

Justwhistledixie sharp and speedy

By David Grening, courtesy of *The Daily Racing Form*

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OZONE PARK, N.Y. - With one solid sprinter and one undefeated router, the owner/trainer tandem of West Point Thoroughbreds and Kiaran McLaughlin could dominate the stakes program for 3-year-old fillies at Aqueduct this winter.

In Sunday's \$65,000 Ruthless Stakes, at six furlongs, the speedy Justwhistledixie goes for her third consecutive victory against six opponents. One reason McLaughlin is delaying the inevitable stretching out of this filly is because he has Fitz Just Right, unbeaten in two starts, set to run in next Saturday's \$65,000 Busanda Stakes at a mile and 70 yards.

Justwhistledixie, a daughter of Dixie Union, was sent off as the 2-1 favorite in a 12-horse field in her debut at Saratoga. She finished third behind Selva and Gemswick Park. Selva has gone on to win two stakes while Gemswick Park won a maiden race and has twice placed in a graded stakes.

In her second start, Justwhistledixie finished third behind Be Smart and Mia's First. Be Smart came back to run second in the Grade 1 Alcibiades while Mia's First won a maiden race here last Sunday by 5 1/2 lengths.

On Oct. 13 at Belmont, Justwhistledixie cruised to a seven-length win over next-out winner and Ruthless entrant J.J. Cuvee. Justwhistledixie was very sharp in winning the Love Affair Stakes over Aqueduct's main track on Nov. 28. She dueled through quick early fractions with Thankherbanker. After putting that one away, she withstood a mid-race challenge from Casanova Move before spurting away from that one for a 3 1/2-length score.

"She's definitely pretty handy," said Art Magnuson, the New York assistant for McLaughlin. "We don't have to be on the lead for sure. The last couple she's been pretty sharp and [going to the front] is just what she's done."

Displeased with Belmont's training track last weekend, Magnuson shipped Justwhistledixie and Fitz Just Right to Aqueduct for a four-furlong in-company work which was timed in 47.60 seconds.

Unveil the Mask is an intriguing upset candidate. Rick Violette shipped this daughter of Harlan's Holiday to Philadelphia Park on Oct. 11 and she rolled to an 8 1/4-length maiden score.

Violette said Unveil the Mask missed some training time in early December due to a lung infection. Violette said he's hoping someone can run with Justwhistledixie early so his filly can "pick up the pieces" late.

Finger Lakes shipper Indian Rush, Philadelphia shippers Could Be Us and Ocarson, and Laurel Park shipper Gnome's Delight all have speed, but it remains to be seen if they can pressure Justwhistledixie.

Justwhistledixie delivers in Ruthless

By David Grening, courtesy of *The Daily Racing Form*

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OZONE PARK, N.Y. - Justwhistledixie lived up to her 2-5 favoritism, taking command just inside the three-sixteenths pole under Rajiv Maragh and drawing clear to a 3 1/2-length victory in Sunday's \$70,795 Ruthless Stakes for 3-year-old fillies at Aqueduct.

Gnome's Delight rallied to be second, three-quarters of a length ahead of Ocarson. Unveil the Mask, Indian Rush, and Could Be Us completed the order of finish. J.J. Cuvee scratched.

It was the third straight victory for Justwhistledixie, a daughter of Dixie Union owned by the West Point Thoroughbreds and Lakland Farm and trained by Kiaran McLaughlin.

Maragh, riding Justwhistledixie for the first time, was content to lay second as Indian Rush, under Winston Thompson, carved out fractions of 22.41 seconds and 46.65 for the opening half-mile.

Justwhistledixie took over from that rival leaving the three-sixteenths pole and Maragh tapped her a time or two in the stretch to keep her mind on her business. Justwhistledixie, a \$425,000 yearling purchase at the Keeneland September auction, ran six furlongs in 1:10.81 and returned \$2.80.

"The trip was really pretty simple," Maragh said. "I was on the big favorite, she had a good post, and she has natural speed. The other horse rushed up to take the lead and that gave me the opportunity to use her as a target. Once she made the lead, the race was basically over. I put away the stick at the sixteenth pole, but she started looking at something, so I tapped her once."

Art Magnuson, the New York-assistant for McLaughlin, said that the Grade 3, \$100,000 Cicada Stakes here on March 14 is the major goal this winter for Justwhistledixie. If she needs to run before then, there is the \$65,000 Dearly Precious Stakes here on Feb. 14. Both races are at six furlongs.

No one hit the pick six Sunday, resulting in a \$39,873 carryover entering Wednesday's card.

Justwhistledixie Whistles in Ruthless

By Francis LaBelle Jr., courtesy of NYRA.com
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Justwhistledixie, the most accomplished of the field Sunday, proved to be a deserving favorite as she scored a 3 ½-length victory over Gnome's Delight in the 32nd running of the \$70,795 Ruthless Stakes for three-year-old fillies at six furlongs.

Owned by West Point Thoroughbreds and Lakland Farm, the Dixie Union filly overtook longshot Indian Rush, who had gone the first quarter in 22.41 and the half in 46.05 on Aqueduct's fast inner dirt track. With jockey Rajiv Maragh in the irons, Justwhistledixie ran by her target and was never seriously challenged, as she completed the sprint in 1:10.81 for her third straight victory after two losses.

"It was a great ride by Rajiv today," said Artie Magnusson, assistant to trainer Kieran McLaughlin. "We're certainly happy to have [Justwhistledixie] in the stable. Our goal is the Cicada Stakes in March (Grade 3, \$100,000, March 14, six furlongs at Aqueduct) – there might be a chance she'll run back once more, but the goal is the Cicada."

Maragh said that the win, before 3,319 fans, was fairly straightforward.

"The trip was really pretty simple," said Maragh, whose mount returned \$2.80. "I was on the big favorite, she had a good post, and she has natural speed. The other horse rushed up to take the lead and that gave me the opportunity to use her as a target. Once she made the lead, the race was basically over. I put away the stick at the sixteenth pole, but she started looking at something, so I tapped her once."

Gnome's Delight held off the rest of the field for the place, and was followed by Ocarson, Unveil the Mask, Indian Rush and Could Be Us.

J.J. Cuvee was scratched.

The Ruthless Stakes

By Michael Veitch, courtesy of *The Saratogian*
1/7/09

Justwhistledixie captured the Ruthless Stakes at Aqueduct on Sunday for her third consecutive victory and second in a stakes.

Owned by West Point Thoroughbreds and trained by Kieran McLaughlin, she began her career at Saratoga last summer with two third-place finishes in maiden events.

The daughter of Dixie Union was purchased for \$425,000 as a Keeneland September yearling.

Justwhistledixie has now earned \$128,317 with a record of 3-0-2 in 5 starts.

She is a half-sister to Chace City, winner of the Saratoga Special in 2006.

The Ruthless Stakes honors one of the greats of the 19th century.

Ruthless, a New York-bred daughter of Eclipse owned by Francis Morris, won the first edition of the Belmont Stakes in 1867.

The Belmont at that time was at 1½ miles.

Later that year, she won the fourth edition of the Travers Stakes at Saratoga, contested at 1¼ miles.

Just five days after the Travers, Ruthless won the Sequel Stakes at 2 miles at Saratoga.