Sassa Hanover dominant in Vernon NY Sire Stakes
by James Witherite, Tioga Downs racing media

Vernon Downs, NY --- Making her return to the races after she spent her 2-year-old season in the shadows of JK She'salady, Sassa Hanover ($2.70) proved dominant in her sophomore debut, trouncing six other 3-year-old pacing fillies in her $30,450 New York Sire Stakes event on Saturday (May 16) evening at Vernon Downs.

The Rock N Roll Heaven-Sayo Hanover filly was a fair bit off the early pace, tracking from midfield as Mosquito Hanover (Chris Lems) and Not Before Eight (John MacDonald) alternated on the lead through a :55.2 initial half mile. On the backstretch, Andy McCarthy moved Sassa Hanover off the pegs, commencing a strong push to the fore well before reaching the far turn. Upon clearing Not Before Eight, Sassa Hanover was faced with a first-over challenge from Bossers Joy (Greg Merton), but she quickly dismissed that rival, kicking clear to a 5-1/2 length victory in 1:51. Bossers Joy narrowly held second from Not Before Eight, who labored late after chasing from the pocket.

Trainer Ron Burke's Burke Racing Stable co-owns seven-time winner Sassa Hanover with the Panhellenic Stable, the Weaver Bruscemi partnership, and Larry Karr.

Daughters of Bettor's Delight took two of the other three Sire Stakes splits, with Bettorhaveanother ($22.40, Chris Lems, 1:51) and Bettor Be Steppin ($3.50, Corey Callahan, 1:51.3) proving victorious. Art Major filly Moonlit Dance ($13.00, Joe Pavia, Jr., 1:52.1) rounded out the quartet of Sire Stakes winners on the evening’s program.

Live racing returns to Vernon Downs on Sunday (May 17) afternoon, with first post time set for 1:15 p.m.