



# ITOBA



Indiana Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association



Photo by Linscott Photography



## EXPRESS CHARGE WINS SEASON OPENER AT INDIANA GRAND RACING & CASINO

*Story & Photos By Tammy Knox*

SHELBYVILLE, Ind.; - Feb. 08, 2018 - Express Charge with apprentice jockey Edgar Morales charged home in the stretch to win the season opener Tuesday, April 17 at Indiana Grand. The race kicked off the 120-day racing season that extends to Wednesday, Nov. 7.

Starting from post five in the nine horse lineup used early speed out of the gate to get good positioning along the inside as Gibsons Tricky Boy and DeShawn Parker rallied from the outside to secure the lead. Noble Sowle and Rodney Prescott also chose early speed tactics and tracked the top two on the outside during the five and one-half furlong event. In the stretch, Express Charge moved up for a one on one challenge with Gibsons Tricky Boy for the drive home. Midway through the stretch, Express Charge had a clear path in the center of the track and took over, rallying home for a one and one-half length victory over Gibsons Tricky Boy. Stringtown and Perry Ouzts used a late kick to finish third.

Owned by Haran Thoroughbreds and trained by John Haran, Express Charge paid \$9.00, \$4.60, \$3.80 across the board. It was the first win of the year for the four-year-old son of Unbridled Express. The Indiana sired gelding increased his career earnings to more than \$36,000 with the victory.

"I had a lot of horse and when I called on him, he did the job," said Morales, who is new to Indiana Grand in 2018. "Once I called on him, he did it by himself."

Morales, a native of Puerto Rico, began riding at Keeneland in October 2017. From there, he tested the waters at a few tracks before landing in Oaklawn earlier this year. There, he began to polish his skills and earned 17 wins to be named the leading apprentice for the meet. Morales has followed in the footsteps of his older brother, Roberto, who is also a jockey.

Nine races were contested for the first day of racing at Indiana Grand in 2018. Although snow was falling the previous day and the wind was a little cold on Tuesday, a beautiful sunny day greeted racing fans to help kick off the 16th season of Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing.

"Today's two operative words are no snow," said Jon Schuster, vice president and general manager of racing. "I'm looking forward to improving on the past three years where we saw record numbers. We hope to continue the upward trend."

Schuster was joined by Adam Kallick, vice president of racing administration for Centaur Gaming, in the winner's circle following the first race to officially welcome fans to the 16th season.

"It's a beautiful day and Jon's team has done a great job to prepare for a new season," said Kallick. "I'm looking forward to a great meet."

The 16th season of Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing will offer live action Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays at 2:05 p.m. EST with Saturday racing beginning at 6:05 p.m. Two special Thursday racing dates will be held July 19 and Sept. 6 at 2:05 p.m. EST. About Indiana Grand Racing & Casino: Indiana Grand Racing & Casino holds multiple awards for customer service, entertainment, gaming, dining, and diversity. Located in Shelbyville, Ind., Indiana Grand features 2,200 of the latest slots and electronic table games in addition to a one-mile dirt race course and a seven-eighths mile turf course offering live Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing each year. Simulcast wagering is also offered year-round at Winner's Circle Brewpub & OTB located on the casino floor as well as a Winner's Circle OTB located in Clarksville, Ind.