

QUARANTINA SETS FAIR STANDARD DURING RACING AT GRATZ (PA)

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GRATZ PA – It's not unusual for two-year-olds to turn in spectacular performances on the Pennsylvania Fair Sire Stakes circuit – 14 of the year's 17 divisional track records this year have been notched by the frosh – but it's unusual to see two-year-olds go outright faster than their three-year-old contemporaries. But such was the case as the Fairgrounds in this eastcentral Pennsylvania borough during Saturday and Sunday's two-day Sire Stakes stand, as the temperature dropped ten degrees, there was moisture in the area, and the track variant was moved from "+2" to "+3" between the two cards.

The star of the meet was the International Moni – Cantab Cabela freshman trotting miss Quarantina, who toured the Gratz twicearound in 2:00.1. That was not only a Gratz track record for two-year-old trotters of either sex, but it also was the fastest mile ever turned in by a two-year-old trotting filly at a Pennsylvania fair, eclipsing the 2:00.3 mark set by Nicole Hanover in 2017 at the same oval.

Quarantina is owned by trainer/driver Todd Schadel and his wife Christine; the Schadel barn would also send out the other winners in this group's "A" PaFSS action: Dancinwiththangels in 2:03.3 for her fifth straight win, and Cocktails To Go, now a winner of three consecutive races after a 2:04.4 triumph.

Fastest mile of the entire meet came Saturday from another in the Schadel barn, the Captaintreacheraus – Well What's New pacing gelding Captaincountrystar, who took a new mark of 1:58.3 for Schadel, Andy Miller Stable Inc., and Wallace Townsend Jr. A winner of three in a row at the fairs, Captaincountrystar now has three 2:00 miles to his credit on the circuit, second only to the five posted by three-year-old Buchannon Hanover (more on him in a minute).

Other freshmen turning in 2:00 clockings were Little Lady J, a daughter of A Rocknroll Dance – Monet's Lilly who tallied in 1:59.3 for driver Dave Brickell and trainer/owner Mitchell York, and the Betting Line – Parlee Beach gelding Rusty Beach, home in 2:00 for driver Eric Neal and trainer Richard Dunn, the latter co-owner with MBC Stables LLC.

As noted, the conditions for Sunday's racing were hardly made for speedy miles, yet a sub-2:00 effort was achieved by the Sweet Lou pacing filly Sweet And Feisty, a 1:59.3 winner for Team Brickell/York. Two horses achieved their ninth fair wins of the season, tops among all competitors: the aforementioned Always B Miki colt Buchannon Hanover, winner of nine in a row who needed only 2:01.1 to triumph here, and the Explosive Matters filly Heart Matters, winner of all nine of her fair starts after a 2:03 score.

Both Buchannon Hanover and Heart Matters come from the barn of Todd Schadel, and no genius is required to see that his stable generated the most driving and training wins for Todd at Gratz. Aaron Johnson was second among drivers with four visits to Victory Lane, while Mitchell York was next in line on the training side having harnessed three winners.

The Pennsylvania Fair harness action stays right at Gratz for their two-day meet during the fair proper this coming Sunday and Monday; stops at Bloomsburg and then for a two-day meet at Meadville complete the fairs action for the year in the Keystone State. The top pointearners throughout the summer will earn their way into their \$25,000 divisional Championships, to be held Friday, October 7 at The Meadows.