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## MISSION OF JOY FINDS WAY TO WIN GRADE III, \$205,000 REGRET

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, June 3, 2023)** – **Mission of Joy** found an opening at the top of the stretch, collared pacesetter **Miss Riddler** at the three-sixteenths pole and kicked home powerfully to win Saturday's 54<sup>th</sup> running of the \$205,000 Regret Stakes (Grade III) by 1 ½ lengths over **Papilio (IRE)** at Churchill Downs.

Owned by **Ryan Zabrowski's RyZan Sun Racing** and **Sol Kumin's Madaket Stables**, the 3-year-old **Graham Motion**-trained filly covered 1 1/8 miles on "firm" turf in 1:49.05 under **Tyler Gaffalione**.

Mission of Joy, winner of the Florida Oaks (GIII) in March, finished a troubled third in the \$500,000 Edgewood (GII) on Kentucky Oaks Day when she had to alter course in the late stages of the 1 1/16-mile contest. Saturday's trip was more ideal.

Mission of Joy raced in a relaxed position along the rail chasing pacesetters Miss Riddler and **Girl Named Charlie**, who set fractions of :23.63, :48.39 and 1:13.14. Leaving the far turn, Gaffalione waiting patiently for a seam to open between horses and it did at the head of the straightaway. Mission of Joy kicked clear in the final furlong and safely fended off a bid in late stages by Appalachian (GII) winner Papilio (IRE) while under moderate handling.

"We sat a great trip just behind the speed," Gaffalione said. "In the stretch I was able to tip her out around the pacesetter (Miss Riddler) and she kicked for home impressively."

Mission of Joy, the odds-on 3-5 favorite, paid \$3.46, \$2.36 and \$2.10. Papilio (IRE), the 2-1 second choice under **Javier Castellano**, returned \$2.84 and \$2.36. **Mrs. Astor**, at odds of 11 under **John Velazquez**, was another four lengths back in third and paid \$3.10.

Miss Riddler, Girl Named Charlie and **Sabalenka** completed the order of finish.

With her victory worth \$122,760, Mission of Joy boosted her career earnings to \$289,567 from a record of 4-0-1 in 6 starts.

"She came out of the Edgewood in great shape and she had a tough trip that day," Motion said. "Today, Tyler got her into a beautiful position and she really impressed me. She's a Canadian-bred so we'd obviously look at some of those races but also some of the longer turf races in New York this summer. She handled the mile-and-an-eighth today and proved it wouldn't be an issue moving forward."

Mission of Joy is a daughter of Kitten's Joy out of the Smart Strike mare Smart Mission and was bred in Canada by **Sam-Son Farm**.

The Regret honors the 1915 Kentucky Derby-winning filly.

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## GUNITE RUNS DOWN BANGO IN \$224,500 ARISTIDES

**Winchell Thoroughbreds'** crack sprinter **Gunite** ran down **Bango** in deep stretch to deny the runner-up a third straight victory in Saturday's 35<sup>th</sup> running of the \$224,500 Aristides (Listed) and a record-equaling 11<sup>th</sup> victory at Churchill Downs.

Gunite, who also excels at Churchill Downs, clocked six furlongs over a "fast" track in 1:08.46 under **Tyler Gaffalione**, who rode the winner for Hall of Fame trainer **Steve Asmussen**.

Asmussen won the Aristides for record fifth time. His other triumphs in the race came with **Mountain General** (2003), **Riley Tucker** (2010), **Rothko** (2012) and **Volatile** (2020).

Gunite, who defeated Bango by 1 ¾ lengths, won for the fourth time in seven starts at Churchill Downs.

**Strava** and **Sibelius** ran a scorching opening quarter mile in :21.71 with Bango tracking from third and Gunite following in fourth. Sibelius and Bango engaged Strava around the turn as Gunite sat just behind the three-wide trio, who passed the half-mile marker in :44.92.

At the top of the stretch, Bango emerged as the leader but the pursuing Gunite was tipped out by Gaffalione. Gunite grinded down the stretch, took the lead at the sixteenth pole and inched clear late for his seventh career stakes win.

"He sat a really comfortable trip from just off the pace," Gaffalione said. "He broke a little bit slower but settled in nicely to stride. He's a very exciting horse and can tell keeps maturing with age."

Now age 4, Gunite won the Grade I Hopeful at 2. His 3-year-old season featured victories in the Maxfield, Amsterdam (GII), Harrods Creek and Perryville. His 2023 campaign began with a victory in the King Cotton at Oaklawn and was followed by a second-place finish in the \$1.5 million Riyadh Dirt Sprint (GIII) and a third in the \$2 million Dubai Golden Shaheen (GI) in the Middle East.

Gunite, the odds-on 4-5 favorite, paid \$3.80, \$2.60 and \$2.10. Bango, at 5-2 under **John Velazquez**, returned \$3.42 and \$2.40. **Tejano Twist** was another two lengths back in third under **Chris Landeros** and paid \$2.62 to show at odds of 8-1.

Sibelius and Strava completed the order of finish.

"I thought he ran a really good race and ended up being second best to a really nice horse," said **Greg Foley**, trainer of Bango. "This race could have been a Grade I with these horses in it. We'll regroup with him and hopefully get back to the winner's circle next time. (Velazquez) told me he may have moved a little bit too soon but he still ran a really hard race against a quality winner."

Gunite, who banked \$139,000, improved his record to 8-5-2 with purse earnings of \$1,749,509 in 17 starts.

Gunite is a son of Gun Runner out of the Cowboy Cal mare Simple Surprise. He was bred in Kentucky by his owner **Ron Winchell**.

"Just like his sire Gun Runner, he seems to get better with age," Asmussen said. "We're very fortunate to train a horse like Gunite. We've noticed as he's gotten older he has gotten faster and that's a great sign moving forward for his campaign."

The Aristides is named in honor of the inaugural Kentucky Derby winner of 1875.

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### AMERICAN TURF WINNER WEBSLINGER WINS \$225,000 AUDUBON

**Webslinger**, owned by **Leonard Green's D. J. Stable**, showed his 22-1 longshot victory in the \$500,000 American Turf (Grade II) on Kentucky Derby was no fluke as he rolled to a 1 ¼-length win over **Mendelssohns March** as the odds-on 3-5 favorite in Saturday's fourth running of the \$225,000 Audubon Stakes (Listed) at Churchill Downs.

Webslinger, ridden by **Javier Castellano** and trained by **Mark Casse**, ran 1 1/8 miles over "firm" turf in 1:49.87.

"I thought Javier gave him a beautiful trip in this race that was very pacey," said **David Carroll**, assistant to trainer Mark Casse. "He's a horse that each time you run him he seems to get better. He's proven that in his last couple of efforts but today's race was a bittersweet one. **Lois Green**, who was the matriarch of the owner's family, died earlier this week. She was a wonderful woman and our heart goes out to the entire Green family during this time. Hopefully this win was able to give them a little bit of happiness during a difficult week for their family."

Breaking from the outside in the field of seven 3-year-olds, Webslinger relaxed in fourth and in the clear behind **Lazarus**, who set the pace through fractions of :24.34 and :49.04. Around the far turn, Mendelssohns March was the first to challenge the leader as he slipped through an opening along the rail after six furlongs in 1:13.78. Soon thereafter, Webslinger made a four-wide move leaving the turn and swept to the front at the head of the stretch. He kicked on nicely down the lane for his second straight stakes win over the Matt Winn Turf Course.

"There wasn't a whole lot of speed in the race but he was traveling nicely throughout," Castellano said. "He put himself in a good position turning for him and was able to dig in late. He's a very consistent horse and always seems to run well each time."

The \$136,520 first prize jumped Webslinger's earnings to \$860,320 from a record of 4-2-1 in 9 starts.

Webslinger paid \$3.42, \$2.28 and \$2.10. Mendelssohns March, with **Brian Hernandez Jr.** up at odds of 4-1, returned \$3.02 and \$2.40. **Desert Duke** was another half-length back in third under **Mitch Murrill** at 8-1 and paid \$3.04 to show.

**Scoobie Quando**, **Sharar**, **J.P. Race** and Lazarus completed the order of finish.

Webslinger, a gelded son of Constitution out of the Hard Spun mare Arana, was bred in Kentucky by **Ken and Sarah Ramsey**.

The Audubon is named after a Louisville neighborhood located nearby Churchill Downs.

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### IDIOMATIC LEADS ALL THE WAY IN GRADE III, \$225,000 SHAWNEE

**Juddmonte's** homebred **Idiomatic** led every step of the way in Saturday's fourth running of the \$224,750 Shawnee (Grade III) at Churchill Downs to score her first graded stakes win with a 2 ½-length triumph over **Sixtythreecaliber**.

Trained by **Brad Cox**, Idiomatic covered 1 1/16 miles in 1:42.13 under jockey **Florent Geroux**. That marked the fastest of four runnings of the race that debuted in 2020.

Breaking from post 3 in the field of seven fillies and mares, Idiomatic was unpressured early through fractions of :23.82, :47.87 and 1:11.81. **Hidden Connection** came within a half-length around the final turn but Idiomatic had plenty of run left. She opened a clear advantage at the head of the stretch as Sixtythreecaliber chased into contention but Idiomatic dominated every step of the way.

“She was quick away from the gate but was able to settle her speed on the front end and moved comfortably,” Geroux said. “This is the first time I’ve been on her during the races but you can tell from her previous starts she likes to be close or on the lead. She’s run primarily over on the Tapeta at Turfway but has shown she’s able to handle the dirt and going longer.”

Idiomatic returned \$6.40, \$3.82 and \$2.66 as the 2-1 second betting choice. Sixtythreecaliber, under **Edgar Morales**, returned \$8.20 and \$3.50 at odds of 11-1. **Frost Point**, the even-money favorite under **Junior Alvarado**, rallied from last to finish another 1 ¼ lengths back in third and paid \$2.30.

**Moon Swag**, **Hidden Connection**, **Soul of an Angel** and **Travel Column** completed the order of finish. **Pauline’s Pearl** was scratched.

Idiomatic is a 4-year-old filly by Curlin out of the First Defence mare Lockdown. She was bred in Kentucky by her owner.

With her victory in Saturday’s Shawnee worth \$136,520, Idiomatic improved her record to 5-1-2 in 8 starts with earnings of \$474,490.

Previously, Idiomatic won the \$245,000 Latonia at Turfway Park before finishing second to **Pass the Champagne** in the \$200,000 Ruffian (GII) on May 6 at Belmont Park.

“We’re very proud of her effort today routing on the dirt,” Cox said. “She ran well last time out in the Ruffian going a mile on dirt but it seems like two turns suits her better. She was based at Turfway this winter and ran well over the Tapeta track. We were confident she’d be able to handle the switch back to dirt and she proved that today. We always had in mind running her in the Delaware Handicap. But, we’ll see what happens and how she comes out of this race first and foremost.”

The Shawnee Stakes is named after a neighborhood in western Louisville.

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### CHURCHILL-LOVING SET PIECE WINS GRADE III, \$206,750 ARLINGTON

**Juddmonte** scored a stakes double Saturday at Churchill Downs when their venerable 7-year-old homebred gelding **Set Piece (GB)** collared pacesetter **Get Smokin** with a sixteenth of a mile to run and comfortably won Saturday’s 87<sup>th</sup> running of the \$206,750 Arlington Stakes (Grade III) by one length.

One race earlier, **Idiomatic** won the \$224,750 Shawnee (Grade III). **Florent Geroux** rode both winners for trainer **Brad Cox**.

A multiple graded stakes winner across North America, Set Piece ran 1 1/16 miles on “firm” turf in 1:42.42 to record his fifth victory beneath the Twin Spires and become racing’s newest millionaire. His most notable triumph came in last year’s \$400,000 Wise Dan (GII).

Get Smokin, who also finished second in last year’s Arlington, dictated the terms through comfortable early splits of :24.16 :48.96 and 1:13.31. Not exactly a setup, the closer Set Piece, was last in the field of the six older horses before he tipped out with a five-wide move at the top of the stretch. He charged home with a powerful late kick and drove past Get Smokin at the sixteenth pole under a hand ride.

“He’s one of my favorite horses I’ve ridden,” Geroux said. “He has no early speed so it’s always tough in bigger fields because you can’t go super wide turning for home but if you stay too far on the inside you end up in trouble. He always tries hard and I’m so happy he was able to get a win today.”

Set Piece, off as the odds-on 3-5 favorite, paid \$3.52, \$2.82 and \$2.26. Get Smokin, a 15-1 outsider under **Ricardo Santana Jr.**, returned \$7.20 and \$3.80. **Harlan Estate** was another three-quarters of a length back in third under **Declan Cannon** at odds of 27 and paid \$5.94 to show.

**Classic Causeway**, **Royal Patronage (FR)** and **Kentucky Ghost** completed the running order. **Tiberius Mercurius** was scratched.

Set Piece earned \$122,760 for the win and improved his career record to 12-2-2 in 27 starts with earnings of \$1,068,683.

“He’s a barn favorite of ours,” Cox said. “Juddmonte sent him over to our barn in North America a couple years ago and he’s knocked at the door of a Grade I in the past. Today he rallied strongly against a pace that wasn’t very fast at all. He loves it here at Churchill and we’re very proud of his win today.”

Set Piece, a son of Dansili (GB) out of the Kingmambo mare Portodora, was bred in Kentucky by his owner.

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## RATTLE N ROLL SLIPS THROUGH INSIDE TO WIN GRADE III, \$225,000 BLAME

**Rattle N Roll**, who broke from the inside post in a field of eight older horses, was bottled up along on the inside rail for most of the way in Saturday's fourth running of the \$225,000 Blame Stakes (GIII) at Churchill Downs but the 4-year-old colt found running room with three-sixteenths of mile to the finish and ran down **Call Me Fast** to win by 1 ¼ lengths on his way a third straight graded stakes victory. **Happy American** was another three-quarters of a length back in third.

**Brian Hernandez Jr.** rode the winner for trainer **Kenny McPeck** and owner **Michael J. Mackin's Lucky Seven Stable**. Rattle N Roll clocked 1 1/8 miles in 1:48.93 over a "fast" track.

Just two weeks ago, Rattle N Roll won the \$250,000 Pimlico Special (GIII) by a nose on Black-Eyed Susan Day. Prior to that, he won the \$300,000 Ben Ali (GIII) at Keeneland by 1 ¼ lengths.

**Barber Road**, who finished sixth in last year's Kentucky Derby (GI), was a surprise leader early on setting fractions of :23.98, :48.35 and 1:12.19 with Grade I turf winner **Santin** applying mild pressure in his dirt debut.

Rattle N Roll advanced to third down the backstretch in tight quarters along the inside. He was full of run around the final turn but was trapped behind the leader Barber Road, who maintained his path while racing on the rail. When the field left the turn and hit the top of the stretch, Barber Road drifted out ever so slightly which left a small inside opening for Rattle N Roll, who made contact with the rail while slipping through. Once clear, Rattle N Roll proved to be much the best as the 8-5 favorite.

"Two starts ago at Keeneland (Call Me Fast) closed late and we were able to hold him off," Hernandez said. "Today, he got the first run on us but once I tipped my horse outside at the eighth pole he really responded well and finished up strong. This win is a credit to Kenny and his team. This horse always seems to show up and run well and he came back today on quick rest. But, Kenny and his team had him ready to go."

Favorites won five of the six stakes races at Churchill Downs on Saturday.

Rattle N Roll returned \$5.48, \$3.18 and \$2.66. Call Me Fast, ridden by **Julien Leparoux** at 9-2, paid \$4.44 and \$4.12. Happy American, 14-1 under **James Graham**, paid \$5.48 to show.

After Happy American, it was Barber Road, Santin, **Pioneer of Media**, **Cooke Creek** and **Masqueparade**.

The victory was worth \$135,280 and increased Rattle N Roll's bankroll to \$1,501,141 with a record of 8-1-2 in 18 starts.

"I think this horse benefitted at the end of last year and into this year running in Grade IIs and Grade IIIs," McPeck said. "It taught him to mature. Brian had this horse loaded at the rail and it got a little tight there in mid-stretch but it was a credit to him and the horse for being patient and getting room to close. **Smile Happy** and Rattle N Roll are both owned by the Mackin family and it's a good problem to have moving forward with two very strong caliber horses for the classic races."

Rattle N Roll is a Kentucky-bred son of Connect out of the Johannesburg mare Jazz Tune. He was bred by **St. Simon Place**.

The Blame is named after the 2010 Eclipse Award-winning older horse that handed Zenyatta her lone defeat in that year's Breeders' Cup Classic (GI) at Churchill Downs.

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## REGRET QUOTES

**Tyler Gaffalione (jockey, Mission of Joy, winner)** – "We sat a great trip just behind the speed. In the stretch I was able to tip her out around the pacesetter (Miss Riddler) and she kicked for home impressively."

**Graham Motion (trainer, Mission of Joy, winner)** – "She came out of the Edgewood in great shape and she had a tough trip that day. Today, Tyler (Gaffalione) got her into a beautiful position and she really impressed me. She's a Canadian-bred so we'd obviously look at some of those races but also some of the longer turf races in New York this summer. She handled the mile-and-an-eighth today and proved it wouldn't be an issue moving forward."

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### ARISTIDES QUOTES

**Tyler Gaffalione (jockey, Gunite, winner)** – “He sat a really comfortable trip from just off the pace. He broke a little bit slower but settled in nicely to stride. He’s a very exciting horse and can tell keeps maturing with age.”

**Steve Asmussen (trainer, Gunite, winner)** – “Just like his sire Gun Runner, he seems to get better with age. We’re very fortunate to train a horse like Gunite. We’ve noticed as he’s gotten older he has gotten faster and that’s a great sign moving forward for his campaign.”

**Greg Foley (trainer, Bango, runner-up)** – “I thought he ran a really good race and ended up being second best to a really nice horse. This race could have been a Grade I with these horses in it. We’ll regroup with him and hopefully get back to the winner’s circle next time. (Jockey John Velazquez) told me he may have moved a little bit too soon but he still ran a really hard race against a quality winner.”

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### AUDUBON QUOTES

**Javier Castellano (jockey, Webslinger, winner)** – “There wasn’t a whole lot of speed in the race but he was traveling nicely throughout. He put himself in a good position turning for him and was able to dig in late. He’s a very consistent horse and always seems to run well each time.”

**David Carroll (assistant trainer, Webslinger, winner)** – “I thought (jockey) Javier (Castellano) gave him a beautiful trip in this race that was very pacesess. He’s a horse that each time you run him he seems to get better. He’s proven that in his last couple of efforts but today’s race was a bittersweet one. Lois Green, who was the matriarch of the owner’s family, died earlier this week. She was a wonderful woman and our heart goes out to the entire Green family during this time. Hopefully this win was able to give them a little bit of happiness during a difficult week for their family.”

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### SHAWNEE QUOTES

**Florent Geroux (jockey, Idiomatic, winner)** – “She was quick away from the gate but was able to settle her speed on the front end and moved comfortably. This is the first time I’ve been on her during the races but you can tell from her previous starts she likes to be close or on the lead. She’s run primarily over on the Tapeta at Turfway but has shown she’s able to handle the dirt and going longer.”

**Brad Cox (trainer, Idiomatic, winner)** – “We’re very proud of her effort today routing on the dirt. She ran well last time out in the Ruffian going a mile on dirt but it seems like two turns suits her better. She was based at Turfway this winter and ran well over the Tapeta track. We were confident she’d be able to handle the switch back to dirt and she proved that today. We always had in mind running her in the Delaware Handicap. But, we’ll see what happens and how she comes out of this race first and foremost.”

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### ARLINGTON QUOTES

**Florent Geroux (jockey, Set Piece, winner)** – “He’s one of my favorite horses I’ve ridden. He has no early speed so it’s always tough in bigger fields because you can’t go super wide turning for home but if you stay too far on the inside you end up in trouble. He always tries hard and I’m so happy he was able to get a win today.”

**Brad Cox (trainer, Set Piece, winner)** – “He’s a barn favorite of ours. Juddmonte sent him over to our barn in North America a couple years ago and he’s knocked at the door of a Grade I in the past. Today he rallied strongly against a pace that wasn’t very fast at all. He loves it here at Churchill and we’re very proud of his win today.”

**David Carroll (assistant trainer, Get Smokin, runner-up)** – “I was a little surprised he was able to get away with the slower fractions on the front end but he settled nicely up the backside and really dug in down the stretch. He just ended up being second best.”

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### BLAME QUOTES

**Brian Hernandez Jr. (jockey, Rattle N Roll, winner)** – “Two starts ago at Keeneland (Call Me Fast) closed late and we were able to hold him off. Today, he got the first run on us but once I tipped my horse outside at the eighth pole he really responded well and finished up strong. This win is a credit to Kenny (McPeek) and his team. This horse always seems to show up and run well and he came back today on quick rest. But, Kenny and his team had him ready to go.”

**Kenny McPeek (trainer, Rattle N Roll, winner)** – “I think this horse benefitted at the end of last year and into this year running in Grade IIs and Grade IIIs. It taught him to mature. Brian had this horse loaded at the rail and it got a little tight there in mid-stretch but it was a credit to him and the horse for being patient and getting room to close. Smile Happy and Rattle N Roll are both owned by the Mackin family and it’s a good problem to have moving forward with two very strong caliber horses for the classic races.”

**Julien Leparoux (jockey, Call Me Fast, runner-up)** – “We just ended up being second best today. In his last start at Keeneland (in the Ben Ali) Rattle N Roll got the jump on us and we finished second. Today I was able to get the jump on him but ended up just being second best.”

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### ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK

Churchill Downs Racetrack (“CDRT”), the world’s most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. [www.ChurchillDowns.com](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).

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