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Indiana Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association



Altito Sets Track Record In Don K. Memorial Starter Handicap at Indiana Grand Racing & Casino

Story by Tammy Knox - Photos by Linscott Photography (unless noted)



SHELBYVILLE, Ind. (July 25, 2018) – Patience proved to be a virtue for Altito and Ty Kennedy in the fifth round of the \$30,000 Don K. Memorial Starter Handicap Wednesday, July 25 at Indiana Grand. The series, named in honor of former Indiana HBPA executive director Don Kubovchik, extends through a majority of the 120-day racing season at different distances on both the turf and dirt courses.

Starting from post two, Altito was in no hurry to get involved in the early action as Perfect Execution and Rodney Prescott moved into the lead. Kennedy chased Altito early on to close up the gap and settle nicely into fourth place along the inside as Shobiz Star and Victor Santiago tracked Perfect Execution through the early stages of the one and one-eighths mile event.

The field began to tighten its grip on Perfect Execution in the final turn and Altito moved up along with the pack. Kennedy had a big hold on the gelding and sat patiently before finding a seam along the inside and moving in for the stretch drive. In the stretch, Altito and Perfect Execution battled gamely for the win, giving the edge to Altito in the last few strides. He was a winner by one and one-quarter lengths over Perfect Execution. Bobby the Brain and James Graham maintained ground for third. The time of the race was 1:49.63, a new track record for one and one-eighths miles over Indiana Grand’s oval.

Altito paid \$7.00, \$3.80, \$3.20 across the board as the race favorite in the eight-horse field. It was his seventh career win in 26 career starts and his career earnings were boosted to more than \$142,000 for Alan Ribble’s Ribble Farms, LLC. Davis Vance trains the four-year-old son of Bernardini.



“We plan to keep him right here,” said Vance. “There are three more or so of these and this fits him perfectly. Plus the timing and the competition is just right for him.”

Vance, a native of Logansport, Ind., has numerous training titles to his credit from various tracks including Churchill Downs. He has more than 3,000 career training victories and is best known for his work with the Eclipse Award winning filly Caressing, winner of the 2000 Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies.

Vance and Ribble claimed Altito for \$20,000 this past spring at Oaklawn Park. Since joining the Vance Stable, the \$270,000 purchase from the Keeneland Yearling Sale in 2015 has earned two wins and two seconds in four starts. Altito’s win in the Don K Memorial Starter Handicap was his first start at Indiana Grand.

The previous track record for the one and one-eighths mile distance was established in 2011 by Hawk on the Hunt and jockey Marlon St. Julien. Hawk On The Hunt, trained by Tom Trione Jr., covered the distance in a time of 1:50.07.

The sixth of 11 rounds for the Don K. Memorial Starter Handicap Series will be held Wednesday, Aug. 6. The race will be held on the turf course at one and one-sixteenth miles before returning to the dirt for a one-mile event Wednesday, Aug. 24 for the seventh round.

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.

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