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Eleven vie in \$75,000 Daniel Stearns Cleveland Gold Cup Stakes

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by Kimberly Rinker, For the Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund

A full field of 11, Ohio-registered runners will break from the Jack Thistledown starting gate on Saturday afternoon, June 30, in the 51st running of the \$75,000 Daniel Stearns Cleveland Gold Cup. The one and one-eighth mile contest for 3-year-olds is the seventh race on the card, with an approximate post time of 4:40 pm, ET.

The multiple, stakes-winning **Missap** will be trying for her second straight victory, having taken the \$75,000 Green Carpet Stakes at Belterra on May 27. Trained by Kellyn Gorder for breeder/owner Beckett Racing Team, Missap has \$186,368 in career earnings from three wins and two seconds in nine starts. This durable bay filly by A.P. Warrior-Miss Carrera, by Memo (Chi) also won the 2017 edition of the \$150,000 John W. Galbreath Memorial on Best of Ohio day and was second in the \$75,000 Tomboy Stakes at Belterra on May 13 of this year. She is one of just two fillies in the Stearns.

Midnight Mikey is a homebred son by Dark Kestrel conditioned by Louis Ruberto, Jr., for the Ruberto Racing Stable. A winner of \$101,396 lifetime, the bay gelding will be trying for his third straight win—having captured a pair of Thistledown allowance races on May 9 and June 13 over the Cleveland dirt. Midnight Mikey won the \$75,000 Loyalty Stakes on Sept. 9 last fall at Belterra and was second in the \$75,000 Radosevich Memorial Stakes on Dec. 2 of last year.

Trainer Mike Rone will bridle up **Charlee's Magic** for breeder/owner Ronald Dewolf in the Stearns. A winner of \$128,130 lifetime, this Jump Start gelding broke his maiden one year ago at Thistledown and captured a Mahoning allowance race on Nov. 8, 2018. The bay gelding began this season with a smart, second-place finish in the \$75,000 Noonan Stakes at Mahoning on April 14 before rebounding to win the \$75,000 Tall Stack Stakes at Belterra on May 5. Despite a solid effort, he was fifth in the \$75,000 Green Carpet Stakes on May 27 to the victress Missap.

Gary Johnson will tighten the girth on the striking grey **Over Ice**, a gelded son by Overanalyze-Country Club Sue, who has \$59,746 in career earnings. From seven starts he's amassed two wins, two seconds and a third for owner Jerry Laria, with a victory earlier this season at Keeneland on April 13. He was second in the \$75,000 Tall Stack Stakes before winning a Thistledown allowance sprint on June 11.

Distinctive Flower is a homebred owned by Lowell Allen and trainer John Bourke with \$37,380 in her bank account. This daughter of Flower Alley-Real Distinctive, by With Distinction has two wins coming into the Stearns; a May 21 maiden special weight triumph and a June 20 allowance victory—both at Thistledown. This is her first foray into the stakes ranks.

The lightly-raced **Forewarned** hails from Pavel Matejka barn, who conditions the chestnut son of Flat Out-Fortune Play, by Five Star Day for breeder/owner Preston Stables, LLC. This youngster sold for \$65,000 at the Keeneland 2017 November Mixed Sale, and to date has earned \$33,703 for his connections. From five starts, Forewarned has one win and a pair of seconds. After breaking his maiden in his second career start on Aug. 24, 2017 at Belterra, Forewarned was second in a Belterra allowance race, finished ninth in the \$150,000 Juvenile Stakes on Best of Ohio day, and most recently was second in the \$75,000 Green Carpet Stakes to Missap on May 27. This will be his first start over the Thistledown surface.

Deer Creek Road is a chestnut son by General Quarters-Golden Corona, by Gulch conditioned by Ivan Vazquez for owner Henry Chau. The venerable gelding broke his maiden at Mahoning Valley on March 27 of this year and to date has earnings of \$46,088. Bred by Jerome Daniels, Deer Creek Road was third in the \$75,000 Green Carpet Stakes on May 27 at Belterra after finishing fifth in the \$75,000 Tall Stake Stakes at Belterra on May 5.

West Leonard, a Colonel John-Candor gelding trained by Robert Gorham, will be trying for his first stakes triumph in the Stearns-Cleveland. Bred and owned by Mast Thoroughbreds, LLC, West Leonard broke his maiden last September at Thistledown and most recently won a Belterra allowance sprint on May 3. From nine starts West Leonard has two wins and two seconds with \$48,667 in earnings.

Looch Racing Stable's **Fusaichi's Wind** will be trying for his first victory of the season in the Stearns. The son by Fusaichi Pegasus-In Case of Wind, by In Case broke his maiden at Mahoning Valley on Nov. 1, 2017 and in nine starts has only missed one purse check. Jeff Radosevich trains the \$45,800-winning gelding, who was bred by Michael Winings.

Murry Spur is an altered son of Regal Ransom, out of the Tabasco Cat mare Cool Chicken. Trained by Ron Moquett for Riolato Racing Stables and Southern Spring Stables, Murry Spur is making his stakes debut after winning a Thistledown maiden special weight in impressive style for these connections on May 23. Bred by Joe Cowles, the sturdy bay gelding has \$18,884 in his coffers, and was a \$25,000 yearling at the Keeneland 2016 September Sale.

Dijkstra's Devil hails from the barn of John Langemeier for breeder/owner Spooky Hollow Racing, Inc. The homebred gelded son of Algorithms-No Little Angel, by Lord Carson won his last start, a June 1 sprint at Belterra and has \$17,250 in his bankroll from just two career starts.



Photo Cutline: Missap, shown here winning the 2017 edition of \$150,000 John W. Galbreath will be trying for her second straight stakes win in the \$75,000 Stearns-Cleveland Gold Cup stakes for breeder/owner Beckett Racing Team. *Photo by Coady Photography*