

Awesome Gem gets 'confidence-booster'

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Awesome Gem earned a start in the \$700,000 Hollywood Gold Cup on July 11 with a victory in an allowance race on turf on Saturday.

The stylish win ended a 14-race losing streak dating back to an optional claimer here in June 2007. In between, Awesome Gem placed in eight stakes, including a nose loss in the Grade 1 Goodwood Stakes in 2007, a third in the 2007 Breeders' Cup Classic at Monmouth Park, and a third in the Grade 3 Berkeley Handicap at Golden Gate Fields on May 25.

"We needed that confidence-booster," trainer Craig Dollase said of Saturday's race. "It's nice to see him back in the right spirit."

Ridden by Alex Solis for West Point Thoroughbreds, Awesome Gem (\$8.40) ran 1 1/16 miles on turf in 1:40.60, winning by 1 1/2 lengths over pacesetter Crafty Power. Dollase is optimistic that Awesome Gem, a 6-year-old gelding, can win his first stakes since the Grade 2 San Fernando Breeders' Cup Stakes in January 2007 in the Gold Cup.

"You know how these horses are," he said. "When they win, they can reel off a couple. We're not done yet."