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POLO ART WINS FIRST TURF RACE OF 2018 AT INDIANA GRAND RACING & CASINO

*Story By Tammy Knox
Finish Photo by Linscott Photography*

SHELBYVILLE, Ind.; – May 11, 2018 – Indiana Grand Racing & Casino kicked off turf racing Friday, May 11 with three of the eight Thoroughbred races carded on the turf. The first horses stepping on the turf was for the afternoon’s fourth race, a \$32,500 Allowance Optional Claiming event running five furlongs. Polo Art and Jockey Malcolm Franklin earned the win by one and one-quarter lengths in a time of :55.70, just three-tenths of a second off the track record for the distance.

Starting from post three in the six-horse lineup, Polo Art got away from the gate in third and tracked the progress of Louisiana Brown and DeShawn Parker along the inside with Saturday Tryst and Richard Bracho applying pressure on the outside. The top two had a secure lead on the field heading into the only turn of the race before Franklin made a move with Polo Art. The small-statured Polo Art hugged the rail and was on top by the time the horses turned for home, rallying out to an open length victory over the turf. Louisiana Brown came back to fight his way into second over Blazer and Fernando De La Cruz for third.

Paying \$14.80, \$6.60 and \$3.80 across the board, Polo Art was a bit of a surprise to racing fans. However, seeing Franklin in the winner’s circle for the first turf event of the year was not a surprise. Franklin has won the first turf race of the season the past three years. Although it was his first time riding Polo Art, he felt comfortable aboard the six-year-old son of Northern Afleet.

“He’s (Polo Art) an older horse and he is comfortable and easy to ride,” said Franklin. “He broke good and I was able to take him back into a stalking position. When the horse in front of me (Louisiana Brown) started getting out, we took advantage and got through on the inside. I started getting after him and he responded and we held on for the win.”

The trip to the winner’s circle for Polo Art was his eighth of his career. The chestnut gelding returned earlier this year from an injury last season and was making his third start of 2018 and his second at Indiana Grand. Owned by Roger Spiess’s Spiess Stable and Randy Klopp, Polo Art is trained by Randy Klopp and has been with the stable for a long time.



“We bought this horse privately from Dizney (Donald Dizney), who is the breeder, down in Florida when he was two,” said Klopp. “After his race in August last year, we took some time off with him to let him recuperate from an injury. He’s not very big and he’s built like a Quarter Horse. He carries a lot of weight all the time and it just takes him a couple of starts to get fit.”

Polo Art has accumulated nearly \$165,000 in career earnings. His win with Franklin was his first victory over the turf.

The 16th season of Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing continues through Wednesday, Nov. 7. Racing is conducted Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 2:05 p.m. EST with Saturday racing beginning at 6:05 p.m. EST. Two special Thursday racing dates will be held July 19 and Sept. 6 with a 2:05 p.m. EST post time.

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.