

Check Six quickest in Bluegrass Colt Pace

By Ray Cotolo, for The Red Mile

LEXINGTON, KY—Check Six made his move first over heading into the far turn, eventually passing tempo-setter American Passport to win the first of three divisions for the \$173,900 Bluegrass for three-year-old pacing colts and geldings in 1:50 on Sunday, October 2 at The Red Mile.

American Passport took the lead, pacing the first quarter in :27.4 and the half in :55.4. Sitting third, Check Six moved to the outside and advanced towards American Passport heading to three quarters. Timed in 1:23, American Passport sprinted to a three-length lead at the head of the stretch. As American Passport approached the line, Check Six narrowed into his lead to his outside, soon drawing alongside and passing him to win. Katies Rocker, riding the pocket for the mile, finished third.

Winning his 12th race in 26 starts, Check Six, by Somebeachsomewhere out of the Artsplace mare Southwind Vanna, has now earned \$903,804 for owners Burke Racing Stable, Weaver Bruscmi, William Switala and James Martin. He is trained by Ron Burke and was driven by Yannick Gingras. He paid \$4.20 to win.

“I wasn’t sure if American Passport was going to keep going, but I knew I had some pace still,” Yannick Gingras said. “I was just waiting to straighten up and try and let him go.”

“He’ll be here next Sunday,” Gingras also said.

Sprinting to the front, Western Fame set a fast pace and battled off challengers Jj Flynn and Fine Diamond to win his division of the Bluegrass in 1:50.3.

Going the first quarter in :26.3 and the half in :54.3, Western Fame’s first challenge came from Fine Diamond, pulling first over out of third, around the far turn. The two were stride for stride after a 1:24 third quarter before Western Fame battled him off towards the rail. Jj Flynn fanned wide of Fine Diamond in the stretch to pursuit Western Fame, accelerating into second but running out of ground, failing to overtake Western Fame in the final strides.

Western Fame, by Western Ideal out of the Artiscape mare Shyaway, won his fifth race in 22 starts, earning \$316,156 for owner Brittany Farms. The Jimmy Takter trainee was driven by Mark MacDonald and paid \$2.80 to win.

“He’s a really tough horse and can actually race anyway,” Mark MacDonald said. “He races good from behind too, but I was the heavy favorite today so I took a shot and left with him. It’s a tiring track, but he raced super. First quarter in :26.3 and last quarter in :26.3... can’t ask for much more than that.”

“Myron Bell had the confidence [in Western Fame],” George Segal said. “He didn’t race many times last year, but he was always a good individual with a good attitude... he just wasn’t in a good place last year. But this year, everything has worked out.”

Lindy Beach won his fourth race in a row in the final Bluegrass split, storming down the center of the track to win in 1:50.3.

Fresh Cut took the lead from the rail, pacing in front of Manny and Jk Will Power through a :27.4 first quarter. Jk Will Power pulled first over and brushed to the lead before the half, timed in :55.4. Entering the far turn, Manny edged first over from third and rushed by Jk Will Power to nearly clear command heading to three quarters. He remained off the pylons but in front by a length at three-quarters in 1:23.4.

Jk Will Power flew up the rail to challenge for the lead in the stretch. Manhattan Beach, tracking Manny from second over, fanned towards the center of the track, as did Lindy Beach, who had been racing from third over. Once Manhattan Beach took the lead, Lindy Beach soon swept alongside and right by Manhattan Beach to win. Fresh Cut managed to slide into contention for second while Manhattan Beach finished third.

A winner of four races in 13 starts, Lindy Beach, by Somebeachsomewhere out of the Real Desire mare Real Appealing, has now compiled \$64,912 in earnings for owners Lindy Farms of Connecticut and Frank Baldassare. Trained by Frank Antonacci and driven by Tim Tetrick, he paid \$11.40 to win.

“The plugs were in and Timmy [Tetrick] looked comfortable,” Frank Antonacci said, “but the trip worked out perfect as well. When you’re looking at these horses that can just flat fly, you need the trips.”

“He was coming back good this winter, and he had a little injury right before we were getting ready to qualify him, so we just gave him plenty of time. We knew he was a good gelding and we wanted to give him a chance to come around this time of year.”

“I think Jimmy [Takter] said it when he was out here; that this is a form game and when you have a horse that’s coming into form, they tend to stay that way for awhile. He has got a lot of confidence, and didn’t realize he was racing about six classes up today.”

Live racing resumes at The Red Mile on Thursday, October 6 with the International Stallion Stakes for two-year-old trotting colts and geldings. First race post is slated for 1:00pm.