

## VERNON: RUSSELL HILL & HONORABLE DAUGHTER TAKE RESPECTIVE DIVISIONS OF EMPIRE BREEDERS' CLASSIC TROT

By Jim Moran

Russell Hill and Honorable Daughter earned championship honors in Monday afternoon's \$419,150 Empire Breeders Classic finals for 3-year-old trotters at Vernon Downs.



Second wagering choice (\$6.90) Russell Hill snapped the eight-race winning streak of favorite Dontellmywife with a 1:57.1 triumph in Monday's seventh race, the \$206,275 colt and gelding division.

Favored Honorable Daughter (\$2.40) prevailed with an impressive 1:57 victory in the afternoon's \$212,875 eighth event, the filly flight.

Noted catch-driver Jim Morrill, Jr. steered both EBC winners. He guided Russell Hill to a front-striding,  $\frac{3}{4}$ -length decision over Dontellmywife. Calchips Brute finished third. It was the second win in four season's starts for the bay son of Conway Hall-Southwind Maywood, who is trained by Jimmy Takter for Canadian owners Al Libfeld, Marvin Katz and Sam Goldband. It marked the third lifetime tally for the career winner of \$176,367.

Honorable Daughter, trained by Larry Remmen for owners Paolo Rosanelli and John Siena, worked her way to the front nearing the three-quarter mark and then drew off for a 3-1/2 length score over Porque. Matchplay Volo finished third. It was the second straight season's score and 11<sup>th</sup> tally in 13 starts for the bay daughter of Malabar Man-Honorable Mother, who hiked her lifetime bankroll to \$948,242.

The crowd of 1,527 witnessed the meeting's swiftest mile, a 1:52.3 triumph by the Betty Tauber-owned pacer Victory Streak (Ken Holliday driving for trainer Sherri Holiday) in the day's \$6,000 sixth session.

With Takter handling the lines for Falkbolagen, Ab of Sweden, Lantern Kronos cruised to a five-length verdict



in Monday's \$9,000 third test, the week's Open trot, and lowered the track's current speed standard for diagonally-gaited performers to 1:55.2.

Ideal Michael, owned, trained and driven by Ray Schnittker, led throughout the \$9,000 fourth race, the Open handicap pace, and recorded a 1:53.1 victory, which at that point in the day, tied the fastest mile in 16 current Vernon programs.

With Ruel "Dude" Goodblood, Jr. driving for trainer Paul Kelley and owners William J. Donovan and Linwood Higgins, Chocolate Art was declared the winner of the day's \$9,000 first race, the weekly feature for female pacers.

**DOWNS DOINGS**—In addition to trainer Takter and Morrill, Jr., driver Bill Bailey (Go On Credit and Butterscotch Swirl) also chalked up two wins during the 11-race card...Due to the special Monday program, there will be no live racing at the Downs this Thursday night (May 28). Live racing resumes at 6:55 p.m. on Friday (May 29) and continues on Saturday (May 30). Thursday night racing will begin again at 6:55 on June 4 ...More information can be obtained at [www.vernondowns.com](http://www.vernondowns.com).

*Photo credit: FOTOWON*