

NYSS headlines big card at Batavia Downs Saturday

By Tim Bojarski, Batavia Downs Media Relations

Batavia, NY---Two of the five richest 3-year-old trotting fillies in North America, that also just happen to be the top point-getters and money earners in the New York Sire Stakes (NYSS) for their sex and gait this year, will be in town on Saturday (Aug. 22) to compete for the \$120,400 up for grabs at Batavia Downs.

Barn Doll (Conway Hall-Headintheclouds) currently ranks third for money earned in 2015 behind only Mission Brief (who finished second in the Hambletonian) and Wild Honey. She also ranks third for most wins by her sex and gait.

Barn Doll has four wins and two seconds in the state series along with wins in both the elimination and final of the \$248,275 Empire Breeders Classic at Vernon Downs in June where she trotted back to back 1:52.1 miles. Jeff Gregory, who grew up just a short drive from Batavia, comes home to steer the classy filly that will start from post five as the morning line 4-5 favorite for trainer Stave Pratt.

In the other division, Jewels In Hock (Credit Winner-Jewels Galore) is fifth in North America in earnings for her sex and gait and second behind Barn Doll in the state for points and banked winnings.

Jewels In Hock comes in on a roll, winning four out of her last five starts, including three NYSS events. She has a seasonal mark of 1:53.3 earlier this year at the Meadowlands and has earned \$190,350 on the strength of her seven victories. Chris Lems is in the bike this week for trainer Linda Toscano and will team the filly from post two as the handicapper's choice at 7-5.

The two divisions are programmed as races three and four. There are also two divisions of the NYSS Excelsior series carded as race one and two. These events go for \$15,000 each.

Batavia Downs overnight featured Open pace has three of the top side-wheelers in Upstate New York going head to head for the \$9,500 purse.

JK Panache ships in from Tioga Downs where he just scored a three-length, 1:50.3 win. He has also been victorious in five of his last six outings. His seasonal and lifetime mark of 1:47.3 was taken at Vernon Downs just last month.

Fireyourguns has eight wins this year at Tioga, Vernon and Buffalo, but has yet to hit the line first at Batavia. Like JK Panache, he too set a lifetime best of 1:47.3 at Vernon Downs in June and figures to be a major player in this race.

Cobble Beach won this race last week in a sparkling 1:52.1 and is a winner of three out of his last four races. His gate speed gives him a definite advantage here as he is in top form right now and working on a career best year.

Post time for the first race is 6:35 p.m.