

Test Of Faith Fires In Bluegrass

By Ray Cotolo, for The Red Mile

LEXINGTON, KY—With just one blemish in her eight-race resume, Test Of Faith cruised to her sixth-consecutive victory when winning the first of two divisions of the \$268,000 Artspeak Bluegrass Two-Year-Old Filly Pace — sponsored by the Artspeak Syndicate and Winbak Farm — on Friday (Oct. 2) at The Red Mile.

Marsala Hanover hustled for the lead from post 8 and took the field by the opening quarter in :28. Test Of Faith landed in fourth moving to the first turn and started to edge off the pylons while Marsala Hanover sped to a :55.4 half. Into the far turn Test Of Faith committed to race first over and inched towards the pacesetter heading to three-quarters in 1:24. Marsala Hanover clung to a diminishing lead in the stretch as Test Of Faith charged to her side and then right on by to win in a lifetime-best 1:50.3. JK Alwaysbalady closed from second over for third with Lady Midnight taking fourth.

“We really think she’s a special filly,” said Ken Jackson of Kentuckiana Horse Farms. “When Melvin [Segal] bought this one, Brett [Pelling] loved her and we decided we’d come in with him and he was generous enough to let us in. When we started going to New York, Brett was pretty adamant that we had the best two-year-old pacing filly in the country and definitely in New York. And maybe it’s truly the case.”

An Art Major filly out of the Cams Card Shark mare Cannae Cammie, Test Of Faith has banked \$434,500 for owners Melvin Segal, Kentuckiana Racing Stable and Eddie Gran. Brett Pelling conditions the Fred Hertrich III-bred filly while David Miller sat in the sulky. She paid \$2.40 to win.

Fire Start Hanover fired from the pocket at the top of the stretch and strode in hand to a 1:50.4 victory in the second division of the Artspeak.

Clearing command by a :28.2 opening quarter, Fire Start Hanover yielded the lead moving up the backside to 7-5 favorite Blue Diamond Eyes, who crossed over to the top past a :56.1 half. Making Waves angled first over rolling to the final turn and gained ground on Blue Diamond Eyes to three-quarters in 1:23.4, but Fire Start Hanover had enough room at the top of the stretch to peer out of her seat. The Richard “Nifty” Norman trainee powered to the lead entering the final eighth and strolled to the finish under wraps over Blue Diamond Eyes. Lindy At The Beach finished third with Making Waves taking fourth.

“I know nothing about training a horse — I only watch — but she’s done really well the last month,” co-owner Marlys Pinske said after the race. “We love The Red Mile. We’ve come to The Red Mile for probably 40 years; we’re always here.”

Co-owned by the Pinske Stables with David Hoese and Lawrence Means, Fire Start Hanover won her fifth race from eight starts, earning \$145,836. Dexter Dunn drove the Hanover Shoe Farms-bred Somebeachsomewhere filly who paid \$9.60 to win.

Grand Circuit competition resumes at The Red Mile on Saturday (Oct. 3) with three divisions of the \$359,300 Stay Hungry Bluegrass Two-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Pace — presented by the Stay Hungry Syndicate and Hanover Shoe Farms — and four divisions of the \$349,000 Norman Woolworth Bluegrass Two-Year-Old Filly Trot — presented by Arden Homestead Stable, ET Gerry & Peter Gerry, Maragareta Wallenius-Kleberg, Stoner Manor Inc., Menhammar Stuteri Ab, Jorgen Jahre Jr., LST Stables and Lawrence DeVan. Racing gets underway for the 13-race card at 1:00 p.m. (EDT).