hurt by a trio of leavers and used hard before finally reaching the top, enjoyed things his own way to the final turn but fell apart once into the stretch, failing badly as the 1/5 choice – he wasn't all that good in last week's victory, and was definitely vulnerable-looking heading into tonight! BEST BETTOR saved ground from 5th, pacing home evenly behind the top bunch while not a threat. VALENTINE HUNTER came out from 6th to 3/4s, struggled to gain and was all done by the final turn. MAN RAY had a terrible start and was never involved...even before eventually going offstride

Race 7 – EVER HOPING A took over from CADILLAC BAYAMA to the quarter, hit the brakes to the half then paced a sharp :27.3 on the back side, kicking home in :28.1 to secure the sharp wire to wire victory. LAYTON HANOVER came out 3rd over to 3/4s, followed wide on the final bends then charged home through the lane to rally into 2nd – another VERY sharp performer for an exceptionally hot barn! CASILLAC BAYAMA took the early lead then let the winner take over, proved no match once into the stretch and was unable to hold on to the place spot – a bit disappointing. BIG GULP found a spot to drop in 4th, came out 2nd over off turn three, swung wide around stalling cover on the final turn but flattened once into the homestretch – not as sharp this week. KARLOO BRADLEY N sat last to the final turn, came out and was pacing well, after the fact. MIGHTY SANTANA N saved ground from 5th with little to offer in the lane. DEETZY took off the gate this week, sat the cones at the back and was never in the hunt. TOPVILL SOMROCKET ended up sitting 3rd, pulled first over from turn three but could only challenge for 2nd as the pace really quickened to 3/4s, weakening before they turned for home

Race 8 – MIDNIGHT THUNDER was the lone leaver and made the top off turn one, rated a very easy clip on his own terms then sprinted home in :27.4 to easily seal the deal – hasn't always looked all that smooth here at Yonkers but he had no issues at all tonight. ONTOP RAINMAN secured the two hole trip but was unable to make a dent into the quick final quarter, a clear 2nd best. FANTOME EN JOIE got away 3rd and never varied, chasing evenly all the way. RAYRAY saved ground from 4th, pacing home evenly into the quick final quarter. BULLVILLE STEPHANO came out from 5th off turn three, struggled to gain but held evenly into the fast final quarter. PINE BUSH ITALIANO sat last and had no chance. OHOKA LEBRON N broke before the start

Race 9 – KOMODO BEACH got a free pass to the lead from DP REALORDEAL, cut an easy clip on his own terms and had more than enough left to spring home in :27.4 to seal the deal – he paid 7/5 tonight (as the 2nd choice) but delivered the mile that his fans were probably looking for LAST week....when he was sent off at 10 cents on the dollar but raced like a 20-1 shot! DP REALORDEAL was sent off as the odds on choice but the normally aggressive Bongiorno elected to let the winner cut this mile, waited for his chance in the lane and did finish with plenty of pace – but was unable to overtake the winner into the fast final quarter – definitely hurt his own chances by not cutting this mile, from the rail. WINDSUN RICKY was hurt when VIRTUAL HORIZON left late to his inside and had to take a spot in 5th, began a long uncovered move from the 5/8ths and was up to challenge for 2nd to the final turn, staying on gamely for 3rd even if well off the top pair. ALWAYS ROCKIN sat the 3 hole trip, unable to outkick WINDSUN RICKY for 3rd with no real excuses. VIRTUAL HORIZON left late (and a bit erratically) before

dropping in 4th, looked in and out at times and really just never grabbed the bit, looking “choppy” much of the way. GRAY DRAGON sat in the back and was never a factor...but wasn’t terrible either in his first start here since 2021. ROCK CANDY continues t struggle since returning from the layoff

Race 10 – NIGHT HAWK was used twice to the half to secure the front end, felt THUNDER HUNTER JOE turning up the heat to the final turn, needed more in the lane and found it, pacing home in :27.4 to hold off a pair of very determined rivals. THUNDER HUNTER JOE was moving uncovered from 5th at the half and up to challenge the winner by the final turn, looked like he was going to get by late but just couldn’t outmuscle his very stubborn rival after enduring a very tough trip – big mile off the class drop! HUNTING ZONE got away last but that earned him a 2nd over trip behind THUNDER HUNTER JOE, angled into the lane and had plenty of pace, but came up 3rd best in the 3 way battle to the wire – another big effort. OAKWOOD PADDY IR found no holes off turn one and had to rush up for the lead, allowed the winner to retake to the half, stayed close all the way but was outmuscled for the top spots at the end. FESS UP N had a good start but was eventually sitting 3rd, found room in the lane and paced home evenly behind some pretty sharp rivals. SANTANA HANOVER had to back off at the start, came out 3rd over on the final turn and paced home evenly at the back

Race 11 – PINK RUBY made the early lead then released UNITY, popped out to the top of the lane and used her fresh legs to roll on by in the lane – a perfect “pocket rocket” winner. UNITY made the lead off turn one, rated kind fractions while facing no pressure but was no match for the winner once they hit the homestretch. CAPTAINS STAR had a slowish start, came out behind weak cover to 3/4s and wisely dropped back inside on the final turn, was clear in the lane and did a nice job winning the battle for the show spot – nice mile off the layoff. LOOKATMYART yielded willingly and got away 3rd, angled clear for the drive home but hung badly. ALWAYS B MIMI came out from 6th past the stands and was forced to try a long uncovered move, could never get near the leader (despite the slow pace) and was fortunate just to last for a 5th place check – hasn’t clicked for her current connections. BROOKDALE JESSIE saved ground to no avail. TUGGINGONCREDIT came out from 7th off turn three, never got close and finished well back. TUAPEKA JESSIE N broke trying to drop in 4th on turn one.

Race 12 – STATESIDE DEUCE GB was pocketed by HEZ ALLTHERAGE N, gapped a bit into the very sharp 3rd panel, benefited when that leader broke on the final turn and was able to avoid trouble and go by to his inside, opened a clear lead into the stretch and was kept to a drive to improve his local slate to 7-5-1-1. PEETIE got away 4th, was also able to benefit by going inside the troubled leader on the final turn, was quickly up into 2nd and chased the top one home to the wire – opportunistic, but also much better than last week. CLEVELAND B MIKI was part of the inside group that avoided final turn trouble, pacing home solidly to take home 3rd. VICI was able to drop into a free spot in 5th off turn one, flushed out the favorite to race 2nd over to the half, followed wide around the breaking leader on the final turn but lost lots of ground, angled widest into the stretch then kicked home full of pace, after losing all chance! HEZ ALLTHERAGE N blasted hard from the pole and seated the leavers, hit the gas hard to 3/4s and opened a clear lead to the final turn...but then lost action and went offstride briefly, never really recovering or getting his momentum back (placed 6th) – he had gait issues LAST week, but was looking tonight until that costly miscue! HUNTERS HERO dropped in 3rd on turn one, was flushed out uncovered to the half, could only challenge for 2nd as the pace really hastened to 3/4s, had to go wide around HEZ ALLTHERAGE N on the final turn and never got his momentum back, a disappointing 6th (pl. 5th) as the even money favorite. GRETZKY THE GREAT came out to turn three, was a loose 3rd over on the back side, had to drop back down to the cones on the final bend and was no factor after that. BETTER OFF SINGLE was debuting tonight for our leading barn but was dismal throughout