

May 3, 2010

HELLO MOTO! TEAM VALOR AND BARBER STRIKE IN SUMTER S. IN MIAMI, MOTOVATO MAKES GOOD AT ODDS-ON WITH DECISIVE SCORE AT CALDER, PROUD CITIZEN HORSE IS PAYING QUICK DIVIDENDS TO VALOR PARTNERS



Team Valor knew going into Saturday's Sumter at Calder that the main threat to Motovato's defense of his crown for the \$55,000 stakes in the would be none other than Causeway's Kin, an improving, purple-blooded, 4-year-old colt owned by the Estate of Edmund Gann and trained by Marty Wolfson.

The irony involved in the matchup was uncanny. Not only did Team Valor and Gary Barber acquire Motovato from the Estate of Ed Gann about 2 months ago, but it was You And I Forever, a 5-year-old horse owned by the Estate of Ed Gann, who swooped past Motovato en route to victory in the Grade 2, \$300,000 Gulfstream Park Handicap in March.

The story goes further. You And I Forever is the older half-brother of Causeway's Kin. The former being by A.P. Indy, the latter by Giant's Causeway. Both from the 5-time Grade 1 winner You, who was campaigned by Gann. So when Motovato ranged up alongside the right flank of Causeway's Kin spinning out of the final bend in 8.33-furlong race, Team Valor's faithful knew they had a dogfight on their hands and may have dug down a little deeper from within to get Motovato home on top. The gritty son of Proud Citizen came through with a decisive 1 ¼-length score by the time the wire arrived. The win was of the grind-it-out variety, as Causeway's Kin proved a formidable foe to run down. The top pair separated themselves by a whopping 7-lengths from the show horse.

In just 2 starts since being acquired by TVI and Barber, Motovato has a strong second-place finish to his credit in a Grade 2 in which he banked 60-large and Saturday's stakes win pocketed him another \$30,000, swelling his career bankroll past the \$300,000 plateau. A Listed winner around 2 turns thrice and a Graded winner around 1 turn, Motovato may just now be coming into his own. Trainer Marty Wolfson has had the Grade 1 Metropolitan Mile on Memorial Day in the back of his mind for a few months now, but since Saturday's race may have been more taxing on Motovato than initially intended, a softer spot like the Grade 3 Memorial Day Handicap right in his own backyard may be a more realistic option if Wolfson feels the horse is up to any sort of race in 30 days time.

"Marty said Motovato came into the Sumter doing better than ever," Team Valor CEO Barry Irwin remarked. "Had he not run Causeway's Kin, who is eligible for a NW2, against Motovato, our colt would have had a much, much easier time of it. He had to work pretty hard to mow down that other horse. He's got a lot of toughness and class about him. We've got to be careful about where we decide to go with him next and how long we give him until his next race."

Speed figures underlined exactly how fast the race was run, as Motovato ran a 2 Ragozin figure and a 101 Beyer number.