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PROXY RUNS DOWN WEST WILL POWER IN GRADE I, \$750,000 CLARK, KENTUCKY DERBY WINNER RICH STRIKE FINISHES LAST OF SIX

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Nov. 25, 2022) – In a thrilling run down the Churchill Downs stretch, **Godolphin**'s 4-year-old homebred colt **Proxy** was able to run down pacesetter **West Will Power** inside the final sixteenth of mile and win Friday's 148th running of the \$750,000 Clark presented by Norton Healthcare (Grade I) by three-quarters of a length to collect his elusive first graded stakes win. Meanwhile, Kentucky Derby winner **Rich Strike**, who finished fourth in the \$6 million Breeders' Cup Classic (GI) just 20 days ago, finished last of six.

Proxy clocked 1 1/8 miles on a fast track in 1:48.89 under jockey **Joel Rosario**, who rode the winner for trainer **Mike Stidham**.

For Godolphin, it was their second straight Clark win with a homebred as they took last year's renewal with **Maxfield**.

The lofty first prize of \$458,970 lifted Proxy's earnings to \$971,220 from a record of 4-5-2 in 13 starts.

A seemingly hard-luck colt, Proxy is nearly a millionaire after collecting the first stakes win of his career. At age 3, he finished second in a pair of Road to the Kentucky Derby prep races at Fair Grounds, the Lecomte (GIII) behind **Midnight Bourbon** and Risen Star (GII) behind **Mandaloun**. He'd conclude his 2021 season with fourth place finishes in the Louisiana Derby (GII) and Lexington (GIII). Proxy's 4-year-old campaign this season included runner-up efforts in the New Orleans Classic (GII) behind **Olympiad** and Blame (Listed) behind **Dynamic One**, as well as a pair of thirds in the Ben Ali (GIII) and Stephen Foster (GII).

Rested since the July 2 Stephen Foster at Churchill Downs, Proxy was fresh off the 146-day layoff and sat just back of pacesetter and 8-5 favorite West Will Power, the winner of the Fayette (GII) at Keeneland in his last start who dictated the pace through comfortable fractions of :23.94, :48.51 and 1:12.76. The two drew nearly even leaving the final turn with West Will Power in front by a half-length of Proxy, who chased wide from the five path. They matched strides down the lane, but a surging Proxy grabbed command inside the final 50 yards for the triumph.

"This was his first start in a few months so he was a little sharper leaving the gate," Rosario said. "He was a little bit further back in his last start here in the Stephen Foster than I expected him to be. I knew (West Will Power) was really the only horse that had early speed in the race so I didn't want to let him get away easily. He was very professional today throughout. (West Will Power) didn't want to give in. He was very tough on the lead and I had to work pretty hard to get by him."

Proxy, the 2-1 second betting choice, rewarded his backers with mutuels of \$7.08, \$3.44 and \$2.84. West Will Power, with **Luis Saez** up, returned \$3.42 and \$3.28. **Fulsome**, under **Florent Geroux**, was another 2 1/2 lengths back in third and paid \$4 to show.

"I was a little shocked he showed as much speed as he did," Stidham said. "That could have been because of how fresh he was coming off the layoff. We had this race as a target when we gave him a break following the Stephen Foster. It's very special for him to get his first graded stakes win as a Grade I. I think Joel (Rosario) knew from riding (West Will Power) last time in the Fayette that he would show early speed again. When he broke as sharp as he did, he didn't take position away from him. I was confident he'd have enough left in the stretch by his pedigree. He's bred to go a mile-and-a-quarter. There are a lot of options now going forward. I'd love to get back to the Dubai World Cup (GI) but going into 2023 there's a lot still on the table after a win like today."

Last Samurai finished fourth and was followed by **Injunction** and Rich Strike. **Trademark** was scratched.

“He was in a good position at the rail but turning for home he didn’t have anything left at all,” said Rich Strike’s trainer **Eric Reed**. “We knew it was a big risk running him back in three weeks. Sometimes you’re the hero and sometimes you’re the goat.”

Proxy is a son of Tapit out of the multiple Grade I-winning Include mare Panty Raid who was bred in Kentucky by his owners.

The Clark, named for Churchill Downs founder **Col. M. Lewis Clark**, was run for the first time in 1875 during the first racing meet at Churchill Downs, which was then known as the Louisville Jockey Club. Like the Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) and Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI), the Clark has been renewed annually without interruption since its first running.

Racing at Churchill Downs continues Saturday with a 12-race program that begins at 1 p.m. (all times Eastern). The 96th running of the \$400,000 Kentucky Jockey Club (GII) – a “Prep Season” race on the Road to the Kentucky Derby – and the 79th running of the \$400,000 Golden Rod (GII) for fillies are the headliners on the penultimate day of Churchill Downs’ 19-date Fall Meet. Billed as “Stars of Tomorrow II,” each of the 12 races is exclusively for 2-year-olds that may have aspirations of trail-blazing their way to next spring’s Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks.

BUBBLE ROCK SCORES WIRE-TO-WIRE WIN IN GRADE II, \$300,000 MRS. REVERE

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Nov. 25, 2022) – Bubble Rock broke alertly and led every step of the way to win Friday’s 30th running of the \$300,000 Mrs. Revere (Grade II) for 3-year-old fillies at Churchill Downs by 1 ¼ lengths over **Joyful Applause**.

Owned and bred by **John Ed Anthony’s Shortleaf Stable Inc.**, Bubble Rock ran 1 1/16 miles in 1:45.05 over a firm Matt Winn Turf Course to collect her third stakes win and second against graded company. **Joel Rosario** rode the winner for trainer **Brad Cox**.

Bubble Rock, who previously won the Matron (GIII) at age 2 and \$125,000 Cincinnati Trophy at Turfway Park earlier this year, banked the \$177,250 first prize and rewarded her backers with \$2 mutuels of \$5.32, \$3.48 and \$3.46 as the 8-5 betting choice in the field of 10 3-year-old fillies.

She went straight to the front and set moderate fractions of :24.17, :49.26 and 1:13.75 as longshots Joyful Applause and **Take a Stand** tracked about one length back in second and third, respectively, down the backstretch. Bubble Rock was never seriously threatened into the final turn or in the stretch and the top three finished in the same position nearly all the way around the trip.

“She broke very well from the gate and took me to an easy lead down the stretch,” Rosario said. “She got into a really good rhythm and we weren’t going too fast down the backside. I could feel around the turn I still had a lot of horse beneath me and she was able to kick clear in the stretch.”

Joyful Applause, at odds of 34-1 under **Edgar Morales**, paid \$18.52 and \$11.80. **Take a Stand**, ridden by **Fernando De La Cruz**, was another 1 ½ lengths back in third at 38-1 and paid \$15.72 to show.

Lovely Princess, Quality Star, She’s Gone, Lady Puchi, Fancy Martini, California Angel and **Sweet Lady Ivanka** completed the order of finish. **Have a Good Day (IRE)** was scratched.

The winner’s share of the purse pushed Bubble Rock’s earnings to \$508,793 from a record of 4-2-1 in 10 starts. Prior to the Mrs. Revere, Bubble Rock finished fourth in the \$300,000 Valley View (GIII) at Keeneland on Oct. 28.

“We’re very proud of her effort today,” Cox said. “She’s a filly that we tried multiple distances with and at the end of a 3-year-old campaign this was a target for us. She’s run well at Turfway in the past so we could keep that as a target this winter.”

Bubble Rock is a dark bay or brown daughter of More Than Ready out of the Giant’s Causeway mare Reef Point who was bred in Kentucky by her owner.

The Mrs. Revere is named in honor of Mrs. Revere, an accomplished Churchill Downs fan favorite in the mid-1980s. Mrs. Revere won 12 races in 28 starts, finished second seven times and earned \$429,545 for Hall of Fame trainer **Bill Mott**. Her six wins in a dozen starts at Churchill Downs included stakes triumphs in the Regret, Dogwood and Edgewood in 1984 and the Kentucky Cardinal in 1985. She was owned by Dr. **Hiram Polk** and the late **Dr. David Richardson**, who have provided the winner's trophy for the Mrs. Revere in each year of its existence.

CLARK QUOTES

Joel Rosario (jockey, Proxy, winner) – “This was his first start in a few months so he was a little sharper leaving the gate. He was a little bit further back in his last start here in the Stephen Foster than I expected him to be. I knew (West Will Power) was really the only horse that had early speed in the race so I didn't want to let him get away easily. He was very professional today throughout. (West Will Power) didn't want to give in. He was very tough on the lead and I had to work pretty hard to get by him.”

Mike Stidham (trainer, Proxy, winner) – “I was a little shocked he showed as much speed as he did. That could have been because of how fresh he was coming off the layoff. We had this race as a target when we gave him a break following the Stephen Foster. It's very special for him to get his first graded stakes win as a Grade I. I think Joel (Rosario) knew from riding (West Will Power) last time in the Fayette that he would show early speed again. When he broke as sharp as he did, he didn't take position away from him. I was confident he'd have enough left in the stretch by his pedigree. He's bred to go a mile-and-a-quarter. There are a lot of options now going forward. I'd love to get back to the Dubai World Cup (GI) but going into 2023 there's a lot still on the table after a win like today.”

Brad Cox (trainer, West Will Power and Fulsome, runner-up and third) – “Both horses tried really hard. West Will Power was fighting hard on the lead and just got beat at the wire. There wasn't a whole lot of pace but I thought Fulsome was able to run well given how the pace turned out.”

Florent Geroux (jockey, Fulsome, third) – “He was traveling comfortably the whole way and that's his running style to come from off the pace. The problem was the pace wasn't very fast at all. I asked him to get a little closer around the turn but it was tough to close into the leaders.”

Eric Reed (trainer, Rich Strike, sixth) – “He was in a good position at the rail but turning for home he didn't have anything left at all. We knew it was a big risk running him back in three weeks. Sometimes you're the hero and sometimes you're the goat.”

MRS. REVERE QUOTES

Joel Rosario (jockey, Bubble Rock, winner) – “She broke very well from the gate and took me to an easy lead down the stretch. She got into a really good rhythm and we weren't going too fast down the backside. I could feel around the turn I still had a lot of horse beneath me and she was able to kick clear in the stretch.”

Brad Cox (trainer, Bubble Rock, winner) – “We're very proud of her effort today. She's a filly that we tried multiple distances with and at the end of a 3-year-old campaign this was a target for us. She's run well at Turfway in the past so we could keep that as a target this winter.”

Edgar Morales (jockey, Joyful Applause, runner-up) – “She has some good tactical speed and likes to be closer to the pace. I was able to let her sit second behind Joel (Rosario, aboard Bubble Rock). I started asking her to get a little closer around the turn and she hung in there well and was second best.”

Helen Pitts-Blasi (trainer, Joyful Applause, runner-up) – “I'm so proud of her today. I trained the whole family and it's very satisfying to see her run so well against horses like this. She's still just figuring out the game and can only improve from here.”

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