



Ohio State Racing Commission

77 South High Street • 18th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-6108
(614) 466-2757 FAX (614) 466-1900
www.racingohio.net

John Kasich
Governor

Robert K. Schmitz
Chairman

Classen & Tall Stack Stakes highlight Ohio Racing Weekend

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by Kimberly Rinker, for the Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

A pair of \$75,000 Stakes for Ohio-bred runners highlight this weekend's racing action, with the featured events taking place on Saturday, May 5, at opposite ends of the Buckeye State.

Multiple stakes victress **Leona's Reward** will slug it out against four rivals in Saturday's (May 5) \$75,000 Dr. T. F. Classen Memorial, a six-furlong contest for Ohio-Accredited fillies and mares, 3-year-olds and up. Post time for the featured fifth race at JACK Thistledown is 4:05 pm, ET.

The 5-year-old chestnut filly by Parents' Reward—Prime Time Dancer, by Mr. Prospector will be making her 2018 debut in the Classen. Conditioned by Tim Hamm for the Blazing Meadows Farm—who also bred the winner of \$424,356—and co-owner Michael Friedman, Leona's Reward has won ten of 28 lifetime starts, including last season's \$75,000 Catlaunch Stakes and \$75,000 Lewis Memorial Stakes. She also triumphed in the 2017 and 2016 editions of both the \$75,000 Bobby Bricker Memorial Handicap and the \$75,000 Ohio Debutante Handicap, and was a strong second to last year's Classen winner **True Cinder**, who will likely be her toughest rival again this year.

True Cinder, a winner of \$289,300 in her career, is a 4-year-old daughter by Alcindor—Be True, by Shakespeare is owned by trainer Michael Rone. This bay filly rarely bests Leona's Reward, but has finished off the board only once in 13 career starts, sporting six wins, four seconds and two thirds.

Other contestants in the Classen include \$142,012-earner **Blanconia**, a stakes-winning Vaquero lass trained by Jeff Radosevich; **Grizabella**, a 4-year-old daughter by Lunarpal conditioned by Mark Doering; and **Mygirlfriday**, another Lunarpal lass looking for her first stakes triumph for trainer Jennifer Tooley.

Undefeated **Buster's Boy** heads up the \$75,000 Tall Stack Stakes at Belterra Park that same afternoon. The 6½ dirt event for Ohio-registered 3-year-olds sees six rivals going up against the Twinspired gelding, a winner of \$80,880 lifetime for breeder/co-owner Pine Ridge Farm and Jim Rumford. William Cowans trains Buster's Boy, who, after breaking his maiden at Mahoning Valley on Dec. 17, 2017, romped to an allowance victory on Feb. 26 before taking the \$75,000 Howard B. Noonan Stakes on April 14. To date this roan gelding has won his three races by a combined 14¾ lengths. Buster's Boy carries high weight of 122 pounds and will have Walter De La Cruz in the saddle.

Breeder/owner Ronald Dewolf's **Charlee's Magic**, who was second to Buster's Boy in the Noonan, hails from trainer Mike Rone's barn. The Jump Start gelding likewise has \$80,880 in his coffers from two wins, two seconds and a third in five career starts.

Tiz a Rush makes his 2018 debut in the Tall Stack. Conditioned by Jeff Radosevich for owner David Downard, the Tiz Wonderful gelding finished third to the winning Charlee's Magic in a Mahoning allowance races on Nov 8, 2017. A winner of \$72,730 in his brief career, Tiz a Rush's lone triumph came on Sept. 16 of last year, when he broke his maiden at JACK Thistledown by a shopping 15¼ lengths. This dark bay or brown gelding was bred by Ohioans Daniel and Patricia Yates.

The field rounds out with **Deer Creek Road, Over Icce, Hay John Hay** and first time starter **Dijkstra's Devil**.

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Photos of Leona's Reward & Buster's Boy by Conrad Photography