

By Frank Drucker

YONKERS, NY, Saturday, March 6, 2010 -- Dan Carter (Jason Bartlett) whipped five Saturday night rivals--two of them right on the money--winning Yonkers Raceway's \$32,000 Open Handicap Pace.

The field, reduced by a couple after defections of Four Trumps A (judges) and early choice Don'tgetbyme (sick), saw the three inside entities in play early.

Palmer's Z Tam (Pat Lachance) left, as did Dan Carter and a three-deep, 17-10 favorite Legal Litigator (Cat Manzi). Legal Litigator paid a brutal (:26.4) price for the privilege before getting a :55.4 intermission.



The people's preference put forth a 1:25 three-quarters, setting up a three-headed monster melee in the stretch, Dan Carter edged out from the pocket, with Palmer's Z Tam taking the short way. "Dan" was a scant schnozz better than "Palmer" in a season's-best 1:53.4, with Legal Litigator beaten just a neck.

For Dan Carter, a 4-year-old I Am a Fool gelding owned by (trainer) Ron Burke, Weaver Bruscelli, JJK Stables and W Haas Jr., he returned \$8.40 (second choice) for his second (consecutive) win in four seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$33.20, with the triple returning \$99.50.

Bartlett completed a sweep of the weekend's trio of Open Handicap Pace events.

Saturday night also included four, \$10,000 divisions in third (final) preliminary round of the Hopeful Pacing Series for 3-year-old colts and geldings

Joey the Czar (Jim Meittinis, \$2.90) was the fastest of the foursome, strolling home in 1:55.3. The Art Major colt, trained by Bruce Saunders for owner Kevin Gee, went the distance by 9 1/2 lengths for his first win a half-dozen seasonal starts.



The other series winners were...

--Big Mystery (by Artsplace), co-owners James Switlyk & Gary Bury/trainer Burke/driver Greg Grismore (first life win) 1:58/\$11.60;

--Vintage Fenom (by Rocknroll Hanover); owner Edward Bloom/trainer Chris Marino/driver John Sheehan; (life-best) 1:55.4/\$23.20;

--Fox Valley Valkari,g (by Sportsmaster); owner Lon Frocione/trainer Brett Bittle/driver Jeff Gregory; 1:58/\$2.70.

The finals for both genders of the Hopeful are scheduled for next Friday (fillies, \$46,900) and Saturday (colts/geldings, \$49,700) nights, respectively.

Photo credit: *Tom Berg*