

Pimlico Spring Meeting Opens April 19



Pimlico Race Course
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-12-07---Live racing shifts to historic Pimlico Race Course next Thursday for the spring meeting. The headline event of the eight-week stand is the 132nd running of the \$1 million Preakness Stakes® (Grade I), the middle jewel of the Triple Crown, on May 19.

“People are looking forward to Pimlico and real spring weather,” said Lou Raffetto, President and Chief Operating Officer of the Maryland Jockey Club. “We had a great season at Pimlico last year and we look forward to returning with top flight races. After a rough couple weeks weather-wise we have seen a resurgence with the return of turf racing and we want to build that during the Pimlico stand.”

The marquee meet of the Maryland racing season will feature 27 stakes races for purses of \$3.97 million. Fourteen of the added-money races, including all nine of the graded stakes for the meet, are slated for Preakness week, including nine on Preakness Day.

The May 18 card will feature five stakes races for fillies and mares, including the Grade II Black-Eyed Susan Stakes, the Allaire duPont Breeders’ Cup Distaff, which was upgraded from Grade III to Grade II status, and the Grade III Adena Stallions’ Miss Preakness.

“Everyone at the Maryland Jockey Club takes a tremendous amount of pride in putting on a first-class show during Preakness week,” said Raffetto. “It is not only something we are proud of but the Preakness experience is special to Baltimore and Maryland. To be able to host an event of this magnitude means so much in so many ways. It puts a focus on the city and state and it also has a positive economic impact for the entire area. We just spent three months focusing on Annapolis trying to get the state to invest in the industry so we could be on a competitive playing field with the surrounding states. But now our focus will be strictly Pimlico and the Preakness.”

Opening day attractions include free admission, a complimentary live racing program, concession specials and a chance to win one of five Charm City prize packs.

The opening Saturday of the spring stand will include six added money races and a Pimlico baseball t-shirt to the first 4,000 fans in attendance.

For the third straight year, three of the added money races on the Spring Festival of Racing card will showcase Maryland Million-nominated or Maryland-bred runners. The \$125,000 stakes offered are: The Country Life Farm (1 1/16 miles for 3-year-old fillies), the Maryland Stallion Station (six furlongs, 3-year-olds) and the Northview Stallion Station (1 1/16 miles, fillies and mares, 3-year-olds and up).

“This day gives a lot of the horses that hope to run Preakness weekend a chance to get a race over the track,” added Raffetto. “With the promotions that weekend we look to put on a top quality card.”

The headline event on the card contested on April 21st is the \$125,000 Federico Tesio Stakes for 3-year-olds. The Tesio, which will be televised on ESPN, has been a Preakness prep for such standouts as Deputed Testimony (1983), Oliver’s Twist (1995) and Magic Weisner (2002). This year’s field is expected to include Etude, the promising son of Include, from the Dickie Small barn.

The meet will conclude on Saturday, June 9, racing on a Thursday through Sunday schedule.

First post for 22 days of the meeting will be 1:10 p.m. with adjustments on Preakness (10:30 a.m.), Black-Eyed Susan (12:15 p.m.) and Kentucky Derby (12:45 p.m.) days. Pimlico will offer twilight racing (3:15 p.m.) Thursday’s and Friday’s for a three-week stretch following the Preakness (May 24-25-31 & June 1-7-8).

"The twilight was hugely successful at Laurel," Raffetto said. "People took advantage of the two-for-one beer specials and two-for-\$22 dining specials which we will be bringing back. We thought once we got passed the Preakness this was something worthwhile."

Etude Is Favored In Saturday's Tesio Stakes



Etude
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-19-07---Fitzhugh LLC's Etude is expected to leave the starting gate as the heavy favorite in Saturday's \$125,000 Federico Tesio Stakes at historic Pimlico Race Course. The 1-1/8 mile test on the main track is one of the final trials for 3-year-olds who are considering a run at the Preakness® Stakes, the middle jewel of racing's Triple Crown.

The opening Saturday at Pimlico, always a harbinger of spring in Baltimore, is entitled the Spring Festival Of Racing. Besides the Tesio, four other added-money races will be presented and they include the \$125,000 Northview Stallion Stakes for fillies and mares, the \$125,000 Maryland Stallion Station Stakes for 3-year-olds, the \$95,000 Jim McKay Sprint for 3-year-olds and up and the \$55,000 Old Hilltop Overnight Stakes for 3-year-olds and up. A sixth added money race, the \$125,000 Country Life Farm Stakes only garnered four entries and was not carded.

Etude (4-5), a grey-roan son of 2001 Pimlico Special winner Include, brings an air of excitement to Saturday's festivities. His six race career began with three straight seconds, but after trainer Richard Small fitted him with blinkers, Etude reeled off three straight victories. Each win was more impressive than the last and his streak was topped off by a stakes victory in last month's Private Terms at Laurel Park.

Trainer Small said, "I think the race is sort of a logical progression, a little longer, a little more difficult, so the horse should be ready for it.

"I think really the horse just figured it out. I think giving him blinkers gives it more credit than they truly deserve. The horse figured it out by himself. He's focused more and he's made big improvement in his races."

Luis Garcia, his pilot for his past three victories, retains the mount.

Five other 3-year-olds will challenge Etude. Second choice on the morning line is Xchanger (2-1), who is based in Maryland at the Fair Hill Training Center. Xchanger won his first two starts at Monmouth Park last summer, including the Grade III Sapling Stakes. His travails have taken him to Belmont for the Grade I Champagne (sixth), Aqueduct for the Grade III Nashua (third), Delta Downs for the Grade III Jackpot (third), and Oaklawn for the Southwest Stakes (fifth) and Grade III Rebel (seventh).

Mark Shuman trains the grey-roan colt and jockey Ramon Dominguez will ride him for the first time. Shuman said, "Ramon Dominguez confirmed he could ride in the Tesio and we decided to stay there (rather than go in the Lexington Stakes at Keeneland).

"He (Etude) was the main reason I was going to the Lexington Stakes. Since they put the blinkers on I'm very impressed. I think that horse will be 4-5 and I think we'll be second choice. I'd rather not run against him but it's close to home. If I'm a good second to him, so be it. We can't change that.

"I hate to make excuses. Sprinting, the horse, he's undefeated. He trains like a horse who wants to go long. We had to make a complete stop at Delta Downs. Then if you come back in the Southwest we're checking when everybody else is running. I was disappointed with the jockey when he came off the rail (in the Rebel Stakes). It was disappointing to come wide for no reason. He didn't give me a chance."

Saratoga Lulaby (6-1) finished a good second behind Etude in the Private Terms and is taking another shot at the favorite. The John Rigattieri trained son of Brahams has finished third, fifth and second in his past three starts, all stakes races at Laurel Park. Dyn Panell keeps the mount.

Locally-based Belly Rub (10-1) has made three trips to Aqueduct this year and won all three starts, albeit against fellow New York-bred runners. The undefeated son of Buddha runs for trainer Dove Haughton and will carry jockey Jeremy Rose for the first time.

Longshots Pink Viper (15-1) and Zephyr Cat (20-1) complete the line-up. Pink Viper ships in from Aqueduct with a maiden win and a victory in the Count Fleet Stakes on his resume. Zephyr Cat is a Pimlico-based runner for trainer Frannie Campitelli. He's won a maiden race and an entry-level allowance.

The Tesio, which will be televised on ESPN 2 from 6-7 p.m., has been a Preakness prep for such standouts as Deputed Testimony (1983), Oliver's Twist (1995) and Magic Weisner (2002).

Purses of \$671,000 make the day the fifth biggest on the Maryland racing calendar trailing only Preakness, Maryland Million, Black-Eyed Susan and De Francis Dash days.

The first 4,000 fans through the turnstiles will be treated to a free Pimlico baseball t-shirt. First post is 1:10 p.m.

RIGATTIERI BARN WINS THREE ON OPENING DAY

John Rigattieri, a leading trainer in New England who has made his presence felt while wintering in Maryland the past few seasons, jumped out in front of the pack when he saddled three winners at Pimlico on today's opening day card.

Rigattieri was quick out of the box when he saddled the winner of today's 1:10 p.m. opener. Marty's Joia (\$6.80) and jockey Brittany Arterburn edged Hill Brae and jockey Jeremy Rose.

The quiet New Yorker delivered his second winner in race three. Sora (\$7.20), who carried jockey Dyn Panell, was a comfortable winner over longshot Onemorefashion, who set off a \$169.40 exacta and a \$450.40 triple.

Rigattieri teamed up with Panell again in race five. He dropped Love The Dawn from allowance company to face \$18,000 claiming fillies and mares and saw her triumph over seven others, to the tune of \$7.60.

More than 5,253 fans turned out under cloudy skies to enjoy an afternoon at the historic Baltimore oval, which will feature live racing through Saturday, June 9. The signature race of the stand is the 132nd Preakness® Stakes, the middle jewel of the famed Triple Crown 30 days from today, Saturday, May 19.



Fans enjoying opening day at Pimlico
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

MJC ANNOUNCES FINAL WINTER MEET HANDLE FIGURES

The Maryland Jockey Club concluded its winter meet on Sunday, posting total wagering figures which are 9% lower than the same dates a year ago. All-sources handle totaled \$291.8 million for the 2007 winter meet, compared to \$321 million for the first 15 weeks of 2006.

NAPRAVNIK BACK IN THE SADDLE FOR FIRST TIME SINCE JAN. SPILL

Rosie Napravnik, Maryland's leading rider in 2006, worked three horses at Pimlico this morning for trainer Dickie Small, one day after being given clearance by doctors to return to work. The 19-year-old suffered three compression fractures in the thoracic region of her back in a spill at Laurel Park on January 26.

"The doctor had the same thing in mind to go at this slow and he left it up to me to how many horses I want to get on each morning," said Napravnik, who rode 300 winners a year ago. "My back feels great after getting on horses this morning. I am not putting a timetable on when I return in the afternoon. It all depends on how well I feel and how quickly I get fit."

Earlier this month, the 2006 Eclipse Award runner-up for outstanding apprentice announced she had hired agent Steve Rushing and would be riding full-time at Delaware Park when she was healthy.

"I sure will be missing Maryland. It has treated me very well," added Napravnik. "I am sure I'll be back at the end of the Delaware meet. I love Maryland. It is like my comfort zone. I feel so welcomed here. All the trainers have supported me and given me a shot."

Four Stakes Enliven Saturday's Undercard



Silmaril
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-20-07---Five stakes spice up the first Saturday card at Pimlico Race Course. While much of the racing public is focused on the \$125,000 Tesio Stakes, with emerging star Etude as the 4-5 morning line favorite, the four other stakes add flavor and panache to the annual Spring Festival of Racing.

For the third straight year the card will showcase Maryland Million-nominated or Maryland-bred runners. Two of the state's leading breeding farms are each sponsoring a race and have donated seasons to two stallions, which will be given to the breeders of the top two finishers of their races.

The stakes go as races two, four, six, eight and ten. The Tesio, which will be shown on a taped-delayed basis on ESPN 2 from 6-7 p.m., is the eighth race.

Race two is the \$125,000 Northview Stallion Stakes. Five Maryland-bred fillies and mares are entered to race 1-1/16 miles on the main track and the 3-5 favorite is the accomplished racing mare Silmaril.

Silmaril is a winner of over \$720,000 and thirteen races, including nine stakes at five different distances. The pride of the Chris Grove stable has started three times this year, with victories in the What A Summer and Conniver Stakes and a troubled, near-miss second in the Grade II Barbara Fritchie. Ryan Fogelsonger has the mount.

"She ran really hard in the Fritchie and it took a lot out of her," Fogelsonger said. "She came back a little quick in the Conniver and she really didn't want to run that day. She won that race on class and heart, not talent. Chris gave her some well deserved time off. I worked her last Friday and she was unbelievable. She felt so strong and just exploded home from the quarter-pole home without asking."

After sprinting in six of her last seven races, the daughter of Diamond returns to a distance where she defeated the champion Ashado in the 2005 Pimlico Distaff (Grade III).

"She has been running really big while sprinting but she will be able to handle the distance," added Fogelsonger. "Because of the small field she will be able to relax and you'll see another big performance. She is my favorite horse because of her personality. If she happened to be a \$7,500 claimer I would still say she was my favorite horse. It is just a bonus that she is a great runner."

Silmaril's stiffest competition will come from Les Ry Leigh, who is shipping to Pimlico from Keeneland after racing at Santa Anita Park this winter. Ramon Dominguez will ride the daughter of Broken Vow for trainer Larry Jones.

Race four is the \$125,000 Maryland Stallion Station Stakes. Seven 3-year-olds will be sprinting six furlongs on the main track. The morning line favorite is Hobbitontherocks (3-2), a Philly Park shipper trained by Ramon Preciado. The son of Lion Hearted finished second after a wide trip in Aqueduct's Bay Shore Stakes. Ramon Dominguez has the mount.

Call Me Clash, who is trained by Scott Lake and will be ridden by Jeremy Rose, is the 9-5 second choice. The son of Clash By Night won the Horatius Stakes at Laurel before running a bang-up second in the seven furlong Lafayette Stakes at Keeneland two weeks ago.

Race six is the \$95,000 Jim McKay Sprint. Seven older horses are entered to race six furlongs on the main track and, based on the morning line odds, the race is wide open. Wild Jam is listed at 7-2, Coppertone Kid and Ironton both set at 4-1 and Pavo and Talent Search share starting odds of 9-2. After these runners come Celtic Innis at 6-1 and Euro Code at 10-1.

Wild Jam, who is based in New York with trainer Ben Perkins Jr., raced this winter at Aqueduct, finishing fifth in the Paumonok Handicap and second in the Grade III Toboggin Handicap. Joe Bravo has the mount.

Race ten is the \$55,000 Old Hilltop Overnight Stakes. Nine older horses will start in this 1-1/16th mile test on the main track. Your Bluffing, who has won sixteen races, 15 of them at Laurel Park, comes into the race off an allowance victory at his home track. Your Bluffing is winless in three tries at Pimlico, which gives some hope to the others. Mike Trombetta, who trains the Pine Bluff gelding, will be in Chicago Saturday as Sweetnorthernstain runs in the \$250,000 National Jockey Club Handicap (Grade III) at Hawthorne. Jose Caraballo will ride.

Second choice in the Old Hilltop is Trapped Again, who ships to Pimlico from Delaware Park. Trapped Again spent the winter traveling to Laurel and Aqueduct without winning, but he does have an enviable record of 7-9-6 in thirty-seven outings. Michael Gorham trains the 7-year-old son of Deputy Commander. Oliver Castillo has the mount.

QUINONES SWEEPS FINAL FOUR RACES ON FRIDAY CARD

Apprentice Carlos Quinones swept the final four races on today's ten race card at Pimlico.

The 5-pound bug won the seventh race aboard Low Ceiling (\$6.80) for trainer Berkley Kern. In race eight, he charged to the lead aboard Hanalei Bay (\$31.00) and nursed that one around the one mile oval to score the upset in the optional/allowance test.

Quinones surprised again in race nine, taking Summer Notebook (\$12.60) to the front and to the winners' circle for trainer Mary Eppler. Then, in the day's finale, he stole off aboard Frontier Sky (\$9.20) and won easily over maiden claimers.

"I am pretty happy," Quinones said. "I never won four races before. Winning races makes me even hungrier. I want to get better every day."

The native of Puerto Rico arrived in Maryland last fall after beginning his career in New York. He finished sixth in the recently completed Laurel Park winter meeting trailing only veterans Jeremy Rose, Mario Pino, Luis Garcia, Ryan Fogelsonger and Dyn Panell. The 21-year-old is represented by J.D. Brown.

"We want to carry that over to Pimlico," Brown said. "The momentum has been building for him. We won a lot of races without a big outfit until Dale Capuano started riding us late in the Laurel meet. One of things I like is that he still wants to ride for the little people. He loses the bug in August and by that time we are hoping to keep the business we have earned as a journeyman."



Carlos Quinones
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

SALZMAN BARN WINS FIRST TWO-YEAR OLD RACE OF THE YEAR



Snow Storm Lady
Photo Credit: Martin Mora/MJC

In what is becoming routine, the barn of Tim Salzman won the first two-year-old race of the year in Maryland when Snow Storm Lady beat stablemate Brewtiful Girl and four other fillies in the Friday opener, a 4 ½ furlong test.

The daughter of Snow Ridge chased the pacesetter Giddyupfour'o'nine but was able to get by to win by a head. Giddyupfour'o'nine held off her stablemate Cherokee Feather for second by a head. Another neck back was Brewtiful Girl, the 1-2 favorite.

The winner stopped the timer in 54.97 and paid \$19.80 to win.

My Girlie Steals Off To Win Northview Stallion Station Stakes



My Girlie
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-21-07---Runaway Point Farm's My Girlie sped to the front from her outside post, set pedestrian fractions and while drifting out towards the finish line, had enough left in the tank to hold off post time favorite Silmaril and win the \$125,000 Northview Stallion Station Stakes for older fillies and mares, the first of five added money races today at Pimlico.

My Girlie, a 5-year-old daughter of Pioneering trained by Mark Shuman, beat Silmaril by 1-1/4 lengths in the 1-1/16th mile test on the main track. Take A Check chased the winner to the far turn, relinquished her position to Silmaril and finished third.

Jose Caraballo rode the winner, who paid \$18. Her winning time was 1:43.96, a full three seconds off the track record of 1:40.8.

"The plan was to try to go as slow as I can," Caraballo said. "The horse loves this track. She was on her toes the whole race. She broke good and wanted to go. I tried to slow her down the back side. She was really ready today and when I turned for home I knew no one could catch me."

"On paper it really looked like it was our race to lose," said Shuman. "Her form certainly indicated that she could be on the lead by herself. I just didn't know how comfortable it could get. I saw the first quarter in .25 and I was hoping real hard for .49 or .49 and change but I was really happy with the half in .48.4. She was very relaxed and running pretty comfortable. He had plenty of horse when he asked her to run on the turn. By the time anyone got up to where they could challenge her, it was just too late. It's always exciting when you beat a horse the quality of Silmaril. She's a real good one."

The pride of trainer Chris Grove's barn, Silmaril is a winner of nearly \$750,000 and nine stakes at five different distances, which includes a win over the champion Ashado in the 2005 Pimlico Distaff (Grade III) at the distance.

"I don't know what to say," said Ryan Fogelsonger, who rode the favorite. "We figured to be laying second and I figured we would be fine. Jose picked up the pace from 25 seconds to 48 seconds and they ran away from the rest of us. I tried to keep her close without asking for too much from Silmaril. We were really coming at the wire but in a five-horse field it is very easy for a 1-9 shot to get beat and that is what happened today."

Katie's Love and Les Ry Leigh completed the order.

Heart Throbbin' Prevails In Maryland Stallion Station Stakes



Heart Throbbin'
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-21-07---One & Won Stable's Heart Throbbin' wore down the favorites to spring an upset in the \$125,000 Maryland Stallion Station Stakes for 3-year-old Maryland-breds and Maryland Million nominees.

Under jockey Ryan Fogelsonger, Heart Throbbin' backed off the pace and tracked speeders Call Me Clash and Hobbitontherocks all the way to deep stretch. At the 1-1/6 pole, frontrunner Call Me Clash appeared to be on his way to victory, but he suddenly shortened strides and Heart Throbbin' rushed outside the leaders to take command. To their credit, Hobbitontherocks and jockey Ramon Dominguez would not surrender, but at the finish line, Heart Throbbin had won by the narrowest of margins, a nose. Hobbitontherocks finished 3/4 of a length ahead of Call Me Clash and Casey Doon finished fourth.

The winner, a 3-year-old gelding by Formal Gold, completed the six furlong distance in 1:11.51 and paid \$15.20.

King Leatherbury trains Heart Throbbin'. He said, "I was sure surprised when they put my number up. That photo was a gift. I was hoping we would be third but I thought if we ran a big race and the other two were off just a beat, then we could win it. Sometimes it turns out in your favor. I claimed this horse for \$40,000 and you hope they're worth what you pay for them. I didn't think he was this kind of horse. He trained very well for this race and he's obviously moved up quite a bit since we claimed him. You're very fortunate when it turns out that way."

"The race set up perfectly for him," Fogelsonger said. "The plan was to sit off the pace, be fairly close off the turn and make the run. Today, he ran up to his ability but he had to improve his ability to beat these two horses. The five came back on me but I thought I had it won."

The victory was career win 6,186 for Leatherbury, third on the all-time list. It is the second added money win of the year for Heart Throbbin', who won the Dancing Count Stakes at Laurel Park on New Year's Day.

"He ran hard but I wish he would have changed leads for me down the lane. I think it would have made the difference," Dominguez said. "We chased the Lake horse (Call Me Clash) which I thought was the thing to do on a speed favoring track in a short field. When the winner came to the outside of us my horse got encouraged and I thought for a second we were going to get up."

Talent Search Wins Jim McKay Sprint Stakes



Talent Search
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-21-07---Kenneth & Sarah Ramsey's Talent Search put away the only horse willing to go with him and cruised to victory in the \$95,000 Jim McKay Sprint Stakes for 3-year-olds and up.

In winning the six furlong test, Talent Search was marking the second victory on today's Spring Festival of Racing card for both jockey Ryan Fogelsonger and trainer Mark Shuman.

On paper, the Jim McKay Sprint appeared to be a wide open affair, but Talent Search embarrassed his foes with his six length victory in 1:09.43, just two ticks off the track record of 1:09 set in 1990 by Northern Wolf.

Euro Code, who dueled with the winner early, gave way grudgingly but held on to finish a clear second. Celtic Innis rallied to narrowly beat out the others and finished third.

Talent Search paid \$15.60.

Fogelsonger said, "We out broke the field by two or three. If they had come to him, he would have run 9 flat (1:09). I know him well. He's very versatile. He can sit off the pace or have a speed duel and still have plenty left for a run. I broke in front running easily. The inside horse came at me so we picked it up on the far turn and got it going. My job is to make it easy for him. I tapped him turning for home and we were gone."

Fogelsonger and agent Kevin Witte chose to ride the winner instead of 2-1 favorite Wild Jam, who finished fourth.

Trainer Shuman said, "The way he trained up all week and the way he came out of his last race just like a monster, he really (has) put it together. He outdid himself. I think we'll keep him ¾'s on the dirt and we'll see what happens in a race here on Preakness day (Grade III, \$200,000 Maryland Breeders' Cup Sprint Handicap).

"I told Ryan to just ride his own race and not to let other speed in the race dictate to him. I really expected him to run a big race today. We found out that if you space his races out a little bit it seems to benefit him. When he runs like this, he can be very hard to beat."

"My instructions were to get the lead but I was pushed by Talent Search the whole way," said Dane Kobiskie, who was aboard the runner-up. "My horse was game and likes to fight but that horse ran away from us."

Private Scandal Scores In Old Hilltop Overnight Stakes



Private Scandal
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-21-07---Ioannis Korologos' Private Scandal must have enjoyed his time off from the races because he came back full of run from his five month vacation and trumped six others in the \$55,000 Old Hilltop Overnight Stakes.

Jockey Horacio Karamanos rode the full son of Not For Love for trainer Peter Bazeos. Sitting off the pace down the backstretch, Karamanos sent Private Scandal widest of all to move into contention, charged by the leaders and drew away to a convincing score in 1:43.2 for the 1-1/16th mile distance on the main track. Your Bluffing, who has won numerous races at Laurel Park but is winless at Pimlico, dove to the inside for the stretch run and finished a gutsy second, 2-3/4 lengths behind the winner. Trapped Again forced the action into the stretch but then tired to third.

Private Scandal paid \$11.

Karamanos said, "He broke good and wanted to go to the lead but I wanted to relax him to be in good position for the stretch run. Into the far turn he exploded, angled outside, went to the lead and finished up strong. He's a nice horse and was 100% fit off that long layoff."

Bazeos said, "He surprised me today but good race horses can surprise you. He can run on any surface. He trains on the dirt, so I don't feel like it makes a difference where he runs. He's by Not For Love, whose horses can run on turf, dirt or in the slop. I knew he was very fit but you don't expect them to do this after five months off. This is a great animal to be around."

Private Scandal was claimed by Bazeos for \$25,000 last August, then proceeded to win two stakes on the turf at Laurel Park in the fall -- the Maryland Million Turf and the Find Handicap. Karamanos was aboard for those races as well.

Xchanger Upsets Etude In Federico Tesio Stakes



Xchanger
Photo Credit: Jeff Snyder

BALTIMORE, 04-21-07---Circle Z Stables' Xchanger cruised to victory in the \$125,000 Feder co Tesio Stakes, while odds-on favorite Etude had nothing to offer when asked and finished off the board. The Tesio was one of five stakes races contested today on Pimlico's opening weekend Spring Festival of Racing. A crowd of 8,997 was in attendance on a picture-perfect spring afternoon.

In today's feature, jockey Ramon Dominguez sent Xchanger right into contention from the start of the 1-1/8 mile test. While under wraps, Dominguez allowed the son of Exchange Rate to take the lead down the backstretch, then waited patiently as longshot Pink Viper sped up on his inside until they were both closing in on the far turn.

When signed to go, the Mark Shuman trainee bounded away from Pink Viper and took command, flew around the turn and opened up easily on the field. He cruised down the stretch and crossed under the finish line 4-3/4 lengths in front of Pink Viper, finishing the race in 1:49.98. (The track record for the distance is 1:47.2). Zephyr Cat finished third, Saratoga Lulaby fourth, Etude was fifth and Belly Rub was last.

"I'm glad neither Mark nor I overanalyzed the race," Dominguez said. "He told me to play it by ear and get a feel for the horse and play it from there. I really thought there was going to be a little more speed toward the inside. I let him put himself where he was comfortable. He was going pretty quick. He showed that he has class. Once I got to the first turn and I had the four horse (Pink Viper) to my inside my horse kind of got strong and I just let him go. I committed myself and let him go."

Xchanger paid \$6.80. He was the top half of a \$70.40 exacta and the lead part of a \$509.20 triple.

"This is the first time I rode him," added Dominguez. "I was surprised about his speed. He showed interest and wanted to run so I committed to let him go into the far turn. At the top of the lane we were going real fast and I looked back and realized we had opened up. I wanted to put him where he was comfortable and today he was comfortable going to the lead."

Etude, the 3-5 favorite, came into the race with Preakness aspirations but the Pimlico-based son of Include never fired finishing more than 10 lengths behind the winner.

"It wasn't his day," said Luis Garcia, who rode the favorite. "I have no idea. I was waiting for a little bit more but that's racing. He really didn't want to go today There is not much to say. I am surprised."

Xchanger has now won three of eight starts. After winning his maiden debut and the Sapling Stakes at Monmouth, Shuman raced him in five more stakes (four graded) and watched the grey colt suffer from more than his share of bad racing luck, running against the likes of Scat Daddy, Nobiz Like Shobiz and Curlin, three of the favorites for next month's Kentucky Derby. He opted to go in the Tesio, rather than today's Coolmore Lexington at Keeneland, because Dominguez committed to ride him for the first time. Shuman's star sits 14th on the earnings list for the Run for The Roses with \$202,890 in graded earnings and could be part of the field in Louisville two weeks from today.

"I knew what kind of horse I got and I made excuses for him the last four or five starts," Shuman said. "I was banging my head up against the way but legitimately said I have to stop making excuses for this horse. That horse (Etude) is very impressive his last couple starts. I definitely had respect for him. That horse was the horse everyone talked about headed in but he didn't beat anybody. We have been running against all the best horses in the country. We are still, in my mind, a notch below those horses. We'll try to do what's best for the horse. If for some reason we skip the Derby and Curlin or someone wins like I freak I don't know if I'd run against him in the Preakness."

Shuman saddled three stakes winners on the 11-race Pimlico card. The 36-year-old also scored with Talent Search in the Jim McKay Sprint and My Girlie in the Northview Stallion Station Stakes.

"This is unbelievable," added Shuman. "Three perfect rides. Three perfect trips and three stakes wins. You really can't do any better than that."

Longley Is Tested In Preakness Day Prep



Longley
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-22-07---Donald Adam's Longley, who is pointing to the \$100,000 Barbaro Stakes on Preakness day, left the starting gate as the 1-5 favorite but was hard used to prevail in today's feature, a \$32,000 optional/allowance for 3-year-olds.

Longley and jockey Jeremy Rose beat 21-1 shot Leaglenote and jockey Ryan Fogelsonger by just a neck after the two horses dueled every step of the way in the 1-1/16th mile test.

The battling rivals separated themselves from the rest of the field down the backstretch and traveled past every pole in tandem and it wasn't until a few yards before the finish line that Longley moved ahead to claim the victory in 1:46.14. He

paid \$2.40.

"He didn't really relax but he is game," Rose said. "He went around the track with that other horse and kept putting him away."

The bay son of Seeking The Gold is trained by Graham Motion at the Fair Hill Center. This was his fourth lifetime start and his second victory. He finished sixth in the Grade III Gotham Stakes in his previous outing.

"I was actually impressed with as hard as he ran," Motion said. "I wanted to get him back on track after throwing him to the wolves last time out. We always thought he was a very nice horse and I was very pleased with the way he ran. I know he was a very short price but he had to run hard and you cannot ask for anything more than that."

Pimlico Offers Two Stakes On Saturday

BALTIMORE, 04-26-07---Pimlico will present two stakes on Saturday, the \$95,000 Henry S. Clark for 3-year-olds and up and the \$80,000 Xtra Heat for 3-year-old fillies.

The Clark is a wide open test slated for one mile on the turf and the race has attracted a field of nine. The Xtra Heat is a 5-1/2 furlong sprint on the main track and will see six fillies lining up in the starting gate.

Broadway Partner (7-2) is the lukewarm favorite to win the Clark. Trained by John Terranova, the son of Not For Love started his career on the main track but switched to the turf at Saratoga. He's finished 1-2-1 in six starts on the infield and his best effort was an entry allowance score at Gulfstream Park. His last try was a so-so 6th on the turf at Keeneland. Horacio Karamanos has the mount.

Terranova said, "He's a nice horse. He's up and coming and I think he has a future on the grass. I don't know if he's a top horse but we're going to give him the chance. It was soft at Keeneland in his last start and he didn't like it. If it comes up that way on Saturday, he's not going to run. He has run well on the dirt so if it comes off the grass we might consider that."

Florida shipper Stay Close (4-1) has won three starts on the grass, one at Laurel Park in November and the next two at Tampa Bay this winter. In his most recent victory, the son of Belong To Me saved ground while staying close to the pace, then shot to the lead and won going away. Michael Zweisler trains Stay Close and Jeremy Rose will ride him for the first time.

Midwatch (5-1), one of two runners to be saddled in the Clark by trainer Rodney Jenkins (the other is Denbigh), is a five-furlong grass specialist who has been away from the races since September. A winner of seven grass races, Midwatch won the Tidewater Handicap at Colonial Downs last summer, one of only three starts he made last year. Erick Rodriguez has the call.

Trainer Dale Capuano has entered Due (5-1) on Saturday. The Maryland Million Classic winner has started only once on the grass and appears to be positioned to go if the race is switched from the turf to the main track. Luis Garcia has the mount.

In the co-feature, Your Flame In Me (3-5) is the overwhelming favorite to win the Xtra Heat Stakes. Undefeated in two starts, Your Flame In Me won by 6-1/4 lengths in her maiden debut at Delaware and then won handily in the Gin Talking Stakes in September. The daughter of Boundary is making good progress as she preps for her 2007 debut. Jose Caraballo is her regular rider. Mike Trombetta has her in training at Laurel Park.

Trombetta will also start Changeisgonnacome (9-2) in the Xtra Heat. The daughter of Cherokee Run, who won a stakes at Saratoga last summer, spent the winter in Florida where she won one of four starts. In her most recent try, she led to the top of the lane in the Grade III Forward Gal Stakes before tiring to fifth. Julian Pimentel will ride the filly for the first time.

Two-time winner Paying Off (5-1) is the third choice in the Xtra Heat. She's made all of her starts at Laurel Park, including her maiden win and an entry allowance victory. In stakes races, Paying Off finished third in the Maryland Million Lassie, third in the Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship and near-miss second in the Smart Halo Stakes.

Southwestern Heat, the first foal of champion filly Xtra Heat, is the 4-5 favorite in the race immediately following the race named for his mother. The three-year-old broke his maiden in impressive fashion at Laurel Park earlier this month and is using the 5-furlong test on the turf as a prep for the \$100,000 Hirsch Jacobs Stakes on the Preakness undercard in three weeks.



Your Flame In Me
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

MJC Announces 2007 Alibi Breakfast Award Winners

BALTIMORE, 04-27-07--The Maryland Jockey Club today announced the winners of this year's Preakness media awards. Honorees will be recognized and awards presented at the May 17 Alibi Breakfast in the Terrace Dining Room at Pimlico Race Course. The ceremony is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. two days prior to the middle jewel of the Triple Crown.

The Special Award of Merit is given to someone who has made a positive impact on the racing industry. This year's honorees are Dr. Dean Richardson, whose dedication and perseverance in the hard-fought effort to save Barbaro's life was truly remarkable, and Edgar Prado, the former Maryland riding star who earned his first Eclipse Award as the nation's top jockey a year ago.

Sean Clancy is the recipient of the David F. Woods Award for his riveting feature in the Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred on the roller coaster ride in the first two legs of the 2006 Triple Crown for Team Barbaro. The Woods Award honors the best Preakness story for the previous year. It is the second victory in the last four years for Clancy.



Barbaro Gallops
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

Maryland Jockey Club photographer Jim McCue is the winner of the Jerry Frutkoff Preakness Photo Award, sponsored by Nikon. McCue, the longtime business partner of Frutkoff, captured Barbaro's final gallop at Pimlico on Preakness morning.

The prestigious Old Hilltop Award will be bestowed upon two veteran horse racing writers: Jerry Izenberg, the legendary columnist at the Newark Star-Ledger, and Don Clippinger, editorial director at the Thoroughbred Times.

Former broadcaster Charlsie Cantey will be the Honorary Postmaster.

Chris Lincoln will act as the master of ceremonies. Cardinal William H. Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore, will give the invocation.

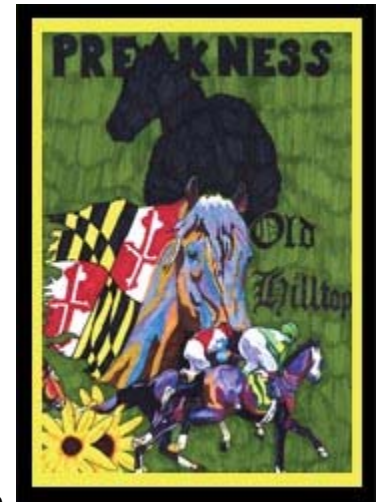
11TH GRADER WINS PREAKNESS PORTRAITS YOUTH ART CONTEST

Alison Herman, a 11th grader at Western High School, is the grand prize winner of the eighth annual Preakness Portraits Youth Art Contest. As the winner of "The Jewel", Herman receives box seating for four at the Preakness, framed artwork autographed by this year's Preakness winners, a \$250 gift certificate and a presentation ceremony at the winner's luncheon on May 6.

Students from 10 Pimlico area schools were invited to create artwork showing the significance of the Preakness Stakes to Maryland history, while capturing the spirit of Thoroughbred racing. The artwork had to include Preakness related images.

One hundred seventy-four pieces of art were entered by the teachers at the respective schools. First, second and third place awards were given to each grade.

Judging was conducted on April 20 by an esteemed panel which included Maryland Jockey Club president Lou Raffetto, WBFF-TV sports director Bruce Cunningham and Nykidra Robinson, neighborhood liaison for mayor's office of neighborhoods in Baltimore city.



Your Flame In Me Trounces Small Field In Xtra Heat Stakes



Your Flame In Me takes Xtra Heat Stakes
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-28-07---Robert Goldsmith's Your Flame In Me shot from the gate and quickly left her three foes in her wake on the way to a smashing, nine length victory in today's co-feature, the \$80,000 Xtra Heat Stakes for 3-year-old fillies.

Jose Caraballo was aboard for the third straight time for trainer Mike Trombetta. With the win, Your Flame In Me remained undefeated, after breaking her maiden at Delaware Park last August and easily winning the Gin Talking Stakes at Laurel Park in September, both by open lengths.

Your Flame In Me completed the 5-1/2 furlong distance in 1:04.75 and paid \$2.40. Paying Off and Earlybird Road battled it out for second and third, respectively. Rekindling Faith finished fourth.

"She came back ready and she did it," Caraballo said. "I like this filly a lot, she has a big future ahead of her. She is very talented and does it very easily. There are not too many around like her."

"We've been pointing her for this race ever since her vacation and it all worked out," said Trombetta's assistant Tana Aubrey.

The daughter of Boundary could be headed to the Grade III Adena Stallions' Miss Preakness Stakes on May 18.

One race after the Xtra Heat Stakes, Southwestern Heat, the first foal of Xtra Heat, tuned up for the \$100,000 Hirsch Jacobs Stakes on the Preakness undercard with a wire-to-wire allowance score on the Pimlico grass.

Stay Close Gallops In Henry Clark Stakes



Stay Close
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-28-07---William Farish Jr.'s Stay Close lived up to his name, tracking the leaders down the backstretch and then surging by the pacesetter in deep stretch to win the \$95,000 Henry S. Clark Stakes, the feature race this afternoon at Pimlico Race Course.

Stay Close covered the one mile distance on the turf in 1:37.36 under jockey Oliver Castillo for trainer Michael Zwiesler. He won by 1 ½ lengths over a very game Midwatch. Belmont Park-based runner Broadway Producer, the program favorite, rallied to finish third.

Stay Close paid \$4.80. The victory was his first added-money score and his fourth win in thirteen tries on the turf.

Jockey Castillo said, "He was sharp and he was ready. He showed that when he ran into the doors (of the starting gate). He was sharp enough where he placed himself behind the leaders and we were in a great spot. He's grown up a lot. He's gotten better since I rode him."

The runner-up was using the Clark as a prep for the \$100,000 Baltimore City Turf Sprint, a five-furlong test on the Preakness undercard.

"I have been working him in the mornings and knew he was in good form," said Erick Rodriguez, who was aboard the runner-up. "The question was whether he could get the distance. He was a little tired and didn't switch leads down the stretch."

Pino Six Days Away From First Kentucky Derby Mount



Mario Pino
Photo Credit: Jim McCue/MJC

BALTIMORE, 04-29-07---Mario Pino has ridden more winners than any other rider in Maryland racing history but later this week, the 45-year-old reaches the pinnacle of his career when he has a mount in the Kentucky Derby (Grade I).

Pino will be aboard Hard Spun for trainer Larry Jones on Saturday at Churchill Downs. The son of Danzig has won five of six starts, including the Grade II Lane's End and Grade III LeComte earlier this year.

"I get up thinking about it and go to bed thinking about it," said Pino, who ranks 16th on the all-time win list with 5,888 victories. "When the post positions come out I guess I'll start thinking more about the race. It is getting more exciting and I am feeling it more every day."

The Ellicott City native, who has two career Preakness Stakes mounts, will be in Louisville Monday morning as Jones plans to work his star five-furlongs in his final major pre-Kentucky Derby work.

"It is like being in the World Series or Super Bowl with the 20 best three-year-olds in the country running on this one day," added Pino. "Just to get there to ride in the race is awesome, but to ride a colt like this is special."

Pino will be busy Saturday with mounts on Wildcat Bettie B in the Grade I Humana Distaff and Laurel Park-based Ah Day in the Grade II Churchill Downs Handicap. He'll arrive in Kentucky for the Friday card after riding at Delaware Park (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) and Pimlico (Thursday).

-MJC-