



Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association

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Back home in Madison County

By Thom Pye

When Patricia Sweeney's 3-year-old filly A Oliveinmymartini won the \$4,838 Ohio Fair Racing Conference 1st race on Saturday (July 7) she was returning to the scene of one of her many triumphs from last year. It was the Mike Sweeney-conditioned daughter of Three Olive's first start of 2018 and she toured the London oval just as handily as she had in 2017. This time she stepped off a mile of 2:00.2 and put a feather in driver Jeff Nisonger's cap as they paced a quarter in :30 seconds flat. It was the 7th win in 9 Ohio Fair starts for the Ohio State ATI-bred speedster as she also sports a 2nd and a 3rd on her card.

Ambitious Lillian took a liking to the local oval as well when the Bruce Farquhar-trained youngster by Big Bad John and Jeff Nisonger took a new lifetime mark of 2:04.3 in the \$9,810 OFRC 2-year-old filly pace with a quick 29 second last panel.

It wasn't a cake walk for Black Magic Racing LLC's Pet Walker but the 3-year-old Pet Rock-Miss Walker filly did both her trainer Greg Luther and driver Ken Holliday proud when she paced to victory in 2:01 over Grant Me This (Beau Brown) and Rei's Honor Roll (Jeff Nisonger) and pushed her earnings to over \$40,000 in nine 2018 starts. She has a lifetime tab of 1:52 at Miami Valley taken just a month ago as well.

The Ohio Ladies Pace Series proved another battle and when the dust had settled Cassimir Oppee and Mandy Jones came from off the pace to capture the honors in 2:02 with a last quarter of :29.2. Emily Hay with Milliondollarart was 2nd as Rhonda Patrick and Lyons Gingerninja took 3rd.

The Racing With The Stars competition again had 7 enthusiastic participants as they were paired in the \$3,365 OFRC division for seven 3-year-old filly trotters. Bugs MVP, Chris Beaver's multiple stake winning lass by My MVP, kept her form again for Cameron McCown as she added her 10th victory in 21 lifetime starts and cruised home easily in 2:04 over Momentsoffire (Ryan Holton) and Man The Keg with Scott Altizer.

As McCown was bringing Bugs MVP back to the Winners Circle I was still looking for our winner in the crowd mulling around the tent. "Betty Hopper," I bellowed in search of the lucky lady. "Betty Hopper!" Half the grandstand pointed to the Winners Circle where she was already standing with RWTS' Taylor Johnston as photographer Brad Conrad directed the group into position while they offered congratulations to each other. "She's over there!" someone called to me. I turned to see the smiling lady happily talking to everyone. "Wha'a?" I said as I walked over to join them. "How'd..." I still say she jumped the fence.

More fun, excitement, and good racing to come Sunday (July 8th).

Madison County finishes with a flourish

By Thom Pye

London, Ohio - The 2018 race program at the 129th Madison County Fair showed the folks that the 118-year-old track still has what it takes for an exciting day of fast miles and close finishes.

The weather could not have been more pitch perfect when announcer Ayres Ratliff called the horses to the gate at 12 noon for the 1st division of the \$5,085 Ohio Fair Racing Conference 2-year-old colt pace and the Steve Bateson/Harold Moore/Jeff Brewer-owned Kryptonite Rock (Pet Rock-Riverbank Hanover) kept the field

at bay as the Jeff Brewer-trained colt with and driver Jason Brewer sprinted home in :29.4 en route to a new lifetime tab of 2:03.4h. Woodman B (Scott Cisco) was 2nd as Bonsai (Hunter Myers) took the show spot.

In the second race, the \$3,615 OFRC division for 2-year-old trotting colts, it was a tight scramble to the wire but Katherine Ann Smith of Glen Allen, VA's Jesse Turbo (Cayenne Turbo) and trainer/driver Pat Karcher emerged the victor over Look At Turbo (Ammon Hershberger) and Jeff Nisonger with Perfect Pete. Old Jesse and Karcher has no local supporters as there wasn't cent bet on them to win. That left a lot of "I WAS going to bet him but..." murmuring through the grandstand.

And the big wheel kept on rollin' as the Mike Conklin's star pupil Long Train Running and Hunter Myers again clipped off another impressive mile as the Big Bad John gelding went express for the \$4,860 OFRC 3-year-old colt 1st division in a solid 1:59.1h, winning by 4, pacing a last panel in :28.4 over Goingtocalifornia (Beau Brown) as McHarry L with young Harrison Levan took 3rd.

The 2nd OFRC \$4,785 division was taken by trainer/driver Cameron McCown's Officially Nub when the Art Official gelding got Drinka Beer (Tyler Smith) by a head - much to the delight of half the grandstand - in 1:59.1h as he stamped out a last quarter in :28.4. Insane Propane (Tyler Rush) was 3rd.

Another Jeff Brewer/Jason Brewer combo would take the 2nd \$5,010 OFRC division for 2-year-old pacers with Woody Woodpecker as the colt by Woodstock knocked off a mile in 2:01.4h and laughed his way home with a :29.2 last quarter. Winchester Wally (Jeff Nisonger) grabbed 2nd money as Thundering Jim (Luke Ebersole) rumbled up for show.

There were good trottin' miles by Stars An Stones, PC'S Caviar (both driven by Cameron McCown) and Cumberland Gap (Lou Bauslaugh) during the afternoon.

The contestants were from Moraine, Kenton, Lancaster, and Bloomingberg in the Racing With The Stars contest that went to post for the afternoon's 5th race but the draw pitted two local London friends on the colts that finished 1-2.

"We've known each other for eons," laughed an amicable Ron Stewart, "we worked in the Department of Corrections for over 40 years."

And while they both sat together to watch a good race it was his pal Mel Lowry who had the winner and got to be part of the Winners Circle celebration.

"Next time," ribbed Stewart as Lowry happily inspected his OHHA prize package.

For the 2018 "Doc" McMillan Open Pace 9th race finale it was local owner/breeder Mark Yoder of London's Bubba Delight as Cameron McCown scored his 3rd winning drive of the day with the Ed Bibler-trained 5-year-old gelding by Pine Valley. Standing Proud (Chad Moore) was 2nd in the mile in 2:03.3h while Light Up The Sky (Luke Hanner) was third.

Thanks to all at the Madison County Fairgrounds and the Speed Committee for giving the fans and the horsemen a good, enjoyable program.