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She's no Angel, but on the Track Lookout at Indiana Grand Racing & Casino

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Finish Photo by Linscott Photography

Stretch photo and paddock photo by Dean Gillette

SHELBYVILLE, Ind.; – May 6, 2018 – The odds have always been against Lookout Angel. From an injury as a foal that left a disfigurement to long odds on the board, it appears Lookout Angel is always trying to beat the odds. But she got the best of those odds Saturday, May 5, surprising a field of six by fighting off late challengers to take home the win in the Indiana sired \$11,000 Waiver Claiming event at Indiana Grand, paying \$19.00 for the win.



Starting from the outside post six, Lookout Angel, with Alex Canchari aboard, was in the mix early in the six-furlong race. She tracked the leaders before taking over the top spot in the stretch and fought off challenges from both the inside and outside. Tornada and Fernando De La Cruz were not backing down without a fight on the inside and Darlene's Delight and Richard Bracho were coming at the top two with all she had on the outside. In the end, Lookout Angel was able to fight both of them off for the win by one-half length. Tornada won the close photo with Darlene's Delight for second.

Owned and trained by Dawn Martin of Caseyville, Ill., Lookout Angel scored her fifth career win in her 31st career start, boosting her earnings over the \$70,000 mark. She has been with Martin since she was a baby, and now at seven years old, her owner still has faith in her ability to be competitive and profitable each season.

"She (Lookout Angel) won the first race of the meet last year and then comes back this season and wins her first start of the year," said Martin. "I love this mare so much. I have 26 in the barn right now and if you asked me which one is my favorite, I'd always say her."

Martin nicknamed Lookout Angel with the tag "Crooked" due to her crooked head from an injury she sustained as a foal. Whether that injury affected her fiery personality is unknown, but from day one, she has been a challenge that most trainers would not deal with. However, Martin saw something in the chestnut at an early age and never gave up on making her into a racehorse.

"Because she is challenging, that makes it that much more rewarding when she races," added Martin. "She gives it everything she's got every time she goes out."

Martin owns a farm near Fairmount Park and does most of her conditioning at home. However, when it gets close to racing, she polishes her horses off at Fairmount Park. Through all the years dealing with Lookout Angel, Martin is the only one that ever gets on her during training. She knows her ways and knows the little things that will set her off and cause her to shift into a mode that isn't fun to deal with.

"I was on her at Fairmount Park last week and there were very few horses on the track," explained Martin. "Everyone was going the same direction, but I looked up and there was a horse turning and coming toward us. I knew she wouldn't like that and sure enough, as the horse got closer, she started leaping and acting up. I thought she would get better as she got older, but she hasn't changed at all. She's still the same as she was when she was younger."

Martin leans on Miguel Cazares at Indiana Grand to help get Lookout Angel through the paddock process and onto the track. Cazares, who is the assistant trainer for Joe Davis, comes up to the paddock and keeps her on the move while the valet and Martin get her saddled on the walk. Cazares knows her well and handles her with ease until the jockey gets on her back and she gets on the track. Once she's on the track, she seems to get in the zone and is good to go.

"If you don't keep her moving, she will flip," said Martin. "She will flip in the receiving barn, she will flip in the paddock, she will flip just about anywhere, but when she gets on the track, she's pretty good and the jockeys usually don't have any trouble with her. I've known Miguel and his family for years. He is good help and they are all good people. He's been around her all these years and helps out a lot."

Martin was a little surprised of the outcome of Lookout Angel's race. She made the trip up to Indiana Grand with another Martin trainee Benny's Angels, who won the first race of the night, giving Martin a training double on the evening. Lookout Angel was rather calm in the receiving barn, which gave Martin a little concern before the race.



"Last time she (Lookout Angel) was calm like that in the receiving barn, she didn't race very well," recalled Martin. "So, I wasn't really expecting her to run well tonight. She surprised me."

Through her 31 career starts, all but seven of Lookout Angel's starts have been recorded at Indiana Grand. During that time, she has been ridden by 12 different jockeys. She's almost always close at the end, finishing in the top three 20 of her 31 tries.

"She is not mean, she is just real bouncy," said Martin. "At first, people would ask why she wasn't getting claimed. I would tell them they have seen her in the paddock. They know what she is like."

Martin didn't know that her name would contradict her personality when she gave her the title of Lookout Angel as a baby. She merely played off the pedigree in selecting the name, something that makes her smile now.

Another thing that makes Martin smile is the prospects she has at her farm. Almost all of her two-year-olds are Indiana bred. She has invested heavily in the program and brings all of her mares to Indiana to foal each year. She has six two-year-olds that she is prepping for the ITOBA sale in June. On one hand, it appears Martin may be trying to downsize slightly, but on the other hand, she still loves what she does and has no immediate plans for retirement.

"I've always said that I cannot retire until 'Crooked' retires," added Martin. "She's seven now. As long as she keeps going, I'll keep going."

Live Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing continues through Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2018. The 120-day race meet offers racing Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 2:05 p.m. with Saturday racing at 6:05 p.m. Thursday racing dates have been set for July 19 and Sept. 6 with post time 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 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.