

Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs Week in Review

November 6-12, 2009

It has been a wonderful 2009 season at Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, one we won't soon forget. With the season in its final days, it's time to look back at some of the performers that made the year so memorable. With that in mind, here is a look at the 2009 MSPD Horses of the Year.

PACER OF THE YEAR: FOUR STARZ SUE

This gelding from the Carmine Fusco barn has been an outstanding performer at Pocono for the past several years. This year he won 6 times in 19 tries, including 5 times in 15 Open paces. He was particularly strong at the beginning of the campaign, with 5 wins and 3 places in his first 11 starts at Pocono in '09.

TROTTERS OF THE YEAR: ALL ABOUT JUSTICE and GRAIN OF TRUTH

In an extremely competitive category, it somehow made sense to have two different horses share this one. All About Justice moved all the way up from the low conditions to the Open trots for trainer Gail Wrubel, winning 9 of 13 starts along the way. Grain Of Truth, trained by Ray Schnittker, was in the money in 15 of 21 races with 4 wins, all against Open competition.

CLAIMING PACER OF THE YEAR: THEREDANDPANLINES

It's hard to improve upon perfection, and that's why this gelding was a relatively easy choice in this class. In 6 races at Pocono from July to October, all at the highest claiming prices of \$25,000 and \$30,000, Theredandpanlines won every time out. All of those races came while the gelding was in the barn of trainer Ron Burke.

CLAIMING TROTTER OF THE YEAR: TWOCARLANE

Consistency was the name of the game for this gelding. Despite constantly changing barns, he hit the board in 16 out of 26 races against the toughest claiming trotters on the grounds. After seemingly endless near-misses, he then ripped off a three-race winning streak in September and October, doing the trick for three different trainers.

MARE OF THE YEAR: NIP N ATTACK

The pride of the Chris Oakes barn was more than up to the task of facing the very best distaff pacers Pocono had to offer. In 11 starts at Pocono, every one of which came against Open competition and often from assigned outside post positions, Nip N Attach hit the board 8 times with 5 wins, 2 second-place finishes, and one third.

3-YEAR-OLD COLT OF THE YEAR: JOHNNY Z

In only 3 starts at Pocono in 2009, this 3-year-old colt, named after our publicity director and TV host John Zimich, made quite an impression. He swept through the Max Hempt Memorial stakes

competition in May, winning both the elimination and the final, the richest race at Pocono, and then returned in July to win a Reynolds stakes race for trainer George Teague Jr.

3-YEAR-OLD FILLY OF THE YEAR: BILLIE BLUECHIP

For the second straight year the Joe Pavia Jr. barn produced the state champion 3-year-old filly. This time out it was Billie Bluechip, who won the crown in the Pennsylvania Sire Stakes final at Pocono in September. That was the highlight of an outstanding season that saw her win 5 times in 13 tries at Pocono, including several victories against older mares in tough condition paces.

Congratulations to these outstanding horses and all of the horsemen associated with their success. Next week, we'll take a look back at the 2009 season in our last column of the year.

That's it for this week, but I'll see you at the track. Feel free to e-mail me at jbeviglia@mohegansunpocono.com.