

**OLEKSANDRA GOES LAST TO FIRST RUNNING DOWN THE BOYS AT BELMONT  
AMAZING FINISH UNDER COCKY RIDE BY ROSARIO SECURES NECK VICTORY  
“AK” HOMEBRED MISSES 6-FURLONG COURSE RECORD BY 2 TICKS IN 1:07.17**



*Under super-confident ride from Joel Rosario, Animal Kingdom homebred Oleksandra gets up for Bel win.*

Oleksandra's rapid development into one of the nation's most promising female grass sprinters was on display this afternoon at Belmont Park, where she ran down a field of males to score in a nw3 race after a similar event for fillies and mares failed to attract enough entrants earlier in the week.

Pulling out one of his favorite riffs from his songbook, trainer Neil Drysdale sent her out super sharp to beat males, a gambit he has been doing with incredible regularity for the past 5 decades at North American racetracks.

"I've got to credit Joel (Rosario), because he has been coming out to work her, he listens to my tips on how to ride her and now he knows her like a book. He is totally in tune with her and he gives her enough room and time to gather herself before he allows her to make her best move."

On the expansive Belmont Park turf course with its wide turns, Amazon-sized Oleksandra can really stretch out. Once she takes full flight, it is a joy to watch how far underneath herself she reaches with her long hindlegs.



*Assistant trainer John Donohue (L) with longtime Long Island racing partner Steve "Red" Karlin and NY chef Neil Kleinberg.*

Three horses were about 3-to-1, third among those in order of odds being the extra-tall Oleksandra. When the gates opened, Rosario took a nice hold of her and he was able to get her to settle in the run down the backstretch, although for a few strides she did try to show her speed. Rosario was ready for her and the filly was unable to fool the Dominican rider.

Oleksandra trailed the field of 6 until the field approached the quarter pole, where Rosario gradually began to angle outside. He entered the lane at least 5 or 6 wide. Once in the lane Rosario did not immediately move her to a position where she was able to see daylight.

When Rosario finally deigned to wheel the filly out and she began to fire, the jockey did not immediately allow her to get into her full stride. At the eighth pole, which was reached in a very swift :55.70, the Animal Kingdom filly was still 2 lengths in arrears.

Rosario finally gave the office to the filly, she lengthened her stride, closed what certainly looked like an insurmountable gap and got up just before the wire to win by a neck. [VIDEO](#)

Final time of 1:07.17 missed the course record for 6 furlongs by :43 (two-fifths of a second). She likely shaded 11 seconds for her final furlong.

Much credit must go to Drysdale for the fabulous job he has done educating and conditioning this filly because she has not always been a picnic.

The Australian-bred filly will not turn 5 officially on Southern-Hemisphere time until Monday, so she still has a license to improve with maturity.

Oleksandra now has won 4 of 6 American starts and raised her career gleanings to more than \$172,000. She now heads to Woodbine for the Grade 3 Royal North going 6 furlongs. It is doubtful Rosario will be available, so Drysdale is already on the hunt for a replacement. He will, of course, give Rosario a chance to ride her, but he is not hopeful because Saratoga will be on by that time.