



Hypnotic Am, Hen Party highlight the NYSS Finals

By Tim Bojarski, for the New York Sire Stakes

Yonkers, NY --- The \$1.8 million New York Sire Stake finals convened at Yonkers Raceway on Saturday (Sept. 12) with 60 of the best state-bred Standardbreds clashing to determine year-end honors in eight \$225,000 divisions. Although there were a couple of upsets during the evening, several favorites performed as expected and some put on impressive efforts.

The Allerage Farm 3-year-old filly trot went to Hypnotic Am (Chapter Seven-Daydream Am S) in a runaway performance that produced a new stake record.

A short field of seven got even shorter when the gate released the field when Love A Good Story and Seventimesalady both made breaks as Hypnotic Am (Brian Sears) opened up a five length lead at the quarter in :27.2. From there the filly was on cruise control. With no one getting close enough to challenge, Sears went an easy :30 second quarter and :29 up the backside. Hypnotic Am rounded the last turn all by herself and hit the line the same way; on top by five in 1:55, which was a new stake record.

"She was looking around a little bit at the quarter because she hasn't been on a half in a while, but she kept her mind on her business and really performed," said Sears. "She was really good tonight; she's a real sweetheart. I wish they hadn't canceled the Yonkers Trot because I think she would have been really good in there."

Hypnotic Am (\$2.50) is now a two-time NYSS Champion and this win has boosted her earnings to \$916,260 for breeder/owner Courant Inc. Marcus Melander trains the filly.

Then in the Cameo Hills Farm 3-year-old filly pace, Hen Party (Roll With Joe-My Lady Day) won in a strong gate to wire performance to extend her winning streak.

Racine Bell (Jason Bartlett) was first for the front but Hen Party (Tim Tetrick) soon overtook and when she did, it was for good. Hen Party got to the half in a moderate :56 as So Rude (Joe Bongiorno) made her move at the five-eighths and pushed the third panel to a :27.4 clip. But that was as far as she got as Hen Party opened up heading down the lane and held off a late rush by Moaning Lisa (Jim Marohn Jr.) and won by 1-1/4 lengths in 1:53.1.

It was the fourth straight win and seventh out of the last nine starts for Hen Party (\$2.80) who now boasts over a half-million in lifetime earnings with \$541,621 in the bank. The Tony Alagna trained Hen Party was purchased by Crawford Farms Racing for \$100,000 at the 2018 Harrisburg Sale, bred by Frederick Hertrich III.

The NYSS 3-year-old colt and gelding trot was won by Hobbs (Credit Winner-Cruella De Ville) after a dominating performance.

Hobbs (Jason Bartlett) left like a bullet and seated Chaptiama (Brian Sears) who had a notion to take the lead himself. Under a tight rein, Hobbs scooted through very even fractions of :28.3, :58.4 and 1:28.1, but still had Chaptiama right behind him. Coming off the turn, Sears pulled Chaptiama to take their best shot at the leader but that shot wasn't nearly enough. Hobbs kicked away in deep stretch and won by 2-3/4 lengths in 1:56.3.

"Hobbs is a very handy trotter and you can drive him like a pacer," said Bartlett. "He's honest, he has gate speed and he's always there for you no matter how the mile goes and that's the best thing about him."

One of the few owners who attended live was Scott Farber of Runthetable Stable, who also bred Hobbs. He was elated after the race when the horse named after one his father raced became a NYSS champion.

"This is a very difficult business and it's hard to get one here and even harder to breed one that gets here," said Farber. "I give a lot of credit to (trainer) Jim Campbell because last year he said this horse was going to come back great, and he couldn't have been more right."

Hobbs (\$4.60) won his fifth race in his last six starts and pushed his earnings to \$282,965 this year for Runthetable Stable and trainer Jim Campbell.

The Blue Chip Farm 3-year-old colt and gelding pace was won by Blank Stare (Bolt The Duer-Hypnotize) who upset Splash Brother at the wire.

After Major Betts (Dexter Dunn) made a break in the first turn trying for the lead, Splash Brother (Tyler Buter) took the front ahead of Genius Man (Marcus Miller) and Blank Stare (Corey Callahan). As they approached the half, Major Betts had settled himself and was once again moving up the rim towards the leader. But that threat only lasted past the five eighths and that's when Blank Stare made his move on the outside. Blank Stare caught Splash Brother heading into the last turn and the two matched strides into the stretch. Both drivers rocked all the way to the wire but Blank Stare won the battle under the light by 3/4's of a length in 1:52.2.

The third win of the year for Blank Stare (\$22.40) made him a NYSS Champion and pushed his earnings to \$199,699 in 2020. The John Butenschoen trainee is owned by the Harmony Oaks Racing Stable, James Crawford IV and In Over My Head Stable. Blank Stare was bred by Winbak Farm and was a \$22,000 purchase at the Lexington Selected Yearling Sale in 2018.

The Winbak Farm 2-year-old pacing fillies division was won by Test Of Faith (Art Major-Cannae Cammie) in a powerful front-end performance.

Heart Of Mine (Jason Bartlett) and DC Batgirl (Billy Dobson) argued early for the lead but it was Test Of Faith (Jim Marohn Jr.) who ultimately took control. Pacing smartly on the lead, Test Of Faith controlled to front comfortably going to the half in :57 before Party Queen (Tim Tetrick) rolled along outside. That challenge picked up the pace but the leader was holding a strong 1-1/2 length margin. Marohn urged

the filly through the last turn and she sped away in the stretch, opening up two at the beam in 1:54.1, tying the stake record.

Test Of Faith (\$2.40), who was the top point-getter in her division, has now won five out of six lifetime starts and has bankrolled \$257,750 this year, all in NYSS events. Owned by Melvin Segal, the Kentuckiana Racing Stable and Eddie Gran, Test Of Faith is trained by Brett Pelling. Test Of Faith was a \$92,000 yearling purchase at the 2019 Harrisburg Sale and was bred by Frederick Hertrich III.

The Crawford Farms 2-year-old filly trot went to Iteration (Chapter Seven-Steamy Windows) who miraculously recovered from a slow start.

Iteration (Brian Sears) had her nose on the gate in the turn and made a break as the car turned into the stretch. Sears got her back trotting but spotted the field eight lengths when the wings folded. That allowed Splash Blue Chip (Ake Svanstedt) to take the front and cut the fractions. With two more breaks by Ifnotmewho and Credit Income, the field was quite spread out and Iteration was trotting fifth, about 10 lengths behind.

Splash Blue Chip continued to lead by three past the half until Aela Jamieson (Andy Miller) drew alongside and had Iteration on her back. Aela Jamieson matched strides with Splash Blue Chip around the final bend and down the lane while Iteration tipped three deep and motored by everyone to win by a nose in 1:59.

"I had her on the gate because she's been getting a little aggressive lately and she got a little aggressive again," said Sears. "But she came back ok and got the job done."

Following in the footsteps of her full brother Gimpanzee and stablemate Hypnotic Am, Iteration (\$4.20) is now a NYSS Champion on the strength of her third win of the year. Courant Inc. owns and Marcus Melander is the trainer. Iteration was purchased for \$250,000 at the 2019 Harrisburg Yearling Sale, bred by the Order By Stable.

The NYSS 2-year-old colt and gelding trot went to Steel (Chapter Seven-Pink Power) who upset the field at 19-1 in his first lifetime victory.

Incommunicado (Scott Zeron) was the master of fractions while Steel (Andy Miller) sat the garden spot the entire mile. With the field single file to the half in a slow 1:00.2, Ambassador Hanover (Ake Svanstedt) pulled first up from third and put some pressure on the leader by the time they got to the three-quarters. At the head of the lane Incommunicado had rebuffed the challenge from Ambassador Hanover but Steel popped the deuce and out-brushed the leader to the wire and won by a head in 1:59, which was a new lifetime mark.

Steel (\$40.20) is owned by the Pinske Stable and Crawford Farms Racing, who also bred the winner. Julie Miller is the trainer. The \$65,000 yearling purchase from the Lexington Selected Sale, Steel was bred by Crawford Farms Racing.

The NYSS 2-year-old colt and gelding pace was won by King James Express (Art Major-More Diamonds) who made a strong backside brush to take command of the race.

Undefeated American Courage (Matt Kakaley) grabbed the lead off the gate in front of Town Gossip (Joe Bongiorno) and Major Makeover (Mark MacDonald) and they paced that way to the half and around the clubhouse turn. There, King James Express (Jason Bartlett) pulled first over just as American Courage experienced some difficulty on the backside and slowed to a walk, locking Town Gossip in behind him.

The new order as they headed around the last turn was King James Express on the point followed by Carrythetorchman (Marcus Miller) and Town Gossip, who had extricated himself from his predicament. Heading to the wire, King James Express was just too strong and held off all challenges to win by 2-1/4 lengths in 1:56.

"I saw that American Courage didn't look right in the turn, he got a little bumpy. But I was waiting for Mark (MacDonald, Major Makeover) to pull first because my horse is better with cover. But I had to go first and when I cleared he was ok on the point and got game when he heard the horses coming behind him. He's been a nice horse all year, it didn't surprise me when he won the race."

King James Express (\$11.80) is owned by Mark Harder, Deena Rachel Frost and Wayne Carleton and is trained by Mark Harder. Gregory Dey bred the winner who sold for \$20,000 at the 2019 Harrisburg Sale.