

## VICTORY KINGDOM BEATEN NECK IN GRADE 3 ONTARIO FASHION STAKES HOMEBRED JUST PIPPED BY FAVORITE ON SYNTHETIC, EARNING 94 BEYER



*Victory Kingdom also by a neck in the G2 Kewney in Australia and has now placed three times in a Group or Graded stakes.*

**Victory Kingdom** came within a neck of pulling off a coup that would have increased the value of the mare, her dam Victory Party and her siblings in the Grade 3 Ontario Fashion Stakes at Woodbine on Saturday. Unable to handle sloppy dirt in her off-the-turf North American debut in a stakes at Saratoga when beaten off by a dozen lengths, the Animal Kingdom mare was tried on a synthetic track by connections desperately seeking a black-type victory before the mare is offered at Keeneland early in November.

Victory Kingdom was placing in a Graded-level dash for a third time in her career, having done it twice in Australia, where she had come agonizingly close to winning the Group 2 Kewney Stakes over 7 furlongs when also beaten a neck.

Victory Kingdom's dam Victory Party is a half-sister to three of the most impressive horses in the world today; **Beholder** (multiple Grade 1 winner and 4-time Champion), **Into Mischief** (Grade 1 winner and Leading Sire) and **Mendelssohn** (Champion and Grade 1 winner).

In the Ontario Fashion Stakes, the flashy bay Victory Kingdom broke well, raced second early behind suspected pacemaker Sister Peacock, quickly put her away and opened up a daylight advantage through a quarter in :22-flat. She kept close to the rail around the bend and reached the quarter pole in a rapid :44 3/5.

When she entered the stretch, she already looked to be on fumes and the fear was that the fast splits had tapped her stamina reserves. Her jockey allowed Victory Kingdom to situate herself in the lane and change leads before he got a bit busy on her.

Steve Bahen managed to coax a surge from Victory Kingdom and she was able to maintain an advantage of 1½ lengths after reaching the furlong grounds in :56 4/5. The mare had been dispatched at odds of 16 to 1—very nearly the longest chance in the 6-horse field. But she obviously did not realize she was not supposed to be where she was.

Meanwhile, Painting, which had trailed by as many as 5 lengths down the backstretch, began to make up ground fast around the final bend, which she took 4 wide. The well-bred Distorted Humor filly took hold late in the game, reached Victory Kingdom in the final yards and went on to “put a neck” on the pacesetter to win while stopping the clock in 1:09 2/5.



[LINK](#) to video.

Third in three successive Graded events, Painting stood out on form and speed ratings. She ran a 95 Beyer—fully 5 points her new top rating. Victory Kingdom earned a highly respectable 94. Key to the performance was that the ultra-consistent Sav finished 4 lengths farther adrift in third.