

Freshman fillies close out NYSS series at Batavia Downs

Batavia, NY---The eighth and final division of the New York Sire Stakes (NYSS) will visit Batavia Downs on Wednesday (Sept. 16) when fifteen 2-year-old pacing fillies congregate to vie for their share of the \$110,000 in purses up for grabs.

This will be the last time this class will compete before the \$900,000 NYSS Night of Champions for 2-year-olds at Yonkers Raceway on Saturday (Sept. 26) and for some, the outcome of their performance here will dictate whether or not they make the cut in the point standings. The top-six point-getters are solid to make the final, but the last two slots are definitely up for grabs.

The first division (carded as race three) has four horses on the verge of making the final, but the morning-line favorite is making her first start in a NYSS event this year.

Upside Surprise (Art Major-Latte Lady) got a late start to her career after being scratched sick in her first race back on July 10 at the Meadowlands. She did not return to the track until August 18 when she broke her maiden in a big way, winning by 10-lengths at Pocono Downs in 1:53.4.

Her next engagement was the Shes A Great Lady Stake at Mohawk Raceway where she was second in her elimination before finishing sixth in the \$341,250 final behind L A Delight in 1:51.2 on September 5.

Upside Surprise (2-1) will leave from post 4 with Jordan Stratton at the lines for trainer Tony O'Sullivan.

The next four horses by odds are all looking to capture those last two spots in the final and they all need a win to have a shot. But that is something three of them have not done all year.

North American leading trainer, Ron Burke, has three horses in the race: Art Critic (Art Major-Snipet Hanover) and the coupled entry of Encore Deo (Rock N Roll Heaven-Doctdor Cameo) and Rockin Date (Art Major- Rockin Beauty).

Art Critic (3-1) has not won at all this year but also has not missed a check in NYSS action either. Her best race time was 1:54.3 at Vernon Downs just two starts ago and she put out a good performance at Yonkers last week as well.

Art Critic will have Jim Morrill Jr. aboard and leave from post 2.

Encore Deo (7-2) does have one NYSS victory at Buffalo Raceway back on July 1 in a career best 1:57.3. She was race timed at Vernon in 1:53 flat two starts ago and moves back inside after drawing post six at Yonkers last week.

Encore Deo gets the driving services of Matt Kakaley and will leave from post three.

Rockin Date (7-2) is also winless this year but also never seems to get beat by much. Unfortunately for her, after drawing post one and two four times in her last five starts, she moves out to post seven for tonight and that will be difficult to overcome.

Local driving leader Kevin Cummings picks up the lines for the contest.

In the second split (carded as race four) six of the top seven point-getters are competing in the absence of the overall point-leader, Soft Idea. With a lot of early speed behind the gate, Sassa Hanover's track record of 1:54.2 could be in jeopardy.

Dime A Dance (Roll With Joe-Hat Dance Hanover) comes into this event red-hot. She has won her last two outings including a lifetime best, 1:52.2 at Vernon Downs before coming right back in 1:55.4 at Yonkers. She is currently fifth in the standings but could move up considerably with a win here. This filly likes to come off the pace and with the all the leavers entered, this race could set up just right for her.

Dime A Dance (3-1) is another student of Ron Burke and will start from post three with Matt Kakaley in the bike.

No Clouds Bluechip (Roll With Joe-B J's Sunshine) currently sits second in points with 224 as well as NYSS earnings of \$101,999. She strung three-straight wins in NYSS action in July and August and hasn't finished worse than third in the series all year.

Pegged as the second choice at 7-2, No Clouds Bluechip gets the services of Kevin Cummings as chosen by trainer John Berger.

American Ivy (American Ideal-Haunted) is seven for seven in the money this year and finished second to Soft Idea in her last two outings. Last week at Yonkers she was beaten a narrow neck in 1:53.4 off a perfect trip, but that was the fastest of the divisions that night.

Joe Holloway trains American Ivy (9-2) and has assigned Mark Macdonald to steer from post five.

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