



## Ohio State Racing Commission

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# \$75,000 Babst-Palacios Memorial headlines Belterra Weekend

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*by Kimberly Rinker for the Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund*

**Rivers Run Deep**, Ohio's 2016 Sprint Champion, heads up the \$75,000 Edward Babst-Albert Palacios Memorial Handicap on Saturday afternoon, April 28 at Belterra Park.

The six-furlong test for Ohio-registered, 3-year-olds and up foals, features a field of six runners from 17 horses nominated, with a scheduled post time of 4:26 pm, ET on Belterra's first live racing weekend of the 2018 season.

Owned by Ywachetta and James Driver and bred by Nancy Lavrich and Walmac Farm, the son of Ready's Image, out of the Prospector's Music mare Music Miss has amassed career earnings of \$1,126,765 and is looking for his second straight triumph of the year in the Babst-Palacios and his fourth consecutive victory in this stake.

Rivers Run Deep scored an impressive victory in his 2018 debut at Oaklawn Park on March 10, and is a favorite of Ohio racing fans; having been first choice among Buckeye wagering patrons in nearly 75% of all of his starts to date as he begins his 7-year-old season.

Rivers Run Deep, who has amassed 20 wins, nine seconds and five third-place finishes in 40 career starts, with 14 stakes victories to his credit, comes into the Babst-Palacios as the reigning king—having captured this stake the last three years—including a heart-stopping 1:08.2 Belterra track record for the six-panels in the 2016 edition. Last year's front-running victory with jockey Albin Jimenez aboard saw him cover the six furlongs in 1:08.75 over the muddy surface, besting rival Mo Don't No—the 2016 Ohio Horse of the Year—by six lengths.

Besides winning the Babst-Palacios on multiple occasions, Rivers Run Deep has also won the \$75,000 Honey Jay Stakes four times, the \$150,000 Best of Ohio Sprint three times, the \$75,000 Cardinal Stakes twice, and the \$75,000 Tall Stakes and \$75,000 Green Carpet Stakes.

Trained by Chris Hartman, Rivers Run Deep was purchased by the Drivers for \$77,000 at the June 2013 Ocala 2-Year-Olds in Training Sale. This indefatigable competitor carries high weight of 128 pounds in the Babst-Palacios, with veteran Perry Ouzts in the saddle.

Looking to stop Rivers Run Deep from nabbing his fourth Babst-Palacios crown are rivals **Cake Pop**, **My Pardner Cal**, **Altissimo**, **Jocker Justice** and **Prime Time Justice**.

**Photo Cutline:** Rivers Run Deep will be seeking his second consecutive victory of the 2018 season in Saturday's \$75,000 Babst-Palacios Memorial at Belterra Park. *Coady Photography*