

By DAVE LITFIN

Saratoga

AUGUST 9, 2004

MONDAY

With a third of the meet complete, favorites have won 44 of 113 races, a strong 39 percent.

ARTIE SCHILLER (8th, \$4) tracked **STREET THEATRE** and **ICY ATLANTIC** from close range and kicked clear with a three-wide move to win the Grade 2 Hall of Fame Stakes. It was the third stakes win of the year for the 3-year-old colt, along with the Woodlawn and the Hill Prince, and upped his lifetime record on grass to 6-2-0 from eight starts. **MUSTANFAR** circled four wide into the stretch and edged **GOOD REWARD** for second. Icy Atlantic drifted out while weakening in midstretch, causing Street Theatre to clip heels and stumble.

COMMENTATOR (2nd, \$11.60) debuted for trainer Nick Zito and overwhelmed New York-bred maiden sprinters to win by 10 lengths. The performance suggests he will have little trouble going through statebred allowance conditions.

Zito was live again with first-time starter **BURNISH** (4th), who set a pressured pace and held well for second at 25-1 behind universal good-thing **SHOULD BE ROYALTY** (\$3.80). Should Be Royalty, a \$600,000 daughter of Pine Bluff, ran to a series of fast local works, and drove clear after stalking the leaders to the stretch.

AUGUST 11, 2004

WEDNESDAY

Zito continues to be live with first-time starters. The latest was **UP LIKE THUNDER** (1st, \$5.60), a 2-year-old half-brother to the speedy New York-bred stakes sprinter Jena Jena. He edged **URBAN CONQUEST** with a late run on the outside. **BOSTON RAIDER**,

the other new shooter taking action on the board, was announced with less than 10 minutes to post as racing with an aluminum pad on, and faded in the stretch after stalking the pace. **DOCTOR ATTITUDE** was blocked in traffic through the stretch. Follow.

ARCTURUS (3rd) raced for purse money only in a 1 1/16-mile turf race for 2-year-old maidens, after entrymate **ED BOWEN** ran off in the paddock. Arcturus quickly grabbed the lead, and outgamed French import **KFAR DANIEL** (\$3.70) in a long drive. Kfar Daniel was the "winner" for parimutuel purposes.

Divisions of the De La Rose on the inner turf were won by **PERSONAL LEGEND** (6th, \$4.60) and **FAST COOKIE** (8th, \$17.60) over a course that had absorbed some mid-afternoon rain.

Personal Legend, stakes-placed repeatedly in Grade 1 and Grade 2 races since last summer, finished strongly on the outside to nip pacesetter **LENTIL** in the final strides.

Fast Cookie stalked pacesetter **FEISTY BULL**, wrested a short lead in midstretch, and held off a late run from favored **SNOWDROPS**, who was seeking her fifth straight win. Snowdrops was blocked through upper stretch, altered course to the outside, and finished fast to neck **SUPER BRAND** for second.

AUGUST 12, 2004

THURSDAY

PRAISE THE PRINCE (1st, \$3.90) is one tough hurdler. Making his first start since last year's Saratoga meet, Praise the Prince raced in between horses in the A.P. Smithwick Memorial, and looked like a beaten horse approaching the last jump. He never gave up, however, and when **BARZULU** stumbled over the last fence, Praise the Prince capitalized. **NAJIM** rallied nicely at

60-1 for the place. **PUZZLE** (2nd, \$7.40) won the faster division of New York-bred maiden special weights for fillies and mares. She hustled to the lead from post 10, and rode the bias to victory. **SECRET TROIKA** was wide throughout, and is rounding into form. **DARK EQUATION** (6th, \$5.90) raced wide going into the first turn, but was simply too much for maidens in the off-the-turf sixth race. He drew away to win by almost 10 lengths under Jerry Bailey, and is a threat on both turf and dirt. **FRENCH HORN** took lots of money, and may do better on the turf. **BOARD ELLIGIBLE** (8th, \$8.10) came from last to win the feature. After **DOC'S DOLL** showed wild runaway speed, Board Elligible received the fast fractions she needs to set up her late kick. **CHILDRRESS** battled on the pace, and held well for the runner-up spot. **KISS THE LIPS** (9th, \$7) ran away from slow maidens in the finale. He won by open lengths after pressing a moderate pace. The Jennifer Pedersen barn is starting to heat up. **CAN-DOOZ** wants turf. **BAYMONT** (4th, \$4.40) is a consistent filly on the turf. She came from well-back to outfinish **TUESDAY PRAYER** in the lane. **INDELIBLE IMAGE** may be best when allowed to coast on the lead.

- Dan Illman

AUGUST 13, 2004

FRIDAY

Friday the 13th proved to be an unlucky day for closers as speed horses seemed to hold an advantage on the sloppy main track. **EARHART** (4th, \$11) showed professionalism in winning the faster division of statebred maiden special weights for 2-year-old fillies. She was bounced around going into the turn, but ended up rating kindly behind a speed duel before taking control in the stretch. **TIFFANY TOUCH** rallied from far

back, and may need blinkers to sharpen her speed. The 13th running of the Waya Handicap was decimated by scratches after it was rained off the turf course. Jerry Bailey won yet another stakes at Saratoga as **BOUNTING CHARM** (8th, \$3.70) stalked and pounced her way to victory. The winner didn't seem to like being shaken up with the whip in the stretch as she flashed her tail several times. Give **LITERACY** another chance on turf. **IRISH LADDIE** (2nd, \$11.80) overcame the bias to run down \$75,000 3-year-old claimers for Michael Trombetta and Ramon Dominguez. **BORNWITHIT** set a quick pace, but had nothing left for the drive. **SHOTS** was very disappointing. **BLUE SUNDAY** (1st, \$6.80) sold for a pretty penny earlier in the year, and he ran like a million bucks in the opener. Under Jerry Bailey, Blue Sunday shot to an easy early lead, and drew off to win by 15 lengths going 5 1/2 furlongs. **CHEROKEE CHIEF** broke slowly before rushing up to stalk the winner. He could be tough next time. **BAYSWATER** may want two turns

- Dan Illman

AUGUST 14, 2004

SATURDAY

Early speed is so important in 2-year-old races, and **UNITED** (\$16.80) scooted clear in the first half-mile on his way to a gate-to-wire victory in the faster division of maiden special weights. **FLAGSTAFF** has a powerful stretch kick, and it looks like he is starting to figure out this game. He will be tough next time. **PATRIOT ACT** ran well in his debut, and should do better stretching out. **SCIPION** (2nd, \$3.70) was rumored to be a runner, and he didn't disappoint. Sent off at 4-5 for his debut, he didn't seem very interested in the early going, and was well behind when the field turned for home.

Once Javier Castellano maneuvered him to the outside for the stretch run, however, the half-brother to undefeated champion juvenile Vindication roared home impressively to win going away. **AL JOHNSTAN** broke poorly, and raced wide. He will continue to improve as they stretch out in distance. **SPEIGHTSTOWN** (7th, \$3.80) moved to the head of the sprint division with a powerful front-running score in the Grade 2 Alfred G. Vanderbilt Handicap. Was surprised when **BALTO STAR** was sent off as the heavy favorite in the Grade 1 Sword Dancer. He set a very soft pace over the boggy going, but couldn't hold off in-form runners **BETTER TALK NOW** (8th, \$17.80) and **REQUEST FOR PAROLE**.

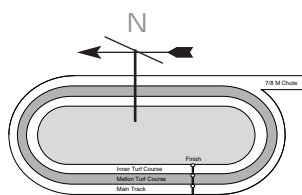
- Dan Illman

AUGUST 15, 2004

SUNDAY

GOLDEN COMMANDER (9th, \$10) received a sweet ride from Javier Castellano in the \$100,000 West Point Handicap for New York-bred turfers. **FOREVERNESS** rallied nicely through a narrow opening on the rail to get the place. **IRISH COLONIAL** might have moved too soon. He was sitting a perfect pace-tracking, ground-saving trip along the hedge when Jean-Luc Samyn decided to shoot through the inside on the turn. He was nailed late by the top two finishers, but the outcome may have been different if Samyn waited longer. **COMACINA** (5th, \$6.60) was already a stakes-placed runner so it was a surprise that she went off the second-choice in a field of maiden special weights for 2-year-old fillies. Wearing blinkers for the first-time, Comacina showed early interest, and sat a nice trip stalking the pace while in the clear. She showed a killer instinct in the stretch, pulling away to win by eight.

- Dan Illman



TRACK TRENDS

DATE	CONDITION	FORECAST	WIND/TEMPERATURE	COMMENT
MON. AUG. 9	Fast/Firm (Rails @ 0 ft. Mellon; rails @ 9 ft. Inner)	Clear	Tailwind backstretch, 78°	No apparent trends.
WED. AUG. 11	Fast-wet fast/Firm-good (Rails @ 12 ft. Mellon; rails @ 0 ft. Inner)	Cloudy	Light crosswind backstretch, 78°	Intermittent light rain.
THURS. AUG. 12	Fast 2-3, muddy 5, 6-9/Good 2, 6, off turf 9	Cloudy/rainy	76°	Speed bias.
FRI. AUG. 13	Sloppy/Off turf	Cloudy	72°	Speed bias.
SAT. AUG. 14	Good 1-3, fast/Yielding (Off turf 4)	Clear	76°	No bias.
SUN. AUG. 15	Fast/Good (Rails @ 12 ft.)	Cloudy	NW 8-12, 76°	No bias.