

BELMONT**Corinthian holds on to win Met Mile****By DAVID GRENING**

ELMONT, N.Y. – Corinthian's ascension through the ranks of the handicap division is back on track after the talented but temperamental colt held on for a three-quarter-length victory in Monday's Grade 1, \$600,000 Metropolitan Handicap at Belmont Park.

Racing four wide but close to the pace from the get-go, Corinthian took over from Latent Heat turning for home and then held off a late run from Political Force, who took a whip in the face from Edgar Prado, the rider of Lawyer Ron. Political Force got second by a half-length over Lawyer Ron, the 8-5 favorite.

Sun King, second in this race last year, finished fourth and was followed in the order of finish by Latent Heat, Silver Wagon, Half Ours, Silent Name – who stumbled badly at the break – and Mr. Umphrey.

The victory was the third in four starts this year and the fifth from nine career starts for Corinthian, a 4-year-old son of Pulpit owned by Centennial Farms and trained by Jimmy Jerkens. Jerkens is the son of Hall of Fame trainer Allen Jerkens, who trained runner-up Political Force.

The win enabled Corinthian, who won the Grade 2 Gulfstream Park Handicap in March, to bounce back from a fifth-place finish in the Excelsior Breeders' Cup Handicap, a race in which he leapt at the break and never really threatened thereafter. Jerkens said Corinthian was too quiet that day anyway, an indication he wouldn't have run well.



ADAM COGLIANESE/NYRA

Corinthian wins Monday's Grade 1 Metropolitan Mile at Belmont Park, his third win in four starts this year.

A week before the Met Mile, Corinthian worked a brilliant five furlongs in 58 seconds, an indication to Jerkens that Corinthian was

sitting on a big race.

"I never had a horse do what he did last week here," said Jerkens, who clocked Corinthian going six

furlongs in 1:09 and change. "He ran to his work."

Breaking from post 8 under Kent Desormeaux, Corinthian raced four

wide but close to the pace, which was contested among Mr. Umphrey, Half Ours, and Latent Heat. The fractions were a modest 23.21 seconds, 45.70, and 1:10.20.

Leaving the five-sixteenths pole, Latent Heat had a short lead. But straightening away down the lane, Corinthian forged to the front. Jerkens was quite confident Corinthian had Lawyer Ron, but was a bit concerned when he saw his father's horse, Political Force, rallying.

"I said 'Oh my God, here comes the Chief,'" Jerkens said, referring to his father's nickname. "I don't believe it."

But Corinthian held on, covering the one mile in 1:34.77 and returning \$21.60 to win.

"Coming to the three-eighths pole, he kind of got into gear and acted as if he wanted to go for the wire," Desormeaux said. "That was the only time I restrained him and told him 'No, not yet.' Finally when the horses engaged, he jumped back in the bridle. I didn't have to ask him much, he knew it was time to go."

Prado said Lawyer Ron had a perfect trip, "just the horse in front kept on running hard at the end."

Commentator, the 2005 Whitney Handicap winner, made a smashing 6-year-old debut Monday, winning the \$65,350 Richmond Runner Stakes for New York-breds by 11 1/4 lengths. In his first start since finishing 10th in the Forego last September, Commentator covered 6 1/2 furlongs in 1:15.69 and returned \$2.30 to win.

There is a pick six carryover of \$262,675 entering Thursday's card.

LONE STAR**Embossed closes strong in Dallas Turf Cup****By MARY RAMPOLLINI**

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas – Embossed, who has raced over seven different courses in his last seven starts, found the soft turf at Lone Star Park to his liking Monday, when he closed fast for a three-quarter-length win over Crested and pacesetter Waupaca in the Grade 3, \$200,000 Dallas Turf Cup.

The 1 1/8-mile turf race was one of six stakes on the ninth annual Lone Star Million Day card, which is the richest program of the meet. The purses for the stakes totaled \$11 million, and the program was led by the Grade 3, \$400,000 Lone Star Park Handicap. A total of 16,196 attended.

Embossed (\$3.80) settled in about four lengths behind Waupaca, who moved to lead soon after the start and led the field through fractions of 25.64 seconds for the opening quarter and 51.23 for the half-mile mark. Embossed came into the stretch four wide and closed well to cover the distance in 1:52.68.

"My main concern was no matter how fast they went – unless they were blitzing – was to keep my horse within reasonable striking distance because he's got a good kick," said Garrett Gomez, who rode Embossed for trainer Niall O'Callaghan. "When I came off the turn, I uncovered him and he started coming home really well for me. You couldn't ask for a horse to do any more than he did today."

Waupaca won a photo for third over More Than Regal. Embossed, who scratched from Saturday's Grade 3, \$150,000 Louisville Handicap at Churchill Downs, earned \$120,000 for his win in the Dallas Turf Cup. He came into the race off a close fourth-place finish to On The Acorn in the Grade 2 San Juan Capistrano at Santa Anita on April 22.

Embossed races for Gary Tanaka and has now won 5 of 23 starts and \$441,233.

Ouija Board: Another win for Gomez

Gomez won the other graded turf

stakes on the program when he guided Lady of Venice to an impressive 1 3/4-length victory in the Grade 3, \$200,000 Ouija Board for fillies and mares at a mile. Brownie Points won a photo for second over Rich Fantasy.

Lady of Venice (\$2.80) trailed the field for much of the Ouija Board, as Rich Fantasy set fractions of 24.03 seconds for the opening quarter and 48.62 for the half-mile. Lady of Venice continued to trail to the top of the stretch, then was angled out five wide and unleashed an explosive rally through the stretch. She covered the distance over soft turf in 1:38.32.

"She's got a beautiful turn of foot," Gomez said. "She is just a remarkable filly."

Lady of Venice is trained by Patrick Biancone, who said earlier this week that the filly would be pointed for the Grade 2 CashCall Mile Invitational at Hollywood Park in July. Lady of Venice races for Martin Schwartz.

USA: Third stakes for Going Ballistic

In the first stakes on the program, Going Ballistic (\$8) rallied between horses in the final furlong to win the \$100,000 Pin Oak Stud USA Stakes for 3-year-olds by a half-length over Later Gater. It was another three-quarters of a length back in third to favorite Beta Capo. Cliff Berry rode the winner, who closed from seventh to win for trainer Donnie Von Hemel.

"At the half-mile pole when I pulled a goggle down, he grabbed the bit and I said, 'All right, I've got some horse,'" Berry said.

Going Ballistic covered the 1 1/16 miles over soft turf in 1:45.29. He earned \$60,000 for the third stakes win of his career and his earnings now stand at \$283,242 for Kindred Thoroughbreds.

Valid Expectations: Cintarosa closes

Cintarosa (\$16.40) closed with good energy through the stretch for a 1 1/2-length win over Moroccan Rose in the \$100,000 Valid

Expectations for fillies and mares at six furlongs. It was another head back to Yo Fanci in third.

Cintarosa sat several lengths off the pace set by Moroccan Rose and attended by True Tails and Seekingthereinbow. She unleashed a strong bid in the stretch and covered the distance over a track rated muddy in 1:12.

"She handled the going well," said Steve Asmussen, who trains Cintarosa for Jack Grunwald. "She ran beautifully on the right day."

Luis Quinonez rode Cintarosa, who registered her first stakes win in the Valid Expectations.

Atlanta Highway (\$9.20) closed with a flourish to win her third straight race in the \$100,000 Stonerside for 3-year-old fillies at seven furlongs. She won by 6 1/2 lengths over pacesetter and favorite Gallant Dreamer. Richard Eramia rode the winner for DeDe McGehee and trainer Andrew Leggio Jr.