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TWO PHIL'S BRILLIANT IN THE JEFF RUBY STEAKS

FLORENCE, Ky. (Saturday, March 25, 2023) – **Two Phil's** stamped himself a date at Churchill Downs on the first Saturday in May with a convincing 5 ¼-length victory in the \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (Grade III) – the marquee race at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

Owned in partnership by **Patricia's Hope** and **Phil Sagan**, Two Phil's earned 100 points on the Road to the Kentucky Derby Championship Series for his victory in the Jeff Ruby Steaks, adding to his growing total of now 123 points. Runner-up **Major Dude** tallied 40 points followed by third-place finisher **Funtastic Again** (30 points), fourth-place **Wadsworth** (20 points) and fifth-place **Maker's Candy** (10 points).

Two Phil's was ridden by **Jareth Loveberry** and trained by **Larry Rivelli**. The son of former Jeff Ruby Steaks winner Hard Spun completed 1 1/8 miles in 1:49.03.

Loveberry positioned Two Phil's in seventh in the early stages of the Jeff Ruby Steaks, 2 ¾-lengths off pacesetter Funtastic Again's quarter-mile time of :23.49. Up the backside, Funtastic Again and jockey **Gerardo Corrales** continued to dictate the pace through a half-mile in :47.84. At the half-mile pole, Two Phil's moved up to fourth, two-lengths off the pace. Around the far turn, favored **Major Dude** began to make his challenge in the two-path while Loveberry spun Two Phil's three-wide. At the top of the stretch Two Phil's poked his head in front and never looked back drawing clear in the late stages of the Jeff Ruby Steaks.

"The original plan probably wasn't to run in this spot," Rivelli said. "I was just looking for the best route to get Two Phil's to the Kentucky Derby. With this race on the calendar I thought it was the perfect timing and perfect spot. We're on our way to the Derby."

Two Phil's rewarded his backers with mutuel payouts of \$7.64, \$3.90 and \$2.92. Major Dude with jockey **Irad Ortiz Jr.** in the saddle returned \$3.28 and \$2.56. Funtastic Again paid \$3.96.

Rivelli reported Two Phil's will now head back to Hawthorne Park and ship to Louisville about three-weeks out of the Kentucky Derby. The talented 3-year-old boosts a lifetime record of 8-4-1-1 with purse earnings of \$683,450.

Wadsworth crossed the wire fourth followed by Maker's Candy, **Congruent**, **Baby Billy**, **Escapologist**, **Bluebirds Over** and **Point Proven**.

Two Phil's is by Hard Spun out of the General Quarters mare Mia Torri. He was bred in Kentucky by co-owner Phil Sagan.

JEFF RUBY STEAKS QUOTES:

Jareth Loveberry, jockey, Two Phil's (winner): "Three weeks ago I suffered a hairline fracture in my left fibula but I'm pretty high on life right now and don't feel that too much. Two Phil's has seemed to get better each week this winter at Fair Grounds. Last time he had a beautiful trip but he seems to do his best running while behind horses. I think h'es getting better with each start. He ran well in the Lecomte but I thought he was even better in the Risen Star. It's just very exciting to be partnered with a horse like this and a team that's supported me."

Larry Rivelli, trainer, Two Phil's (winner): "The original plan probably wasn't to run in this spot. I was just looking for the best route to get Two Phil's to the Kentucky Derby. With this race on the calendar I thought it was the perfect timing and perfect spot. We're on our way to the Derby."

Irad Ortiz Jr., jockey, Major Dude (runner-up): "I was just second best to the winner today. I sat a great trip and was in a perfect spot. The winner outkicked us going for home."

BONTANIAL REMAINS UNDEFEATED AT TURFWAY WITH 2 ½-LENGTH VICTORY IN BOURBONETTE OAKS – LNJ Foxwoods and Clearsky Farm's Botanical kept her undefeated streak at Turfway Park in tact with a 2 ½-length victory in Saturday's \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks.

Botanical's victory in the Bourbonette Oaks also gave her rider **Chris Landeros** his third stakes victory on the Jeff Ruby Steaks program. Landeros previously won the \$250,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes and \$250,000 Latonia Stakes.

Trained by **Brad Cox**, Botanical completed the 1 1/16-mile Bourbonette Oaks in 1:44.47.

Botanical earned 50 points for her victory in the Bourbonette Oaks – a Road to the Kentucky Oaks Championship Series event. Her stablemate **Flashy Gem** earned 20 points, while non-Kentucky Oaks nominees **Thirty Thou Kelvin** received 15 points and **Miss New York** tabbed 10 points. Fifth-place finisher **Ag Bullet** added five points.

Botanical broke well at the start of the Bourbonette Oaks and was immediately taken to the lead under Landeros. Botanical easily completed a quarter-mile in :24.58 and Landeros kept Botanical well-rated up the backside through a half-mile of :48.51. At the three-sixteenths pole, Botanical was joined briefly to her outside by her stablemate Flashy Gem but easily kicked clear in deep stretch.

"I can't really tell you exactly what made her who she is today but she seems to be getting better with every race," assistant trainer **Tessa Walden** said. "I think anytime you get in a race like the Kentucky Oaks you will go there. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity."

Thirty Thou Kelvin completed the trifecta followed by Miss New York, Ag Bullet, **Always At Ease**, **Shewillghostu**, **Renegade Rebel**, **Bolivie (IRE)** and **Medaglia Forever**.

Botanical was the even-money post time favorite and paid \$4.06, \$2.62 and \$2.38. Flashy Gem, under **John Velazquez**, returned \$3.62 and \$3.12. Thirty Thou Kelvin, ridden by **Gerardo Corrales**, paid \$8.44.

Botanical is a 3-year-old daughter of Medaglia d'Oro out of the Blame mare Daisy. She was bred in the Bluegrass State by Clearsky Farms and **Godolphin**.

WOLFIE'S DYNAGHOST CRUSHES IN TWINSPIRES KENTUCKY CUP CLASSIC – Woodslane Farm's Wolfie's Dynaghost remained a perfect 3-for-3 over the synthetic surface with a convincing 2 ¼-length victory in the \$299,600 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Listed).

Ridden by Hall of Famer **John Velazquez**, Wolfie's Dynaghost completed 1 1/8 miles in 1:50.09.

Wolfie's Dynaghost broke sharply from the starting gate and sat second into the first turn, just outside of **Two Birds**. Velazquez and Wolfie's Dynaghost poked their head in front at the half-mile pole and never gave up the lead. At the top of the lane, 9-1 longshot **Verstappen** attempted to make a run at the Wolfie's Dynaghost but proved to be second best.

Trained by **Jonathan Thomas**, Wolfie's Dynaghost returned \$7.08, \$4.20 and \$3.70. Verstappen, ridden by **Declan Cannon**, paid \$7.44 and \$4.58 while **King Cause** finished third and paid \$5.64.

Multiple Grade I winner **Santin** had a troubled beginning and checked in fourth followed in order by **Founder**, Two Birds, **Richiesgotgame**, **Wentru**, **Camp Hope** and **Ocean Atlantique**.

Wolfie's Dynaghost improved his career mark to 19-7-2-4 with solid purse earnings of \$586,805. The talented 5-year-old son of Ghostzapper was bred in Kentucky by his owner.

IDIOMATIC NOTCHES FIRST-CAREER STAKES WIN IN \$250,000 LATONIA STAKES – **Juddmonte's** 4-year-old filly **Idiomatic** held off a late charge of **Kate's Kingdom** to notch her first-career stakes victory in Saturday's \$245,000 Latonia Stakes at Turfway Park.

Jockey **Chris Landeros** was aboard the **Brad Cox**-trained Idiomatic in the Latonia Stakes and the duo completed 1 1/16 miles in 1:44.50.

Idomatic sat in second in the opening stages of the Latonia Stakes, 1 ½-lengths behind leader **Grand Ave Girl**. Into the first turn, Grand Ave Girl skittered an opening-quarter mile in :23.39. Landeros continued to rate Idiomatic up the backside, about one-length behind Grand Ave Girl's half-mile clocking of :47.63. Around the far turn, Idiomatic overtook a tiring Grand Ave Girl and was able to hold off the late charge of Kate's Kingdom for a two-length victory.

It was another three-lengths back to Bellamore who finished ahead of **Il Malocchio**, **Purrfect**, **Bali Belle**, Grand Ave Girl and **Candy Raid**.

Idomatic returned \$2 mutuels of \$7.06, \$4.04 and \$3.26. Kate's Kingdom, ridden by **Irad Ortiz Jr.** paid \$4.40 and \$2.82 while Bellamore returned \$3.90.

"She's a big filly and covers a lot of ground with her stride," Landeros said. "She was very comfortable and I think could run all day. She's won at a mile-and-a-quarter and one-mile at this meet. It shows how versatile she is."

Idomatic improved her overall record to 6-4-0-2 with purse earnings of \$297,970.

Idomatic is a 4-year-old filly by Curlin out of the First Defence mare Lockdown. She was bred in Kentucky by her owner.

LONGSHOT RARIFIED FLAIR HOLDS OFF OCEAN POINTE TO WIN RUSHAWAY – It was bombs away in the \$250,000 Rushaway Stakes where **Magdalena Racing**, **C&H Diamond Racing**, **David Menard** and **Al Riccio's Rarified Flair** made his 3-year-old debut a winning one at odds of 29-1.

Trained by **Kenny McPeek** and ridden by **Chris Landeros**, Rarified Flair recorded his second-lifetime victory in a final time of 1:45.45 for the 1 1/16-mile distance.

Rarified Flair had a slow beginning in the Rushaway and was forced to eighth early in the field of 12 3-year-olds. **Moon Landing** and **John Velazquez** took early command of the Rushaway field into the first turn and cruised a quarter-mile in :23.73. Up the backside, Moon Landing was joined to his inside by a keyed up **Worthington** and the duo completed a half-mile in :48.73. Meanwhile, Moon Landing continued tracking the early pace in seventh, about five lengths off the pace. Around the far turn, while the leaders continued to battle one another, **Luan Machado** and **Midnight Rising** made a bold, four-wide rally and took the lead at the quarter-pole. Moon Landing was tipped five-wide in the stretch by Landeros and surged past Midnight Rising inside the 1/16th pole.

"Kenny (McPeek) was confident in him today and so was I," Landeros said. "We broke in a little bit of a tangle but I let him take his time to get his feet underneath him. He traveled well after the start and came with his run in the stretch. I'm very proud of his effort."

Bettors were rewarded if they backed Rarified Flair who returned \$2 mutuels of \$61.78, \$26.90 and \$12.92. Fellow longshot **Ocean Pointe**, who went off at odds of 35-1, completed the exacta and returned \$31.42 and \$14.70. **Santorini**, the 2-1 post time favorite, finished third and paid \$3.68.

Midnight Rising lost the photo for third by a nose to round out the superfecta. He was 2 ½ lengths clear of **Itzos** followed by Worthington, **Unified Weekend, Quadra Island, Moon Landing, Ironsides, Reckoning Force** and **Roja Redemption**.

Rarified Flair is a 3-year-old son of Honor Code out of the Arch mare Truth. He was bred in Kentucky by Maccabee Farm.

EYE WITNESS REMAINS UNDEFEATED WITH IMPRESSIVE FIVE-LENGTH VICTORY IN ANIMAL KINGDOM STAKES – Westerberg, Mrs. John Magnier, Jonathan Poulin, Derrick Smith and Michael B. Tabor's talented 3-year-old **Eye Witness** notched his second-career victory with an impressive five-length score in the \$178,500 Animal Kingdom Stakes.

Trained by **Wesley Ward** and ridden by **Irad Ortiz Jr.**, Eye Witness covered the 6 ½-furlong distance in 1:11.76.

It was a fairly non-eventful journey for Eye Witness as he sat second in the early stages of the Animal Kingdom Stakes behind front-running **Olazabal**, who covered an opening quarter-mile in :22.26. Around the far turn, Ortiz continued to track Olazabal through a half-mile in :46.54. At the head of the lane, Eye Witness quickly took command of the race and drew off in hand in the final Florence furlong.

"I knew he'd handle the surface well after breaking his maiden here last time," Ortiz said. "That was only his second start. Today, I let him break and just do his thing up the backside. I had a lot of horse the entire way around there."

Eye Witness was bet down to the heavy 3-5 favorite and returned \$3.42, \$2.32 \$2.10. Olazabal held second under **Gerardo Corrales** to return \$2.96 and \$2.10. **Brazen Boy** and **Chris Landeros** finished third and paid \$2.40.

Moon Strike (GB) and **Tiger Paw (IRE)** completed in the Animal Kingdom order of finish.

Eye Witness is a son of City of Light out of the Mr Greeley mare Gracilia. He was bred in New York by Anlyn Farms.

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