

Talented trotter lives up to his name

by Kim French, USTA Internet News Editor

Columbus, OH --- Although his behavior is certainly not deceitful, dishonorable or underhanded, New York Sire Stakes champion Devious Man does have a mischievous glint in his eye, which warrants special surveillance and lends credence to his name.

"He's a horse with lots of personality, that's for sure," said Julie Miller, the colt's conditioner. "He's a character; always nickering around the barn. He already knows he is a talented horse and he wants the attention from everyone else for it."

Owned Andy Miller Stable Inc. and Stroy Inc., Devious Man is a newly turned 3-year-old son of [Credit Winner](#)-Miss Garland. Selected by the Millers and purchased for \$62,000 at the 2015 Standardbred Horse Sale, the colt is the 12h foal out of his prolific dam and is a half sibling to Goodlookngirl ([Giant Hit](#), \$154,088), Celebrity Shark (Dream Vacation, \$139,528), Broken Record ([Muscles Yankee](#), \$134,858) and the multiple Dan Patch Award winner, O'Brien Award winner, world champion and 2005 Hambletonian victor Vivid Photo (S J's Photo, \$3.27 million).



USTA/Mark Hall photo

Devious Man amassed a record of 12-7-1-1 as a freshman and banked \$308,233.

"He stood out to us right from the beginning," Miller said. "We were prepared to go higher for him, but were happy to get him for what we paid. We were surprised though with this pedigree and the fact he is a half-brother to a Hambletonian winner. He was a little on the smaller side and the mare is older, so maybe that is why, but he was very nicely gaited from the beginning."

From his sole season of racing, Devious Man has amassed a record of 12-7-1-1 and banked \$308,233.

The colt commenced his career on June 30, 2016 at Monticello Raceway in a \$22,200 New York Sire Stakes event. He lost by a mere neck. He then broke his maiden in his next trip to the post on July 13 at Buffalo Raceway in the same company prior to finishing third on the same circuit at Vernon Downs.

Devious Man's next engagement was the Peter Haughton Memorial where he was fourth in his \$20,000 elimination and fifth in the \$294,450 final on Aug. 6 at The Meadowlands. His journey in the final, however, was quite eventful and impressive despite the fact he broke behind the gate. After spotting the field a ton of real estate, Devious Man, who was steered by regular pilot Andy Miller, gobbled up ground to finish extremely well once he returned to trotting.

"That was one of those things where he didn't mind his manners," Miller said. "He got hot going to the gate and did not keep his mind on what he was doing, which with him you need to keep him focused. He's the kind of horse that will pay more attention to the birds flying around than his business. But Andy and I were really pleased with how he performed in the race once he was back on stride. That was quite a big move he made to finish where he did."

After the miscue in the Haughton, Devious Man returned to the Empire State for his New York Sire Stakes schedule where he reeled off five consecutive triumphs, including the \$225,000 New York Sire Stakes final on Sept. 24 at Yonkers Raceway with ease.

He then traveled to the Bluegrass State where he earned his sixth win in a row by capturing his \$56,000 division of the International Stallion Stake on Oct. 6 at Red Mile by a hard fought neck over the talented Simply Volo from the John Butenschoen barn.

Devious Man's next engagement would be a \$20,000 elimination for the Breeders Crown, but he failed to make the final after an eighth place finish behind Walner. Sent off as the public's third selection behind Dan Patch Award winner and world champion Walner, the colt certainly had a valid reason for the worst finish in his young career.

"He displaced his palate that night so he had a breathing problem," Miller said. "He did not hit What The Hill's wheel (the second place finisher) but he got on that line and veered in when it happened. Fortunately, it was not a serious enough problem that required anything other than some extra care, but it was unfortunate it happened on that night."

Although he was scheduled to compete in the \$147,100 Matron Stake at Dover Downs on Nov. 3 to conclude his freshman campaign, Devious Man was scratched shortly before that race. It was not related, however, to the breathing issue he endured in the Breeders Crown elimination.

"He ended up ripping his right front shoe off on the ship down to Dover and drove a nail up into his hoof wall," Miller said. "It's not the first time he's done that, but this time was more serious and it wasn't something we could fix right away so he could race. That is when we just turned him out for the winter.

"He can be a handful and you have to watch him all the time, but it's only because he is such a good-feeling horse. He is very playful; but he loves to trot. Even when he's out there bucking and rearing, he comes right back down into his gait."

As to what Devious Man's 2017 campaign consists of, expect to view him on the New York circuit and select open stakes engagements, which could include the Hambletonian. The Millers finished third in the trotting classic last year with Sutton.

"I am very happy with how he came back in," Miller said. "He put on weight and grew taller. He looks great, but now you have to hope his mind matured as much as the rest of him. This is a horse that needs to mind his manners and be kept to his task. He has talent, but he needs to learn to stick to his business when he's out there. Andy was always very happy with him last year and said he always had something left in the tank, which is what you want.

"We will follow the same plan with him as we did last year. People say you should always stick to what the horse does best. This horse got over all those different New York surfaces and then transferred that form to the Red Mile. That is another thing you want to see.

"We know Walner is definitely the big horse in this division and he will be tough to beat, but we think we have a nice horse.

"The Hambletonian for him? We will see how it goes, but getting there is in the family."