

QHRAI

December 2010

NEWS PAGES

AQHA REGIONAL STANDINGS - CENTRAL REGION

RESULTS AVAILABLE AT WWW.AQHA.COM

THREE-YEAR-OLDS

FILLY	COLT	GELDING
1 Royal Snow White 76	1 Brim Of Royalty 75	1 Fearles Fred 112
2 Fantanas Best Cigar 74	2 Debs Rqd 57	2 Fillemup Phil 77
3 Babblin Brook 70	3 Tentation 50	3 Mr Black Jesse 74
4 A Sweet Gamble 69	4 Mr Brimmerton 44	4 Hooked On Magic 72
5 The Regal Streak 67	5 Gallant Corona 37	5 Fishin For Magic 71
6 Determinedly 65	6 Rockn On Ready 33	6 Uncommom Episode 70
6 Runnin Jessica 65	7 Streakin To Fame 29	7 Oak Tree Boulevard 68
8 Shez So Kool 62	8 Eyem Cleat 23	8 I Is It 67
9 Cartels Belle 61	9 Mr Royal Shake Em 22	9 Havanna Gold 61
10 Sam Little Chic 58	10 Larks Merridoc 19	10 Five Star Cartel 59

AGED - FOUR AND UP

MARE	STALLION	GELDING
1 Bp Southern Mariah 101	1 Vision Quest Corona 67	1 Bold Badon 134
2 Itisasitis 82	2 Callin Kipty 34	2 Hqh Cash Bandit 105
3 Fredaville 80	3 Hes Regal 33	3 Struttin High 103
4 Eye Am A Star 76	4 Mbn Finest Hour 28	4 Shamu Moon 93
5 Whereshesupposedtobe 55	5 Dashin Dynamo 26	5 Hawkinson Time 92
6 Mc Dashin Lil Angel 49	6 Make Out Artist 22	6 Burrs Tictac 81
7 Aspretyasyouplease 43	7 Dashin Sharp Shooter 21	7 Skyline Lover 79
8 A Zooming Jet 42	8 One Hot Drifter 18	8 Ima Jr Special 73
9 Gladness 41	9 Ethics Aside 16	9 Bigtime Feature 71
9 Wranglin Easy 41	9 Just Amazing Jess 16	10 Hez Rare Too 67
	9 Royal Wicked 16	

OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	BREEDER
1 Manny Silva 382	1 Ron Raper 1172	1 Thomas Robert Wellington 1099	1 Circle S Ranch Inc 496
2 Randy L Thompson 317	2 Edward Ross Hardy 1104	2 Oscar Delgado 995	2 Randy L Thompson 353
3 Sofia Gallegos 281	3 Anthony F Cunningham 773	3 Aaron Hunt 938	3 Diana L Moster 346
4 Vernon Hammes 252	4 Robert 'Bob' Johnson 596	4 Harold Collins 873	4 Bobby D Cox 327
5 Robert Or Julie Petersen 250	5 Brent Clay 566	5 Stormy Smith 747	5 Vernon Hammes 247
6 Jk Running Horses Llc 235	6 Charley R Hunt 521	6 Cody Rodger Smith 714	6 Ronald E Haynes 241
7 Alonso Orozco 220	7 Dicky Benton 398	7 Juan F Delgado 623	7 Robert Or Julie Petersen 223
8 Francisco Ramos 219	8 Brian Muse 386	8 William E Ives 615	8 Michael C Teel 222
9 Anthony F Cunningham 202	9 Efrain Bueno 371	9 Julie Veltman 535	9 Bill Price 205
10 Harold Bragg 199	10 Randy Haffner 369	10 Victor Olivo 506	10 Corner K Quarter Horses Llc 192

AGED - THREE AND UP

DISTANCE	
1 A Dasha Red 47	
2 Hard To Ketch 38	
3 Dangerous Guns 36	
4 Rb Twenty Four Seven 34	
5 Stone E Motion 31	
5 Tal Task 31	
7 My First One 28	
8 Jk Bonjur 24	
9 Whereshesupposedtobe 22	
10 Street Meter 21	

"Fastest Horses on the Track"



STAKES QUOTES

BANK OF AMERICA CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

Fairgrounds Race Course & Slots of New Orleans, LA was the site of the 2011 Event
(www.fairgroundsracecourse.com)

Jim Mulvihill of Fairgrounds Race Course & Slots provided this release
with quotes from some of the significant players of the prestigious event...

For Immediate Release -

THE \$75,000 PFIZER STARTER ALLOWANCE CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP

3-year-olds and up which have started for a claiming price of \$5,000 in the past 12 months, 350 yards

Owner-Trainer Abraham Jaquez (A Spring Snow, winner): "I was pretty confident tonight. I didn't think he'd turn into this kind of horse when I got him. I don't know what we are going to do with him next but we'll bring him to Sunland. This is one of the biggest wins of my career."

Jockey Esgar Ramirez (A Spring Snow, winner): "The horse broke a little slow, but that's the way he always kind of breaks. At 40 or 50 yards, he picked up the ground and started passing them real easy. It was his first time under the lights. He's a great horse and my friend trains him. He did a really good job as trainer."

THE GRADE 1, \$350,000 BANK OF AMERICA CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP

3-year-olds and up, 440 yards

Jockey John Hamilton (Feature Jess Rockin, winner): Did the home track advantage help? "Yes, I really think so. The track surface here and the starting gates are a little different than the others are used to, so I think that helped her. She's just automatic and swallows everything up."

"She outran horses that weren't quite this caliber (in her last start at Fair Grounds). I thought I was live until I saw the past performances in the program and I just thought, 'Wow, this is a tough race.' I didn't realize this would be such a tough field. But in the paddock she was staring everybody down. She gets near horses and she can intimidate them. I'm excited to go to California (for the Grade 1

continued....

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Champion of Champions). She's the best thing I've ever ridden. She's unbelievable."

Trainer Donnie Strickland (Feature Jess Rockin, winner): "You know what? This might be her track. She really loves the mud; I was hoping for a muddy track, but it doesn't matter. I'd like to thank the Reeds for giving me the opportunity to train this mare. There can't be a better horse."

Owner Heath Reed of Reed Land & Cattle Company (Feature Jess Rockin, winner): "We were trying to get her qualified to this deal and we went all the way to Prairie Meadows with her (to compete in a regional qualifying race) and tried to do good up there. We got beat up there. Donnie said we need to haul here down there (to Fair Grounds for a regional qualifying race on September 25). I said, 'Do what you gotta do.'"

"We talked about it (her running in the Champion of Champions) on Monday. Most people probably thought we were crazy (for already making airline reservations for her to fly to Southern California in anticipation of running in the Champion of Champions), but Donnie said this mare has run big down here. She ran huge again this time. About Monday or Tuesday, she'll be going to California.

"When we sent her to Donnie in Florida (at Hialeah Park) last year she won a stakes and broke the track record. Then I ran her at Remington and she got beat by Spit Curl Diva by a nose and Donnie said, 'I'm stakes-winning Donnie and you're stakes-placed Heath.' I said, 'I understand. Will you take her back so I don't get her beat again?'"

Jockey Joe Ruiz (Rylees Boy, second): "When you come to this kind of a race and you have a chance at the Champion of Champions, anything else is disappointing. He ran a good race, but I was expecting to win so I'm not a very good sport. The 10-horse just beat us. You come for one purpose – to get the win and go to the Champion of Champions."

Jockey Jarrod Deschamp (Stolis Winner, Quarter Horse racing's new all-time earnings leader, third): "He ran a good race. The inside's a lot deeper here. He ran his tail off. He's a good horse and you have to put him up there as the best. He's probably the best one I ever rode. He got away good but they just ran a little better."

Trainer Heath Taylor (Stolis Winner, Quarter Horse racing's new all-time earnings leader, third): "He ran a phenomenal race. He got away from the gate up on his feet and got away really good. It was a tremendous field of horses. It kind of played out how I saw it all week. I had prayed and prayed and prayed to draw anywhere on the outside half of the racetrack. I don't want to make excuses – they did a great job with the racetrack – but I would have loved to have been outside. The rider said he ran super; he just got beat.

"They (Feature Jess Rockin) ran a track-record time. The horse had already had a start here and ran phenomenal. You can't take anything away from the horse that won the race."

You still must be proud of the earnings record? "You would always like to do it with a winning effort but, hell, the horse has won more money than any Quarter Horse that's ever had a bridle hung on his head so it's hard to be very disappointed in the horse.

"This whole earnings thing, we did it in the context of what was good for the horse. We weren't ever just going to run the horse, run

the horse, run the horse. He'll never run at a lower level. But he's relatively sound, he's 4-years-old and he's a gelding. If he stays good and healthy we'll probably race him a couple more years; however, if the horse does not sustain a Grade 1-type of performance level, we won't. It'll be determined by the health of the horse."

What's next for him? "We'll take him back to Texas to our ranch. We'll get him scoped and x-rayed. The horse is actually training great and is healthy. I'll have to get with the owner and see. We might possibly take him to The Championship at Sunland Park (G1) for \$400,000 the day after Christmas."

Breeder-Owner Jerry Windham (Stolis Winner, Quarter Horse racing's new all-time earnings leader, third): "Refrigerator had held the record for 15 years. You hate that you end up breaking a record like his in one respect. Refrigerator, we ran against him. We beat him once. He beat us once. We knew him well and he was a great, great horse. It's an honor to have the record.

"We've been wanting to get it done all year, but it's been a tough go. Seems like we had a lot of adversity. Just like tonight, we felt we had a little adversity because of where we drew, but that's the way it goes. You've gotta run where you draw.

"He broke much better. He was there until the very end. They just run by him. That's about all you can do.

"He's just one in a million. When you look at him he's such a tremendous individual. He's pretty sound. He ran a good race tonight. If he'd have been out here on this outside, I don't think they would have won."

THE GRADE 1, \$200,000 ADEQUAN DERBY CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP
3-year-olds, 400 yards

Jockey Alfonso Lujan (Acorn, winner): "I think he shied away from the crowd a little bit but he ran real gutsy tonight and this is a special win. He really gave 110-percent and put it all on the line."

Trainer Janet VanBebber (Acorn, winner): "This horse, I've always had the utmost confidence in him because he gives 100-percent. I'm very, very proud of him. I was pleased to be on the outside of the racetrack (in post 11), although a little concerned about being on the far outside because I think he labored a little bit out there. That's the part of the racetrack that had not yet been run over this evening. Nonetheless, he prevailed because he just persevered."

Owner Rose Mary Chandler (Acorn, winner): "I'm overwhelmed, to say the least. We watched the race inside (on the monitor) so I could see him start and finish. I'm very excited."

THE GRADE 1, \$125,000 MERIAL DISTAFF CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP
Fillies & mares, 3-year-olds and up, 400 yards

Jockey David Brown (Spit Curl Diva, winner): "In the final strides she was getting a little tired but she gave me her all and got it done. I think the sand in this track just got her a little tired.

"I'm really looking forward to (the Champion of Champions). You only get to ride a horse like this once in your lifetime. I think this race sets her up perfectly for the Champion of Champions."

Trainer Jody Brown (Spit Curl Diva, winner): "I really don't care for those kinds of (close) finishes. She broke well. My concern always is that there's a horse out there that she can't see coming. She made me sweat a little bit."

Owner Tom Lepic (Spit Curl Diva, winner): "David said she labored a little bit at the end so that's why it was close. But a win is a win. You don't win every race by a length or two. With a race like this, you just want to win. This horse was meant to do that. It was great. "She's now won at five different tracks in five different states at five different distances. It's been an unbelievable year for her."

[WINNER NOTES: David Brown and Jody Brown are a husband and wife team...Spit Curl Diva will be flown to Southern California on Monday to prepare for her next start, the Champion of Champions (G1) in December at Los Alamitos.]

Jockey Orlando Baldillez (Believers Gathering, second): "My mare ran her eyeballs out. She ran a great race. We can't take nothing from her (Spit Curl Diva); she just beat us. My mare ran her race."

[ADDITIONAL NOTE: State veterinarian Dr. Tom David reported that Jesstifiably Stoli, who fell at the break, suffered a fractured pelvis, a break in her spinal cord, and paralysis of the rear limbs and quarters. "The way they break [from the gate] so hard it happened immediately," David said. "The rider didn't even get another step." The mare was euthanized. Jockey David Pinon was uninjured.]

THE GRADE 2, \$150,000 JOHN DEERE JUVENILE CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP
2-year-olds and up, 350 yards

Jockey Larry Payne (A Plain Brown Rapper, winner): "It was a little bit of a slow start and the eight-horse came out and bumped us a bit. We got about a half-length back but he really accelerated and was just on cruise mode at the end."

Trainer Bill Harris (A Plain Brown Rapper, winner): "We felt pretty confident. We believed in 'Rapper' all along, since (owner) Lloyd (Yother) raised him as a baby. We had him picked out from the very beginning, and he's not let us down."

Owner Lloyd Yother (A Plain Brown Rapper, winner): "He's had four outs, he's won three of them and he's won them pretty handily so we were hoping (for a victory). He's been a nice horse. He moved well in the pasture as a baby. He looked like the real thing."

What's next? "We're going to run him in some derbies. We'll just figure out what our options are. He's sound right now, knock on wood, and hopefully he'll remain that way and we'll have a good 3-year-old."

Jockey G.R. Carter Jr. (Fast Movin Vic, second): "My horse broke really well. It felt like the five-horse (Feature My Lover B) may have brushed my rear hip just a little leaving the gate and kept him from getting a really good send away from there. The seven (A Plain Brown Rapper) and the ten (Loose Perry) both had me beat but my horse finished really good and got by the ten right at the wire. I was really happy with the way he ran."

Jockey Esgar Ramirez (Loose Perry, third): "They never gave me a chance to get settled. They put me in the gate, and they opened the gate, and we lost two lengths at the start. He ran a super race. I think he could have won if he would have had a chance to break better."

THE GRADE 1, \$125,000 RED CELL DISTANCE CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIP

3-year-olds and up, 870 yards

Jockey G. R. Carter Jr. (De Passem Okey, winner): "I really liked the post position draw and how this race set up. I just let him break and he got off the shoulder of Bad Act. He changed leads when he was supposed to and made me look good."

Why didn't we get to see one of your customary back-flip dismounts? "I hurt my foot here about a week ago; you'll notice I got a little ol' limp. I hate to break everyone's hearts but there's not going to be any back-flip."

How did you hurt your foot? "Doing a back-flip! I was out late at a benefit and about three in the morning some of my buddies talked me into doing one and I under-rotated, came around and just drove it into the ground. I think I might've cracked a little bone. It's been hurting for about two weeks."

Trainer Rodney Reed (De Passem Okey, winner): "I felt real good about (this race). I liked the post position we drew and I felt good about G.R. (Carter Jr.) riding him. He broke real well, got good position, handled it with ease."

[NOTE: This race marked the final start of the year for De Passem Okey.]

Owner Steve A. Holt (De Passem Okey, winner), from Guthrie, Oklahoma, works in the oilfield and raises Quarter Horses: "We got this (gelding) at Remington, we claimed him (for \$7,500). We thought this horse would move up and he's been astronomical. It's Rodney and his staff. They've done a tremendous job with this horse. He's been in the money every trip.

"We got lucky. We drew a good post. Two of the big guns were outside. We thought we had a shot and sure enough we did."

Jockey Stormy Smith (Bad Act, second): "He left there and ran to the front like he was supposed to. He just got outrun today. He did his job just like he was supposed to, just like they said he would. He's a cool old horse."

Jockey William Ives (Stone E Motion, eighth as favorite): "It was nowhere near what we planned. He wasn't right tonight. I'm not sure why exactly but he did not want to run. He wasn't in it. He didn't give me near the effort that he usually does. About halfway through the turn he just kind of started fighting with me. We straightened out for home and I got him into his right lead and he responded for about 50 yards but then he just kind of floated down through there (to the finish). It just wasn't his night."

Trainer Bill Harris (Stone E Motion, eighth as favorite): "He's had some problems, had a bruise we've been fighting. It just wasn't meant to be."

**For a detailed list of results from this event visit www.fairgroundsracecourse.com or www.aqha.com

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