

## The Empire Report – Wednesday, April 10, 2024 – Race Recap

Race 1 – SHINE A LIGHT took command off turn one, felt the plugs come out on the final turn as he repelled a bid from DIAMONDBEACH, felt the tripsitter coming at him in the lane but easily held off his lone remaining challenger, delivering as the 1/5 chalk in the opener. UP THE CREEK was able to secure the two hole trip behind the heavy favorite, chased closely all the way and was a very solid 2<sup>nd</sup> best, well ahead of the others. HES SPECIAL saved ground from 5<sup>th</sup>, benefited on the final turn as DIAMONDBEACH went offstride and bothered others and was able to pick up the show spot thanks to his good fortune. VENIER HANOVER was out 4<sup>th</sup> over from 7<sup>th</sup> before 3/4s, was really bothered on the final turn but recovered to finish full of pace, not far off the show spot. SWEET TROY came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over to 3/4s, was bothered badly by the final turn breaker and had lost all his momentum by the time he recovered. IM A GIGOLO lagged in last to 3/4s, avoided trouble on the final turn and paced evenly to the end. DIAMONDBEACH came out first over from 3<sup>rd</sup> on the back side, felt his bid stall on the final turn then made a break, bothering others. DELIGHTFUL DUDE N came out from 6<sup>th</sup> off turn three and was racing 3<sup>rd</sup> over on the final bend when wiped out completely.

Race 2 – IT'S A ME MARIO sat a patient 3<sup>rd</sup> early on, came out uncovered to 3/4s and was all over the leader by the final turn, opened a clear lead into the stretch and easily notched his 5<sup>th</sup> victory of the season – continues to impress every week! ULTIMAROCA came out to 3/4s and gained cover from the winner, had plenty of pace into the lane and was a very good 2<sup>nd</sup> tonight, even if no match for the top one. SOUTHWIND PETYR was unable to get around GREG THE LEG and had to sit the pocket, was back to 3<sup>rd</sup> to the top of the lane and found enough late for the show spot, though not up to the top pair. GREG THE LEG maintained command from the start from his pole position, was outrushed by the winner on the final turn and gradually weakened, back to 4<sup>th</sup> by the wire. BRUE HANOVER gapped cover from 6<sup>th</sup> to the final turn, finding some life way after the fact. SHAKE IT sat the cones from 4<sup>th</sup>, wasn't up to the top bunch at all but also wasn't bad, considering the long layoff and difficulty getting qualified. TWIN B HEART THROB sat last and was never in the hunt.

Race 3 – IMABEACHBOY was content to sit pocketed behind DAAMERICANSKY until popping out to challenge before 3/4s, paced on by on the final turn then drew off in the lane to the open-lengths victory – makes it 2 in a row. DAAMERICANSKY took over off turn one, had things his own way until the winner came calling to 3/4s, gave way on the final turn but to his credit, did a great job holding on to 2<sup>nd</sup> when he had every license to tire. LIBERTY N FREEDOM came out from 5<sup>th</sup> to 3/4s, gained steadily to the final turn, looked like he was going to move into 2<sup>nd</sup> in the lane but hung badly tonight, and was never able to pick up the place spot. MACAHOLIC got away 3<sup>rd</sup>, was clear into the lane but outmuscled for a board spot to the wire – still, mice improvement tonight. MAJESTIC KIWI N saved ground from 4<sup>th</sup>, kicking home evenly with the 2<sup>nd</sup> pack (didn't have the same late punch this week). ATLANTIS was behind an empty one near the back to the final turn, finally shook free into the lane and finished okay, after the fact. ALWAYS CLOSE gapped on the cones in 6<sup>th</sup> in a weak performance – needs easier? KEYSTONE DASH continues to struggle.

Race 4 – ROYALTY BEER took command quickly then cut a very soft half, edged clear to the top of the lane and the rout was on! BONTONI DEGATO S happily yielded early to the winner, chased from the two hole but proved no match from the top of the lane, safely holding the place spot as the winner kicked clear. GLOBAL BELIEVER S had to drop in 3<sup>rd</sup> off turn one, had room for the drive home but couldn't find enough to rally for 2<sup>nd</sup> (into the quick final quarter). DEADLINE HALL backed off at the start to 5<sup>th</sup>, began a long uncovered move past the stands, stalled by the final turn (into the quickened clip) but still stayed on well for 4<sup>th</sup>, despite a less than stellar trip. LOS BALLYKEELAMIGO came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over off turn three, trotting home evenly in an encouraging mile. CREATIVE VENTURE failed to ever close from the back of the pack (no chance). STRONGERWITHLINDY was short off the layoff.

Race 5 – LYONS PRIDE left under urging and remained under encouragement to finally reach the top to the quarter, faced no pressure while still under prompting to 3/4s, had no trouble shaking off the heavy favorite to the top of the lane and reported home a very easy winner, picking up his first local victory – Bongiorno pretty much just stole this one. ITALIAN DELIGHT N had to drop in 5<sup>th</sup> (after the winner left to his inside), came out uncovered past the stands and was unable to get close enough to bother the winner to 3/4s, continued to try hard on the final turn but was clearly in trouble as they turned for home, doing a good job holding the place spot as the winner drew off. LYONS JOHNNYJNR let the winner go to the quarter and was content to sit the two hole, gapped a bit on the final

turn then continued to weaken in the lane, fortunate just to hold on to 3<sup>rd</sup>. MINGO JOEL came out from 6<sup>th</sup> to turn three but was a bit sluggish and widely dropped back to the cones, gained inside on the final bend then found a clear rail for the drive home, finishing well to almost hit the board – sneaky ok! PROVOCATIVEPRINCEN came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over from 3<sup>rd</sup> on the final turn but lacked the stretch pop to be a serious player. MACHLICIOUS came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over to 3/4s but gapped cover, turning in another weak effort. MISTER SPOT A tried a three wide move from last to 3/4s but was all done by the final turn

Race 6 – WARRAWEE YANG was off to a flat-footed start in 4<sup>th</sup>, was moving past the stands and was able to trot by the leader past 5/8ths, felt IMMANUEL K S bearing down on him into the lane but was able to dig in and hang on...after Gingras was finally able to get the plugs popped! IMMANUEL K S had a good start before ending up sitting 3<sup>rd</sup> by the quarter, came out behind the winner off turn three and trotted up into 2<sup>nd</sup> behind that one to 3/4s, had dead aim through the lane but just couldn't go by, beating the others by a big margin – sharp tonight off the qualifier. CITY OF HOPE came out from 6<sup>th</sup> on the back side, swung wide from 5<sup>th</sup> to the final turn and continued to stay on gamely through the lane, besting the others for 3<sup>rd</sup> while well off the top two. BLUEBIRD BISHOP took command as CHEZACTIC broke then yielded to the quarter, came out to 3/4s after being caught behind the stopping leader then was outkicked in the lane for the show spot. CREDARENA looked a little erratic at the start, came out from 6<sup>th</sup> on the final turn but was quickly empty – never looked good tonight. CRYSTAL TRIO IT was briefly wide on the first turn before making her way to the lead, gave way to the winner's brush on the back side then folded badly. CHEZACTIC went right to the top...but was soon offstride

Race 7 – WILD WAY took control off turn one, had things her own way to the top of the lane and was able to make it home safely over a fairly soft bunch, despite a :30.2 final quarter. EL MISSION GODDESS was content to sit patiently in 4<sup>th</sup> early on, pulled first over off turn three and was up to challenge for 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3/4s, kept coming into the lane but couldn't find enough to get to the winner – nice try. WISTERIA HANOVER made the top then yielded to the winner, was tiring to the top of the lane but was able to dig back in a bit to hold the show spot. MR KNOWITALL gained inside from the back to the final turn, shook free in the lane and did have some trot finishing. TO MY CREDIT got away 3<sup>rd</sup>, saved ground but was outkicked home with no excuses. I GOT THE TAB had to drop in 6<sup>th</sup> on turn one, came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over to 3/4s but was empty by the final turn – another clunker. TOMBSTONE came out from 6<sup>th</sup> to 3/4s but quickly gapped cover while 3<sup>rd</sup> over – weak try. VOSS BLUE CHIP left in his seasonal debut but didn't survive the first turn

Race 8 – OAKWOOD DYNASTY IR got away nicely in the two hole, was clear for the drive home and able to collar the leader late to pick up her first U.S. victory. IM A BELIEVER flew right to the top, cut a very easy clip on her own terms and had no reason at all not to be able to finish the job. YOUCANCALLME DAISY backed off at the start when outleft, came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over to 3/4s behind sluggish cover, was still 4<sup>th</sup> at the top of the lane but kicked home strong in the final 1/16<sup>th</sup> of a mile, right there 3<sup>rd</sup> at the wire. FREAKY came out uncovered from 3<sup>rd</sup> on the back side but had trouble advancing into the slow pace, had to drop back inside on the final turn and tired to a soundly beaten 4<sup>th</sup> in the lane – started her career at 4 for 4 but that streak came to an abrupt halt tonight. PINE BUSH MAGA was no factor from the back but easily bested the others for a 5<sup>th</sup> place check. URSULA BLUE CHIP sat last and was always well back. NEITHER DO I was dismal on the cones. FANSBABY came out from 6<sup>th</sup> on turn three but was going in reverse before they hit the final turn

Race 9 – TACHYON took a pit stop in 3<sup>rd</sup> before rushing to take over at the quarter, grabbed a breather to the half then opened a nice lead to the top of the lane, winning easier than the final margin might suggest – back on his best game again! SEA CAN got away slowly in 4<sup>th</sup>, pulled first over at the half and was up to challenge for 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3/4s, took over 2<sup>nd</sup> to the top of the lane and continued to trot very well to the wire, an excellent 2<sup>nd</sup> in his local debut! LAVA FIELD got away in the pocket then was back to 3<sup>rd</sup> after the winner took over, was behind a tiring rival to the top of the lane then maneuvered free into the lane, finishing well to claim the show spot (even if well behind the top pair). BY THE BOOK ended up 3<sup>rd</sup> over to the half, avoided a breaker off turn three but was still 3<sup>rd</sup> over to 3/4s, was still sitting 6<sup>th</sup> on the final bend then found good trot into the lane, just missing the show spot – just found himself in a bad spot. CAL MILES N SHELL came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over on the back side, enjoyed a good trip and really should have been able to pick up 3<sup>rd</sup> off that journey. CHALLENGER made the top then forced a sharp opening panel before yielding to the winner, gapped a bit to 3/4s and was back to 3<sup>rd</sup> by the top of the lane, continuing to fade more into the lane – bottomed out? YOU GOT IT was racing 2<sup>nd</sup> over when he broke on turn three. PAPA DOC broke in the back to 3/4s

Race 10 – RESOLVE TO WIN made a quick lead and opened a hole for CASSIUS HANOVER, crawled to the half in :59 then met up with FERRETTI to 3/4s, shook that one off into the stretch and won comfortably from there. FERRETTI pulled first over from 3<sup>rd</sup> on turn three, was up to challenge the winner at 3/4s, was still trying hard at the top of the lane but drifted a bit to the wire, safely holding the place spot. CASSIUS HANOVER dropped nicely into the pocket early on, gapped a bit to the final turn, did better in the lane but was still outmuscled for the place spot. DYLADMAR saved ground all the way, had room from 4<sup>th</sup> into the lane and trotted evenly to the wire. CRAZY BROTHER JIM was no threat from the back but trotted home evenly off a ground saving trip. FRANK THE ELDER left but soon had to back off into 4<sup>th</sup>, gapped cover after pulling 2<sup>nd</sup> over and was empty before 3/4s. INFINITY STONE never got close after getting away last

Race 11 – OPTRIX was off to a slow start in 5<sup>th</sup>, came out to turn three then rushed up to challenge for 2<sup>nd</sup> to the final turn, overtook the leader into the stretch and just managed to hold off a fast flying rival up the cones to score in his Hilltop debut. WICKENBURGH avoided getting looped by DIAMANTE TRIO IT then found the pocket off turn one, had to wait in the stretch before finally finding clearance up the rail then kicked home strong from there, just missing out to the top one – good chance he wins it if free sooner. COVENTRY HALL had the quick lead then drove on to seat a couple of others, cut a modest clip while facing no real pressure to the final turn, couldn't hold off the winner into the stretch and was no match for the place horse either, after allowing that one room at the cones – could be tighter next time? MOHATU AS got away 4<sup>th</sup> and gapped to the half, got shuffled back to last by the final turn but did finish alertly at the end after finding room in the lane – promising first start of 2024. DIAMANTE TRIO IT was unable to loop around WICKENBURGH into turn one and had to find a spot to drop in 3<sup>rd</sup>, sat in from there and trotted home evenly, while no threat. MYCROWNMYKINGDOM came out 2<sup>nd</sup> over on the back side, gapped the winner's cover to the final turn and was empty in the lane. BLACK TIE BASH came out 3<sup>rd</sup> over to 3/4s, tipped wide from last to the top of the lane but flattened quickly

Race 12 – ROCK THIS WAY made the lead early then yielded to CAPTAIN T HANOVER, waited for his turn in the stretch and was able to collar the leader into the slow final quarter. CAPTAIN T HANOVER took command off turn one, was pressed to the half by the parked PRESTIGE SEELSTER, dismissed that one off turn three and still looked good to the top of the lane...but got a but leg weary inside the final 1/16<sup>th</sup> of a mile and was collared by the tripsitter. B COOL FOOL saved ground nicely, was full of pace entering the stretch but had no room at all up the cones, and had to settle for 3<sup>rd</sup> for his new connections – next time? JOJOS PLACE sat 3<sup>rd</sup> all the way, was clear at the top of the lane but lacked the finish to take advantage of the good trip. SWAGASAUUSREX saved ground from the back and was up to 5<sup>th</sup> into the stretch, pacing home well for that final paycheck. SHANWAY N joined the poor flow 3<sup>rd</sup> over to 3/4s, dropped back inside (at the back) on the final turn and just had no prayer – give him a pass. PRESTIGE SEELSTER left outside a couple of others and was in no-man's land off turn one, was forced to go on but just ended up parked, started to back off past turn three and called it a night ...lives to fight another day. SMOKING BY N came out from 5<sup>th</sup> at the half, had to go wide around the tiring PRESTIGE SEELSTER but couldn't even do that, ultimately finishing way back in an unexpectedly poor performance