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Indiana Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association



Whistle Stop blows to victory in \$100,000 Hoosier Breeders Sophomore Fillies Stakes at Indiana Grand Racing & Casino

Story by Tammy Knox - Photos by Linscott Photography

SHELBYVILLE, Ind.; – June 21, 2017 – It was time for Whistle Stop to step up and blow her own horn and that is just what she did in the ninth running of the \$100,000 Hoosier Breeders Sophomore Stakes for fillies Wednesday, June 21 at Indiana Grand. Whistle Stop blew by the competition in the stretch to rally home for her third straight win with Jockey Marcelino Pedroza aboard.

Pedroza had Whistle Stop alert at the start, gunning out of the gate in search of one of the top spots in the eight horse field. Bar Rag and Tommy Pompell maintained their positioning inside as the race leaders while Whistle Stop tracked their progress along the outside with Midnight Blvd and Leandro Goncalves sitting closely in third along the rail.

Bar Rag continued to lead the way down the backstretch as heavily favored Defining Hope, ridden by Malcolm Franklin, waited patiently in mid pack to make their customary move around the turn. Defining Hope moved in a flash around horses and by the time the field had landed at the top of the stretch, she was challenging Bar Rag and Whistle Stop for the lead while Midnight Blvd was also close behind on the inside.

In the stretch, Whistle Stop shook loose from the competition and surged forward, pulling away for the victory and her first career stakes win by the margin of two and three-quarter lengths. Midnight Blvd split horses late to finish second over Defining Hope for third.

"I really didn't think she (Whistle Stop) would be able to win this race based on how little she is," said Pedroza, who has guided her to all five of her career wins. "But she has a big heart and she tries so hard. I thought for a second she was going to run off in the first turn but she finally relaxed and was nice and quiet with the other horses around her. She really responded when I asked her in the stretch."

Overlooked at the betting windows, Whistle Stop returned \$13.40, \$6.40, \$2.60. The time of the one and one-sixteenth mile race was 1:44.92.

"She (Whistle Stop) is nice and easy to care for in the barn," said Brandi Garner, assistant to Mike Lauer. "I wasn't sure she could go the distance but she proved to us she can."

Whistle Stop is owned by Penny Lauer, trained by Mike Lauer, and was bred by the Lauers at their farm in Finchville, Ky. They have been active in the Indiana breeding program for decades and Lauer serves on the Indiana Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA) board. The daughter of Into Mischief increased her career earnings to more than \$185,000 and is now five for 11 lifetime.

"We've put a lot of years into it and to get a win like this (with this filly, Whistle Stop) makes it worthwhile," said Penny. "We have liked her since she was a baby and we have always thought a lot of her mother."

Whistlin Jean, the dam of Whistle Stop, was an impressive contender on the Indiana circuit during her career. She won nearly \$200,000 for the Lauers and posted five wins, including a win in the Hoosier Breeders Sophomore Fillies Stakes in 2010 when it was held at Hoosier Park.

The 15th season of Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing continues through Saturday, Oct. 28. Racing is conducted Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 2:05 p.m. EST with Saturday racing beginning at 6:05 p.m. EST. Thursday racing will be held July 6 – Aug. 24 at 2:05 p.m. EST.

About Indiana Grand Racing & Casino: Indiana Grand Racing & Casino holds multiple awards from industry publications for customer service, entertainment, gaming and dining. Located in Shelbyville, Ind., Indiana Grand features 2,200 of the latest slots and electronic table games in addition to a one-mile dirt race course and a seven-eighths mile turf course offering live Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing each year. Simulcast wagering is also offered year-round at Winner's Circle Brewpub & OTB located on the casino floor as well as an off-track betting facility located in Clarksville, Ind. For more information, please visit www.IndianaGrand.com.

