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Photos by Linscott Photography



HOOSIER NEIGHBOR WINS PAUL TINKLE ITOBA STALLION SEASON STAKES AT INDIANA GRAND RACING & CASINO

SHELBYVILLE, Ind.; – Aug. 27, 2014 – The first running of the Paul Tinkle ITOBA Stallion Season Stakes for colts and geldings represents a man who was very active in racing in the state of Indiana. It is only fitting that the horse who won it was named Hoosier Neighbor, signifying the type of man Paul Tinkle was.

Trained by one of Tinkle's friends, Mike Lauer, Hoosier Neighbor began the race very quietly, trailing the field of six into the turn as Big Chance and Alejandro Contreras led the way. Colony Classic and Alberto Pusac kept the pace lively by applying pressure on the lead from the inside. Meantime, Spanish Leather and Rodney Prescott sat three wide seeking an opportunity to take over the front spot.

In the turn, Downtown Kid and Albin Jimenez scooted up the inside to get good positioning on Big Chance while the remainder of the field began to fan out wide across the track, leaving Hoosier Neighbor in the position widest of all heading into the stretch.

Jockey Ricardo Santana Jr. had Hoosier Neighbor in full gear as they began to pass horses swiftly. Halfway down the stretch, Downtown Kid still had the advantage and was not giving in. Big Chance was also hanging tough, but Hoosier Neighbor proved to be the best at the end, sliding by for the win by one-half length over Downtown Kid. Big Chance was less than a length back of the win for third in the exciting three-horse photo.

"Last time he (Hoosier Neighbor) ran six furlongs and that was a little short for him," said Santana, Jr. "He likes the mile better. He really tries and he never gave up."

Hoosier Neighbor earned his first career win in the race, paying \$8.40, \$3.00 and \$2.40 across the board. The Ocean Indy colt more than doubled his career earnings with a bankroll that now exceeds \$69,000. Lauer's wife, Penny, is the owner and the Indiana-bred colt comes from their farm in Kentucky.

"We were hoping to break this colt's (Hoosier Neighbor) maiden before the race but it didn't work out that way," said Lauer. "He's an easy keeper and he always tries, just like his mother (Neighbors). In fact, all of her foals have been that way."

The time for the one-mile race was 1:39.92, which establishes a benchmark for future races in the Paul Tinkle ITOBA Stallion Season Stakes.

Tinkle dedicated his life to horse racing in the state of Indiana. A long-time farm manager for Mac Fehsenfeld, Tinkle began training Quarter Horses and Thoroughbreds for the operation and spent the last 20 years going to sales and purchasing horses for the stable. One of those horses, Valid Video, made it all the way to the Breeders' Cup for Fehsenfeld, a trip that both Francis and Paul enjoyed.

Tinkle found out three years ago that he had cancer, but it didn't slow him down. He continued to be involved in racing all the way up until the last few months of his life. Earlier this meet, the Tinkles got special permission to bring one of his horses to the paddock so he could see the horse, which would be his last time at the track.

"The stewards gave us special permission to bring Fran's Flatter up to the paddock during the races," said Francis. "So, Tony Duran brought him up and walked him around for Paul. Paul was in a wheelchair. That horse was Paul's big dream. He didn't get to see him race, but he got his picture taken with him that day and was so glad to see him."

After finishing second and third, Fran's Flatter made it to the winner's circle in his third career start for Raise the Bar Stables, LLC, which the Tinkles are part of. The win was 25 days after Paul passed away, which was July 5 at the age of 72.



A Celebration of Life ceremony was held at Indiana Grand July 19 with a blanket and a large group of family members and friends in attendance for the honor. Later, Paul's ashes were scattered over the turf course, continuing his connection with racing.

"I was told the night of the Celebration of Life ceremony that they were going to name this race after Paul," said Francis. "He would have been very proud."

Live Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing continues through Saturday, Nov. 1 offering racing Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 2:05 p.m. with Friday and Saturday action beginning at 5:05 p.m. For more information, visit the Website at indianagrand.com.

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 2,000 of the latest slots and electronic table games in addition to a one-mile oval race course offering live Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing each year. Simulcast wagering is also offered year-round at Indiana Grand Racing & Casino as well as an off-track betting facility located in Clarksville, Ind. For more information, please visit www.IndianaGrand.com.

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