

Pye on Racing

2019 Ohio Fair Column

By Thom Pye

Track records fall at Clinton County Fair

Wilmington, Ohio – Clinton County saved the fireworks for its two days of racing on Monday, July 8th and Tuesday, July 9th as the lighting-fast and well-kept oval produced several of the quickest miles ever.

In the very first contest of the season, Shawn Barker II got the seat behind Kirk Nichols' and trainer Dan Ater's Monkey's Uncle in the \$3,741 OCRA 1st division and line-drove the 3-year-old gelding by Uncle Peter to the fastest trotting mile in the history of Wilmington when he blasted a time of 1:59.4h, coming his last quarter in :29.3. It was the 2nd career victory in 17 lifetime starts and he easily held off Lion On Landon (Allan Woolums) and Forgotten Treasure (Kacey Burns) by 2 ¼ lengths.

Bada bing. Bada BOOM!

The next race was the \$3,749 OCRA 3-year-old colt pacers and Friskiesonaroll and Tyler Smith rambled to a new lifetime mark as the Bret Swartz owned and trained Feelin Friskie gelding bested Western Bay Bay (Trevor Smith) and Deena's Lil John (Cam McCown) with a mile in 1:58h.

Owner/trainer Kent Wilcox's Western's Last Gun remained undefeated (3 for 3) as Cam McCown piloted the Gunthatwonthe west gelding to a new lifetime tab of 2:01.3h in the \$4,116 OCRA 2-year-old colt pace by 2 over Ed's Country Rocker (Alex Hawk) and Jeff Nisonger aboard Mel Matt.

Homer Hall got it all in the \$3,741 OCR 3-year-old colt 2nd division as Ryan Holton won by 10 ½ lengths with the Steve Carter student and trotted a final panel of :28.2 in 2:02.1h and was the RWTS Best Bet of the Day.

But wait... that's not all!

Snap, crackle, pop! It was Charles Purvis's Jimmy Ray Lou and Sir Dan Noble rewriting the track's record books as the Ben Davis-trainee zoomed to a triumph in the \$3,749 OCRA 3-year-old pace with a scorcher in 1:56h. Posting a final split of :28 flat, the Mister Big gelding was on top by 3 over Top Recruit (Trevor Smith) while East Beach (Scott Ferguson) took show.

Trainer Mark Rowe unveiled another promising 2-year-old when the Matt Rowe-owned Risky Million made his initial debut on a racetrack and the Bigrisk gelding produced a sharp 2:03.1h mile with teamster Jeff Nisonger defeating Rockin



Scout (Roy Wilson) and Megalodon Shark (Kayne Kaufman) by 3 in the \$4,116 OCRA 2nd pacing division.

And then... it was the Dan Noble trained and driven Doubleyellowline that crossed out another record when the Norman Rae Racing LLC and Deborah Noble-owned gelding by Uncle Peter hoisted his own banner in the \$5,424 OCRA 2-year-old trotters 2nd division by signing in with a mile in 2:01h for another new track standard.

In keeping with the spirit it was Norman Rae Racing LLC's Pet Rock gelding Ubuntu as trainer/driver Dan Noble erased yet another record, this one was for 2-year-old pacers, as the duo won in 1:58.1h by 13 in the \$4,116 OCRA 3rd division as Alex Hawk, aboard Nob Hill Flash, and LL Mystro (Brendan Johnson) were witnesses from afar.

It was a good day of racing and for Sir Dan Noble as the Xenia native commanded a driving triple and produced three new track records with them as well.

Plaudits to the track crew for an excellent racing surface.

On Tuesday the action continued unabated as Scott Cisco steered Head Gun Racing Stable's Oh Miss Rylee to a length win in the \$3,733 OCRA 3-year-old pacing filly division for trainer Bret Schwartz in 1:59.1h while I Got The Diamonds (Roy Burns) and Woodyoucolorwithme (Hugh Beatty) were that close.

The first division of the Spring Haven Farm Ladies Driving Series saw some sibling rivalry on the racetrack as Elizabeth Murphy (23) and Light Up The Sky hung little sister Kylene Murphy (22) aboard Real Revenge out to dry the entire mile, as it was two in, two out until a patient-sitting Mandy Jones went four wide around the final turn with her Sports Band and paced home in :29.4 to take it by a well-measured neck over Art's Delight (20-year-old Kiara Morgan) and Light Up The Sky in 2:00h.



The Ladies' 2nd division saw 21-year-

The fastest trotting mile ever at Clinton County Fair was set by Monkey's Uncle with Shawn Barker II in 1:59.4h in 2019's very first race. Thom Pye Photo

old Kacey Burns take her first win of the year with a mile in 1:59h with the Brian George-trained Bluesky Charley. Why Don't U Stay (Jazmin Arnold) was second while Amy Wengerd on Moreland Flash was third.

Joining them in the Winners Circle was the Clinton County Homeless Shelter's Darlene Simpson as this caring lady offered their thanks for the donations of canned goods from The Ladies Drive Against Hunger. This deserving organization feeds and helps house over 1,000 people in need a year in the Wilmington area and OHHA was truly humbled to be part of the effort.

David Myers was up behind Richard McCormick's Winning Fireworks lass Spring Twister in the \$9,172 OCRA 3-year-old filly trot and notched a new lifetime tab of 2:02.1h for the Charles Vigneron pupil. Touch Of Bling (Kacey Burns) and Out Of Time (Tami Hartman) were on the board as well.

McDelicacy (by McArdle) and driver John Collins took the \$5,924 OCRA 2-year-old filly pace 1st division in 2:02.1h as the Zack Tackett-student bested Amazing Sparkle (Luke Hanners) and Helen K (Roy Burns) by 3 open lengths.

This was also the RWTS fan contest and when John Quincel, proudly wearing the number 3 (McDelicacy) strolled into the Winners Circle, he was chuckling.

"I was your very first winner of the fan contest," he grinned, "I won it last year at the Circleville (Pickaway County) Fair... I had

the 3 then too."

We've seen thousands of fans over the past year... we thought he looked familiar.



A new track pacing standard of 1:56h belongs to Jimmy Ray Lou with driver Dan Noble in the sulky. Thom Pye Photo

Wilmington's final race of the season was a thriller in the \$3,733 OCRA 3-year-old filly pace as it was a head-to-head stretch drive in :27.4 for Hawk's Cry Farm LLC's Vinecancruise (Roy Wilson) as the Ben Davis-trained daughter of Yankee Cruiser caught the pace-setting Dawnna Marie (by McArdle) and Ryan Holton at the wire by a scant nose.

A few of the fans hung around to study the Bob Nash photo finish and even came back to look at it again.

A fitting finale to a fast and furious two great days of Ohio County Fair racing.



Mandy Jones had a nice smile for the camera and a nice drive aboard Sports Band as she would take the 1st division of the Spring Haven Ladies Driving Series. Thom Pye Photo



The Clinton County Homeless Shelter gives thanks as Bluesky Charlie and Kacey Burns pose for their picture. Thom Pye Photo



Another close finish at Wilmington as Crosswind Layla (Scott Cisco) goes by Mel Will See (Jeff Smith) and Selectiveignorance in the \$5,924 OCRA 2-year-old filly pace. Thom Pye Photo