

Tall Dark Stranger Strong In KYSS Championship

By Ray Cotolo, for The Red Mile

LEXINGTON, KY—Glamour-boy phenom Tall Dark Stranger continued his winning ways when holding off stablemate Fortify to win the \$250,000 Three-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Pace Final of the Kentucky Sires Stakes (KYSS), which was one of eight divisions on the \$2-million championship card Sunday (Sept. 20) at The Red Mile.

Securing the pocket to a :26.1 first quarter, Tall Dark Stranger slid off the pylons and around early leader Caliber to lead the field by the half in :54.2. The North America Cup champ continued on a loose lead to three-quarters in 1:21.3 as Fortify mounted a late-race challenge from pocket turning for the finish. The Nancy Takter-trained pair raced on equal terms to mid-stretch but Tall Dark Stranger surged back to the front to win by a neck in 1:48. Captain Kirk finished third with Sea Of Life fourth.

Passing \$1 million in earnings this season and padding his career earnings to \$1,741,645 for owners Crawford Farms Racing, Marvin Katz, Caviart Farms and Howard Taylor, Tall Dark Stranger won his eighth race from nine starts this season and his 16th from 18 overall. Yannick Gingras drove the Bettors Delight colt—bred by James Avritt Sr. out of his mare Precocious Beauty—who paid \$2.10 to win.

Driver David Miller began his big day with Blue Diamond Eyes, besting 2-5 favorite Making Waves in a 1:51 mile to win the Two-Year-Old Filly Pace and his first of four finals on the afternoon.

Away third as Making Waves paced to the quarter in :28.3, Blue Diamond Eyes edged off the pylons moving to the backstretch and brushed to the top heading towards a :56.4 half. Making Waves tracked the leader tightly from the pocket rounding the final turn to three-quarters in 1:24.3, where the public choice angled outside for the attack. Through the stretch Making Waves dug into Blue Diamond Eyes, but the Ron Burke trainee repelled the pocket popper and hold sway by one-and-a-half lengths. Making Waves settled for second with High Minded sliding up the pegs for third and Single Girl snagging fourth.

Off a victory in the Pennsylvania Sires Stakes Championship, Blue Diamond Eyes added a fourth win to her seven-start resume and pushed her bankroll to \$317,042 for owners Thomas and Scott Dillon. The Brittany Farms-bred Captaintreacherous filly returned \$6.40 to win.

Undefeated Always B Miki colt Perfect Sting kept his record intact with a blowout 1:49.4 victory in the Two-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Pace in rein to David Miller.

Native's Filou fired from post 7 to the lead entering the first turn and took the field by the quarter in :28.2. Perfect Sting soon tipped outside from fourth and advanced towards the lead moving into the backstretch, but Native's Filou accelerated towards the half to stretch out Perfect Sting to a :55 midpoint. The 1-9 favourite cleared command heading to the final turn and led to three-quarters in 1:22.4 as Native's Filou angled from the pocket to challenge the leader late, though

levelled out late while Perfect Sting strode away to a two-and-a-half length victory. Captains Place slid up the pylons for third with Fulsome taking fourth.

Winning all six of his starts, Perfect Sting—a homebred for Brittany Farms LLC and Val D’Or Farms—has earned \$194,400. Joe Holloway, who trained the colt’s dam Shebestingin, conditions the \$2.10 winner.

Off a runner-up finish in the Peaceful Way Stakes, Lady Chaos returned stateside with a sweeping move late in the mile for David Miller to score at 6-1 in the Two-Year-Old Filly Trot.

Race-favorite Darlene Hanover dashed by early leader Beautiful Game after a :27.4 opening quarter to lead the field into the backstretch. Dutiful raced third while Miller floated Lady Chaos slightly off the pegs from fourth as Darlene Hanover strolled to the half in :56.1. The Linda Toscano trainee flushed Dutiful for cover into the final turn but fanned three wide by three-quarters in 1:25 for the stretch drive. Darlene Hanover clung to a diminishing lead as Beautiful Game veered out of the pocket to take a short lead before Lady Chaos, towards the center of the track, stormed by to win in 1:53.1. Eazy Pass rallied to best Darlene Hanover in the final strides for third.

Now a four-time winner from seven starts, Lady Chaos has banked \$248,303 for owners Richard Gutnick, Thomas Pontone, Joseph Lozito Jr. and Enviro Stables Ltd. The Cantab Hall filly bred by Lindy Farms of Connecticut and Av And Son Bloodstock LLC paid \$14.40 to win.

Linda Toscano and Dave Miller teamed in the following final with Baby Your The Best to upset 1-9 favorite Reflect With Me with a 1:49.3 mile in the Three-Year-Old Filly Pace.

Pettycoat Business protected position from the pylon post moving to a :27.3 first quarter but yielded control when Baby Your The Best brushed first over from third into the backstretch. Baby Your The Best kept the pace hot to a :55.2 half and to three-quarters in 1:23.1 as Reflect With Me attempted to gain ground first over. Spinning for the finish Baby Your The Best scooted away from Reflect With Me, extending her lead to three-and-a-half lengths at the finish with Pettycoat Business finishing third and Gai Waterhouse fourth.

A Captaintreacherous filly owned by Richard and Joanne Young, Baby Your The Best won her third race from nine starts this season and her fifth from 22 overall, earning \$457,947. Steve Stewart, Conquest Acres Lp and Michael Robinson bred the \$14.20 winner.

Per Engblom trainee Beads trotted a paid workout at the start of the Sunday card with a 1:51.2 romp in the Three-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Trot.

Driver Brian Sears sent the Archangel colt to the point from post 2 and held a firm lead through fractions of :28.2, :56.2 and 1:24 before widening to a three-and-three-quarter length victory as the 1-9 favorite. Barley inched by pocket-sitter Ontopofthehill to take second while Simsalabim gave chase in fourth.

Beads, bred by Atlantic Trot Inc. and Steve Stewart, competes for owners Renee Spahr and Christina Takter. The colt collected his fifth win from 10 starts this season and his seventh from 18 overall, earning \$260,463. He paid \$2.10 to win.

Hypnotic AM surpassed the million-dollar plateau with a 1:51.1 victory as the 3-5 favorite in the Three-Year-Old Filly Trot.

The Marcus Melander-trained Chapter Seven filly landed in the pocket behind Panem moving to a :27.2 opening quarter. As Tuscany parked and progressed uncovered before going offstride into the backside, Hypnotic AM vacated pocket and circled to the front heading to a :55 half. Crucial edged first over and rolled towards the leader with Ms Savannah Belle in tow circling the final turn, drawing within a length of the lead by three-quarters in 1:23.2. Hypnotic AM drifted slightly off the pylons through the stretch, leaving a seam for Panem to slide through and secure second while Crucial gave pursuit from third and Ms Savannah Belle settled for fourth.

Bred by Courant A B for owner Courant Inc., Hypnotic AM won her fifth race from nine starts this season and her 12th from 18 overall, amassing \$1,041,260 in earnings. Brian Sears drove the \$3.40 winner.

With 7-5 favorite Cuatro De Julio losing stride into the first turn, Venerate vaulted to the lead and cruised to a 1:51.4 victory in the Two-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Trot, a fifth of a second off the world record.

Venerate led pylon-starter Cricket Fashion by the quarter in :28 with New Legacy racing third and Bidensky fourth. The Julie Miller-trained colt by Love You continued uncontested to the half in :56.1 and by three-quarters in 1:24.4 chased by Cricket Fashion as his lead grew. Venerate hit the finish clear of Cricket Fashion with New Legacy farther back in third and Bidensky taking fourth.

Owned by Pinske Stables and Andy Miller Stable Inc., Venerate won his third race from six starts, earning \$188,766. Steve Stewart and Kemppi Stable bred the \$10.40 winner while Andy Miller sat in the bike.

State-bred stakes action continues at The Red Mile on Monday (Sept. 21) with eight \$50,000 finals of the Kentucky Commonwealth Stakes for freshmen and sophomores of each sex and gait. First-race post time for the 12-race card is slated for 1:00 p.m. (EDT).

PHOTOS: Tall Dark Stranger winning the KYSS Three-Year-Old Colt & Gelding Pace and the subsequent winner's circle presentation (Amanda Stephens Photo)



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