

May 28, 2011

CRIMSON CHINA UP IN CLOSING STRIDES TO SNARE LAMPLIGHTER STAKES GIANT'S CAUSEWAY COLT GETS IDEAL PREP FOR \$600,000 VIRGINIA DERBY GRAHAM MOTION AND ALAN GARCIA COMBINE FOR ANOTHER STAKES WIN



Crimson China was last all the way today in the Lamplighter Stakes at Monmouth Park as the heavy 1 to 2 odds-on favorite, but his backers never had a moment's worry, even though the 3-year-old was last of 5 runners turning into the homestretch.

The pace was super-fast, as the grass sprinter Le Bon Ton Roule cut out suicidal fractions while being pushed by I'm Steppin' It Up as the splits were :22, :45 4/5 and 1:09 3/5.

Crimson China needed only 100 yards to put away his field.

As the field turned into the lane, the Team Valor colorbearer required about 6 seconds to mow down his opposition and won by 1 length while being eased across the line by a confident Alan Garcia, who was combining for yet another stakes win with trainer Graham Motion. Garcia had won the \$500,000 Vinery Racing Spiral Stakes in March at Turfway Park aboard subsequent Kentucky Derby hero Animal Kingdom.

Crimson China was third, still 4 lengths in arrears at the furlong marker. He was moving to the leader after a mile in 1:34 2/5 and hit the wire to complete a mile and a sixteenth in 1:40 3/5.

"The colt broke good, he was in my hands until I let him go in the stretch and he won easily," said the jockey, who took off riding at Belmont Park to pilot the English import in the \$70,000 event that will serve as his lone prep for the July 16 Virginia Derby, which will be renewed this season for a purse of \$600,000.

Crimson China now sports a record in 6 starts of 3 wins and 2 seconds, his lone unplaced outing occurring when he was fifth, beaten little more than 3 lengths, in the Grade 1 Blue Grass Stakes, after he was run back in 3 weeks.

Barry Irwin said "Graham has learned that this colt runs best when he has plenty of time between races. He will have 7 weeks between now and the Virginia Derby. He was just getting warmed up when he hit the wire and he is crying out for each of those 10 furlongs at Colonial Downs."

Crimson China was winning Team Valor International's sixth stakes race this season and he is among 5 stakes winners for the Versailles, Kentucky based stable.