

By Sam Pendolino

Hamburg, NY---Benzley Mindale, a six-year old The Panderosa gelding, out of the Jate Lobell mare Gently Weeps, won the \$6,000 first leg of the Bret Hanover claiming series in 1:59.1, to register his second win this season for owner Michael Torcello, here at Buffalo Raceway Saturday night.



Benzley Mindale (\$5.50) driven by reinsman Jamie Dunlap sat a patient fifth as eventual second place finishers Party To A Crime and driver Ray Fisher Jr., cut all the fractions, :29, :58.2, and 1:29.1. A strong back-side brush and a :29.3 last quarter-mile put the winner three-quarters of a length ahead at the wire. Owhtabeachbum (Phil Biehler) came in third.

“He (Benzley Mindale) doesn’t have a lot of gate speed, so he has to do it the hard way,” said Dunlap. “Once he gets going though, he can really pace”.

Trained by Gerry Sarama, the \$3,000 share of the winning purse put Benzley Mindale’s seasons bankroll at \$9,496, and \$72,943 lifetime.

Golder (\$4.30) also won a division in 1:57.4 with Jim McNeight in the sulky for owner-trainer Laurie Patistas. Using the same approach as Benzley Mindale, Golder sat fifth for most of the race, then used a strong :28.3 last quarter-mile to sweep by tiring leaders to score his third win of the year.



“I thought I was in trouble”, said McNeight. “But Luckily I snuck out just in the nick of time, and he was really strong in the stretch”.

Racing will resume on Wednesday March 10, with first post scheduled for 6:40 pm.

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