



## Ohio State Racing Commission

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# Fantastic stakes action at Jack Thistledown

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by Kimberly Rinker for the Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

A pair of \$75,000 stakes for Ohio-bred runners and the \$500,000 Grade III Ohio Derby were featured on Saturday afternoon, June 24 at Jack Thistledown Racino.

**Leona's Reward** upset six male rivals in the \$75,000 George Lewis Memorial Stake in commanding fashion for the Blazing Meadow Farm and trainer Tim Hamm.

Ridden by Pablo Morales, the 6-1 daughter by Parents' Reward stalked the leading 3-5 favorite Buckeye Bullet (Luis Quines) until the head of the lane, then overtook the leader en route to scoring a nose victory over the late-closing 6-5 **Eighthardway** (Irwin Rosendo). Buckeye Bullet tired and finished 3¼ lengths back, while 79-1 longshot **Mound** (T.D.Houghton) picked up a fourth-place check.

The homebred Leona's Reward was clocked in 1:54.82 for the one and 1/8 miles dirt test, pushing her career earnings to \$255,546. She now has six wins, five seconds and two thirds in 22 career starts.

**Justalittle smoke** blazed to victory in the \$75,000 J. William Petro Memorial Handicap for jockey T.D. Houghton, owners Mast Thoroughbreds and trainer Robert Gorham. The 5-year-old chestnut daughter of Smoke Glacken was on fire in the lane, breezing to a 7¾ length triumph as she won this event for the second straight season against nine competitors, timed in 1:46.44.

The victory, the third of the season in as many tries for the public's 3-5 choice, was Justalittle smoke's 15<sup>th</sup> career win and upped her lifetime bankroll to a hefty \$722,870. **School Board Prez** (5-1, Pedro Cotto, Jr.) finished a head in front of 14-1 **La Nina Bronca** (Christian Pilares) for the second-place prize, while 36-1 longshot **Tune Up** (Jeff Skerrett) notched fourth. Justalittle smoke was bred by the Belvedere Farm and sold to these connections for the modest sum of \$22,500 as a yearling.

The \$500,000 Ohio Derby saw Kentucky Derby rivals 5-2 **Irap** (Julien Leparoux) and 4-5 **Girvin** (Mike Smith) battle it out in a late stretch slug fest that required a photo to reveal the former had bested the latter by a scant whisker. Time for the one and 1/8 mile test was 1:50.48. **Untrapped** (5-1, Ricardo Santana, Jr.) was third while 16-1 **Sorry Erik** was fourth for jockey Kent Desormeaux.

Owned by Reddam Racing and trained by Doug O'Neil, the sophomore son of Tiznow—Silken Cat, by Storm Cat, Irap became racing's newest millionaire (\$1,072,600) with his second career win in ten starts. Bred by Aaron and Marie Jones, Irap was a \$140,000 yearling purchase and later sold for \$300,000 at the Ocala Breeders' Sales Company 2016 March Sale of 2-Year-Olds in Training.

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**Photo Cutline:** Leona's Reward, Justalittle smoke and Irap all captured their respective stakes on Saturday afternoon, June 24 at Jack Thistledown Racino. **Photos by Jeff Zamaiko**