

**BLUE CHIP MATCHMAKER SERIES UNDERWAY**  
**FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway**

YONKERS, NY, Friday, March 16, 2018—Nor'easters be damned. The first sign of spring occurred Friday night (March 16<sup>th</sup>), with the beginning of Yonkers Raceway's Blue Chip Matchmaker.

A consecutively-contested quartet of \$40,000 events for high-end pacing mares opened the show.

The first division fooled very few in the equine persona of Shartin N (Tim Tetrick, \$2.50). Away fourth from the pole, she took over from Gina Grace N (Larry Stalbaum) after that eight-holer made front (:27.1, :57.3).

Shartin N blew right by, opening nighttime daylight before a 1:25.3 three-quarters. The lead was three lengths off the final turn and 4¼ lengths at the wire, finding it in 1:54.2,

Motu Moonbeam N (Brent Holland) was second as the 47-1 rank outsider, with Shesjustadelight N (Ron Cushing) a decent third after losing the winner's tow.

"Tim, is this one the real deal?"

"I think so," Tetrick said.

For Shartin N, a 5-year-old Down Under daughter of Tintin in America co-owned by Richard Poillucci and Jo Anne Looney-King and trained by Jim King Jr., it was her fifth win in six seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$39.20, with triple returning \$261.

The second Matchmaker grouping saw another odds-on Kiwi lass as Sell a Bit N (Jordan Stratton, \$2.90) set a dawdling pace (:28.1, :58.2, 1:26.4), then held sway in 1:55.2.

Pole-sitting Sell a Bit N took over from Medusa (Scott Zeron), then whip that one by a half-length. Third went to Dudesalady (Brent Holland) after trying it first-up, with Annabeth (Mark MacDonald) fourth.

For Sell a Bit N, a 5-year-old Down Under daughter of Julius Caesar owned by Von Knoblauch Stables and trained by Peter Tritton, it was her fourth win in seven '18 tries. The exacta paid \$6, the triple (three wagering choices in order) returned \$15 and the superfecta paid \$56.50.

"(Sell a Bit N) had three weeks off, so she wasn't 100 percent, but she refused to let anyone pass her," Stratton said.

The short-priced procession continued in Friday evening's third series event. Lady Shadow (Jason Bartlett, \$2.90) had things her own way. From post position No. 2, she saw Call Me Queen Be (Zeron) make the first lead. Lady Shadow gained the advantage before a :27.3 opening quarter, then rated a :57.2 intermission.

Safe from Terror (Yannick Gingras) found an eight-hole seat, only to take out of fourth. That turned out to be an ill-advised move, as she backpedaled toward a 1:26 three-quarters. Lady Shadow owned a length-and-a-half lead into the lane, before winning by a half-length in 1:54.3.

Scandalicious (Tetrick) and Eclipse Me N (Dan Dube) rallied for second and third, respectively. Meanwhile, Call Me Queen Be edged from the pocket, but faded to fourth.

For season-debuting Lady Shadow, a 7-year-old daughter of Shadow Play co-owned by (trainer) Richard Banca, D'Elegance Stable IX and Thomas Lazzaro, her career earnings went past \$1.94 million, The exacta paid \$9.40, with the triple returning \$82.

'It's the best she's raced since she's been in the barn,' Bartlett said.

The first round's final foray had the only non-favored winner, as pocketed third choice Twinkle (Eric Goodell, \$8.10) was quite handy.

From post No. 2, Twinkle nestled in behind Lispatty (George Brennan) with substations of :27.4, :57.2 and 1:25.3. Pulling early, Twinkle went right by, winning by a length-and-a-quarter in 1:54.2. Dewar N Soda (Bartlett) wound up a three-hole second, with Lispatty third and Vintage Babe (Holland) fourth.

Last season's series champ and this race's 17-10 fave, Mackenzie A (Stratton), never did get involved and finishing eighth (last).

For season-debuting Twinkle, a 5-year-old daughter of Bettor's Delight co-owned by Dana Parham & Let it Ride Stables and trained by Ross Croghan, she's now won 12-of-13 career starts. The exacta paid \$105, the triple returned \$338.50 and the superfecta paid \$1,570.

"She's an all-around nice horse," Goodell said.

Saturday night (March 17<sup>th</sup>) offers a quintet of \$50,000 divisions of Free-for-Allers in the opening round of the George Morton Levy Memorial Pacing Series

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(photos-Mike Lizzi-accompany)

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