



## BIG KICK HAS OPTION TO ADVANCE TO CLAIMING CROWN AT INDIANA GRAND RACING & CASINO

Story By Tammy Knox  
Photos By Linscott Photography



SHELBYVILLE, Ind. (Aug. 16, 2017) – For the first time in the history of the track, Indiana Grand, in cooperation with the Indiana Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA) have teamed up to offer a special bid to the Claiming Crown. A special race was held as part of the Wednesday, Aug. 16 racing program with the winner automatically getting a bid to participate in the Claiming Crown Iron Horse Stakes during the event at Gulfstream Park in early December.

A field reduced to five due to four scratches started the one mile and one-sixteenth race on the dirt with Lamu and Manny Cruz busting out along the inside post for the early lead. The duo maintained that spot through a majority of the two-turn race, feeling the presence of Far Out Kailee and Richard Bracho on the outside for most of the way.

In the final turn, Wild About You and Fernando De La Cruz slipped out three wide as Big Kick was still on the rail looking for an opportunity to get out and get on the move. That opportunity arrived coming out of the turn and the eight-year-old Tiznow gelding split horses to grab the lead. The field was still tightly bunched into the stretch, and everyone had the opportunity to overtake Big Kick, but he was strong to the finish line, winning by two and one-half lengths over Wild About You for second. Race favorite Far Out Kailee finished third.



Owned by Maggi Moss of Iowa, Big Kick earned his 13th career trip to the winner’s circle. The well-bred gelding has made 47 career starts and with the win in the \$25,000 prep for the Claiming Crown, his earnings are now in excess of \$385,000. He came to Trainer Tom Amoss’ barn via a claim last year at Indiana Grand and has found a permanent home.

“He has been a very good starter horse since we claimed him,” said Amoss. “He’s one of the family now. Maggi (Moss) has already told me that when he’s ready to retire, there is already a home for him.”

As far as his future, Amoss said that Big Kick might be a possibility to be included in the \$110,000 Iron Horse at the Claiming Crown in December at Gulfstream Park.

“If he won today, we talked and it is definitely under consideration,” added Amoss, a five-time leading trainer at Indiana Grand. “I’m encouraged that Indiana Grand offered \$1,000 toward travel expenses to go, so it’s a possibility.”

Amoss added that they may have found the key to Big Kick.

“He’s an old pro,” said Amoss. “The secret to his success for us is that he loves peppermints. Every evening when I walk the barn, I feed him peppermints and he’s repaid us by winning.”

Big Kick has now won over eight different tracks under nine different jockeys. It is the second consecutive win for Mena on Big Kick. It also marked seventh win for the partnership of Amoss and Moss since being claimed in May 2016.

The addition of the Claiming Crown Iron Horse Stakes “win and you’re in” came to fruition earlier this year. Kevin Greely, director of racing, and Joe Davis, president of the Indiana HBPA talked about the possibility of bringing a connection to the event to Indiana.

“We formed a partnership with the horsemen and decided to offer this race,” said Greely. “It turned out to be a nice quality race for us. Joe (Davis) and I talked and we spoke to TOBA and the National HBPA about adding it. We selected a category that we felt we had horses in the region (\$8,000 Starter going long) that would fit well in here.”

In addition to \$1,000 toward travel expenses for Big Kick courtesy of Indiana Grand and the Indiana HBPA, they will also cover the \$100 nomination fee.

The Claiming Crown, held in association with TOBA and the National HBPA, formed in 1999 at Canterbury Park in Minnesota. It was designed to showcase the “blue collar” type horses in eight different races contested on both turf and dirt surfaces at different distances. The “Crown” has moved to different tracks throughout the years. Gulfstream Park will host the event through 2018. All eight races include purses in excess of \$100,000.

Live racing at Indiana Grand continues through Saturday, Oct. 28. Racing is conducted Tuesday through Friday at 2:05 p.m. with Saturday racing at 6:05 p.m.

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).