

Walner destroys world record in Stallion Stakes

By Ray Cotolo, for The Red Mile

LEXINGTON, KY— Sweeping to command off a :55.1 half, Walner gradually drew clear of his rivals and sprinted home in the stretch to win one of five divisions for the \$280,000 International Stallion Stakes in 1:51.3, beating Southwind Frank's world record of 1:52.2 set at The Red Mile in the International Stallion Stakes last year.

Dover Dan grabbed the lead through a :28.1 opening quarter, with Fraser Ridge trotting second and Muscles Jared in third. Walner flew from fourth to the lead marching into the far turn. Leading by three-quarters in 1:23.3, he kicked away from Dover Dan, who drifted enough to allow Fraser Ridge room to trot at the pylons. Fraser Ridge got up for second and Dover Dan for third while they trailed Walner by lengths at the wire.

Linda Toscano trains Walner, a Chapter Seven colt out of the Ken Warkentin mare Random Destiny. A winner of four in five starts, he has earned \$78,750 for owner Kenneth Jacobs. Tim Tetrick drove the \$2.40 winner.

"I told Linda that it felt like I was at [the half] in :57 and three-quarters in 1:25" Tim Tetrick said. "But when it flashed up [1]:23, I thought 'Oh shoot!' He went to the wire, plugs in, and I asked him a bit, but he trotted all the way to the wire."

"He's a great colt; I've liked him from day one," Tim Tetrick also said. "Even when I got to sit behind him down at [Pinehurst Training Center] I've liked him. He only had one little mistake, but he's a good horse."

"He acted like the real deal right from the first day," Linda Toscano said. "He has a lot of the same traits his father does; he loves his work, he's a big, beautiful-gaited horse, and he gets over the ground so easy that you have to be careful you don't go too fast with him."

"I figured [he'd go] 1:52, and I would've been happy with that, but 1:51-and-a-piece is just unbelievable," Kenneth Jacobs said. "We were very patient with him, and now we're waiting for the Breeders Crown if we can get lucky enough to win that."

"I've never had a trotter this good," Jacobs also said.

Southwind Cobra popped out of the pocket in the stretch, trotting to a 1:53.3 win over New Jersey Viking and Signal Hill.

Soho Hanover took command from Southwind Cobra, brushing to the lead after a :28.3 first quarter. Money Macintosh was racing third, Sir John F fourth and 1-2 favorite New Jersey Viking fifth. After a :56.2 half, Signal Hill was flushed first over by Shivered, boxing in New Jersey Viking into the far turn. Money Macintosh edged out of third and provided Signal Hill cover heading to three quarters. Losing stride, Money Macintosh forced Signal Hill three wide through a 1:25.2 third quarter.

Southwind Cobra tipped off the rail and trotted to the lead in the stretch. Signal Hill stalled towards the center of the track and New Jersey Viking fanned towards the center of the track, recouping ground trying to gain the lead, only able to come a half-length shy of victory.

By Muscle Hill out of the Broadway Hall mare Caerphilly, Southwind Cobra won his second of nine starts this season, earning \$62,672 for owners Burke Racing Stable, Jack Piatt II, Lawrence Karr and Weaver Brusceci. Trained by Ron Burke and driven by Yannick Gingras, he paid \$22.60 to win.

“I raced my horse on the front last week and I don’t think that’s the place for him,” Yannick Gingras said. “I knew there were good horses behind me, but I knew I had a lot of trot, too. He likes to track down horses, and he raced this way well this afternoon. It was a matter of whoever would get there first.”

After losing to Snowstorm Hanover in their \$55,250 Bluegrass division, International Moni slid by Snowstorm Hanover to win their division of the International Stallion Stakes in 1:53.1.

Patton was the early pacesetter, trotting the first quarter in :28.1 before losing the lead to International Moni midway down the backstretch. Snowstorm Hanover tracked his backside brush, following his cover and eventually clearing the lead through a :56.1 half. Such An Angel soon pulled first over into the far turn, bringing Meme Hanover into the mix heading to three quarters. Timed in 1:25.1, Snowstorm Hanover held command.

Meme Hanover angled off Such An Angel’s cover as she faltered through the stretch. From third over, Mountain Of Love began flying down the center of the track after Snowstorm Hanover, who was also under pursuit by International Moni attempting to slide up the pylons. The two matched strides approaching the wire, with International Moni getting a nose in front of Snowstorm Hanover.

International Moni, by Love You out of the Speedy Crown mare Moni Maker, won his first race in eight starts this season, compiling \$77,795 in earnings for owner Moni Maker Stable. He is trained by Frank Antonacci and driven by Scott Zeron. He paid \$7.80 to win.

“I thought it was close; we were wheel-to-wheel at the wire,” Scott Zeron said. “I love this horse. He just needed to get stronger throughout the year just like he showed today; I double-used him. He’s a really nice animal to sit behind. He does that job for me and I just have to put him into play.”

“This is a special win on a lot of different levels,” Frank Antonacci said. “This horse is 25, 30 years in the making and a little outside-of-the-box thinking, and Moni Maker didn’t lose many photos, so that was good to see. We’re proud of this horse.”

Devious Man grinded first over to the lead and held control as Simply Volo lunged at him for second in a 1:53.2 mile.

Clearing the lead through a :28.4 quarter, Simply Volo led down the backstretch. Long Tom brushed to the lead from fourth, taking control after a :56.2 half. He led around the far turn as Devious Man gradually edged out of third to the outside, coming alongside Long Tom at three-quarters in 1:25.

Devious Man inched to the lead in the stretch. Long Tom chased at the rail while Simply Volo fanned out of the pocket towards the center of the track, hesitating for a few strides before charging towards Devious Man. He came a half-length short of passing Devious Man, while Long Tom trotted home third.

Winning his seventh race in 11 starts, Devious Man, by Credit Winner out of the Garland Lobell mare Miss Garland, has now earned \$308,233 for owner Story Inc. Trained by Julie Miller and driven by Andy Miller, he paid \$3.40 to win.

“My horse is really game,” Andy Miller said. “He has been pretty good all year; the only hiccup he had was in the Peter Haughton when he made a break at the start. He has been bustling around those New York tracks, so he dug in pretty good [to hold off Simply Volo].”

Bill’s Man powered by race-leader What The Hill to win his division of the International Stallion Stakes in 1:52.3 over Don Dream and Shake It Off Lindy.

Unchallenged through splits of :28.1 and :56, What The Hill held control into the far turn. Shake It Off Lindy drafted from the pocket while Bill’s Man, circling by Fly On as he lost stride into the turn, moved into third. He continued pulling towards What The Hill passing three-quarters in 1:24.3 before taking the lead into the stretch. Shake It Off Lindy had no room to trot as Don Dream tipped from off the cones and stormed down the center of the track. Don Dream moved into second and Shake It Off Lindy into third as Bill’s Man hit the line.

Bill’s Man, by Credit Winner out of the Yankee Glide mare Silver Springs, won his second race in 11 starts this season, earning \$70,441 for owners William Wiswell and M&L Of Delaware LLC. Trained by John Butenschoen and driven by Corey Callahan, he paid \$16.40 to win.

“I was planning on following Andy [Miller on Fly On], but he got a little rough,” Corey Callahan said. “It looked like he was going to lose him, so I went ahead and went three deep to go around him. By the time I was already halfway by, he had run and we were in a good spot.”

“This is a really good horse,” Callahan also said. “Looking at his lines, he has been there in the lines where he hasn’t run. He has shown us a lot of trot all along. He probably would’ve won [last week] if I asked him to go on, but I was trying to be careful with him since he jumped in his last couple times. I wanted to keep his confidence up, and it helped, so I’m not at all surprised by this effort today.”

“We’re absolutely thrilled to death,” John Butenschoen said. “We’re in Lexington, and we won a race; hoot hoot, hit hit, hooray. Whatever, it’s fun.”

“He is Breeders Crown eligible, and he has the Valley Victory later on, maybe even the Matron,” Butenschoen also said. “We’re going to see how he comes out of this race first, and then play it by ear.”

Grand Circuit action at the Red Mile continues Friday, October 7 with four divisions of the \$255,000 International Stallion Stakes for two-year-old trotting fillies. Friday’s card also features a \$3,038 Pick 5 carryover, which covers races two through six. First race post for the seven-race card is 1:00pm.