

Cherokee's Boy Looks Tough in Jennings Handicap



Cherokee's Boy.

LAUREL, MD. 12-01-05---Cherokee's Boy, who ranks 16th on the all-time earnings list for Maryland-breds, is the overwhelming 1-2 favorite in the \$75,000 Jennings Handicap, Saturday's feature race at Laurel Park.

Cherokee's Boy has won 11 stakes from his 39 lifetime starts and is closing in a million dollars in earnings. Just this year the son of Citidancer has racked up four added money victories, including the Salvatore Mile (Grade III) in July at Monmouth Park. Last week, the five-year-old and Travis Dunkelberger wired a strong allowance field at Charles Town to prep for the Jennings.

In October, trainer Gary Capuano used the same routine as Cherokee's Boy finished a strong second in the Maryland Million Sprint six days after winning the HBPA Governor's Cup at Charles Town in record time.

"He is just so consistent and Gary has done such a terrific job of spotting him in races where he is always competitive," said co-owner Dave Picarello. "Knock on wood he has never had an injury and he just loves to run. Coming back in seven days is not the traditional way to do things but he is sound and ready to go. Last Saturday Travis did a good job of saving him through the stretch so we could run this Saturday."

Picarello and Foard Wilgis also owned Cherokee Wonder, the dam of Cherokee's Boy. Her second foal has 15 lifetime wins and 31 in the money finishes, failing to pick up a check just once: an eighth place finish in the 2003 Preakness Stakes (Grade I). The \$45,000 first place prize for the Jennings would boost his all-time earnings to \$969,866.

"We are trying to get to that million dollar mark," added Picarello. "We will have to wait until next year because this will be his last race of the year. For two guys who didn't know a lot about this business when we got into it back in December 1992 it would be a dream come true. I have had the list of the top 25 Maryland-breds up on my office wall since the beginning of the year. Just getting onto the list was our first goal and now he is sitting just behind Urbane (15th at \$1,018,568). Hopefully it would boost his resume as a future stallion. Maybe we'll get lucky and get into the top 10 if things go well."



Foard Wilgis and Dave Picarello: owners of Cherokee's Boy. (Photos by Jim McCue)

Shine Again currently ranks 10th with \$1,271,840 in career earnings. Cigar, the leading money winner in history, tops the Maryland-bred list with \$9,999,815.

Gary Capuano is serving a 30-day suspension for an infraction at Charles Town, so Cherokee's Boy will be saddled by his father Phil.

His chief competitor on Saturday might be Gold Casing (9-2), a late blooming 3-year-old. After losing his first five, the chestnut son of Americo's Bullet has won his past three starts, including the 1-1/8 mile Northern Dancer Stakes on November 12. The added money win was the first for trainer William Hairfield after nearly forty years in the business. The Jennings is slated for the same nine-furlong distance.

"This weekend he's in against older horses," Hairfield said. "That may make things a bit tougher – but he's matured and is almost a 4-year-old himself. He's doing so good, we just had to give him a shot. Last time out, we had everything our way – but there appears to be a lot more speed in (the Jennings Handicap). It's going to be interesting to see what happens when he gets looked in the eye."

Trainer Linda Albert will start two runners in the Jennings: Off The Glass and Water Cannon. The former is winless this year after five starts and the latter, who competed in the 2004 Preakness Stakes (Grade I) is winless in twelve outings this year. The entry is 6-1 on the morning line.

Completing the line-up are George's Gain (8-1), who comes into the race off an optional allowance victory and Timetoshuffleoff (20-1), who is winless since last November.

The Jennings is the sixth race on the nine-race program. First post is 12:35 p.m.

New Laurel Turf Course is a Smashing Success



Fourteen horses break from the starting gate at Laurel Park. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-02-05---When the Laurel Park fall meeting began in September, Maryland Jockey Club officials had high hopes for its new turf course. After three months the grass courses have exceeded expectations.

The new, sweeping turf course, which has been widened from 75 feet to 142 feet during the summer, has helped make the track a top simulcast signal with an average of 11.2 starters per grass race.

"We have had remarkable success with the size of the fields and the response from the trainers and jockeys who have been on the course," said Maryland Jockey Club Chief Operating Officer Lou Raffetto. "The one thing about this turf course is that the horsemen have

confidence in a sense that if it does rain they know there may be a period of a day or two that we'll be off, but they feel secure that we'll be back on the turf. In the old days if we had an inch of rain we would have been off the turf for the better part of a week."

The statistics are impressive as 105-of-134 races featured double digit fields, a 78% rate. Laurel Park's new turf course has seen 29 full fields of 14 facing the starter. Only 11 races featured fewer than eight starters and nine of those have been seven horse fields. The average win payoff is \$14.45.

"The turf has been huge for us and was worth the wait," said racing secretary Georganne Hale. "We have had a great deal of shippers and we have received rave reviews. When you have people from other tracks calling to say they heard the new turf course is wonderful then you know you have a winner."

Ryan Fogelsonger and Horacio Karamanos have each ridden 21 turf winners during the meet. Graham Motion tops all trainers with seven victories, two more than Hamilton Smith, Mark Shuman and Jimmy Murphy. Beer Stien, trained by King Leatherbury and the Michael McCarthy conditioned Tour Dance are a perfect three-for-three on the new Laurel lawn.

"It has been a program that has been well received by people around the country as evidenced by our export handle which continues to soar on a daily basis," added Raffetto, who expects to card one race a day on the grass through December 23. "We have also brought back the local fans who lost faith in our product who now bet on Maryland racing again."

The turf accommodates six track configurations which were named All Along, Bowl Game, Kelso, Dahlia, Exceller and Ft. Marcy, in honor of some of the great horses which have competed on the grass at Laurel Park. The All Along and Bowl Game will not be used the rest of the year in hopes of using them for the final three weeks (March 29-April 15) of the 2006 winter meeting.

"An unbelievable amount of credit needs to go to Robbie Mitten," Raffetto said. "He has been one of the great unknown turf superintendents in the country. He has been like a top manager without a talented team to work with. He has now been given the tools and he's put out a winning team. It has been like winning a World Series for us."

Cherokee's Boy Romps in Jennings Handicap



Cherokee's Boy and Travis Dunkelberger win the Jennings Hcp. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-03-05---For the first half mile it was all work, but for the rest of the journey it was all play as 2-5 favorite Cherokee's Boy galloped to victory in the \$75,000 Jennings Handicap this afternoon at Laurel Park. With \$45,000 added to his bankroll, the five-year-old has now earned \$969,886, 16th on the all-time earnings list for Maryland-breds.

Timetoshuffleoff and Gold Casing beat a path to the front in the nine furlong Jennings, leaving Cherokee's Boy and jockey Travis Dunkelberger in third place but in close pursuit. Cherokee's Boy charged between the leaders down the backstretch, emerged with the lead entering the far turn and quickly opened up a commanding lead. At the finish line they were 6 1/4 lengths the better of George's

Gain and Water Cannon, who came from far back to grab second and third, respectively. The winner paid \$2.80 and finished the distance in 1:52.49.

Dunkelberger said, "I tried to take him back a little bit but he didn't want to settle. He wanted to be right up there with them. He's an iron horse coming back in a week. He's that much horse and it's amazing. He was so tough on the bit today coming off seven eighths. We asked him early last time and now we didn't ask him early and got him a little confused."

Cherokee's Boy has won 12 stakes from his 40 lifetime starts. This year the son of Citidancer has racked up seven first place finishes, including five added money victories. Owners Foard Wilgis and Dave Picarello indicated their star would be sent to Florida for the winter by trainer Gary Capuano and will return for a six-year-old campaign in 2006 for a run at a million dollars in earnings.

“Sure we’d love to reach the million dollar mark now but he’s earned the break,” said Picarello. “We are such small owners and to have a horse like this is a dream come true. Maybe he isn’t going against the top level horses each race but pretty close and he is always right there.”

Cherokee’s Boy now has 32 in the money finishes and has failed to pick up a check just once, an eighth place finish in the 2003 Preakness Stakes (Grade I).

“He’s an amazing horse,” added Dunkelberger, who has been aboard for seven victories, including five this year. “He just does what you ask him to all the time and you always have horse. I had so much horse today, it was ridiculous!”

Gary Capuano is serving a 30-day suspension for an infraction at Charles Town, so Cherokee’s Boy was saddled by his father Phil.

Nagem Nagem Nagem Wins Her Fifth Race of the Meeting



LAUREL, MD. 12-4-05---Outrun all the way to the top of the stretch, Nagem Nagem Nagem came charging through a gaping hole along the fence to notch her fifth victory in six starts at Laurel Park’s fall meet.

Racing far back off the pace down the backstretch and through the final bend under jockey Enrique Jurado, the 4-year-old daughter of Crypto Star employed her patented late closing tactics to nip three others at the finish line. She finished a neck better than Singing Laur, who was a head in front of Silent Splendor, who finished a nose better than White Gold.

Nagem Nagem Nagem (right) wins her fifth race of the Laurel meet. (Photo by Jim McCue)

Nagem Nagem Nagem (\$4.40) is trained by Stephen M. Casey and owned by J V M Racing Stable. Her five wins this fall include two against \$5,000 claiming company and three against starter/allowance foes. She stopped the timer in 1:56.63 for the nine furlongs over the fast main track.

Casey said, “I love it. We’ve been so hot at Laurel. She’s a hard-knocking filly. She’s not a real good horse, but she knows where the wire is. She just digs in and really tries hard. I’m still shaking. Her (last to first) running style is not easy on the nerves.”

Eleven Fillies and Mares Set For Geisha Handicap

LAUREL, MD. 12-8-05---Sondra Bender’s Promenade Girl is the 2-1 morning line favorite to win Saturday’s \$75,000 Geisha Handicap at Laurel Park. Eleven registered Maryland-bred fillies and mares, including a three-horse entry, are entered to start in the nine furlong race on the main track.

Promenade Girl has made only six lifetime starts but has never finished worse than third. Her record includes a third in the Marshua Stakes, a win in the Twixt Stakes and a runner-up finish in the Northern Dancer Stakes against the boys in her most recent start. Trainer Larry Murray has yet to name a rider on the 3-year-old daughter of Carson City.

Murray said, "I'm hoping that wasn't her best effort last time out. It was her first time going nine furlongs and she probably needed the race. She was also coming back off a 60-day break as opposed to a 30-day break this weekend. She's been doing great and we're looking forward to Saturday's race."

Trainer Richard Small has three runners named to the Geisha, Sticky (Jozbin Santana), Take A Check (Luis Garcia) and Cozy Gain (also Garcia). None have won a stakes but all three are stakes placed. The entry is listed at 5-2.

With a second in the Maryland Million Oaks and a third in the Anne Arundel Stakes, Lexi Star is next on the morning line at 7-2. Jockey Ryan Fogelsonger will pilot the Crypto Star filly for trainer Chris Grove.

Grove said, "She came out of the Anne Arundel just super. She never got a chance to run through the first three-quarters of that race. She's a strong filly that doesn't like to be rated, but that doesn't mean that she needs the lead. For her last workout (a 5 furlong bullet at Bowie) she was just out for a Sunday stroll."

The lone speed in the Geisha is Dance Fee, who was a runaway winner of her last start, the Justakiss Stakes at Delaware Park. Michael Gorham will give a leg up to jockey Jose Caraballo, who has ridden her in the past.

The remainder of the field is comprised of longshots Second Date (15-1), Unrepentant (20-1), Surf Light (20-1) and True As Mine (30-1).

Laurel Park: 1 Old Man Winter: 0



Winning in the winter wonderland: Jockey, Mario Pino took three races on Friday's card. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD 12-09-05---Despite a winter storm that forced the closing of local schools and businesses, Laurel Park opened for racing on Friday. Veteran jockey Mario Pino rode three winners during the nine-race card, which was contested over a sloppy track.

He said, "It's rough and it's hard to ride wearing all these (layers of clothing). You're fighting the track, you're fighting the wind and you're fighting the water. Today, I've gone through more goggles than I ever have."

Pino ranks twelfth in the rider standings. Ryan Fogelsonger leads all jockeys with 57 victories.

As temperatures hovered in the mid 30s, a stiff head-wind provided an additional challenge to jockeys and their mounts as they charged through the saturated stretch.

From Allegany County to Wicomico County, more than twenty school systems shut their doors for the day. The wintry weather also forced the closure of the Baltimore Zoo and a number of area colleges.

Cinnamon Charlie Towers Over Five Others in Pin Oak Stud LLC/Hildene Stakes

Cinnamon Charlie will try to extend her perfect 2-for-2 record in Sunday's \$50,000 Pin Oak Stud/Hildene Stakes for registered-Virginia-bred fillies.

Five other 2-year-old fillies are set to go in the six furlong test on the main track, but Cinnamon Charlie appears to be at a decided advantage. Two of her opponents are winners, but the other three have done very little so far.

Cinnamon Charlie not only broke her maiden at Belmont but she followed that victory with a front running win against entry-level allowance runners at the Meadowlands. Mario Pino has been named to ride the daughter of Indian Charlie for trainer Robert Klesaris.

He said, "She came out of her last start pretty good. We really like this filly. I didn't become aware of this race until the Laurel racing office contacted me a couple weeks ago. It's the perfect spot for her stakes debut. With no disrespect to the local horses, I think our filly is more seasoned."

Scholastic Giant is the second choice. She broke her maiden going 1-1/16 miles in the mud at the Meadowlands last time out for trainer Mark Hennig. Ryan Fogelsonger will ride her for the first time.

Alice Phone Home has one win in six starts. She scored by four lengths in a maiden special weight race at Charles Town but followed that effort with a last place finish in a one mile race here in late November. Alex Beitia is named to ride.

The remaining runners are maidens Mocha Latte, Take Charge Missy and Virginia Baby.

Promenade Girl Captures Geisha Handicap



Promenade Girl takes the Geisha Handicap under Erick Rodriguez. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-10-05---Sondra Bender's Promenade Girl ran down the lone speed and drew off to win today's feature at Laurel Park, the \$75,000 Geisha Handicap for Maryland-bred fillies and mares.

Sent to post as the 2-1 favorite under jockey Erick Rodriguez, Promenade Girl covered the nine furlongs in 1:51.49 over the fast main track and won by 2-3/4 lengths. Take A Check rallied to take the place away from Dance Fee, who stole off to a big early lead only to call it quits entering the home stretch.

Rodriguez said, "It's nice to ride for Mr. Murray (trainer Larry Murray). I didn't even know I was going to ride this filly today. I just arrived at the jockeys' room and saw that he had put me on her. I saw in the paper she had really good form. I just followed the trainer's instructions. He told me just how to ride her and that's what I did." Rodriguez, who is making a nice comeback from injuries earlier this year, rode two winners on today's nine race card.

Trainer Murray said, "I was worried after the first fraction in 24 and change and if they slowed it up from there we would have been in trouble, but the next one was 47 so I felt a little more comfortable. She's got some run to her and some Pleasant Colony behind her so that's where the stamina comes from."

Promenade Girl is the daughter of Carson City and the Pleasant Colony mare Promenade Colony. She was bred by her owner.

Mrs. Bender said, "This horse has been very nice from the get go. She's a looker and she does her job."

Cinnamon Charlie Wins In A Walk In Pin Oak Stud LLC / Hildene Stakes



Jockey Mario Pino celebrates his fifth win of the day at Laurel Park. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-11-05---C D & G Stable's Cinnamon Charlie, ridden by Mario Pino, took command at the start and raced away to a 4-1/4 length victory in today's feature at Laurel Park, the \$50,000 Pin Oak Stud LLC / Hildene Stakes for Virginia-bred 2-year-old fillies. Pino rode five winners on today's nine race card.

Pino sent the daughter of Indian Charlie into the lead from the rail post and let her glide along in front, clicking off easy fractions until she crossed under the finish line in 1:13.31, far ahead of second favorite Scholastic Giant, who was 6-1/4 lengths clear of Virginia Baby.

The winner paid \$3. She is trained by Robert Klesaris, who found out about this race from the Laurel Park racing office and acted accordingly.

Klesaris said, "The stakes coordinator (Wendy Pensivy) called me and it was a no brainer. I couldn't have found a race in the whole world better than this race. She's done everything we've asked of her and we're interested in stretching her out."

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Besides his victory in the feature, Pino won with Great Saint (\$8.00) in the fourth, Royal Rahy (\$20.00) in the fifth, Tartlet (\$24.80) in the sixth and Evasive (\$6.00) in the seventh. Pino's best performance in Maryland was a six winner day at Laurel Park on October 25, 2003. His best effort overall was a seven winner day at Colonial Downs on July 7, 2002. Pino has ridden 5,626 winners during his career, ranking him sixteenth all-time among jockeys.

Pino said, "She did everything right. Bob told me she's coming into the race better than she ever has been and just won



Cinnamon Charlie and Mario Pino win the Hildene Stakes. (Photo by Jim McCue)

Local Warhorse Crossing Point Is Retired

Fred Heyman announced today that his popular gelding Crossing Point has been retired and will be turned over to his trainer Ben Feliciano Jr. and his wife Wendy.



The 8-year-old son of Allen's Prospect won fifteen of forty-seven starts and \$549,415. He won four stakes, placed in four others and campaigned in numerous added-money sprints up and down the East Coast after he entered the Feliciano barn. The Heyman's claimed Crossing Point for \$20,000 in June of 2002.

The owner said, "It was time. He had run so fast and for so long that I think that it was starting to take its toll on him. He is sound and happy. We could have probably dropped him down into the lower claiming ranks and he would have won, but he also might have been claimed and I would read about him running in a \$5,000 claiming race somewhere. He has been too good to us to do that to him. I have given him to Benny and his wife Wendy, first because Benny did such a marvelous job with him and he deserves it and second because I know Benny and Wendy will take great care of him. Who knows, you may read about him as a jumper one day or as Benny's stable pony."

Feliciano said, "It's hard to lose a horse like this but Crossing Point won a lot of races and doesn't owe us anything. My wife is already retraining him as a show jumping horse and he's taken to that line of work extremely well. He deserves a happy retirement. We did not want to see him descend the claiming ladder."

2006 Winter Racing Dates Approved



LAUREL, MD. 12-13-05---The Maryland Racing Commission approved the racing dates for the 2006 winter stand at its monthly meeting this afternoon at Laurel Park. Live racing is scheduled for 75 days at Laurel from January 1 to April 15.

The Maryland Jockey Club will offer 19 stakes races worth just under \$2 million highlighted by a pair of Grade II sprints on Presidents' Weekend. The purses for Barbara Fritchie Handicap, a seven-furlong sprint for fillies and mares on February 18, and the General George Handicap two days later, will be increased from \$200,000 to \$300,000 with the Breeders' Cup Fund contributing \$75,000 to each race.

The Maryland Jockey Club, Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association and Maryland Horse Breeders Association have agreed on a 180-day schedule for 2006. Exact racing dates will be determined at a later date.

The spring meeting will begin the week of April 17 at historic Pimlico Race Course with the 131st running of the \$1,000,000 Preakness Stakes® (GR I), the middle jewel of the Triple Crown, set for Saturday, May 20.

Laurel Park 2, Old Man Winter 0



Snow falls at Laurel Park as the horses parade to post for Thursday's opener. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-15-05---Racing officials braced for the worst, kicking off today's first race in the midst of a driving snow storm. By post time for the second race, the snow had stopped and they were able to present the entire nine-race card despite light freezing rain throughout the afternoon. Last Friday, Laurel officials braved a dire weather forecast and were able to complete the card as several inches of snow hit the region.

"We were mindful of our fans and the owners and trainers who have a vested interest in this business," said Lou Raffetto, Chief Operating Officer of the Maryland Jockey Club. "We thought it was important to give it a chance today. The jocks were willing and it turned out to be the right decision."

From the mountains in Western Maryland to the beaches on the Eastern Shore, seventeen of the 24 school systems shut their doors for the day or were dismissed early including Anne Arundel, Howard and Prince George's counties, the three which border the central Maryland track.

The weather is expected to stabilize this evening with forecasters calling for temperatures in the low 40's throughout the weekend.

BIG FIELD BUT NO STANDOUT IN SQUAN SONG STAKES

A large field without a true standout could prove to be a challenge to area handicappers when Laurel Park presents Saturday's feature, the \$50,000 Squan Song Stakes. The seven-furlong race for Maryland-breds has attracted a field of 10 fillies and mares including an entry. Track handicapper Frank Carulli established Starleena as the lukewarm 5-2 favorite.

The morning line favorite is a Bernie Flint trainee and is based at Churchill Downs. She made the long road trip to Maryland in October running fourth in the Grade III Safely Kept Breeders' Cup, then ran off two victories and a poor fifth in three races as the overwhelming favorite at Mountaineer Park. The daughter of Malibu Moon will ship in from Kentucky on Friday. Leading rider Ryan Fogelsonger picks up the mount.

"She may have been in heat that day (her last start at Mountaineer)," said Flint. "In any case, she was off her game and having a 44 and change half-mile thrown at her didn't help. I would be surprised if she didn't run back to her best form this weekend. She's a 3-year-old facing elders but she tries very hard and continues to improve with age."

Another shipper is Bless My Mary (4-1), who came from Philadelphia Park barn of Tony Dutrow to win a five-furlong sprint at Laurel on November 18. The daughter of Deposit Ticket has won her last three starts but this will be her first effort in stakes company.

“She’s in great form right now,” said Dutrow. “She hasn’t faced this level of competition yet but has given us every reason to try. She’s really super. Nothing much seems to bother her. She has the speed and talent to secure the lead but can also rate if need be.”

Pimlico based conditioner Richard Small will saddle three fillies, including the Fitzhugh LLC entry of Magical Broad and Dynamic Deputy (9-2). The former finished second to multiple stakes winner Promenade Girl in the Twixt Stakes, while the latter won Thursday’s feature as the favorite. The third Small trainee is Feelin’ the Breeze (6-1), a four-year old owned by Huckleberry Farm, who has been in the money 12 times in 14 starts over the main track.

Key Storm (5-1), a Howard Wolfendale trainee, should attract some play with 16 in the money finishes in 26 career starts. The In Case mare is 3-3-0 in seven starts at Laurel. Wolfendale claimed Key Storm for \$25,000 in April and has won two races with her.

Completing the field are Miss Lombardi (6-1), Ultra Tech (15-1), Experts Only (15-1) and Above Average (30-1)

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Jockey Mario Pino celebrates his fifth win of the day at Laurel Park. Photo by Jim McCue

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The morning line favorite is a Bernie Flint trainee and is based at Churchill Downs. She made the long road trip to Maryland in October running fourth in the Grade III Safely Kept Breeders' Cup, then ran off two victories and a poor fifth in three races as the overwhelming favorite at Mountaineer Park. The daughter of Malibu Moon will ship in from Kentucky on Friday. Leading rider Ryan Fogelsonger picks up the mount.

“She may have been in heat that day (her last start at Mountaineer),” said Flint. “In any case, she was off her game and having a 44 and change half-mile thrown at her didn't help. I would be surprised if she didn't run back to her best form this weekend. She's a 3-year-old facing elders but she tries very hard and continues to improve with age.”

Another shipper is Bless My Mary (4-1), who came from Philadelphia Park barn of Tony Dutrow to win a five-furlong sprint at Laurel on November 18. The daughter of Deposit Ticket has won her last three starts but this will be her first effort in stakes company.

“She’s in great form right now,” said Dutrow. “She hasn’t faced this level of competition yet but has given us every reason to try. She’s really super. Nothing much seems to bother her. She has the speed and talent to secure the lead but can also rate if need be.”

Pimlico based conditioner Richard Small will saddle three fillies, including the Fitzhugh LLC entry of Magical Broad and Dynamic Deputy (9-2). The former finished second to multiple stakes winner Promenade Girl in the Twixt Stakes, while the latter won Thursday’s feature as the favorite. The third Small trainee is Feelin’ the Breeze (6-1), a four-year old owned by Huckleberry Farm, who has been in the money 12 times in 14 starts over the main track.

Key Storm (5-1), a Howard Wolfendale trainee, should attract some play with 16 in the money finishes in 26 career starts. The In Case mare is 3-3-0 in seven starts at Laurel. Wolfendale claimed Key Storm for \$25,000 in April and has won two races with her.

Completing the field are Miss Lombardi (6-1), Ultra Tech (15-1), Experts Only (15-1) and Above Average (30-1)

Cinnamon Charlie Versus the Boys in Sunday Stakes



Cinnamon Charlie and Mario Pino win the Hildene Stakes on December 11th. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-16-05---Cinnamon Charlie, the only filly named to the race, is the morning line 8-5 favorite to annex the Northview Stallion Station / M. Tyson Gilpin Stakes for two-year-old Virginia-breds.

Trainer Robert Klesaris ran Cinnamon Charlie in the Hildene Stakes, last week’s Virginia-bred stakes for fillies and the daughter of Indian Charlie led from start to finish. On Sunday, she must outstep two runners who have won claiming races and four maidens, one of which is a first time starter. Mario Pino retains the mount.

“I think this will be a tougher race on her,” Klesaris said Friday morning. “I’m not crazy about running back in seven days while facing the boys and shipping. On the positive side, she’s very competitive and none of the other entrants are better than her on paper. It’s not a practice of mine to run back on such short rest, but there aren’t many other spots to run her and the iron’s hot right now. I will make a final determination after examining her following tomorrow’s training session.”

The two winners she must face are North Beach Condo (2-1) and First To Rome (5-2). The former has won two starts, including a \$25,000 claiming race at Philadelphia Park last time out. The latter broke his maiden at Delaware Park in November and was claimed out of the race by trainer Michael Pino.

Running Bond (8-1) Patterson (15-1), Perilous Lad (20-1) and Home Buster (30-1) have yet to reach the winners’ circle in their young careers.

Magical Broad Turns the Trick in Squan Song Stakes



Magical Broad earns her first stakes victory in the Squan Song S. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-17-05---Fitzhugh LLC's Magical Broad didn't get much play at the betting windows today, but she turned out to be a serious player when she powered to victory in the \$50,000 Squan Song Stakes for Maryland-bred fillies and mares, the feature race this afternoon at Laurel Park.

Trainer Richard Small saddled two runners in the Squan Song. His Feelin' The Breeze was one of the favorites (she finished fifth), but Magical Broad was dismissed by most of the bettors and went to post at 10-1.

Small named jockey Horacio Karamanos to ride the filly this morning and the journeyman came through with a picture perfect ride, keeping the daughter of Broad Brush in close attendance of the pacesetters before driving around them on the turn and drawing off to a commanding, 3-1/4 length score.

Post time favorite Starleena finished second and longshot Experts Only ran third. Magical Broad, who had run second in the Twixt Stakes earlier this fall, ran the seven furlongs in 1:26.55 over the fast main track. This was her first added money score. She paid \$23.20.

Small said, "We took a stab with her, entering this race. After I looked at the field I thought she might be okay here. She's not a typical Broad Brush. Most of them don't have speed. She's fast. Most of them are the gallop-along, long-legged type. She's a bit faster than the average Broad Brush."

Karamanos said, "I watched the replay of this filly's races after Mr. Small named me to ride her. This filly broke well behind the speed and was going nice and easy when I asked her a little bit because the horse in front of me was getting in and out. I wanted to go outside because I think the track is better out there. She tried very hard in this race."

"No excuses," said Ryan Fogelsonger, who rode the runner-up. "I wanted to rate her as much as I could early because speed wasn't holding too well today. She was strong and we got a perfect trip. We were just second best today."

North Beach Condo Wins Northview Stallion Station / M. Tyson Gilpin Stakes



North Beach Condo and Mario Pino take the M. Tyson Gilpin Stakes. (Photo by Martin Mora)

LAUREL, MD. 12-18-05---Nick Sanna Stables' North Beach Condo was just too good for his five Virginia-bred rivals, slipping clear to win the \$50,000 Northview Stallion Station / M. Tyson Gilpin Stakes for two-year-olds.

North Beach Condo and First To Rome went to the lead in the six furlong test, but it was the former, under Mario Pino, who quickly established his superiority. The son of Out Of Place dispensed with First To Rome at the head of the lane and drew away to win by 3-1/4 lengths in 1:14.09 over the fast main track. First time starter Patterson made a big late move to take second. First To Rome faded to third.

The winner paid \$4.60. North Beach Condo is trained by Michael Pino. He was claimed out of his previous start for \$25,000 and has now won two of three starts.

Jockey Pino said, "He was on the outside trying to shy away a little bit. I tried to keep him as close as possible (to First To Rome) without losing any ground. Once he passed him he straightened up and went on. He's going to learn. He's going to get better.

"He's a nice little horse," added Pino. "He came into the paddock and looked like he had some talent. My brother does a good job with these horses. You can ride his horses with confidence. Those two Virginia bred races were nice!"

Pino rode the winners of both stakes for two-year-old Virginia-bred contested at Laurel Park over the past two Sundays. He scored with Cinnamon Charlie in the filly division last weekend.

Owner Sanna said, "Mike claimed him at Delaware without me being there. I like horses by Out Of Place. The horse had a rough trip the last race and was in a lot of trouble, but he (jockey Dominguez) turned him loose and the rest was history. This horse has a lot of potential and the upside today was that he was a Virginia-bred. That all fell into place for us."

Star of NBC Sitcom Visits Laurel Park for Promotional Shoot



Actor Ryan Pinkston suits up in the Laurel Park jocks' room. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-22-05---Hollywood came to Laurel Park Thursday afternoon when 17-year-old actor Ryan Pinkston appeared at the central Maryland track to shoot promotional videos for his half hour comedy pilot called "5-0" which was sold to NBC last month.

Pinkston, who grew up in Highland about 10 miles from Laurel, will play a 5-foot tall, 18-year-old rookie cop who is trying to impress his police chief father. Laurel Park was used as a backdrop with Pinkston dressed in jockey silks.

"Right now it is getting really good feedback from the executives and we are hoping it will be picked up by the network," said Pinkston, who attended River Hill High School for two and a half years and will walk with his class in June despite moving to Los Angeles midway through his junior year. "The show is realistic and has a tone of "Scrubs" where it is very real yet it has its comedy points."

Two years ago Pinkston became one of the most sought-after child actors in Hollywood after posing as a cub reporter on MTV's "Punk'd", which helped land him roles in feature films "Sky Kids 3-D: Game Over", "Soul Plane" and "Bad Santa." He just finished his first top-billed feature film, "Nothing but the Truth," which will be released next year by New Line.

Napravnik Returns Monday



Apprentice Rosie Napravnik will make her return to the saddle on Monday. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-23-05---Apprentice sensation Rosie Napravnik, who was leading the jockey standings when she fractured her left collarbone in a spill on November 12, will make her return Monday. The 17-year-old, who still ranks fourth in the fall standings with 46 victories, is named to ride six horses on the card. She was originally scheduled to come back January 1.

“Howard Wolfendale and Dickie Small have live horses they want to run before the new year so they asked me if Rosie could come back early,” said Napravnik’s agent John Faltynski. “She has worked at least 25 horses and hit left handed just as hard as before she got hurt. She is 100 percent. It is great to be 17.”

Faltynski will petition to the Maryland Racing Commission to add the 43 days to Napravnik’s apprentice year. She was scheduled to lose the bug on July 10 but will now have the five-pound weight allowance until August 22 with the extension.

Napravnik has 68 career victories from 492 mounts and has earned \$1,260,235. She is considered the early favorite for the 2006 Eclipse Award for outstanding apprentice rider.

“Starting a few days early will help us get a jump start to show people we are back and ready to go,” added Faltynski. “I expect business to be even better. We’ll have even more clients

early in the year with some Delaware trainers using her. I am not going to turn anyone away.”

Celestial Legend Heads Juvenile Filly Championship



Unbeaten Celestial Legend heads Monday’s feature. (Photos by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-23-05---After winning all her preliminary bouts, Celestial Legend goes into the main event as the overwhelming 7-5 morning line choice to win the \$75,000 Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship, scheduled as the sixth race on Monday, December 26.

Celestial Legend is four-for-four, including added money victories in the Holly Stakes at The Meadowlands and the Toddler at Laurel in her last two starts. Ryan Fogelsonger was aboard for the Toddler win and retains the mount for trainer Dale Capuano.

“She came out of her last race pretty well,” said Capuano. “With every start we’re testing her limitations. I’m sure she’ll handle the mile. She ran very well going seven furlongs last time out. The track was deep that day and her final time was excellent. She’s trained very well since that effort.”

Keep On Talking is the 2-1 second choice on Frank Carulli's morning line. The daughter of Royal Academy won twice at Laurel Park, breaking her maiden in October and beating optional allowance runners on December 9. Mario Pino is set to ride Keep On Talking for trainer Robin Graham. Keep On Talking could become the third member of her family to win this race. Her half-sister Dixie Talking won this race a year ago, while her dam, Gin Talking, was victorious in 1999.

Somethinaboutbetty, from the powerful Todd Pletcher stable, is the 5-2 third choice. She was a handy winner of her last start, a maiden test at Aqueduct. Mike Luzzi will accompany the Forestry filly from Belmont Park.

After the top the three, the next four runners are Dress Grey (10-1), Who Was (15-1) Don't Tell Susan (20-1) and Pick Up The Tempo (30-1).

HOLIDAY RACING SCHEDULE

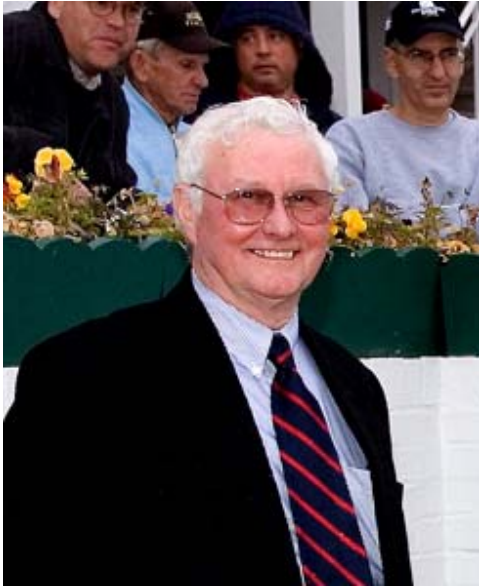


Santa Clause shows off his horsemanship during a Laurel Park post parade. (Photo by Jim McCue)

The Maryland Jockey Club will take a two-day break from racing for the Christmas holiday. Live racing returns to Laurel Park on Monday, December 26 highlighted by the Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship. The top two-year-old boys in the state will compete in the \$75,000 Maryland Juvenile Championship on New Year's Eve.

On Sunday, January 1, the 2006 Laurel winter meet opens with the \$75,000 Dancing Count Stakes for horses just turning three. A special holiday card will take place on Monday, January 2 as well.

Veteran Trainer Cartwright Retires



Trainer Ronald Cartwright. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-26-05---Trainer Ronald Cartwright saddled his last horse this afternoon when the 75-year-old conditioner sent out Stone Prince to a ninth place finish in the fifth race.

A former star steeplechase rider, Cartwright turned to training in the early 1960's first as an assistant to Mike Freeman before heading out on his own prior to the end of the decade. During the 1990's he finished in the top fifteen of the state's trainer standings seven times.

"I've been in this for 60 years and will miss it," said Cartwright. "It has been a great run. I've had a really good life and enjoyed this very much. I had a lot of nice horses and had a good time."

Cartwright's most famous charge was Mz. Zill Bear, who won 15 of 41 starts, including 10 added money scores. The daughter of Salutely won stakes races in Maryland for five consecutive years (1992-1996) and captured the Maryland Million Ladies three consecutive years ('93-94-95).

Cartwright saddled six Maryland Million winners and won three races in 1993, including the Classic with Forry Cow How. He led the state in stakes wins that year with 10.

Other multiple stakes winners he conditioned included Miss Slewpy (a graded stakes winner), Redcall (second in 1994 DC International), Cormorant's Flight, Palliser Bay, Winter Leaf, Castelets and Irish Colony, who he guided from a low-level claimer to added money winner in 2003.

Cartwright won 16 races at Laurel Park and Pimlico this year, including a pair of added money victories. He visited the winners' circle nearly 850 times in his career.

Somethinaboutbetty Takes MD Juvenile Filly Championship



Somethinaboutbetty is set down in the stretch by Mike Luzzi en route to victory in the Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-26-05---Runnin Cardinal Stable and C.E. Glasscock's Somethinaboutbetty took the lead early under jockey Mike Luzzi and was kept to her task to the wire as she galloped to victory in the \$75,000 Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship for registered state-bred 2-year-olds at Laurel Park.

Trained by Todd Pletcher, Somethinaboutbetty covered the one mile distance in 1:41.04 over a track labeled good. She paid \$3.40 as the post time favorite. Don't Tell Susan got up in the last jump to take second. Keep On Talking finished third.

Luzzi said, "You can't hit her. She'll duck away from it. I had to hit her a little late because with the long stretch to the second wire she switched to her left lead. I hit her once to get her back on her right lead. She did duck out a little bit from the whip."

Assistant trainer Seth Benzel said, "It was another learning experience for her. Mike did a great job. He followed what we told him to a T. It was a good experience that hopefully we'll be able to use in the final part a little more. We'll go to the whip and she'll learn a little bit of the whole game. This filly has shown natural speed so we didn't want to take that away from her. It worked out in the end. She gives us the impression of a horse that will improve with distance, as she has since July. Each race you hope she learns a little bit and progresses to the next level."

The winner was bred by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Bender, under the supervision of Larry Murray, at Glade Valley Farm in Frederick County.

The victory was the fifth added money score in the state this year for Pletcher, topping all conditioners. The nation's winningest trainer has exceeded \$20 million in earnings this year. He also won \$125,000 John B. Campbell (Coast Line), \$200,000 Grade II Black-Eyed Susan (Spun Sugar), \$100,000 Woodlawn (English Channel) and \$125,000 Selima (J'ray). Today's winner is co-owned by Louisville basketball coach Rick Pitino.

"She ran well but got tired late," said Mario Pino, who was aboard Keep On Talking. "The winner was tough. I moved a little sooner than I wanted because Mike got away with easy fractions. We got into the three-way duel (fourth place finisher Dress Grey was also involved) but we couldn't stay with them."

Trainer Dale Capuano scratched 7-5 morning line favorite Celestial Legend because of the track, which was labeled muddy in the morning but was upgraded to good during the afternoon. Capuano will point his star, who finished her two-year-old campaign a perfect four-for-four with two added money scores, towards the \$75,000 Marshua Stakes at Laurel on January 7.

DOWN THE STRETCH THEY COME...

With three days remaining in the Laurel Park fall meeting neither the leading jockey nor trainer has been decided. In the rider standings Ryan Fogelsonger (63) leads Luis Garcia (59) and Horacio Karamanos (57) but the 2002 Eclipse Award winning apprentice will not ride the rest of the week. In the trainer standings Dale Capuano (23) has a one-win edge over both Scott Lake and Howard Wolfendale.

For the year at Pimlico and Laurel, Fogelsonger leads Garcia 144-139, while Lake is four ahead of Capuano, 68-64. Capuano has been the state's top conditioner seven of the previous eight years.

Travelin Leroy Tops Lineup for Juvenile Championship

LAUREL, MD. 12-29-05---Michael Gill, the nation's leading owner in both victories and earnings, will be represented by Travelin Leroy, the 6-5 morning line favorite in Saturday's \$75,000 Maryland Juvenile Championship at Laurel Park.

Trained by Mark Shuman, Travelin Leroy has an impressive maiden win and a sharp second in two lifetime starts. He'll flash his natural speed under jockey Eric Camacho on Saturday. The son of Two Punch has not started since November 1 but has been drilling at Gill's base at the Fair Hill training center.

Shuman said, "He's been training good. We were going to run him in a stakes last time out (Steward Mitchell on November 26 at Laurel), but he came up with a sensitive shin and missed four days of training. Everything else was perfect but he's too good of a horse to push, even with a 'pimple' like that. He has a lot of speed and may find himself on the lead. There is very little speed in the race on paper. But if someone goes out there running like crazy, he can rate off of him."

Shuman has saddled four added money winners for Gill at the major Maryland tracks this year. A victory Saturday would tie Todd Pletcher for top honors in 2005.

Creve Coeur is the 7-2 second choice. Graham Motion trains the son of Lion Hearted, a three-time winner with multiple stakes attempts. His best efforts were a win through disqualification in the Maryland Million Nursery and third place finishes in the Tyro Stakes at Monmouth and the Steward Mitchell. Jose Caraballo has the mount.

Motion said, "I thought his last start was a good effort. He had a little trouble while waiting for a hole to open. That may have cost him. He's had a very useful year. One mile will probably be his limit."

The trainer also entered I Dot (8-1), a winner of one of four starts. The son of Our Emblem was second to stakes winner Nine Best two back but was sixth in an allowance test two weeks ago.



Mark Shuman trains the morning line favorite, Travelin Leroy.
(Photo by Jim McCue)

Motion said, "Ryan (jockey Ryan Fogelsonger) said he hesitated a bit when attempting to run through a gap in his last start. We're adding blinkers to help him focus a bit more. I've thought about adding them for a while so it will be interesting to see if they make a difference."

Hall of Famer Bud Delp trains Vegas Play (9-2), a son of Exploit, who has one victory in five starts. His best stakes effort was a third in the Whirling Ash at Delaware Park. He tired to eighth in his last try, the Laurel Futurity on November 19. Richard Monterrey will ride.

Rounding out the field will be Sierra Quorum (10-1), Take Command (10-1), Adopted Arrival (20-1), Rhythmn Master (20-1) and Sound Moon (20-1).

LAKE TIES CAPUANO FOR TOP SPOT IN TRAINER STANDINGS



Scott Lake
(Photo by Jim McCue)

With two days remaining in the Laurel Park fall meeting neither the leading jockey nor trainer has been decided.

his afternoon Scott Lake tied Dale Capuano atop the trainer standings with 24 victories as both conditioners scored on the nine-race card. Lake won a two races as Ten Across (\$5.40-second) and For Fun (\$21.40-seventh) reached the wire first. Capuano countered with a popular victory with Love The Rainbow (\$3.20) in the finale. Howard Wolfendale is two back of the top pair. Capuano and Wolfendale will each saddle five starters over the last two days of the year, while Lake will send out four horses.



Dale Capuano
(Photo by Jim McCue)

In the rider standings Luis Garcia inched closer to Ryan Fogelsonger with a victory aboard Skycrossing (\$28) in today's fourth race, his 60th of the fall meet and 199th of the year. Fogelsonger, who has 63 wins during the meeting, will not ride again until January 11 as he rests his injured back. Horacio Karamanos is still in striking distance with 57 trips to the winners' circle during the campaign.

PROMENADE GIRL PREPS FOR BARBARA FRITCHIE WITH EASY SCORE

Promenade Girl finished off a productive three-year-old campaign with a convincing 8 ¼ length win in the Thursday feature, a \$30,000 optional allowance claimer with apprentice Rosie Napravnik aboard. The daughter of Carson City won four races this year, including the Twixt Stakes and Geisha Handicap, and never finished out of the money in seven starts. Trainer Larry Murray will point his star to a pair of added money races at her home track: the \$85,000 Nellie Morse Stakes on January 28 and the \$300,000 Barbara Fritchie Handicap (Grade II) on February 18.



Rosie Napravnik returns to the winners' circle aboard Promenade Girl. It was the 17-year-old's first win since mid November. (Photo by Jim McCue)

"She is just very classy and does everything right," said Murray.

The win was the first for Napravnik since returning from a broken collarbone she suffered in a spill at Laurel in mid-November. The 17-year-old apprentice was leading the colony in victories during the fall meeting prior to the injury.

"I just hope to pick up where I left off," said Napravnik, who will still finish fourth in the standings despite missing five weeks.

"I think Rosie is great," added Murray. "She has a big future. I think she is as good as an bug rider in the country."

Garcia Reaches 200-Win Plateau



Jockey Luis Garcia raises a pair of fingers to signify his 200th win of 2005. (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAUREL, MD. 12-30-05--- Luis Garcia rode his 200th winner of the calendar year when John's Rush (\$12.80) rallied to take today's sixth race. He then added with a popular score aboard Jet Set Citi (\$3) in the eighth.

The 21-year-old is just one win behind Ryan Fogelsonger for the riding title during the Laurel Park fall meet, trailing the 2002 Eclipse award winning apprentice 63-62, with one day remaining in the stand. Garcia also trails Fogelsonger in the overall standings for the year at the major Maryland tracks, 144-142.

"I want to thank my agent Frank Douglas. I knew we'd have a big year because of him," said Garcia, who won 179 races as an apprentice in 2003. "I just try to do my best for everyone."

Garcia has seven mounts on the Saturday card, while Fogelsonger is off until January 11, resting an injured back.

"I would be so excited to win the meet," added Garcia. "Ryan is tough and rides a lot of good horses but I think I can do it. I am feeling really comfortable right now and I ride the card tomorrow, so we'll see."

CAPUANO AND LAKE STILL DEADLOCKED

With one day remaining in the Laurel Park fall meeting, Dale Capuano and Scott Lake are still deadlocked atop the standings with 24 victories. Neither scored this afternoon with multiple runners. Capuano has three horses entered on Saturday's program, while Lake has one starter. Lake has wrapped up the overall title for the 2005 campaign, leading Capuano 70-65.

SEVEN SET TO GO IN SUNDAY'S DANCING COUNT STAKES

A tightly grouped band of three-year-olds kick off the 2006 stakes calendar at Laurel Park in the \$75,000 Dancing Count Stakes for three-year-olds on Sunday.

Great Seneca is the 5-2 morning line choice, ahead of The Village Vicar (7-2), Crafty Ticker (4-1), Imanewntontoo (9-2), Hounddogman and Ah Day (both 6-1) and Our Bold Ensign (12-1).

Great Seneca is a lightly raced son of Allen's Prospect who has won both of his starts at this track. He broke his maiden on November 19 and came right back with an optional allowance score on December 18. Gary Capuano trains Great Seneca and Horacio Karamanos will ride him for the first time.

Capuano said, "So far, he's doing really well. He's won his first two starts and acts like a horse that has some talent. He's ready to move on to the next level and try stakes (company). This horse is focused. He doesn't need things to go his way in order to win. He's still a little green, but his first two starts really helped him figure things out. I thought about entering in the Maryland Juvenile Championship (on New Year's Eve) but decided it would be best to keep him sprinting for now."

The Village Vicar will receive some backing off his numerous races in the northeast. He has started at Monmouth Park, The Meadowlands and Aqueduct with two wins in seven outings. Trainer James Ryerson will send the Vicar colt to Laurel and will name a rider on race day.

Tim Salzman will saddle Crafty Ticker, who has won three of nine races and has already raced in five stakes, including a victory in the Mountaineer Juvenile in August. Stable rider Eric Camacho has the mount. In nine career starts the son of Favorite Trick has raced at eight different tracks: Pimlico Race Course, Colonial Downs, Mountaineer Park, Monmouth Park, Delaware Park, Charles Town, Laurel Park and Aqueduct.

Salzman said, "He's doing great. This is a decent horse who travels well. At this time of year, you have to be able to race where the money is. He's more seasoned than most horses his age and has already won three races. Two starts back (a fourth place finish in the Steward Mitchell Stakes), he had some trouble through the stretch. He was making a nice run when a hole closed up on him and Camacho was forced to steady. He steadied again before the wire. I'm not sure if he would have beaten the winner (Nine Best) but he very easily could have been second with a cleaner trip. In his last start, the jockey (Mike Luzzi) said that he just didn't handle the inner dirt at Aqueduct."

Salzman will also saddle Hounddogman, who was one-for-five as a two-year old. Luis Garcia will be aboard.

Imanewntontoo is a Philadelphia Park shipper who has started three times with just a maiden win. He was claimed out of his winning race and now is in the Scott Lake camp. Jozbin Santana will ride.

Ah Day comes into the Dancing Count off a wire-to-wire score at Laurel on December 21. Mario Pino will get a leg up from legendary conditioner King Leatherbury.

Our Bold Ensign finished the 2005 campaign with two wins from six starts. In his only added money appearance he was fifth in the Maryland Million Nursery. Apprentice sensation Rosie Napravnik will be in the irons for trainer Joe Delozier.

Vegas Play Makes His Own Luck to Win Maryland Juvenile Championship



Vegas Play and Richard Monterrey upset the Maryland Juvenile Championship. (Photo by Jim McCue)

take the place.

Jockey Monterrey said, "I got into trouble and I just tried to do my best to make it clear and try to win the race. He did everything right. He was much the best today."

LAUREL, MD. 12-31-05---Harry and Tom Meyerhoff's Vegas Play won an eventful running of the \$75,000 Maryland Juvenile Championship for state-bred two-year-olds today at Laurel Park.

Trapped inside and behind horses a furlong from the finish under jockey Richard Monterrey, the son of Exploit bounced off the rail, angled out to the middle of the track, took off after the horses in front of him and won going away in 1:40.94 for the mile distance over the fast main track.

The winner paid \$16.40 and his winning margin was a half-length. Creve Coeur out finished post time favorite Travelin Leroy to

Buddy Delp trains Vegas Play. He said, "I thought he was through there at the eighth pole. It looked like he had room but they kind of closed it up on him. Richard had to check and fortunately for us we had enough horse to come on and still get the money."

The Hall of Fame conditioner now has 3,653 career victories, ninth on the all-time list.

"He went into the race sensationally good," added Delp. "He trained over this track, which I thought was a plus. I thought the favorite was a little suspect. He's by Two Punch and had never been past 5-1/2 (furlongs). I've had some Two Punches in my time and not to many of them go long. I thought that he was vulnerable that way and I thought Graham Motion's horse (Creve Coeur) was the one to beat."

"We had a great trip," said Eric Camacho, who rode the favorite. "I was able to slow it down as much as possible. He just got tired but put on a game fight. Stretching out from 5 ½ to a mile off a layoff against stakes company is asking a lot. I am not disappointed by his performance."

Since 1985 four winners of the race have competed in the Grade I Preakness Stakes the following May: Miracle Wood (1985), Oliver's Twist (1994), Magic Weisner (2001) and Foufa's Warrior (2002). Deputed Testamony, the runner-up in 1982, won the middle jewel of the Triple Crown.

Fogelsonger, Lake, Wolfendale and Gill Take Laurel Meet Titles



Ryan Fogelsonger (Photo by Jim McCue)

FOGELSONGER SWEEPS RIDING TITLES

LAUREL, MD. 12-31-05---Despite missing 48 of the 195 racing days at Pimlico and Laurel Park this year, Ryan Fogelsonger won more races than any rider in the colony, winning 144 races two more than Luis Garcia. The 24-year-old also nipped Garcia for the Laurel fall title, 63-62.

The 2002 Eclipse Award winning apprentice suffered two serious spills in 2005, including one where he injured his back and spent an afternoon at the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Unit. Garcia had a chance to wrestle the titles but was shutout in seven mounts this afternoon.

"To miss three months and still win the title is quite a feat," said Kevin Witte, Fogelsonger's agent. "It has been a trying year and this was the first time he has faced adversity, being injured and riding in pain on a daily basis. We had high expectations for the year and we got very lucky. Luis Garcia is a bright star and he deserved the title more than we did."

Fogelsonger also had the highest winning percentage for riders with more than 500 mounts, winning at a 20% clip for the year. Ramon Dominguez had the best percentage (23.9%) but had only 360 mounts in Maryland this year. The minimum to qualify for the \$2,500 bonus is 500.

The Maryland Jockey Club will honor Fogelsonger in a ceremony at Laurel Park on Saturday, January 14.



Scott Lake (Photo by Jim McCue)

LAKE AND WOLFENDALE TAKE TRAINING TITLES

Scott Lake dethroned Dale Capuano as the state's top conditioner winning 70 races, five more than the perennial champion for the calendar year at Pimlico and Laurel Park. Capuano had been the top conditioner in the state for seven of the previous eight years.

The 40-year-old conditioner, who has horses stabled in Maryland, New York, Delaware, Florida and Pennsylvania, had finished second to Capuano in 2000, 2001 and 2003.

"It really means something to me," said Lake. "We were thinking about getting out of Maryland but revamped some things this year. It feels great to win the overall title."

Lake and Capuano shared the Laurel Park fall meeting title. Each won 24 races during the stand.

Howard Wolfendale took the percentage title, saddling winners at a 24% rate for the year at Pimlico and Laurel, winning 40-of-166. Wolfendale receives a \$2,500 bonus.

Lake and Wolfendale will be honored by the Maryland Jockey Club on Saturday, January 14.

GILL DOMINATES OWNER STANDINGS

For the fourth consecutive year the powerful stable of owner Michael Gill won the most races in Maryland. The familiar blue colors won 86 races at Pimlico and Laurel Park in 2005, including 16 during the fall stand. It was the 14th consecutive meeting won at the major Maryland tracks for the New Hampshire native. Team Gill has 508 victories in the state since moving a stable here in late 2001.

Robert Cole Jr. was a distant second winning 22 races, including 10 during the fall meeting.



Michael Gill (Photo by Jim McCue)