



## Ohio State Racing Commission

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# Leona's Reward captures \$75,000 Classen Memorial

## *Second time a charm for game Ohio-bred*

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by Kimberly Rinker, Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

**Leona's Reward** put in a game effort in the final yards of the \$75,000 Dr. T. F. Classen Memorial Stakes to capture the 13<sup>th</sup> running of the stake for Ohio-Accredited fillies and mares, 3-year-olds and up.

It was the second consecutive season that Leona's Reward had captured the Classen, and it was the 6-year-old mare's fourth straight Ohio stakes triumph.

Trained by Tim Hamm, the daughter of Parents' Reward was making her 2019 debut for owners Blazing Meadows Farm LLC and Michael Friedman and upped her career earnings to \$723,606 with this latest win. Time for the six furlong sprint was a modest 1:11.32—not a bad clocking for the Cleveland one-miler's surface, which was rated as "muddy" at post time.

Leona's Reward, the 5-2 choice, broke well for jockey Scott Spieth and waited until the turn to make a bold, three-wide move. She then battled the leading 1-2 favorite **True Cinder** (Gerardo Corrales) down the stretch and appeared beaten nearing the wire before shifting into another gear and overtaking her rival by half a length with her ears pinned. **Edge Of Pleasure** (T. Houghton), a 35-1 longshot, held on for third with 17-1 **Grizabella** (Hector Rosario, Jr.) getting up for fourth.

Leona's Reward is a multiple stakes winner with 15 wins in 39 starts and won her previous three starts—all stakes events: the \$75,000 Ohio Debutante Stakes on Oct. 13 at Thistledown; the \$75,000 Ruff/Kirchberg Stakes on Nov. 17 at Mahoning Valley; and the \$75,000 Bobby Bricker Memorial on Dec. 1 at Mahoning Valley. She also finished second in the 2017 edition of the Classen to True Cinder.



Multiple stakes winner Leona's Reward captured Saturday's Dr. T. F. Classen Memorial Stakes at JACK Thistledown, getting up to beat True Cinder in the final strides. *Photo by Jeff Zamaiko*

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