

**FAVES PREVAIL IN FRIDAY'S 159G NYSS JIM MEAGHER PACE**  
**BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway**

YONKERS, NY, Friday, August 25, 2017—The U-S Open is right around the corner and nearly right down the road. In that spirit, form held serve Friday night (Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>), with Yonkers Raceway hosting the \$159,000 New York Sire Stakes Jim Meagher Pace for 2-year-old colts and geldings.

Three divisions—at \$53,000 each—and nary one bit of suspense among ‘em.

Hitman Hill (Brett Miller, \$2.20) won the second sire stakes grouping in a night’s-fastest 1:54.2. Winning the draw, he retook from longshot My Delight (Jason Bartlett), then continued on his pleased (:28, 57.1, 1:25.2, 1:53.2).

‘Hitman’ opened a couple of lengths turning for home before prevailing by a comfy length-and-a-quarter. My Delight chased around the oval and saved second, with Jersey Jim (Jim Devaux) skimming the cones from last to grab third.

For Hitman Hill, an American Ideal gelding co-owned by Tom Hill & North Fork Racing and trained by Chris Oakes, he’s won all three of his career tries. The exacta paid \$18.20, with the triple returning \$88.50.

“He’s one of the nicest colts I’ve ever sat behind,” Miller said.

Friday’s opening statebred event had Paprike Blue Chip (Corey Callahan, \$3.90)—the only entrant in the field with a sire stakes win this season—get another (:27.4, 57.1, 1:26.3, life-best-matching 1:54.2)

From post position No. 5, he made the lead, put away a first-up Rolling Sea (Brian Sears), then easily held off second-choice Aces in Heaven (George Brennan).

The final margin was 2¾ lengths, with Rootin’ Tootin’ (Mark MacDonald) a best-of-the-rest third.

For ‘Paprike,’ a Roll with Joe gelding, trained by John Butenschoen for co-owners Harmony Oaks & Crawford Racing and VIP Internet Stable, it was his third win in seven ’17 tries. The exacta paid \$6.70, with the triple (three wagering choices in order) returning \$14.20.

The final Meagher subsection found Casual Cool (Bartlett, \$2.50) with few impediments en route to a fourth NYSS win. From post No. 2, he moved past Topville Olympian (Jim Morrill Jr.), then moved away (:28.1, :58.1, 1:26.4, 1:55).

Casual Cool defeated a two-move effort by Keystone Tenacious (MacDonald) by 2½ lengths, with 105-1 Major Offense (Scott Zeron) picking off the bottom of the ticket.

For Casual Cool, an American Ideal colt owned by Ken Jacobs and trained by Linda Toscano, he's now 4-for-5 this season. The exacta paid \$18.60, with the triple returning \$301.50.

"He doesn't seem to care what size track he's at and he can race either on or off the pace," Bartlett said. "Just a handy horse."

The evening's sire stakes honoring the memory of the Raceway's long-time corporate controller.

Friday night's \$50,000 Filly and Mare Open Handicap Pace was also formful, as in Newborn Sassy (Jordan Stratton, \$3.40) in 1:53.2.

Saturday evening's (Aug.26<sup>th</sup>) program features three, \$40,000 stakes eliminations, two of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Yonkers Trot and one of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Messenger Stakes.

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(FFI...Frank Drucker, Yonkers Raceway Publicity Director, 914-968-4200)