

## Racing Roundup: Famous Western wins Saturday Open Handicap Pace at Yonkers

from harness publicists across North America

Saturday's (Aug. 30) edition of Racing Roundup features results stories from Yonkers Raceway, Saratoga Casino and Raceway, Tioga Downs, Batavia Downs, Scioto Downs and Kawartha Downs.

### Famous Western wins Saturday Open Handicap Pace at Yonkers

**Yonkers, NY** --- Rank outsider Famous Western (Larry Stalbaum, \$67.50) had everything go his way Saturday night, winning Yonkers Raceway's \$44,000 Open Handicap Pace.



*Mike Lizzi photo*

**Famous Western was a 1:52.1 winner.**

Assigned post position No. 2, Famous Western watched the floor show from a primo table. Pole-given Russley Rascal N (George Brennan), as the tepid 2-1 favorite, parked Heston Blue Chip (Brent Holland) through intervals of :26.4 and :55.1.

Famous Western was pocketed, with Handsome Henry K (Eric Goodell) out, then back in. Frankie's Dragon (Brian Sears) wound up second over, with Pancetta (Jordan Stratton) behind him. It was Russley Rascal N leading in and out of the 1:23.2 three-quarters, taking a 1-1/2 length lead into the lane.

The leader was about to throw in the towel, with Famous Western awaiting his turn. He ducked in, whipping the horse on his back -- Dallenbach Hanover (Eric Carlson) -- by 1-1/4 lengths in 1:52.1. Frankie's Dragon, Pancetta and Russley Rascal N rounded out the payees.

For Famous Western, a 6-year-old Western Hanover gelding co-owned by Anita Fialkow and Sandra Presciti and trained by Lance Hudson, it was his 11th win in 27 seasonal starts. The exacta (two biggest prices on the board) paid \$735, with the triple returning \$3,594.

-- Frank Drucker

### Saratoga Casino and Raceway

Ronny Bugatti ([Art Major](#)) continued his recent hot streak at Saratoga Casino and Raceway on Saturday night. The talented 4-year-old prevailed in the \$17,000 Open Pace for the second time in his last three tries. On Aug. 9, Ronny Bugatti recorded his first ever win in the local Open and posted a win time of 1:50.4 which at the time was the second fastest in track history. Following a second place finish in his previous try, the Allan Johnson-trained pacer was the public's 9-5 top choice in the betting on Saturday. In a race that saw all kinds of early action and a couple of lead changes in the first half, Ronny Bugatti and driver Austin Siegelman moved first over approaching the half-mile pole and battled rival BJ's Guy (Bruce Aldrich Jr.) throughout the second half before wearing him down and winning a photo in what was a blanket finish in the feature. Last week's Open winner Bet On Roulette (Wally Hennessey) came from last to finish second while BJ's Guy held on for third. Ronny Bugatti's

win came in 1:52.4. Live racing goes on hiatus at Saratoga for track resurfacing and will resume on Thursday night (Sept. 11) with a first post time of 6:45 p.m.

### **Tioga Downs**

Repelling a late challenge from Spice It Up Lindy, Twin B Spike Man (\$3.10) proved a gutsy 1:54.4 winner in Saturday evening's \$15,000 Open Trot at Tioga Downs, giving Mike Simons one of his four driving wins on the evening. The 7-year-old Ken Warkentin gelding wasted no time achieving the lead, brushing clear of Spice It Up Lindy (Jim Meitinis) after a soft :29.2 first quarter and immediately accelerated through a :57 middle half. Now with Spice It Up Lindy in a tracking position, Twin B Spike Man entered the far turn with a 1-1/2 length advantage. Despite a late challenge in the final yards, Twin B Spike Man held sway for a one length victory. Stitch In Time (Jim Taggart Jr.) tracked the top pair the entire mile, checking in a non-threatening third. Donald Eccleston and Albert Abdala III co-own Twin B Spike Man with Simons. Gail Wrubel handles the training duties. Simons was victorious on three other occasions through the evening, teaming up with Brookside Lily (\$37.60, 1:58.2), Rock Star (\$3.10, 1:53.2) and Current Image (\$7.90, 1:58.2) to complete his grand slam.

### **Batavia Downs**

With an eighth of a mile to go, two lengths separated the seven horses that competed in Saturday night's \$9,500 Open Pace at Batavia Downs and the final result came down to the wire. But when they crossed the line, Best Ears used his head as the margin of victory in the night's feature race. When the man said go in the seventh race, Big Unit (Kevin Cummings) bolted from post two and took an immediate lead off the gate. Best Ears (Jack Flanigen) left from the four hole and was parked, but methodically worked his way towards the leader through a :27.3 first quarter. After not being able to take control at that point, Flanigen tucked Best Ears in second behind the hard-rolling leader before the pack hit the half in :55.3. Then Ready To Work (Jim McNeight) came barreling from behind to take his shot at the top. He led a dull outer flow to the three-quarters in 1:25 before actually drawing near the leader. As they started to bunch around the far turn, Burton Blue Chip (Lee Dahn) swung three-deep around Ready To Work and Best Ears was sitting cool in the pocket behind Big Unit. But Big Unit fell victim to his own fast pace at the head of the lane and started to fade. When they headed down the stretch, Ready To Work took over the lead before Best Ears found the passing lane and shot through in time to win by a head in 1:55. The post time favorite returned \$3.40. Ready To Work was second and Burton Blue Chip was third. It was the sixth win in 29 starts for Best Ears who now has a total of \$42,017 earned for 2014. The 5-year-old [Shark Gesture](#) gelding is trained by Frank Mastrodonato for owners Joe Amico and Joe Amico Jr.

### **Scioto Downs**

Easy Again broke his own track record at Scioto Downs with his win in the \$30,000 Invitational Pace in 1:50.1. He's a 5-year-old ridgling son of [Dragon Again](#) out of Kuklapanandollie. He set a new track record of 1:50.2 just two starts ago at the five-eighths-mile oval. Easy Again scored his third consecutive win for trainer Ron Burke and his connections of Burke Racing Stable, Weaver Brussemi, M1 Stable and Panhellenic Stable. Chris Page had the assignment from post eight in the field of nine and was the post time favorite at odds of 4-5. Page fired out for position and found it right on the front before the quarter that was paced in :26.2. I Found My Beach and Josh Sutton were content to take the pocket trip behind the heavy favorite. They paced down to the half in :54.4 and Page hit the gas as they headed to the three-quarters. Easy Again paced his third quarter in a hot :26.4 and opened up on his foes by 3-1/2 lengths. Sutton and I Found My Beach tried to close the gap, but fell a half-length short and Torrington rallied for the show spot at odds

of 35-1. This was Easy Again's 65th career start and his 20th trip to the winner's circle. His earnings have now exceeded \$650,000.

### **Kawartha Downs**

Since Kawartha Downs opened for its 2014 meet in June, Whitesand Merlot has been one of the most regular performers, having raced in all but one of the 11 programs to date. Her consistency was rewarded Saturday night as she scored her first win since shifting to the Fraserville oval. Trainer and owner James Kay was up behind the 11-year-old daughter of Northern Luck who was home first in 1:59.3. An iron horse, with 244 lifetime starts to date, Whitesand Merlot hails from one of the most notable female pacers of all time, Silk Stockings, her third dam. A winner of more than \$694,000 four decades ago, Silk Stockings was also known for her toughness and her great rivalry with another outstanding female pacer, Tarport Hap. Racing continues at Kawartha next Saturday night, which features elevated purses for several of the races. Racing begins at 7 p.m.