



# ITOBA



Indiana Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association



## DEPARTING TAKES OFF IN \$100,000 MICHAEL G. SCHAEFER MEMORIAL AT INDIANA GRAND RACING & CASINO



SHELBYVILLE, Ind.; - July 16, 2016 - With more than \$1.8 million in career earnings and a resume that includes multiple graded stakes wins, Departing is the type of horse to always be respected. He earned more respect Saturday, July 16 in the 18th running of the \$100,000 Michael G. Schaefer Memorial during Indiana Derby Night at Indiana Grand.

Ridden by Brian Hernandez Jr., Departing generally stays up near the lead from the start and he followed suit for his trip in the Schaefer Memorial. The six-year-old son of War Front was positioned three wide early on as Bordini and Alex Contreras claimed the top spot along the inside. Down the backstretch, both Departing and General A Rod, with Luis Saez aboard, both made a move to try to overtake Bordini, but he came back and held onto the top spot heading into the final turn. General A Rod eventually began to lose momentum, leaving Bordini and Departing to battle it out for the stretch drive.

Bordini would not give in easily. He fought back gamely as he went stride for stride with Departing before eventually losing his advantage. Departing went on to secure the win in a time of 1:40.96 for the one mile, 70 yard event, two lengths ahead of Rocket Time, who closed late for Corey Lanerie to finish a neck ahead of Bordini for second.

Departing was a strong contender as a three-year-old, winning the Illinois Derby, the West Virginia Derby and the Super Derby at Fair Grounds in Louisiana. He has shown no signs of slowing down and looks to be on the top of his game even at an extended age.

Departing paid \$6.80, \$3.60 and \$2.60 as the third choice on the board in the eight-horse field. He is now less than \$75,000 away from eclipsing the \$2 million mark in career earnings. He exits Indiana with nine career wins in 26 career starts for Claiborne Farm and Adele Dilschneider. Tom Drury Jr. now trains the accomplished racehorse. Hernandez Jr. has quite a history with the horse, riding him for his first five career wins that included the Illinois Derby.

"I had a good position, and I just tried to stay out of his way," said Hernandez Jr. "This was a great spot to get his confidence back up and get him in the right frame of mind. He had a lot of confidence going around

the second turn, and he was sitting on a big one. We just kind of cruised along. A horse like him, he's proven how good he is. Like Seth (Hancock) wanted to do, he just wanted a good confidence boost in this horse. Because he's run against some really, really good horses the last two years. I mean, he's had his excuses. Even in the Alysheba (his last start), he gets beat four lengths to Majestic Harbor and Eagle. This was a little easier spot and he got his confidence."

This was the first start as trainer for Drury Jr. with Departing. The win with the horse and with the connections of Claiborne was not lost on him.

"I think they were just looking for a little softer company for him (Departing)," said Drury Jr. "They (Claiborne) looked at this spot and some other things down the road, just maybe trying to get away from the heavy-heads that he's been facing. I really don't know what we're going to do next, we'll just enjoy this one today."

Since he is so new to the Drury Stable, Drury explained he just tried to keep everything as normal and regular as possible for Departing.

"I just tried to stay out of his way," said Drury of his first start with Departing. "He's made \$1.8 million without me. We were just trying to stay out of his way. He seemed like he was doing well going into the race. First time you run one, you're always afraid you're going to miss something or maybe not notice something. He showed up and ran his race. Got a nice confidence-builder today. Hopefully it's something we can move forward off of. And, words can't describe it (winning a stakes race for Claiborne). You grow up in this business, you're always reading about Claiborne. It's just unbelievable, especially Departing of all horses. To be able to win a stakes with him is pretty special."

*Live Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing is conducted Tuesday through Friday at 2:05 PM EST with Saturday racing beginning at 6:05 PM. The 120-day season runs through Saturday, Oct. 29.*

*About Indiana Grand Racing & Casino: Indiana Grand Racing & Casino holds multiple awards from industry publications for customer service, entertainment, gaming and dining. 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 an off-track betting facility located in Clarksville, Ind. For more information, please visit [www.IndianaGrand.com](http://www.IndianaGrand.com).*

