

New York-Breds at the Races: September 26 to October 2

By Bill Heller

Full of Mine Lights up the Toteboard at 25-1 Friday at Belmont Park

Missile Approved Racing and Knight RB Stable's four-year-old colt **Full of Mine**, a 25-1 longshot ridden by Angel Arroyo, wore down **Watch the Tie**, the 8-5 second choice in a field of seven under Irad Ortiz, Jr., to win a \$60,000 New York-bred maiden special weight switched from the grass to the sloppy main track by a length Friday at Belmont Park. He completed the seven-furlong distance in 1:25.61.

Full of Mine, a son of Mineshaft out of Dance Song by Unbridled's Song, was bred and is trained by Naipaul Chatterpaul. Full of Mine was making his second start back off a sixth-month layoff.

Arroyo placed Full of Mine in third as 23-1 **Baby Snacks**, ridden by Manuel Franco, led and Watch the Tie chased in second through a :23.55 opening quarter-mile and a half-mile in :47.56. Heading into the far turn, Watch the Tie went after Baby Snacks on the outside. Full of Mine followed Watch the Tie on the outside while **Super Psyche**, the 3-2 favorite under Junior Alvarado, rushed up on the far outside to join the leaders.

Watch the Tie took over the lead as Baby Snacks tired, but Full of Mine closed in quickly. After three-quarters in 1:12.38, Watch the Tie and Full of Mine battled nose-to-nose. Watch the Tie was game, but Full of Mine edged past him in deep stretch to win. Super Psyche finished a clear third, 2 ¼ lengths behind Watch the Tie. **Lead by Example**, who went off at 3-1 odds under Joel Rosario, was a distant fourth.

Full of Mine now has a win and three seconds from eight dirt starts, for earnings of more than \$75,000.

Closing ground resolutely under Junior Alvarado, Clear Star Stable's five-year-old gelding **Saturday Appeal**, the only New York-bred in a field of six, got up in the final strides Friday to nip Great Attack and Israel Rodriguez by a short head in a \$53,000 open \$32,000 claimer switched from turf to dirt. He completed the seven-furlong distance in 1:24.67. Saturday Appeal was sent off at odds of 9-2 and Great Attack went off at 10-1 odds.

Rick Schosberg trains Saturday Appeal, a son of Any Given Saturday out of Truly Charming by Elusive Quality who was bred by McMahan of Saratoga Thoroughbreds. In his previous start in a New York-bred allowance/optional \$40,000 claimer at Saratoga on September 2nd, Saturday Appeal finished sixth at 21-1 odds.

Saturday Appeal broke first from the outside post, but settled in third as Rapsallion, who went off at 2-1 odds under Manuel Franco, took the lead and Great Attack raced in second. Rodriguez sent Great Attack up on the outside, and he took the lead by a length after a first quarter in

:22.96. Great Attack led RapsCALLION by a length after a half-mile in :46.26, then stretched his lead to three lengths as Saturday Appeal rallied into second and RapsCALLION faded.

Slowly but steadily, Saturday Appeal whittled down Great Attack's advantage, getting within a length after three-quarters in 1:10.90. Saturday Appeal kept coming, but Great Attack held him off until the final 50 yards, when Saturday Appeal edged past. There was a huge gap back to 2-1 Non Stop in third.

Saturday Appeal is now five for 40 with nine seconds, two thirds and more than \$290,000 in earnings.

Saving ground the entire way under Kendrick Carmouche, Robert Toscano and Bran Jam Stable's four-year-old New York-bred filly **Saharan Serenade**, trained by John Toscano, Jr., edged Saratoga Karaoke and jockey Junior Alvarado by a half-length to win a \$40,000 conditional \$25,000 claimer switched from grass to dirt Friday. She completed the six-furlong distance in 1:12.77. Saharan Serenade, who was coupled with New York-bred **Gethot Stayhot**, went off at 6-1 odds in the field of six, and Saratoga Karaoke was sent off at odds of 7-1.

All Mine Tonight, the New York-bred on the rail who was the 6-5 favorite under Irad Ortiz, Jr., dueled with 2-1 Queen of the Spa two-wide and New York-bred **Annie Walker** three-wide through a quarter in :23.29 and a half-mile in :46.93.

Alvarado sent Saratoga Karaoke four-wide on the far turn to join the leaders, while Carmouche found room on the rail for Saharan Serenade. That made all the difference, as Saharan Serenade prevailed narrowly.

Saratoga Karaoke finished second, a half-length ahead of All Mine Tonight. Queen of the Spa was fourth.

Saharan Serenade is a daughter of Wild Desert out of Little Legend by Well Noted who was bred by Joe Marx and sold for \$75,000 as a two-year-old in May 2013. She is now three for 12 on dirt with two seconds and earnings of more than \$115,000.

Jose Lezcano rallied Anthony Perri's three-year-old colt **Norm the Giant** to a length-and-a-quarter victory in a six-furlong \$41,000 New York-bred maiden claimer as the 6-5 favorite in a field of seven Friday. Perri claimed Norm the Giant in his previous race, when he finished second as the 3-1 favorite on September 18th.

Jim Ryerson now trains Norm the Giant, a son of Frost Giant out of Apocalyptic by Hickman Creek who was bred by Sunrise Stables.

Before the start, **Ruxpin** broke through the starting gate, but he was quickly apprehended by his assistant starter. After receiving clearance by the veterinarian, Ruxpin was reloaded into the gate and Kendrick Carmouche climbed back on. At the start, **Ant and Bee** brushed the gate, losing rider Israel Rodriguez, who immediately got up afterwards.

Memory Keeper, who was sent off at 7-1 odds under Manuel Franco, set the pace: a quarter in :22.93 and a half-mile in :46.63. Norm the Giant, who was fifth early, rallied into second and

went after the frontrunner at the top of the stretch. Norm the Giant wore down Memory Keeper inside the sixteenth pole to win in a final time of 1:12.11. Memory Keeper held second, three-quarters of a length ahead of 4-1 **Field Sense**. **Sandy Strikes** was a distant fourth at 23-1 odds.

Norm the Giant now has a win and three seconds in seven starts, for earnings of more than \$45,000.

Bella Joy Blows Them Away Thursday at Belmont Park

With a sudden burst of acceleration, Twin Magnolia Farm's three-year-old filly **Bella Joy** turned a close race into a runaway victory, rolling along the rail under Junior Alvarado to capture a \$60,000 New York-bred maiden special weight switched from the grass to the dirt by seven lengths on a track rated "good" Thursday at Belmont Park. Taking a ton of late money, Bella Joy went off the 2-1 favorite in the field of nine and covered the one-mile distance in 1:36.49.

Lon Wiggins trains Bella Joy, a daughter of Kitten's Joy out of Bella Trella by Cherokee Run who was bred by NY Kitten Foals and sold for \$60,000 as a yearling at Keeneland in September 2013. She had finished sixth in her only two starts on dirt previously. Wiggins freshened Bella Joy a bit off a solid third on grass at Saratoga on August 14th.

Bella Joy broke fourth as the three horses in the outside three posts went for the lead: 25-1 **Dilly Magilly**, 8-1 **Bubba Zena** and 7-2 **Ranger's Express**. Bubba Zena forged a narrow lead in between Dilly Magilly on the rail and Ranger's Express on the outside through a :23.62 first quarter. Bubba Zena edged away a bit to lead by three-quarters of a length after a half-mile in :47.37.

Heading into the far turn, 4-1 **Fredaq** and 5-2 **Belief** ranged up on the far outside. Alvarado kept Bella Joy on the rail, and when Bubba Zena tired on the front end and drifted a bit, Bella Joy had all the room she needed. She exploded away from the pack and won impressively. Ranger's Express edged 57-1 **Frosty Lady** by a neck for second. Belief was another length back in fourth.

Bella Joy now has a win from three dirt starts and two thirds from seven turf tries, for total earnings of more than \$55,000.

In a six-furlong \$41,000 New York-bred maiden \$40,000 claimer for two-year-old fillies Thursday, Clark Brewster's **Frequently** rallied under apprentice Eric Cancel on the inside of first-time starter **Madame Maybry** to win by a half-length in a final time of 1:12.01. Frequently was sent off at 5-2 odds and Madame Maybry went off at 6-1 under Irad Ortiz, Jr.

Wiredancer, a firster who went off as the 9-5 favorite in the field of seven with Joel Rosario riding, closed a ton of ground on the rail to finish third, 2 ¼ lengths behind Madame Maybry while 6 ½ lengths clear of 38-1 **Reyana Dream**, who was adding Lasix, in fourth.

Frequently is a daughter of Discreetly Mine out of Hattiesburg by Mutakddim who was bred by Steinmetz Equine Holdings and is trained by Steve Asmussen. She was making her third career start after a pair of fifths, the first in a maiden special weight and the second in a maiden \$65,000 claimer.

Cancel got Frequently away third as 6-1 **D'bunnyphone** set the pace under Israel Rodriguez and first-time starter **Bustin Hearts**, who went off at 3-1 odds with Kendrick Carmouche aboard, chased in second through an opening quarter in :22.39. Døbunnyphone stretched a half-length lead to a length and a half heading into the far turn.

By then, Madame Maybry had rallied from fourth into second. Madame Maybry continued her momentum to take the lead after a half-mile in :45.80. Madame Maybry opened a 2 ½-length lead in mid-stretch while bearing out badly. That left plenty of room on the inside for Frequently, who quickly closed in.

Ortiz finally got Madame Maybry running straight under a right-hand stick, but Frequently had all the momentum and passed her in deep stretch.

With complete authority, Youngs Racing Stable's three-year-old colt **Adirondack Posse** made his dirt debut a winning one, taking Thursday's finale, a six-furlong \$41,000 New York-bred maiden claimer switched from turf to dirt, by five lengths under Manuel Franco. Sent off at 5-1 odds in the field of eight, he won in a snappy final time of 1:09.98.

Gary Contessa trains Adirondack Posse, a son of Posse out of Live Band by Dixie Brass who was bred by Michael Schrader and sold for \$40,000 as a yearling at Saratoga in 2013. Before Friday, he'd made six starts, all on grass, including a fine dead-heat for second in an open maiden special weight at Gulfstream Park in his three-year-old debut. Dropped into maiden claimers in New York, he finished a distant ninth then a much-improved fourth when he led late before tiring under Joel Rosario.

Adirondack Posse was far back early as **El Genio**, who was sent off at 5-2 odds under apprentice Eric Cancel from the outside post, took the field to a quarter in :22.58 and a half-mile in :45.49. **Elusive New Yorker**, who went off at 2-1 odds from the rail under Rosario, swept up to the lead. It was short-lived, as Adirondack Posse blew past him.

Elusive New Yorker was a clear second. El Genio finished a distant third, three-quarters of a length ahead of 83-1 **The Crocheron Kid** in fourth.

Adirondack Posse increased his earnings to more than \$35,000.

Lucky Nancy E. Wins Allowance Race at Sloppy Belmont Wednesday

Patricia Generazio's four-year-old home-bred filly **Lucky Nancy E.** hustled to the lead under Kendrick Carmouche and never surrendered it, holding off favored **Perfect Freud** by nearly two lengths to win a \$65,000 New York-bred allowance race switched from the grass to the sloppy main track at Belmont Park Wednesday afternoon. She completed the mile and a sixteenth in 1:45.10. Lucky Nancy E. was the 5-1 fourth choice in the field of five, and Perfect Freud was the 7-5 favorite under Javier Castellano.

Jim Ryerson trains Lucky Nancy E. a daughter of Disco Rico out of Beyond the Limit by Unbridled who was fourth at 3-1 odds behind Perfect Freud in her previous start at Saratoga.

She burst to the lead Wednesday, leading Perfect Freud by a length and a half after a quarter in :23.78. They remained 1-2 through a :47.01 half-mile and three-quarters in 1:11.62. Perfect Freud had tried making up ground on the inside of Lucky Nancy E. without success, so Castellano switched her to the outside. It didn't matter, as Lucky Nancy E. continued on strongly through the stretch to win comfortably.

Perfect Freud finished second, five lengths clear of 7-2 **Courageisamajority** in third. **Lady Gracernote** was a distant fourth at 22-1 odds.

Lucky Nancy E. is now four for 14 on dirt with one second and two thirds. She also has a win, two seconds and a third from 14 starts on grass, for total earnings of more than \$240,000.

In another six-furlong \$62,000 New York-bred allowance originally carded for the grass but run instead on the soupy main track Wednesday, Richard Seale and Douglas Arnold's three-year-old filly **Slam Chowder** got up in the final stride under Junior Alvarado to nose **Miss Matzoball** and Javier Castellano in a final time of 1:11.29. Slam Chowder was the 2-1 second choice and Miss Matzoball was sent off at 5-1 odds in the field of seven.

Eddie Kenneally trains Slam Chowder, a daughter of Grand Slam out of Kid Soup by Alphabet Soup who was purchased for \$15,000 in 2012 as a weanling. She had won her debut on a sloppy track by 8 ¾ lengths at Aqueduct on December 10th.

Breaking from the outside post, Miss Matzoball and the filly inside her, **Full Tap**, the 9-5 favorite ridden by Irad Ortiz, Jr., got into an immediate speed duel. Slam Chowder raced behind that pair in third, 2 ½ lengths back, after an opening quarter in :22.48.

Miss Matzoball and Full Tap continued to battle on the front end, opening six lengths on Slam Chowder after a half-mile in :45.51.

Miss Matzoball put away Full Tap, but was soon confronted by Slam Chowder. Miss Matzoball fought on gamely and still had the lead 50 yards before the wire, but Slam Chowder got by her just before the finish line. **Shotgun Love** was third at 9-1 odds, a length behind Miss Matzoball. **Moondance Joy** finished fourth at 7-2 odds.

Slam Chowder is now three for four on dirt. She also has a second and a third from two turf tries, for total earnings of more than \$115,000.

In another race switched from the grass to the sloppy main track, Luis Saez sent Dutchess Views Farm's homebred three-year-old filly **Esther the Queen** to the lead and she rolled to a 2 ½-length victory in a \$41,000 New York-bred maiden \$40,000 claimer. Sent off the 3-5 favorite in the field of seven, she completed the seven furlongs in 1:26.51 to give Saez his third winner Wednesday.

Nicholas Ester trains Esther the Queen, a daughter of Purim out of French Link by Orientate who was returning to dirt and dropping into maiden claimers for the first time in making her fifth career start.

She broke second, but quickly made the lead. **Lady Chocolotta**, who was sent off at 7-1 odds under Angel Arroyo, raced in second, and 7-2 **Wantagh Queen**, ridden by Irad Ortiz, Jr., was third through a fast :22.61 first quarter.

Esther the Queen stretched her lead to three lengths through a :46.37 half-mile, then to six lengths, getting six furlongs in 1:12.42. She cruised home to win easily. **Taramislew**, who went off at 7-1 odds under Kendrick Carmouche, finished second. There was a gap of nearly 10 lengths back to Wantagh Queen in third. Lady Chocolotta finished fourth.

Esther the Queen now has a win and a fourth from two dirt starts, and a third from three turf tries.

Unbeaten Sudden Surprise and Melodic Capture Two-Year-Old Stakes

Repole Stable's unbeaten homebred colt **Sudden Surprise** and Treadway Racing Stable's undefeated filly **Melodic** captured two seven-furlong \$150,000 New York-bred stakes for two-year-olds Sunday afternoon at Belmont Park: the 22nd running of both the Bertram F. Bongard and Joseph A. Gimma Stakes, respectively.

Sudden Surprise is a son of Giant Surprise out of Ready and Good by More Than Ready who is trained by Todd Pletcher.

Melodic is a daughter of Tale of the Cat out of Christina's Melody by Unbridled's Song who was bred by Mia Gallo, Dave Stack, Mary Kegley, Sam Palazzole, Bernie Ryan, et al and sold for \$150,000 at Ocala in April. She is trained by Leah Gyarmati.

In the Bongard, Sudden Surprise, ridden by John Velazquez, went off the 7-2 third choice in the field of five despite being the only colt in the field who was two for two. **Championofthenile**, ridden by Jose Ortiz, went off the slight 6-5 favorite off a six-length maiden win in his dirt debut after finishing sixth on grass to begin his career. **Get Jets** went off at 8-5 odds from the rail under Ortiz's brother Irad, Jr. off a 4 ½-length maiden win in his lone start at Saratoga.

Breaking from the four post, Sudden Surprise broke incredibly well, immediately taking a length-and-a-half lead as Championofthenile, who broke from the five post, took over second. Velazquez got away with a slow pace: a quarter in :23.91 and a half-mile in :47.22.

Heading into the far turn, 29-1 **Steve's Image** ranged up three-wide on the outside of both Sudden Surprise and Championofthenile, and 6-1 **Manipulated** rallied four-wide. Irad Ortiz, Jr. kept Get Jets on the rail as Sudden Surprise continued to lead by a length after three-quarters in 1:10.90. Get Jets gained on the inside of Sudden Surprise and had dead aim on him, but Sudden Surprise wasn't done and gamely held him off to win by a neck in a final time of 1:23.50. Get Jets finished second, a length and a quarter ahead of Championofthenile. Manipulated finished fourth, three-quarters of a length behind Championofthenile.

Sudden Surprise is now three for three with more than \$250,000 in earnings.

The Joseph A. Gimma was Sunday's opener and Melodic, who had won her debut at Saratoga by two lengths at 19-1 odds on September 2, went off at 5-2 odds from the outside post in the field of five under Kendrick Carmouche. She broke first, but was taken back to fourth by Carmouche.

Surprise Cameo, who was sent off at 6-1 odds under Joel Rosario, took the early lead chased by **Super Surprise**, the even-money favorite under John Velazquez, and 2-1 **Frosty Margarita**, who was ridden by Irad Ortiz, Jr.

Surprise Cameo led **Super Surprise**, her uncoupled Repole Stable-owned stable-mate in trainer Todd Pletcher's barn, by a half-length through a quarter in :23.13 and a half-mile in :46.46.

Heading around the far turn, the leading pair were joined by Frosty Margarita three-wide and Melodic four-wide. Once the quartet straightened out at the top of the stretch, Melodic took over. She hit six furlongs in 1:11.63 and won comfortably by three lengths in a final time of 1:25.01. Frosty Margarita finished second, a length and three-quarters ahead of Surprise Cameo. Super Surprise was another length back in fourth.

Melodic has already earned nearly \$135,000 in her first two starts.

Luis Saez got J and M Racing Stables' five-year-old mare **Uncle Southern** up in the absolute last stride Sunday to nip front-running **Maggiesfreuddnslip** and jockey Manuel Franco by a head for her second straight victory in a \$65,000 New York-bred grass allowance/optional \$40,000 claimer. She covered the six-furlong distance in 1:09.01. **Sister Sophia** was just another neck back in third.

Uncle Southern was sent off at odds of 6-1, Maggiesfreuddnslip went off at 14-1 odds and Sister Sophia was the 4-5 favorite in the field of eight.

Linda Rice trains Uncle Southern, a daughter of Uncle Camie out of Southern Statement by Dixie Brass who was bred by Uncle Camie Breeding Farm. Uncle Southern had won her prior start on dirt, also at 6-1 odds.

Maggiesfreuddnslip outsprinted Uncle Southern to the early lead through a :22.41 first quarter. Then 14-1 **Non Finisce Mai** and 6-1 **Sweetpollypurebrd** moved up into second and third, respectively, as Uncle Southern dropped back to fourth through a :45.62 half-mile.

Maggiesfreuddnslip shook clear by two lengths as Uncle Southern rallied into second and went after the front-runner. Sister Sophia, who had been last early, continued her wide rally and closed in on the top pair. Maggiesfreuddnslip tenaciously held on, but Uncle Southern got up in the desperate final yards. Sister Sophia settled for third, a length and a quarter ahead of 7-2 **Vicki's Dancer**.

Uncle Southern is now three for six on grass with one second. She is three for 13 on dirt with one second and two thirds, for combined earnings of more than \$310,000.

Owner/trainer David Jacobson's six-year-old New York-bred gelding **Moneyinyour Pocket**, the 6-5 favorite in the field of five under Jose Ortiz, wore down Congenial, the 7-5 second choice under Cornelio Velasquez, and went on to a 2 ½-length victory in a \$32,000 open \$16,000 claimer. He covered the mile and a sixteenth in 1:43.16.

Moneyinyour Pocket is a son of Raffie's Majesty out of Badger Pocket by Badger Land who was bred by Wellspring Stable. Jacobson claimed Moneyinyour Pocket for \$40,000 when he finished

fifth at 7-1 odds vs. state-breds at Aqueduct on April 5th. After three lackluster performances, Moneyinyour Pocket posted two wins, a second and a third from his next five starts heading into Sunday.

Moneyinyour Pocket worked his way into second after Congenial claimed the early lead from 8-1 Moe Man through a :24.04 first quarter. Moneyinyour Pocket stuck a neck in front, but Congenial countered immediately to regain the lead through a :48.27 half-mile. Congenial inched away to a one-length lead after three quarters in 1:12.25, but couldn't shake Moneyinyour Pocket.

Ortiz rode Moneyinyour Pocket hard to make another run and he did, passing Congenial and drawing away from him late. Springcourt, who went off at 4-1 odds under Irad Ortiz, Jr., rallied to finish second and Congenial was third, a length and a half behind Springcourt.

Moneyinyour Pocket's victory was his ninth in 37 dirt starts with eight seconds and six thirds. He has also raced twice on turf and has earnings of more than \$255,000.

In Sunday's finale, a seven-furlong \$41,000 New York-bred maiden \$40,000 claimer on the grass, Jose Ortiz sent owner/trainer Charlie Baker's three-year-old gray filly **Cosmic Tale**, the 2-1 favorite in the field of 11, between horses in mid-stretch and she drew off to a 4 ½-length victory in a final time of 1:21.78.

Coramoss, who went off at 7-2 odds from the rail under Ortiz's brother Irad, Jr., finished second, a neck ahead of 7-1 **Hope's Roar**. **Take a Bow**, a 21-1 shot ridden by Elvis Trujillo, was fourth, a length behind Hope's Roar.

Cosmic Tale is a daughter of Cosmonaut out of Mythical Yarn by Johannesburg who was bred by W & T Thoroughbred Holdings and sold for \$21,000 as a yearling in 2013. She had finished third, after leading late, as the 3-2 favorite in her previous start at Saratoga on August 24th. She went off the favorite again from the two post Sunday.

Cosmic Tale alternated in fourth and fifth on the inside as Take a Bow battled 88-1 **Mohawk Lily** on the front end through a quarter in :22.58 and a half-mile in :45.75. **Irish Laughter** rushed up three-wide and Coramoss rallied four-wide around the far turn as Ortiz kept Cosmic Tale on the hedge.

In early stretch, Ortiz saw an opening between Take a Bow and Mohawk Lily. He shot Cosmic Tale through and she spurted away impressively for her first win.

Cosmic Tale is now one for seven on grass with one second and a third. She's also raced twice on dirt and has total earnings of more than \$50,000.

La Verdad Wins the Gallant Bloom to Remain Unbeaten This Year

Flashing her brilliant early speed under Jose Ortiz, Lady Sheila Stable's remarkable five-year-old New York-bred mare **La Verdad** won the 22nd running of the 6 ½-furlong \$300,000 Grade 2 Gallant Bloom Handicap wire-to-wire by a half-length over Wavell Avenue Saturday at Belmont Park. She won in a final time of 1:15.16 as the 1-2 favorite in a field of seven. In doing so, she

upped her record this year to five for five and her career record at Belmont to seven wins and one second in eight starts, the only loss coming in last year's running of the Gallant Bloom when she lost by a head to another outstanding New York-bred, Artemis Agrotera.

Trained by Linda Rice, who has done an incredible job of managing her racing career, La Verdad is a daughter of Yes It's True out of Noble Fire by Hook and Ladder who was bred by Eklektikos Stable.

La Verdad is now 15 for 21 lifetime with two seconds and earnings of more than \$1.35 million.

Breaking alertly from the two post, La Verdad took the lead immediately as 8-1 Room for Me, ridden by Cornelio Velasquez, and 11-1 Street Story and Javier Castellano tried to keep up with her. "She took the lead easy," Ortiz said. "I had a little pressure from the outside, but after that she settled down and she was fine."

La Verdad led Room for Me by a neck after a first quarter in :22.76 and by a half-length after a half-mile in :45.04. By then, Dame Dorothy, the 5-1 second choice on the rail ridden by John Velazquez, had rallied from fourth into third.

La Verdad stretched her lead to two lengths at the top of the stretch as Dame Dorothy advanced into second and Wavell Avenue rallied three-wide under Joel Rosario.

La Verdad led by a length and a half after three-quarters in 1:08.78 as Wavell Avenue closed into second. Wavell Avenue continued to gain in deep stretch, but La Verdad held her off to stretch her winning streak to five. Dame Dorothy finished third, a length and a half behind Wavell Avenue.

"I think she needed the race," Rice said. "We missed a little training. I think this race will do her a lot of good. She'll move forward and will be harder to beat next time."

She's been hard to beat her entire career.

In another classic brother vs. brother stretch battle, Irad Ortiz, Jr. drove Hidden Brook Farm's five-year-old New York-bred gray mare **Neck of the Moon** to a neck victory over 9-2 Morning Star and Jose Ortiz in an \$87,000 grass allowance Saturday at Belmont Park. She covered the one-mile distance in a fast 1:32.47. Neck of the Moon, one of two New York-breds in the field of 10, was the 8-5 favorite and Morning Star was the 9-2 second choice.

Chad Brown trains Neck of the Moon, a son of More Than Ready out of Cotopaxi by With Approval who was bred by Stone Bridge Farm. Neck of the Moon was third at 4-1 odds in her previous start in the same open allowance company at Saratoga on August 29th.

Neck of the Moon raced in fourth early as 10-1 Susie's a Cowgirl set a fast pace under Luis Saez. Morning Star chased in second, three lengths off the lead, through a quarter in :23.01 and a half-mile in :45.70. Morning Star went after Susie's a Cowgirl around the far turn as John Velazquez rallied 10-1 Katama three-wide and Neck of the Moon closed ground four-wide.

After three-quarters in 1:08.53, Morning Star took a length-and-a-half lead. It didn't last long, as Neck of the Moon closed relentlessly. Neck of the Moon took a neck lead with 100 yards to go

before Morning Star surged one last time, falling just short at the wire. Katama finished third, 2 ½ lengths behind Morning Star.

Neck of the Moon is now four for 12 on turf with three seconds and three thirds. She was third in her lone dirt start and has total earnings of more than \$250,000.

Whisper Hill Farm's four-year-old nearly white gelding **Tapitation** shook off a 14-month layoff to win a mile-and-a-sixteenth \$72,000 New York-bred grass allowance by a length and three-quarters Saturday under Javier Castellano. Sent off the 2-1 favorite in a field of nine, Tapitation won in a final time of 1:42.50.

Trainer Ralph Nicks did an outstanding job getting Tapitation ready for his first start since July 26th, 2014, when he finished fifth as the 2-1 favorite at Saratoga with Irad Ortiz, Jr. aboard.

Tapitation broke well, and Castellano let him settle in second behind 11-1 **Bugle Blues**, who set a slow pace under Manuel Franco: a quarter-mile in :25.33 and a half-mile in :50.14. Bugle Blues had a two-length lead after three-quarters in 1:14.00, but Tapitation quickly closed ground on him when Castellano asked him for more.

Tapitation surged past the front-runner in mid-stretch and had plenty left to hold off **Jax Heritage**, the 5-2 second choice ridden by Joel Rosario. **Raffies Bay**, who went off at 8-1 odds under Junior Alvarado, finished third, 2 ¾ lengths behind Jax Heritage while a neck ahead of Bugle Blues in fourth.

Tapitation is a son of Tapit out of Derriane by Cozzene who was bred by Waterville Lake Stables and sold for \$230,000 as a yearling at Saratoga in 2012. He is now one for three on grass with one second and one for four on dirt with three seconds, for total earnings of more than \$125,000.

Robert and Lawana Low's first-time-starting colt **Mountain Music Man** ran down front-running longshot **Hit It Once More**, then held off heavily favored **Governor Malibu** to win a \$70,000 New York-bred maiden special weight for two-year-olds by a neck Saturday under John Velazquez. Mountain Music Man, the 7-2 second choice in the field of 10, covered the six-furlong distance in 1:10.36. Hit It Once More was sent off at 37-1 odds under Manuel Franco, and Governor Malibu was even money with Joel Rosario riding.

Todd Pletcher trains Mountain Music Man, a son of Bluegrass Cat out of Unbridled Melody by Unbridled's Song who was bred by WinStar Farm and was purchased for \$450,000 in May.

Mountain Music Man made his debut off eight works at Saratoga. He broke second from the five post as Franco sent Hit It Once More to the lead. Hit It Once More led Mountain Music Man by a half-length through a :22.72 first quarter, then stretched his lead to a length and a half by running a half-mile in a testing :45.54.

Mountain Music Man closed the gap quickly as Governor Malibu, who had been fourth early, arrived on the scene three-wide. Hit It Once More fought on bravely before Mountain Music Man went by as Governor Malibu continued his momentum. Mountain Music Man held off Governor Malibu by a neck, with Hit It Once More just another half-length back in third.

Blugrascat's Smile, a firster on the rail who went off at 22-1 odds under Jose Ortiz, finished a distant fourth.