

**THE BLACK ALBUM PREVAILS IN CLOSE FINISH TO WIN CHARLIE BARLEY S. FLAVIEN PRAT FASHIONS PERFECT TRIP FOR GUTSY LITTLE 3-YEAR-OLD FRENCH COLT, FRENCH TRAINER AND FRENCH JOCKEY WIN AT WOODBINE**



*Photo credit: Michael Burns photography*

The Black Album received a gorgeous ride from turf genius Flavien Prat and responded in kind with a courageous performance to get up in the last step to account for the \$100,000 (Canadian funds) one-mile Listed Charlie Barley Stakes last Saturday on the outer grass course at Woodbine.

Dispatched as the 3-to-1 second choice to even-money favorite Global Access (the stakes-winning son of former Team Valor's German yearling buy and double Grade 2 winner Daveron), The Black Album sported blinkers. Trainer Rodolphe (Rudy) Brisset advised Prat that the colt figured to break sharply and to see if the jockey could find some cover and wait as long as possible to turn him loose.

"The Black" did indeed break sharply, but Prat was able to tuck him behind the pacesetter and stay in the pocket racing fourth with the favorite just outside of him until he was ready to let him strut his stuff in the lane. Positions did not change through the first half mile.

"The Black Album has had a great run, comes up on the inside," the race caller announced as the field turned for home. Just inside the lane, Prat momentarily looked to be stymied behind horses, but he instantly found a seam, split horses and suddenly was head and head on the lead against Graham Motion's Inventing Blame. More importantly he had given the slip to

Global Access, who tried to block "The Black" around the turn but his jockey did not have enough horse to pull it off.

Down the lane, The Black Album fought tooth and nail with the 9-to-1 shot Inventing Blame, winner of his last start at Woodbine. Prat used his stick a few times to keep the black colt going and went to a vigorous hand ride just before the finish line and was able to get his mount to drop his head right on the wire when it counted, to win by a head.

Global Access found his best stride too late and wound up half a length back in third. The mile was traversed in 1:34-flat. [VIDEO](#)

The winning horse, jockey and trainer all were born in France. *Vive le France!*

"It was good and it all worked out as planned," Brisset said.

Barry Irwin said "The colt is probably just a touch better going shorter, but the one turn is his gig. That long stretch at Woodbine did not do him any favors. I can see this colt winning a sprint at Kentucky Downs if we could get him into a race there. Regardless, he is a very useful little horse. He can win more races if he is spotted correctly and if we are lucky enough to get rides like this one."

The Black Album is now a double stakes winner, having accounted last year at 2 in France for the Group 3 Prix la Rochette over seven-eighths of a mile at Longchamp for trainer Jane Soubagne. His record now stands at 4 wins and 2 thirds from 10 career outings and earning just shy of the \$200,000.

He becomes stakes winner number 157 for a Barry Irwin syndicated horse since 1987. The 25-percent strike rate of stakes winners has been maintained for the past 32 racing seasons.