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Sophmores star in Ohio Sires Stakes at Scioto Downs

The Countdown to Super Night Begins

July 26, 2019

by Kimberly Rinker, Ohio Standardbred Development Administrator

A quarter of \$50,000 Ohio Sires Stakes were contested on a pleasant Friday evening, July 26 at Scioto Downs, with temperatures in the low 70s, as 3-year-old trotting and pacing fillies vied in Leg 3 of the OSS series.



Snobbytown & Chris Page

Snobbytown (Chris Page), who was making her sophomore debut for Burke Racing, Weaver Brusceci and Jason Melillo, didn't disappoint as the 5-2 choice, holding off 1-2 **Giggles In Dreams** (Shawn Barker II) by a scant nose at the wire in 1:53.

Owner Melillo was on hand to congratulate the Burke Brigade team and gave insight to this latest acquisition.

"We were looking for a good 3-year-old," Melillo offered. "Ronnie (trainer Burke) told us about her and said the sire isn't flashy, but puts up a lot of numbers, and so we bought her privately."

The Nob Hill High daughter had qualified twice over Springfield's one mile oval, pacing to a 1:54.4 second-place finish on July 9 and returning seven days later to score a 1:53.3 clocking in a wire-to-wire performance that saw her win by 19 lengths.

In her OSS contest, Snobbytown had sat chilly in the two-hole throughout the mile behind Giggles In Dream through fractions of :26.2, :56 and 1:25, pulling out in the final strides to mow down her rival with a :27.4 final panel, while another Burke trainee, 6-1 **Avaline hanover** (Brett Hanover) got up for third.

Melillo first began purchasing horses with Burke in 2012, campaigning the good filly, Pink Camo, p, 2, 1:52.3F (\$210,766).

"I grew up going to the Meadowlands with my grandfather," Melillo, a native of Clifton, NJ, recalled. "And he said he always dreamed of being in the winner's circle some day. That's where my love of harness racing began."

Later, after relocating to Ohio, Melillo attended The Ohio State University's medical school and now serves as Chief of Staff at Riverside Hospital as an obstetrician.

"I'm kind of the black sheep in my family," Melillo laughed. "My father was a pediatricist and everyone else in the family is pediatricist but I wanted to do something different, and I fell in love with obstetrics."

The win upped Snobbytown's career earnings to \$66,830 from six wins, five seconds and two thirds in 14 starts. As a freshman, she split time racing on the Iowa fair circuit and was a solid third in the OSS consolation at Northfield Park.

Bred by Ohio's Scott Hagemeyer, Snobbytown is the fourth foal out of the Towner's Big Guy mare Shantytown Girl p, 2, 1:59h (\$5,980) and is a half-sister to: Paydaze On The Way (by Look Sharp) p, 4, 1:52.2f (\$255,723) and Paydaze A Rockin (by World Of Rocknroll) p, 5, 1:53 (\$69,711).

Giggles In Dreams is also a daughter by Nob Hill High, while third-place finisher Avaline Hanover is by Dragon Again.



Queen Of The Pride & Tony Hall

Queen Of The Pride got a perfect steer by Tony Hall to win the first OSS pacing division in a new career clocking of 1:51.1—lowering her mark by a tick for owner Frank Chick of Harrington, DE.

The McArdle lass, who was sent off as the 3-5 favorite, sat behind the leading 7-2 **Rylee Roo** (Aaron Merriman) through panels of :25.3, :55, and 1:22.2 before unleashing a :28.3 late brush to prevail easily over her rival by 2¼ lengths. **Rose Run Uptowngal** was third at 8-1 for Chris Page.

“She raced in the Lismore Final on May 25 and made a break and injured a hoof,” trainer Kevin Lare explained. “She really wasn’t ready for that Ohio Sires Stakes (on June 14 when she made a break), but we the foot is all healed up now and she’s back to normal.”

Queen Of The Pride won her OSS Leg one in 1:51.4 before finishing eighth in Leg two. The venerable filly now has \$485,479 in career earnings with \$131,525 amassed this season from six wins, a second and a third in ten starts. Lifetime, she has 11 wins, four seconds and four thirds in 24 starts.

Queen Of The Pride was a \$62,000 yearling purchase at the 2017 Ohio Select Sale. She was bred by Hickory Lane Farm’s Brad Wallace and is the fourth foal out of the Western Ideal mare Lionness Hanover and is a half-sister to Roaring To Go (by Art Major) p, 2, 1:50.4 (\$431,999); Well Excuse Me (by Well Said) p, 4, 1:53f (\$76,035); and Well Let’s See (by Well Said) p, 6, 1:54.2s (\$98,702).



Back Splash & Aaron Merriman

Back Splash took the first of the trotting contests—setting a new track record of 1:54 in the process for driver Aaron Merriman and trainer Chris Beaver. Owned by Beaver, Don Robinson, Steve Zeehandelar and RBH Ventures, the Triumphant Caviar filly left no doubt she was much the best as she finished 1½ lengths in front of the hard-trying 3-5 choice and stablemate **Pure Chance** (Jason Thompson). **Aunt Percilla** was third at 9-1 with Danny Noble at the lines.

Back Splash had finished seventh in her OSS leg one test at Miami Valley and was a much-improved third in leg two on June 8 at Northfield. From 16 career starts she now has four wins and four thirds with \$86,492 in her bankroll. A \$30,000 purchase from the 2017 Ohio Select Yearling Sale, Back Splash is the third foal out of the Yankee Glide mare Splashabout and is a half-sister to Sailaway Dream (by Daguet Rapide) 5, 1:56.2 (\$142,069).

Refined and driver Brett Miller collared the leading 1-2 favorite **Only Take Cash** (Aaron Merriman) at the wire to score a major upset in the second OSS division. The Uncle Peter daughter had left the gate at 33-1 and returned a whopping \$69.80 on a two dollar ticket.

Trained by Virgil Morgan, Jr., for the Winstar Farm of Hartly, DE, Refined used come from behind tactics to score the victory, tying the new track record mark set by Back Splash just a few races earlier in the evening. **Aunt Rose** was third at 7-2 for Ronnie Wrenn, Jr.



Refined & Brett Miller

The victory was career win four for Refined, who also has a pair of seconds and two thirds in 14 lifetime starts, along with \$59,880 in earnings. She was purchased for \$15,000 at the 2017 Lexington Select Yearling Sale.

Refined is the eighth foal out of the Malabar Man mare Reinvent 3, 1:56 (\$386,007) and has half-siblings in: Do It For Annie (by Like A Prayer) 6, 1:56f (\$224,008); Kumbaya De Vie (by Yankee Glide) 2, 2:00.3f (\$59,088); Relevant (by Deweycheatumnhowe) 6, 1:58.3h (\$44,901); Recreate (by Manofmanymission) 3, 1:58.3s (\$22,118); and Fleur De Hill (by Muscle Hill) 1:56.3f (\$24,310).

Ohio Sires Stakes continue Saturday night (July 27) with a pair of \$50,000 contests for 3-year-old pacing colts.

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