

May 14, 2016

EURO CHARLINE ENHANCES LOFTY REPUTATION IN GR. 1 LOCKINGE MARE RUNS SECOND TO TOP MALES AT A MILE, BREEDERS' CUP IN SIGHT BOTTI HAS SUCCEEDED IN SETTling HER, TURNING CAREER AROUND AT 5

Euro Charline confirmed her place among the elite horses in the world on May 14 with her second-place finish against males in Newbury's Lockinge Stakes, the first Group 1 for older horses this season in England. The 5-year-old mare gamely followed up on her second-place finish to Japan's Real Steel in the \$6-million Dubai Turf in March and has now won or placed in five races at the highest level.



Euro Charline, left, was the first filly or mare to finish in the top three in the Lockinge since 2007.

The highest-earning female horse in Team Valor history, Euro Charline pocketed \$109,000 to push her career bankroll past \$2.3-million.

The Lockinge is a perennial fixture in the World Thoroughbred Rankings' 50 leading races. Team Valor CEO Barry Irwin and trainer Marco Botti had to think long and hard about running Euro Charline after the Berkshire track took on more than two inches of rain over 7 days, with clear skies only moving in on the eve of the Lockinge.

Botti and his team walked the course layout twice before deciding the ground had dried enough to give the mare a fair chance. She has struggled in boggy conditions throughout her career.

High on the "pros" ledger in the deliberation of whether to go forward with Euro Charline was the presence of Ryan Moore, the leading international jockey who beat her aboard Real Steel in Dubai. Moore previously teamed with Euro Charline to win the Grade 1 Beverly D. Stakes at Arlington in 2014 and delivered another strong ride in the Lockinge even though the race played out in less than ideal fashion, as she only briefly found cover in the early stages over the one-mile straightaway, with the ground officially rated "good" but still obviously on the soft side.

Euro Charline settled well in midpack behind Godolphin's pacemaker, Barchan, but inherited the lead sooner than Moore expected, with about 2 1/2 furlongs remaining.

"The pacesetters stopped too soon for us and I was in front with no cover," Moore told Botti. "The Irish horse next to me (Endless Drama, which finished third), is very big and I wanted to keep out of his way, so I held my ground as long as possible."

When Moore asked Euro Charline to quicken, the mare gave her best and 100 meters from the wire she looked home free, until the winner Belardo came roaring up from last place on the far side to reach her and drive on to win by a length.

In the group at the center of the course, Euro Charline put away the favorite, Limato, and out-finished Endless Drama for the place spot.

Moore had identified Belardo as a chief threat based on his strong form on rain-softened turf, including a victory in the Group 1 Dewhurst Stakes at 2 and a close second-place finish to the top-class Solow in the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes last fall at 3.

Botti and Moore both said that the mare unfortunately hit the front a furlong too soon and was unable to keep up her furious finish for that long.

Euro Charline was the only filly or mare in the field and is the first female to finish in the top three in the Lockinge since 2007.

Botti said, "Euro Charline has proven again what a great filly she is. Team Valor must be very proud of her. She's tough and I think this is the best she's been. She's strong and has matured.

"Ryan said he wished [the front-runners had] taken him a bit further, but she didn't do anything wrong. This year she's run three good races, but she probably deserves to win a group 1 in England now."

Euro Charline will likely get that chance on July 8 in Newmarket's Falmouth Stakes, a race she finished second in last year. The long-range plan is to freshen her up in late summer and point for the \$2-million Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf at Santa Anita.

Barry Irwin said, "I have learned that the best way to win a Breeders' Cup race is to have a break in the autumn. We will stick with this plan. Personally, I could not be more proud of this mare. She has definitely improved from 4 to 5 and beat some real runners today."

[**Twin Spires recap**](#)

Lockinge Video Footage and Analysis
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