

Excelsior finals held at Saratoga Casino Hotel

by Mike Sardella, for Saratoga Casino Hotel

Saratoga, NY --- There were eight finals of the New York Sire Stakes Excelsior Series contested on the Sunday matinee card (Sept. 23) at Saratoga Casino Hotel. Two trainers each won two of the finals that went for purses of \$55,000. Chris Oakes emerged victorious in two of the afternoon's co-features as his trainees prevailed in the Excelsior final for 3-year-old pacing fillies and 2-year-old pacing colts.



Melissa Simsesr-Iovino photo

Oakes' Special Kay Deo ([American Ideal](#)) drew the rail and the sophomore filly was piloted by Tyler Buter. Special Kay Deo pulled off the mild upset when she parlayed her pocket ride to victory in 1:53.2, the fastest clocking for any of Sunday's Excelsior winners. Oakes' Cal ([American Ideal](#)) also sat the pocket before prevailing on Sunday as the 2-year-old gelding scored in 1:54.3 with Jason Bartlett in the sulky.

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Erv Miller trained two of the Excelsior final winners as his Michando (Muscle Mass) pulled off the matinee's biggest upset. Marcus Miller piloted the 3-year-old trotting filly who was dismissed at odds of 39-1. Michando was yet another to spring the pocket en route to a Sunday Excelsior score, stopping the timer in 1:57.1. Miller's Heavens Challenge ([Rock N Roll Heaven](#)) scored the win in the 2-year-old filly pace final as Jim Morrill Jr. sat behind the freshman as she prevailed in 1:54.4 while upsetting at odds of 9-1.

Maureen Salino's Lifetime Credit ([Credit Winner](#)) won the 2-year-old filly trot final, prevailing in 1:59.2 with John Stark Jr. in the sulky while Anette Lorentzon trainee Labadee As ([Conway Hall](#)) scored in the 2-year-old colt and gelding Final in 1:57.3. Labadee As was driven to victory by Brian Sears.

The Ed Hart-trained Thor De Vie ([So Surreal](#)) lengthened his win streak to four when he scored on the front end to give reinsman Jason Bartlett two wins on the day. Thor De Vie held off the late bid from Imstaynalive (Bruce Aldrich Jr) to prevail in 1:53.4. The 3-year-old colt and gelding trot went the way of Nows The Moment ([Credit Winner](#)) who overcame a slow start before scoring in 1:57 with Shane Taggart in the sulky. The Allison Mac Donald trainee's win was his seventh on the season.

Live racing resumes Thursday at Saratoga with a first post time set for 12:15 p.m.