

PRESQUE ISLE DOWNS

FOR RELEASE

By Kevin Decker
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Local Longshot Upsets Boyes Field

The 20th edition of the \$100,000 Karl Boyes Stakes for three-year-olds and up was loaded with star-studded talent. The field included a Breeders' Cup Champion, the track's all-time record holder at six furlongs, last year's race winner, and a stakes placed entrant from Canada.

Despite their resumes, none would make it to the winner's circle. Instead, a local horse that received a dream journey in the race was able to knock off the field at 34-1 to capture the event.

The horse that pulled the feat off is Spirited Sol. Trained by Kimberly DePasquale for Winterhawk Farm, He got away this just behind early leaders Jean Valjean (jockey Antonio Gallardo) and Victory Achieved (Keiber Coa). While those two dueled to an opening quarter mile of 22.0 seconds, Spirited Sol sat along the rail in third for jockey Martina Rojas, while favorite Horsepower (Edwin Gonzalez) was beside him much of the early fractions.

"I wanted to let the speed horses go by me early. They did and I followed them. I took hold through the early part of the race," said Rojas

Once the field went past the half in 45.2, but the leaders began to show their wear by coming wide off the turn and carrying the closers out as they began their march, fanning as wide as the eight path to try to get by.

However, Rojas took the short route and cut the corner while taking advantage of an opening created by the top two coming off the rail off the turn.

"I got a perfect trip. Once the inside opened up, I was able to go though," added Rojas.

Once Rojas had a clear path for her charge, she pointed Spirited Sol down the clear track with momentum and a jump on the other closers. Spirited Sol pulled away in the stretch to win by three lengths. Victory Achieved held on for second, while Horsepower was third. Time for the six furlongs was 1:10.3 minute.

"I got him from friend of mine four years ago. He had been racing at Delaware Park and had a second and a fourth place finish. The first thing I did was geld him and turn him out," said trainer DePasquale on being given Spirited Sol.

Throughout his career, Spirited Sol has not had the best of luck in races. From getting boxed in, to getting bounced around, to having road woes, it was as if all those past demons were gone with today's effort.

As for where Spirited Sol will go next, DePasquale is not sure. She knows there are some Virginia-restricted races for him at Colonial later this summer. She was pleased with how well he came out of the race, and looks forward to his next effort.

Spirited Sol is an eight-year-old by Soldat out of the Stormy Athletic mare Spirited Storm. He was bred in Florida by Tag Stables.

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