

McWICKED WINS 250G DAN ROONEY INVITATIONAL PACE
BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, NY, Saturday, October 13, 2018—It wasn't a fair fight.

Odds-on choice McWicked (Brian Sears, \$2.90) dusted his foes Saturday afternoon (Oct. 13th), winning Yonkers Raceway's \$250,000 Dan Rooney Invitational Pace.

The race was supposed to be a small-oval slap fight between McWicked—back here for the first time since the 2017 George Morton Levy Memorial Pacing Series—Bit of a Legend N (Jordan Stratton) and locally-debuting Lazarus N. Well, Bit of Legend N couldn't match strides and Lazarus N was scratched-sick, so McWicked was left without a meaningful play date.

Undaunted, he did as he figured to do.

Away third behind Nuclear Dragon (Tim Tetrick) and Mach it So (Jason Bartlett)—the former's early intervals of :27 and :55.3—McWicked—from post position No. 2—left the cones and threw down a :27.1 third quarter (1:22.4).

He opened four lengths in and out of the final turn before winning by that same margin in 1:50.4. Bit of a Legend N was second-choice/second-best, with Evenin' of Pleasure (Joe Bongiorno) third. Mach it So and Endeavor (Trace Tetrick) came away with the final pay envelopes, with Always at My Place (George Brennan) and Nuclear Dragon bringing up the backside.

For McWicked, a 7-year-old son of McArdle owned by S S G Stables and trained by Casie Coleman, it was his ninth win in 16 seasonal starts (\$1,178,864). The exacta paid \$6.90, the triple returned \$29.80 and the superfecta paid \$139.50.

"I figured I'd come first up," Sears said. "I thought he was the best and could get it done that way and it worked out. He's showed up every week and always put out a really great effort.

"He'll do it any way you want and he's all racehorse. He's just a pleasure to be around and a pleasure to drive. It was nice to get it done today."

In a span of about 81 minutes, Sears won the million-dollar International Trot with 30-1 Cruzado Dela Noche ("It's awesome. To win the signature race here, you don't get that many opportunities. I think this is the fourth time I've been in it, but to win it, it's quite a thrill.") and this 250-large invite.

You may want to have him select the lottery numbers.

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(photo-Mike Lizzi-accompanies)

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