

'ANGEL,' 'MICKEY,' 'SEASIDE' WIN ELIMS FOR YR TROT, MESSENGER
BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, NY, Saturday, August 26, 2017—Yonkers Raceway Saturday night (Aug. 26th) hosted a trio of \$40,000 stakes eliminations, two for Yonkers Trot No. 63 and one for the 62nd Messenger Stakes.

The opening elim for Yonkers Trot had a different feel before the outset when pole-sitting, third choice Enterprise (Tim Tetrick) broke behind the gate and effectively was eliminated from the elimination.

That faux pas left the race as a two-choice, two-speed number, with even-money Devious Man (Andy Miller) waltzing around Westchester (:28, 59, 1:28.1). He was chased by the \$30,000 buy-in, Yes Mickey (Ake Svanstedt). Devious Man, last season's New York Sire Stakes champ, had a couple of lengths in and out of the final before 'Mickey,' after leaving from post position No.4, received the memo.

He dove inside, whipping Devious Man by a neck in 1:56.1. Another Chapter (Dan Dube) was a distant, three-hole third, with 49-1 outsider Southwind Cobra (Matt Kakaley) a 'distanter,' four-hole fourth. As for Enterprise, he did catch the field but could not sustain a first-up offering.

For Yes Mickey, a Muscle Hill gelding trained by his driver for owner Mellby Gard Inc., it was his third win in 10 seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$10, with the triple returning \$43.20.

What's been the difference for this season's version of Yes Mickey after a one-start, \$600 frosh season?

"He doesn't break," Svanstedt said, succinctly.

The second elim for the Trot wound up with much more intrigue at the bottom than at the top, where a first-up (from post No. 4), odds-on Guardian Angel AS (Jason Bartlett, \$3.10) was grinding by Money Macintosh (Miller). The margin was a half-length in 1:56.2.

Money Macintosh led through intervals of :28.4, 58.1 and 1:27.1, holding second from entrymate Top flight Angel (Brian Sears) as that one rallied from last among the six-pack. Di Oggi (Montrell Teague) and Southwind Hydro (Marcus Johansson) wound up in a dead-heat for fourth, which led to an unanswered question.

As of this writing (just past midnight Sunday morning), the author was unable to get a definitive answer regarding the field for next Saturday's half-million final of the second jewel of the Trotting Triple Crown. The top four finishers in each get invites, but how this 'heater' issue gets adjudicated is unknown...as of now. Updates when available.

For Guardian Angel AS, a statebred son of 2012 Yonkers Trot winner Archangel co-owned by ACL Stuteri AB & Kjell Johansson and trained by Anette Lorentzon, he's now 7-for-

12 this season. The exacta (two wagering choices) paid \$4.40, with no triple wagering offered to a limited number (five) of wagering interests.

“I didn’t care where I was going to get away (fourth), and I didn’t care if I was going to be first-over,” Bartlett said. “I just didn’t want to tip him on his head leaving. He always gets over Yonkers very well.”

The Messenger’s game of ‘musical chairs’—nine 3-year-old colt/gelding pacers to eliminate one—wasn’t close to being a fair fight.

Art Rooney Pace winner Downbytheseaside (Brian Sears, \$2.10, part of entry) made the lead before the half, then rolled home by 8½ lengths in 1:51. Art Scene (Jordan Stratton) won the scrum for second, whipping the winner’s entymate Blood Line (Mark Macdonald).

The latter made the lead passing a 27-second opening quarter-mile, before ‘Seaside’, away third from post position No. 3, found front nearing the 56-second intermission. He began losing his rivals in and out of a 1:23.3 three-quarters, taking six lengths into the lane.

Mac’s Jackpot (Bartlett) and first leader Summer Side (Ray Schnittker) earned the minors, while Funknwaffles (Corey Callahan), Henry the Dragon (Teague) and Miso Fast (Kakaley) also made next week’s \$500,000 second jewel of the Pacing Triple Crown.

Beyond Delight (Dan Dube) was the odd horse out.

For Downbytheseaside, a son of Somebeachsomewhere trained by Brian Brown for co-owners Country Club Acres, Joe Sbrocco, Richard Lombardo and Diamond Creek Racing, it was his seventh win in 11 seasonal starts (\$706,216). The exacta paid \$9.10, with the triple (Mac’s Jackpot ‘thir’ for this wager) returning \$21.20.

“You never take anything for granted, especially in a nine-horse field,” Sears said. “He just has a tremendous turn of speed,” Sears said. “I was so glad he won at Northfield (Milstein Memorial), because he deserved it after some tough luck and tough trips.”

Saturday night’s \$50,000 Open Handicap Pace was won by a pocketed Caviart Luca (George Brennan, \$17.20) in 1:52.2, a tick off his seasonal best.