

YONKERS HOSTS SATURDAY NIGHT'S 172G NYSS MICHAEL SORENTINO TROT
BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, NY, Saturday, September 23, 2017—Yonkers Raceway Saturday night (Sept. 23rd) hosted the \$172,000 New York Sire Stakes Michael Sorentino Trot for 3-year-old colts and geldings.

It was the last of 16 sire stakes local legs, leading up to the Oct. 14th New York 'Day' of Champions. That afternoon, eight, \$225,000 NYSS finals take place during Yonkers' \$3.3 million International Trot matinee program.

A pair of groupings, at \$85,250 and \$86,750, respectively, comprised this event.

The opening division saw Seven and Seven (George Brennan, \$4.90) give nothing else a chance in 1:55.

Making just his second sire stakes appearance of the season, Seven and Seven—from post position No. 4—took over from Eye of a Tiger AS (Jason Bartlett) after a :28.1 opening quarter-mile.

He continued leading through intervals of :57.2 and 1:26 before Yonkers Trot winner Top Flight Angel (Andy Miller). The pole-sitting, 3-4 favorite was in no particular hurry early and thus had way too much to do late.

Seven and Seven opened 2¼ lengths into the lane, then finished it off by 2½ lengths. Top Flight Angel was a non-threatening second, with Eye of a Tiger AS third.

For second choice Seven and Seven, a Chapter Seven homebred (Mrs. Durand) Ontario co-owned by (trainer) Tom Durand, the missus, June, and Allan Smith, it was his second win in nine seasonal starts. Durand had not started a horse locally in nearly four years, but made up for lost time Saturday (more about that in a bit).

The exacta paid \$9.30, with the triple returning \$18.20.

"I didn't know anything about him and drove him accordingly," Brennan said. "I did know that Tom would send them here with purpose."

"We made a decision before the season to race him in Grand Circuit events," Durand said. "We didn't have much luck with that, so we tried him in the final sire stakes of the season. Maybe he can make the final."

Saturday's second Sorentino division had even-money Guardian Angel AS (Bartlett, \$4)—whose early Yonkers Trot break did him—get the better trip and the bigger check here. Working it out second-over from post No. 3, he stalked Swell Chap (Brian Sears) after that one swallowed up early leader Zach's Zoomer (Miller).

'Zach' was done after fractions of :28, :57.2 and 1:26.3. Swell Chap opened a length lead in and out of the final turn but couldn't stave off Guardian Angel AS. The latter prevailed by a hard-earned head in 1:56, with Icanflylikeanangel (Jordan Stratton) rallying for third after finding himself pocketed to a tiring leader.

For Guardian Angel AS, a son of 2012 YR Trot winner Archangel trained by Anette Lorenzton for co-owners ACL Stuteri AB and Kjell Johansson, it was his eighth win in 15 '17 tries. The exacta (two wagering choices) paid \$9.40, with the triple returning \$43.60.

Saturday's pair of \$50,000 Open Handicaps were won by...

--Pace—The Real One (Pat Lachance, \$6.90) in 1:50.3, fastest local mile of the season;
--Trot—Dia Monde (Brennan, \$3.70) in 1:54.2. Durand's other starter also went down the road, matching the track record for 4-year-olds geldings.

Between races, driver Mark MacDonald was feted with a congratulatory sign for his 6,000th win, the milestone reached the previous night at Vernon Downs.

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