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OTRF Stakes highlight Thistledown Thursday Program

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by Kimberly Rinker, Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

A pair of \$75,000 Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund stakes are set to be contested at JACK Thistledown on Thursday afternoon, June 18. The 17th running of the J. William Petro Memorial Handicap has been carded as the fifth event (Post Time 2:50 pm, ET), while the 40th running of the George Lewis Memorial Stakes is the seventh race (Post Time 3:50 pm, ET) of the day.

The \$75,000 Petro features a field of six Ohio-registered fillies and mares, 3-year-olds and up, traveling one and 1/16 miles over the Cleveland dirt. **Leona's Reward**, who is the oldest (age 7) and richest (\$937,806) mare in the group, carries high weight of 124 pounds for trainer Tim Hamm and owners Blazing Meadows Farm LLC and Michael Friedman.



Leona's Reward scoring a win at JACK Thistledown

The homebred 7-year-old chestnut daughter of Parents' Reward-Prime Time Dancer, by Montbrook was fourth in her debut in the \$75,000 Roland Memorial on June 4 and appears well-poised to notch her first triumph of the year. Leona's Reward has 19 wins, seven seconds and five thirds in 49 career starts and has earned \$254,000 or more every year at ages four, five and six. Her stakes earnings are \$801,750 from 14 stakes triumphs and seven stakes-placed finishes.

Other members of this impressive field of stakes winners include: **Grizabella**, a winner of \$338,877 lifetime who captured the \$75,000 Miss Southern Ohio Stakes last September; **Totally Obsessed**, a \$233,627 earner who won the \$75,000 Southern Park and \$75,000 Norm Barron Queen City Oaks Stakes in 2019; **Moonlit Mission**, a Shackleford 3-year-old who is currently on a four-race win streak including triumphs in last year's \$75,000 Tah Dah and \$150,000 Galbreath; **Cali Dream**, a winner of \$332,952 who was second in this stake last year and captured the 2019 edition of the \$75,000 Pay The Man Stakes; and **Drillit**, who sports a bankroll of \$294,710 and won the \$75,000 First Lady Stakes last season.

Eight Accredited Ohio foals, 3-year-olds and up, will break from the Thistledown gate in the one and 1/16 miles Lewis Memorial, including last year's winner of this stake, **Sammy Da Bull**, a 4-year-old son of Vertiformer trained by breeder Rodney Faulkner for the R&P Racing Stables LLC. To date this chestnut gelding has earned \$163,570 for his connections.

Trainer Jeff Radosevich sends out a triple threat of stakes winners that include \$420,520 earner **Mobil Solution**; **Verissimo**, a winner of \$207,253 lifetime; and **Pat's Karma**, who has \$136,975 in his coffers. Mobil Solution has finished second in the Lewis Memorial for the past two seasons; Verissimo captured both the \$75,000 Catlaunch and \$75,000 Horizon Stakes in 2019; while Pat's Karma's lone stakes victory was in the 2018 edition of the Radosevich Memorial.

Other entrants in this stellar field include **Direct Deceit**, a striking grey son of Twinspired trained by Michael Lauer for Penny Lauer and winner of \$133,068 lifetime who is still looking for his elusive first stakes triumph.

Both **Funnel Cake** and **Mobil At Last** hail from Gary Johnson's stable. Funnel Cake, a 5-year-old Kettle Corn, \$183,911-earning gelding won the \$75,000 Buckeye Native Stakes in 2019, while Mobil At Last, a 6-year-old son of Mobil with earnings of \$137,689 lifetime is still trying for his first stakes win. Longshot **Master Legionaire**, a 4-year-old chestnut son of Mixmaster with \$32,993 earned lifetime, enters stakes competition for the first time in his brief career.