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Indiana Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association



Surprise Prize Surprises in Don K. Memorial at Indiana Grand Racing & Casino

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



SHELBYVILLE, Ind. (Aug. 29, 2018) – It was a gate to wire effort for Surprise Prize and jockey Malcolm Franklin in the seventh round of the \$30,000 Don K. Memorial Starter Handicap Wednesday, Aug. 29 at Indiana Grand. The duo covered the one mile distance over the dirt course in a time of 1:37.09.

Starting from the inside post one, Franklin had Surprise Prize ready for action as the Ray Kuwik starting gate opened for the series. The four-year-old chestnut gelding got the early lead and kept Crafty Spector and Fernando De La Cruz to his outside flank with Perfect Execution and Rodney Prescott also staying close in third. As the horses moved into the final turn, they began to attack the top three. Perfect Execution moved up to face Surprise Prize, who was still holding strong on the front end. The remainder of the field fanned out five wide heading into the stretch, hoping to catch the top two. However, Surprise Prize was too strong on the front, fending off the entire field for the win by one and one-quarter lengths over Perfect Execution. Altito and Ty Kennedy moved up for third.



“I got pretty lucky,” said Franklin. “I was hoping I could go out and get the lead and hold on and that’s what we did. I noticed in the first turn he acted like he was trying to pull himself up, but when that other horse came up on him, he took hold of me again. By the time we hit the backstretch, I had him figured out by then.”

Those who supported Surprise Prize at the windows were rewarded with \$27.00, \$12.00 and \$5.40 across the board. The son of Pure Prize is owned and bred by Nelson McMakin and trained by Phil Sims.

Surprise Prize now has five career wins in 13 career starts with more than \$80,000 in earnings. He has now earned wins in his last two starts and it was his first win at Indiana Grand in two tries.

For Franklin, it was a nice boost to be back in the winner’s circle. The Creston, South Carolina native recently returned to riding after missing a couple of months due to an injury. Franklin was the 2013 leading jockey at Indiana Grand and still holds the record for most wins in one season (158) set during that year.

The Don K. Memorial Starter Handicap returns for round eight Tuesday, Sept. 11 running one and three-eighths miles scheduled for the turf. The series is named in honor of former executive director of the Indiana Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA) Don Kubovchik, who passed away about 15 years ago. A total of 11 rounds of the Don K. Memorial Starter Handicap are slated for 2018, all running for a purse of \$30,000 over different surfaces and different distances.

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. A special Thursday racing program will be held Sept. 6 with a 2:05 p.m. post time.

Indiana Grand Racing & Casino, which is owned and operated by a subsidiary of Caesars Entertainment Corporation (NASDAQ: CZR), 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. For more information, please visit www.IndianaGrand.com. Must be 18 or older to wager on horse racing at racetracks and 21 or older to gamble at casinos. Know When To Stop Before You Start.® Gambling Problem? Call 1-800-9-WITH-IT (1-800-994-8448) ©2018 Caesars License Company, LLC.