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\$75,000 Catlaunch Stakes features stellar field

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by Kimberly Rinker, Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

Multiple stakes winner **Eighththehardway** heads up a stellar field of Accredited Ohio-breds in the fifth running of the \$75,000 Catlaunch Stakes on Saturday, Sept. 28, at JACK Thistledown.

The one and one-sixteenth mile contest for 3-year-olds and up features eight Buckeye foals who have combined career earnings just shy of \$1.6 million. Eighththehardway is the richest horse in the field, with \$458,188 in the 7-year-old gelding's coffers from ten wins, seven seconds and ten thirds in 50 starts. He won the 2016 edition of the Catlaunch; was fourth in this stake last season and finished third in 2017.

Mobil Solution won the Catlaunch in 2018 and is a winner of \$353,020 in his career for owner Gerald Silver and trainer Jeff Radosevich. This multiple-stakes winning 4-year-old Mobil gelding has six wins, seven seconds and five thirds in 21 lifetime starts.

Other contenders include \$75,000 Horizon Stake winner **Verissimo** and \$75,000 Lewis Memorial winner **Sammy Da Bull**, as well as **Pat's Karma**, **Grand Kitten**, **Midnight Mikey** and **Direct Deceit**.



Catlaunch in his paddock at Old Friends in Georgetown, KY. *Photo by Rick Capone*

Foaled March 18, 2001, Catlaunch was a revered, Ohio-bred son of Noble Cat-Skilaunch, by Relaunch bred by Ron Fields and owned by Scioto Farm Supply Company. He was named Horse of the Year multiple times.

The hardy gelding broke his maiden at age 2 in October 2003 and went on to win 40 of 108 starts, at distances from six furlongs to 1¼ miles, including 22 stakes. He amassed 22 second-place finishes and notched 15 third-place checks in his career, and was a perineal fan favorite at Thistledown, as well as at River Downs and Beulah Park.

Catlaunch won the Babst/Palacios Memorial three times; the Ruff/Kirchberg Memorial three times; the H. M. Rowland Memorial Handicap five times and was second once (at age 11); the Sydney Gendelman Memorial four times (last time at age 12); the George Lewis Memorial three times; and the Governor's Buckeye Cup and Best of Ohio Endurance twice each. He was named 2006 Ohio-Accredited Male Horse of the Year and 2006 and 2007 Ohio Handicap Horse of the Year.

Catlaunch raced through his 13th year before his retirement in 2014 and lived out his days at Old Friends in Georgetown, KY, after earning \$1,122,309 for his connections. Sadly, at age 17, Catlaunch was humanely euthanized due to a chronic neurological disorder.

When he passed, Old Friends founder and President Michael Blowen told the Paulick Report that "Catlaunch, with his warm personality and good looks, was a favorite among all of our volunteers and farm staff.

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