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Indiana Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association



LOVELY BERNADETTE WINS \$200,000 INDIANA GRAND STAKES AT INDIANA GRAND RACING & CASINO

Story By Tammy Knox

Photo by Linscott photography



SHELBYVILLE, Ind. (Sept. 6, 2017) — Lovely Bernadette and jockey Florent Geroux rolled to an impressive win in the ninth running of the \$200,000-guaranteed Indiana Grand Stakes Wednesday, Sept. 6 at Indiana Grand. The duo covered the one mile turf race in a time of 1:35.37.

Starting from post seven in the 10-horse field, Lovely Bernadette broke well and was in contention early for the lead along with five other horses. Each one looked as if they might strike out to take control for a few strides before I'm Betty G and DeShawn Parker finally committed to the front spot, leading the way through the majority of the race. Little movement was detected as the field stayed close throughout, but when the final turn arrived, several noticeable moves began to unveil, including one from Lovely Bernadette from the center of the track.

In the stretch, I'm Betty G remained strong with her hold on the front end as Lovely Bernadette began to add pressure on the outside. In the end, Lovely Bernadette got the victory by one and one-half lengths over I'm Betty G. Youngest Daughter and Joe Bravo rallied from the back of the pack to pick up third place honors.

"She (Lovely Bernadette) was very sharp today and she broke super sharp from the gate," said Geroux, who scored wins in the two \$200,000 stakes races on the day at Indiana Grand. "I just wanted to nurse her around there because I know she can really finish. She gave me a good kick at the end. I had not ridden her before but I have run against her and she always beat me. She is a very honest filly and always tries very hard."

Lovely Bernadette scored her fifth career win in her 12th career outing for trainer Jim DiVito and owner Jim Miller. The Wilburn sophomore filly now has a bankroll that exceeds \$300,000.

Lovely Bernadette paid \$8.20, \$5.20 and \$3.80 across the board as the second favorite of the field. It was her second start at Indiana Grand, finishing third to Youngest Daughter in the \$100,000 Ta Wee Stakes in mid July, also on the turf.

"We are very proud of this filly," said Miller. "She can really fly and has always had a big kick at the end and she still does that now. I'm a hands on type of guy so we work together on her schedule, but I give credit to Jimmy (DiVito) because he picked her out and he's the one that trains her."

Miller and DiVito selected Lovely Bernadette from the 2016 Ocala Breeders Sale for \$28,000. She has deep ties to Indiana as her father, Wilburn, was the 2012 winner of the Indiana Derby, the state's richest and most prestigious horse race.

"Last year, she (Lovely Bernadette) was running well on the dirt," said DiVito, the multiple Graded Stakes winning trainer based in Chicago. "But, when we went to Hot Springs, she tailed off. So, we tried her on the turf and she took off."

Live racing at Indiana Grand continues through Friday, Oct. 27. Racing is conducted Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 2:05 p.m. with Saturday racing at 6:05 p.m. A special racing day will be held Thursday, Oct. 26 beginning at 2:05 p.m.

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.

