

Justwhistledixie Easy Davona Dale Winner

By Jason Shandler

Posted: Sunday, March 1, 2009 6:04 PM

Courtesy of Bloodhorse.com

West Point Thoroughbreds and partners' [Justwhistledixie](#) stalked the pace, took over leaving the turn, and cruised to a 3 3/4-length victory in the \$150,000 [Davona Dale Stakes](#) (gr. II) ([VIDEO](#)) for 3-year-old fillies at Gulfstream Park March 1.

Trained by Kiaran McLaughlin, Justwhistledixie was making her graded stakes debut after winning three consecutive races in New York. The daughter of [Dixie Union](#) —General Jeanne, by [Honour and Glory](#), served notice with her emphatic score that she is now a serious Kentucky Oaks (gr. I) contender.

"We left her up in New York early this winter because we thought she could dominate, but after she won the Ruthless we felt she was good enough to come down here for graded stakes, which is what it's all about," McLaughlin said. "I thought a mile would suit her. The timing of the Bonnie Miss (gr. II, March 27 at Gulfstream) would be good and then we hope to go on to the (Kentucky) Oaks."

Ridden by Alan Garcia, Justwhistledixie completed a mile on the fast main track in 1:37.67. Edward Evans' [Casanova Move](#) rallied well in the stretch and was a clear runner-up under Jose Lezcano, seven lengths in front of third-place [Frolic's Dream](#), who went off as the 9-5 favorite in a field of seven.

Frolic's Dream, winner of the Jan. 30 Forward Gal (gr. II), set the pace in the Davona Dale, outracing Justwhistledixie to the first quarter-mile, which went in :24:48. C.S. Silk came up to challenge Frolic's Dream and was on nearly even terms when a half-mile went in :47.31, while Justwhistledixie was content to sit just off the two dueling leaders.

Frolic's Dream muscled away the lead from C.S. Silk as they advanced on the turn, but it was not long before Justwhistledixie made her winning three-wide move. She took over approaching the quarter-pole and opened up a two-length lead at the top of the stretch. Casanova Move's mild rally was not nearly enough to threaten the winner in the final furlong.

"Ah, brother she jumped out so well," Garcia said. "We got up on the rail, relaxed, and did what we expected. She wanted to run today. She really pressed the express button in the last quarter-mile."

Justwhistledixie, who was bred in Kentucky by Hermitage Farm, entered the Davona Dale off a pair of stakes victories at Aqueduct. Her most recent score came Jan. 4 in her 3-year-old debut, a 3 1/2-length win in the Ruthless Stakes. The dark bay filly has never been off the board in six lifetime starts, producing a 4-0-2 record. She has earned \$217,927.

Sent off as the second choice, Justwhistledixie paid \$7.40, \$4.20, and \$3.20. The exacta (7-8) returned \$81 with 15-1 Casanova Move. The \$1 trifecta (7-8-4) was worth \$127.

Renda finished fourth, followed by C.S. Silk, Shared Account, and Step Out Smartly. Hopeful Image and Stage Trick were scratched.