

SOPH PACING LASSES DOWNSTATE IN \$172,499 NYSS ART WATSON PACE

BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, NY, Tuesday, June 19, 2018—New York Sire Stakes return downstate Thursday night (June 21st), with Yonkers Raceway hosting the \$172,499 Art Watson Pace for 3-year-old fillies.

There are three consecutive divisions—worth \$56,833, \$57,833 and \$57,833, respectively—going as races nine through 11.

First post for the dozen-race card is 6:50 PM.

The first NYSS ensemble finds Tell Me a Joke (Jim Morrill Jr., post 2) eyeing a second statebred win. The daughter of Art Major went down-the-road at Tioga (1:53.2) and enters having won half of her six seasonal starts.

Hopefully, Tell Me a Joke has a short memory, since the last time she was here, she stopped to a walk on the lead as the odds-on favorite in her division of the Reynolds Memorial. The lass is co-owned by Howard and Judith Taylor & Blue Chip Bloodstock and trained by Gareth Dowse.

Betterthangraduate (Matt Kakaley, post 1) is trying to regain her six-figure frosh form. The Betterthancheddar miss is winless in a half-dozen tries this season.

The second NYSS division sees Pueblo Blue Chip (George Brennan, post 6) going after another statebred win. After wiring her foes at Saratoga (1:53.3), she tried open company in WEG's Fan Hanover, but was outrun.

The American Ideal miss is trained by Ron Burke for co-owners Blue Chip Bloodstock, Michael Guerrero and Menary Racing.

Azreal As it Gets (Brian Sears, post 7) was the bridesmaid in last season's \$225,000 final of the NYSS here.

Speaking of last season's statebred finale (note the professional segue), the victress has returned.

Alexi's Faith (Morrill Jr., post 7) is back stateside after two weeks in WEG's Fan Hanover, tiring to fourth in last weekend's final.

The daughter of American Ideal is trained by Casie Coleman for co-owners West Wins Stable, Kevin McKinlay, Jim Fielding and J. Robert Darrow.

Wisdom Tree (Scott Zeron, post 5) was a blowout sire stakes winner at Buffalo (1:54) in her latest outing.

The next New York Sire Stakes visit is Tuesday's (June 26th) Jim Meagher Pace (2-year-old colts/geldings, purse TBA).