

August 11, 2008

**FAIRBANKS BOUNCES BACK TO HIS BEST IN 5 ¾-LENGTH SARATOGA SCORE, TODD PLETCHER TRAINEE WIRES HIS FIELD IN DUKE OF MAGENTA STAKES, TEAM VALOR COLT'S 107 BEYER IS HIS BEST SINCE 115 FIGURE LAST SEASON**



Fairbanks returned to his best form to score a facile, wire-to-wire victory in Saturday's featured Saratoga race, the inaugural \$111,750 Duke of Magenta Stakes, in which he was sent postward as the 8 to 5 favorite in a field of 7 older handicappers.

Richard (The Mig) Migliore was reunited with the 5-year-old Giant's Causeway horse for the 1 3/16-mile race and he allowed the speedy bay to bowl along under a good hold, as he went the initial quarter in :23.90 and the first half in :47.86.

Team Valor International principal Barry Irwin, speaking with "The Mig" in the paddock, said "A good strategy today might be to have the race won before you leave the backstretch."

During the third quarter of the race, Migliore loosened his hold on the reins and let the long-striding horse strut his stuff. Fairbanks responded by quickly doubling his advantage to more than 3 lengths. Migliore let him stride out to the quarter pole, where his lead increased to just under 5 lengths.

Once in the homestretch, Migliore sat down and rode the horse for the next furlong, quelling any bids from his pursuers. In the final sixteenth of a mile, Migliore turned around, saw he was comfortably in front, took a hold of his mount and let him cruise to the wire.

Fairbanks won by 5 ¾ and it could have been 8 had his rider so desired.

Final time of 1:55.45 was four-fifths of a second shy of the track record at Saratoga set 26 years earlier by Rokeby Stable's Winter's Tale.

Another Giant's Causeway horse Angliana was second by a nose ahead of the highly accomplished former Pletcher runner Magna Graduate. Pletcher's other colt Sam P., who raced second for the initial half-mile, dropped back to finish fifth beaten 10 lengths.



*Barry Irwin and Richard Migliore happy with the win.*

Barry Irwin said "The Mig rode a great race. The race was won in the third quarter, when Richard let the horse roll a :23 1/5 quarter down the backstretch. That took all the starch out of the competition."

Fairbanks improved his race record from 17 starts to 5-4-0 and earnings of \$582,768. The Graded stakes winner and Grade 1-placed runner was winning his second career added-money event.

The horse was bought by Team Valor International as a yearling when he topped the Saratoga sale on a bid of \$1.85 million.

The Duke of Magenta victor is stakes winner number 9 this season for Team Valor International, which earlier had won Graded stakes with 8 other runners. Win number 40 for the stable this year kept Team Valor's winning strike rate at a solid 20 percent. Earnings for 2008 increased with the \$67,050 pot increased to \$2,355,319. Team Valor has won 40 races so far in 2008, and 10 of them have been stakes, meaning that 25 percent of the stable's victories in 2008 have come in stakes.

