

GREEN UP UNDERLINES HER CLASS IN FACILE LISTED 7-FURLONG TRIUMPH JOHNNY V. ADJUSTS TO CONDITIONS, DELIVERS TEXT-BOOK RIDING LESSON



Green Up looked like her old self yesterday as she drew off fast down the lane while racing strictly on her own.

Green Up looked to have an insurmountable task for her comeback facing Frank's Rockette Sunday in a one-corner elongated sprint at Aqueduct for the \$135,000 Pumpkin Pie Stakes, but the pile of late money bet on the Team Valor International filly was a sign of confidence from unexpected quarters and presaged a positive yet unexpected result.

Frank's Rockette was sent off an odds-on favorite at 1-to-2, as the \$1.4-million earner has long been among the premier East Coast one-corner specialists for trainer Bill Mott. But the money that came in late for Green Up cut her odds to 8-to-5 at the off.

Barry Irwin had overruled trainer Todd Pletcher on the launching pad for the filly's comeback, eschewing an allowance race at Keeneland, instead favoring the Listed Pumpkin Pie Stakes to be used as a lucrative black-type prep for next month's Grade 3 Go for Wand Stakes at The Big A.

After a leisurely break, which found her last of 4 in the opening strides, Green Up was allowed to move up in short order and attend the pace while third on the outside about 2 lengths off the pace. In the run down the backstretch she eventually closed to the gap to be lapped on the top pair rounding the turn while 3 wide.

Fractions were more like those in a route race, not a sprint, as they basically went a quarter in :24 and a half in :47. Irwin was relieved to see the moderate splits, as it meant that Green Up was not unduly used to attend the pace. He liked seeing her wide, as she wants to be in the clear on the turns.



Curving for home the favorite emerged in front, trying to pack out Green up. When the field straightened up at the top of the lane for the drive to the finishing post, Frank's Rockette was marginally in front between horses and Green Up was never more than a neck behind herd. Although the favorite kept trying to carry Green Up out in the initial part of the home stretch, the TVI color-bearer was more than able to stand her ground.

JRV tapped her only once with the stick, choosing instead to simply show it to her a couple of times to maintain her forward momentum. She hit the front just before the eighth pole as she passed that marker after 6 furlongs in 1:10 4/5. She cruised through the final furlong in :12 2/5 to hit the wire in 1:23 1/5.

"The time was not fast, owing to the modest early splits, so the Beyer came back weak at 89, reflective of the overall slowness of the race," Irwin said, "but that is all good for us. Johnny said the filly won very easily and galloped out very strong. He was singularly impressed by the filly and how easily she handled the runner-up."

Green Up picked up just over \$74,000 for the win, increasing her career gleanings to about \$375,000. She also will receive a \$10,000 check from the Virginia Breeders' Association for winning a race outside of Virginia. In 8 career outings, she now has 5 wins (3 in Listed stakes), 1 second and 1 third.

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