

SHARTIN N HAT TRICK LEADS THIRD ROUND OF MATCHMAKER
BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, NY, Friday, March 30, 2018—Yonkers Raceway deferred to the ladies for Good Friday and Passover (March 30rd), offering the non-denominational third round of the Blue Chip Matchmaker.

Four, \$40,000 events again brought together many of the best pacing mares.

First Division—A perfectly-pocketed Lakeisha Hall (George Brennan, \$14.60) measured it off against 1-4 favorite L A Delight (Yannick Gingras).

The latter, away third from the pole, moved to the lead right at a 27-second opening quarter-mile. She then had a no-excuse middle half (:56.4, 1:25.4). Meanwhile, Lakeisha Hall, from post position No. 4, made a quick lead before finding her sequestered in the two-hole.

L A Delight owned a length-and-a-quarter lead into the lane. However, former Kentucky Sire Stakes champ Lakeisha Hall edged out and edged past, winning by a half-length in 1:54.2. Medusa (Scott Zeron) was a best-of-the-rest, three-hole third.

For second choice Lakeisha Hall, a 5-year-old daughter of Third Straight co-owned (as Burke Racing) by (trainer) Ron Burke, Weaver Brusceci and Jack Piatt II, it was her first win in three seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$28.20, with the triple returning \$88.50.

“Once I made the lead, I wanted to make (L A Delight) work,” Brennan said. “She had to go some in the first quarter, then not much, but my mare was sharp.

“I was kicking myself last week. It was one of the few times I picked off Ronnie (Burke) and she was very good. She was good again.”

Second Division—If Tim Tetrick has asked series leader Shartin N (\$2.90) at any point during the first three weeks, he did it in private, as the femme fatale made it look simple again. Chilly early from post No. 2, she watched pole-sitting Lady Shadow (Jason Bartlett) take over from Scandalicious (Gingras).

The intervals was soft enough (:28, :57.4) when Shartin N moved from fourth. She used a :27.2 third quarter (1:25.1) to dispose of Lady Shadow, taking a length-and-a-half lead in and out of the final turn. Shartin N finished it off by a length in 1:53.3, remaining the Matchmaker’s lone meticulous mare.

Safe from Terror (Jordan Stratton) lost her tow when the winner cleared, but continued well to be second. Eclipse Me N (Dan Dube) was third.

For Shartin N, a 5-year-old Down Under daughter of Tintin in America co-owned by Richard Poillucci & Jo Anne Looney-King and trained by Jim King Jr., it was her seventh win (fourth consecutive) in eight ’18 tries. The exacta paid \$10.60, with triple returning \$47.20.

“She’s really versatile and learning to become an Americanized horse,” Tetrick said.

Apparently, she's going to turn into a 'slacker' as well, as Mrs. King indicated Shartin N is getting next week's fourth round off for good behavior.

Third Division---Second-choice Twinkle (Eric Goodell, \$4.80) played leapfrog with 13-10 fave Sell a Bit N (Stratton). Good thing, too, as the latter tired and the leader held sway.

Twinkle, from post No. 4, made the first lead, looping Sell a Bit N. The latter did take over before the :27.3 opening two furlongs. Twinkle left the cones to seize the initiative going into the second turn, finishing it off from there (:57.3, 1:25.2, season's-best 1:54.1).

Shesjustadelight N (Ron Cushing), away third from the pole, came first-up and was a very good second, missing by three-quarters of length. Third went to Miss Irish Rose A (Larry Stalbaum), with Sell a Bit N fading to fourth

For 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 2-for-3 this season (and series) and won 13-of-15 career starts. The exacta paid \$22.80, the triple returned \$318.50 and the superfecta paid \$1,035.

Fourth Division—For a second consecutive week, defending series victress Mackenzie A (Stratton, \$3.10) was an off-the-pace beast. Away sixth from post No. 6, she watched Newborn Sassy (Tetrick) leave around Call Me Queen Be (Zeron). Again, there's wasn't much early excitement (:27.4, :57.4), but no matter.

Mackenzie A was moving, and she nearly had an unwanted deterrent for yet another week. This time however, All About Madi (Bartlett), slipped back in after briefly coming out from third. That left Mackenzie A to engage Newborn Sassy in and out of a 1:26 three-quarters.

The leader was tough, but the challenger was tougher. Just about synchronized turning for home, Mackenzie A wore down Newborn Sassy by a half-length in 1:54.1. Call Me Queen Be wound up third.

For Mackenzie A, a 6-year-old Down Under Rock N Roll Heaven lass trained by Peter Tritton for co-owners Von Knoblauch Stables and Ellen Kinser, it was her second win in three seasonal/series efforts. The exacta (two wagering choices) paid \$13, with triple returning \$65.50.

"She never disappoints me because she always shows up," Stratton said.

Saturday night (March 31st) offers a quartet of \$50,000 divisions of Free-for-Allers in the third round of the George Morton Levy Memorial Pacing Series. A reminder that there is no horse race wagering permitted in New York State Easter Sunday (Apr. 1st), including the Raceway and Empire City Bets.

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(photos-Mike Lizzi-accompany)

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