



Ohio State Racing Commission

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

Mike DeWine
Governor

Scott Borgemenke
Chairman



Mares vie in \$75,000 Vivacious Handicap

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by Kimberly Rinker, Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

A full field of 12 Ohio registered mares, 3-year-olds and up, will take center stage at Belterra Park on Friday, July 16 in the \$75,000 Vivacious Handicap. Post time for the one and one sixteenth mile event, scheduled as Race Six over the Belterra turf course, is 3:00 pm, ET.



Moonlite Mission winning the 2021 Petro Memorial *Photo by Jeff Zamaiko*

Moonlit Mission, victorious in the June 17, \$75,000 J. William Petro Memorial Handicap, gets the nod in here. Trained by Silvano Gonzalez for owner Charlie J. Williams, this chestnut 4-year-old daughter by Shackleford-Moonlite River, by Maria's Mon, has two wins in three tries thus far in 2021, with \$68,400 in her seasonal coffers. Bred by Belvedere Farm, she has \$337,950 in career earnings from seven wins, two seconds and a third in 14 lifetime starts. Four of those victories were stakes triumphs for Moonlit Mission, who was a \$18,000 purchase at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall 2018 Yearling Sale.

Drillit, who finished second to Moonlite Mission in the Petro, will be looking for revenge from her rival. This four-time stakes winner is a 5-year-old chestnut daughter by Drill-Way To Fly, by

Boman's Band, and is conditioned by Robert Gorham for Mast Thoroughbreds. Bred by Eric Heyman, Drillit has a trio of seconds in as many tries this year and seasonal earnings of \$42,100. Lifetime, she has amassed \$447,770 from seven wins, eight seconds and five thirds in 27 starts. Her stakes triumphs came in the \$150,000 Galbreath Memorial (2018); the \$75,000 First Lady Stakes (2019); the \$75,000 Petro (2020); and the \$100,000 Best of Ohio Distaff Stakes (2020).

Cali Dream, a 7-year-old dark bay daughter of Cowboy Cal-Afternoon Dreams, by Afternoon Deelites, is another mare with a solid shot in here. This winner of \$370,628 lifetime has ten wins, seven seconds and eight thirds to her credit in 51 starts. Trained by Gary Johnson for Jerry Laria, Cali Dream was third to Moonlit Mission in the Petro on June 17 and will be trying for her first win of the season in the Vivacious. Bred by Robert Gorham and Mast Thoroughbreds, Cali Dream one stakes victory to her credit lifetime, with her best efforts coming at the allowance levels.

Grizabella, a 7-year-old bay daughter by Lunarpal-Chic Cat, by Tiger Ridge, is the richest mare in the field with career earnings of \$456,477. While she does not venture into the winner's circle on a regular basis, she is one of those tough-trying, gutsy racehorses that is always right there. Trained by Jeff Radosevich for Michael Annechino, Grizabella does have several stakes triumphs to her credit, including the \$75,000 Bobb Bricker Memorial Handicap (2020), and the \$75,000 Miss Southern Ohio Stakes (2019 & 2020). In 57 lifetime starts, she has finished first, second or third 31 times, with eight wins, 12 seconds and 11 thirds. Grizabella was bred by Mapleton Thoroughbreds.

Finally, **Distinctive Flower**, who captured the 2020 edition of the Vivacious Handicap, will be looking to keep her crown intact. This 6-year-old bay daughter by Flower Alley-Real Distinctive, by With Distinction has \$211,464 in career earnings for owner Mark Kuntz, Easy Money, and Michael Luebbe. Trained by Larry Smith, Distinctive Flower has a pair of Belterra triumphs under her belt coming into this stake, having won on May 7 and June 17 respectively, with \$35,900 in seasonal earnings. Lifetime, she has seven wins, five seconds and seven thirds in 31 trips postward. She was bred by Lowell Allen & John Bourke.