

Macho Again surprises in Stephen Foster

colt spoils Einstein's bid for history

By Alicia Wincze –
Courtesy of Lexington Herald Leader
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LOUISVILLE — Too often when Macho Again has gone to the post in his 18-race career, his connections have held their breath wondering which version of the gray colt would show up.

Some days, they would see the talented runner that finished second to champion Big Brown in last year's Preakness Stakes. Other times, they would see the erratic colt who lost three straight races to close out an otherwise promising 3-year-old campaign.

Throughout it all, those around Macho Again said he had the talent to one day become a Grade I winner.

Macho Again (2) and Robby Albarado pulled away from the pack in the stretch at Churchill Downs.

The horse finally did just what was expected of him in Saturday's Stephen Foster Handicap.

Macho Again spoiled Einstein's bid for history when he overtook the field on the far outside in the stretch to win the Grade I race by 1 length over Asiatic Boy at Churchill Downs.

Though Einstein was bidding to become the first horse to earn consecutive Grade I wins on turf, dirt and synthetic surfaces, Macho Again was out to prove he could put his inconsistent reputation behind him.

Despite having one win in his last six starts, the son of Macho Uno has had flashes of brilliance, most notably his victories in the Grade II New Orleans Handicap in March and the Grade II Jim Dandy Stakes as a 3-year-old last season.

"It was a wonderful win. I feel so glad for the partners that stuck with this horse, and I'm very proud of this colt," said owner Terry Finley, president of West Point Thoroughbreds. "You know, he's danced a lot of dances but, for a horse like him, you've got to be a Grade I winner to be a Kentucky stallion. That was the reason we brought him back this year. I feel like he's just starting to come into his own right now."

As has been the case more than once in his career, Macho Again followed up his impressive 1-length win in New Orleans with a sixth-place effort in the Grade III Alysheba Stakes at Churchill Downs on May 1.

But Macho Again turned in a series of bullet works in the weeks leading up to the 1 1/8-mile Foster — an impressive feat for a colt not known for his prowess in the mornings.

So trainer Dallas Stewart said he knew that if his charge could get the proper pace Saturday, he could show what he is capable of on his best day.

"A lot of people said he was an in-and-out horse but thought he was more in than out," Stewart said. "The times he was out I thought he had some excuses, but he showed himself today. He beat a great group of horses."

With long shot Finallymadeit winging away on the front end through fractions of :24 and :48, Macho Again settled at the back of the eight-horse field under jockey Robby Albarado — who won his third consecutive Stephen Foster after guiding Curlin to victory last year and Flashy Bull to the win in 2007.

Using the same sweeping move he unleashed in New Orleans, Macho Again circled the field five-wide around the final turn and had a clear path on the extreme outside while favored Einstein was bottled up and then bumped during the stretch run.

"They did all they could to beat him, but that's just part of racing I guess," said Helen Pitts-Blasi, trainer of Einstein.

Macho Again covered the 1 1/8-mile distance in 1:49.75. Asiatic Boy, who was making his U.S. debut, rallied gamely from the middle of the pack to nose out Einstein for second.

During the winner's circle celebration, many of the West Point partners in attendance jubilantly cried out that they had themselves a stallion.

Now that Macho Again has showcased the ability his connections were waiting to see, some are counting on seeing more of the same in the immediate future.

"We're in the racing business, and we love the game," said Finley, who added that his colt would next point toward the Grade I Whitney Handicap at Saratoga on Aug. 8.

"We really think that in 2010, if everything stays on track, we'd love to come back and defend our title here."

Macho Again circles field to win Stephen Foster Handicap

Albarado takes 4-year-old colt from last to first Grade I victory

BY JENNIE REES JUNE 13, 2009

COURTESY OF LOUISVILLE COURIER JOURNAL

Trainer Dallas Stewart took some offense the other day when it was suggested that Macho Again, the stretch-running 4-year-old colt he trains for West Point Thoroughbreds, was an "in-and-out" horse.

Stewart views Macho Again — who always finishes either first, second or nowhere — as a hard-trying horse with excuses in his off-the-board placings, including a slow pace.

But you could say he was an out-and-in horse in Saturday's \$660,000 Stephen Foster Handicap. Ridden by Robby Albarado, he rallied on the outside to land in the winner's circle with a last-to-first, one-length victory over Asiatic Boy at Churchill Downs.

"He's a great horse. We had a great rider. We put it all together today," said the Churchill-based Stewart. "He's not an in-and-out horse like most people think. He got the money today on a dry track at Churchill. He proved himself."

The victory was Albarado's third in a row in the Midwest's only Grade I race on dirt for older horses. And it was Macho Again's first Grade I triumph; he won the Grade II New Orleans Handicap in the slop in March and the Grade II Jim Dandy at Saratoga last summer. The Foster also provided the West Point syndicate its first Grade I victory when Flashy Bull prevailed in 2007.

The horse needing the excuse Saturday was favored Einstein, who was attempting to be the first to win Grade I races on synthetic, turf and dirt surfaces in consecutive starts, having won the Santa Anita Handicap and Churchill's Woodford Reserve Turf Classic.

The field jammed up coming out of the far turn, and Einstein got bottled up after he and Asiatic Boy tried to go for the same hole, neither successfully. By the time Einstein shook free, Macho Again had blown to the lead unimpeded.

Then Asiatic Boy, who had retrenched and gone outside, nailed Einstein at the wire to take second by a nose. It took several minutes to sort out the placings

before it was determined that Arson Squad and Bullsbay dead-heated for fourth, a neck behind Einstein.

"They're all next to me. They know I'm a horse to beat, so of course they're going to try to beat me like that," said Julien Leparoux, who rode Einstein for trainer Helen Pitts-Blasi. "I had nowhere to go; I just had to wait. When he got room at the eighth pole, he finished strong."

Macho Again Denies Einstein in Foster

By [Jason Shandler](#)

Updated: Sunday, June 14, 2009 6:16 PM

Courtesy of The BloodHorse.com

West Point Thoroughbreds' Macho Again found room off the turn and pulled away from a wall of horses to win the \$660,000 [Stephen Foster Handicap](#) (gr. I) June 13 at Churchill Downs.

In posting his one-length score, [Macho Again](#) earned his first grade I victory and also denied [Einstein](#) becoming the first horse to win a grade I race on dirt, turf and synthetics in the same year. The 7-year-old son of Spend a Buck, who went off as the 6-5 favorite, finished third after a troubled trip.

Macho Again, a 4-year-old son of [Macho Uno](#), was last in a field of eight for half-mile in the 1 1/8-mile Stephen Foster, content to let [Finallymadeit](#) set the pace for most of the way. Finallymadeit posted splits of :24.03, :48.13 and 1:12.71 under Eduardo Nunez, and still led at the quarter-pole. [Researcher](#) tracked in second the whole way, while [Alphabet Magic](#), [Bullsbay](#) and Einstein were in the next group.

As they made their way off the turn, a tiring Finallymadeit was about to relinquish his lead to a host of horses. Julien Leparoux, bottled up around the turn, thought he had found a small opening in the three-path with Einstein, but they were bumped and cut off by [Asiatic Boy](#), who was keen on hitting the same spot under Alan Garcia. Leparoux had no choice but to drop to the inside in a bunched-up group. By that time, Macho Again, who had circled five-wide under Robby Albarado for the stretch drive, had gone past them all and had all the momentum to the wire in posting a 7-1 upset.

"The race set up great for us today," said Albarado. "We had an outside trip and got a clear run. It's not by design that I wanted to go that wide, but I just put him in a path where he can run around horses. He prevailed to be the best today."

The final time on a track labeled 'fast' was 1:49.75. Asiatic Boy finished a nose in front of Einstein for runner-up. Arson Squad and Bullsbay dead-heated for fourth, a neck further back in hotly-contested finish.

It was the third consecutive Foster win for Albarado, who won aboard Flashy Bull in 2007 and Curlin a year ago. Albarado won five races on the day.

Macho Again won for the second time in four starts this season. The gray/roan colt scored in the slop in the March 14 New Orleans Handicap (gr. II) at Fair Founds, and last

out was sixth to Bullsbay in the Alysheba (gr. II) at Churchill. As a 3-year-old, Macho Again won the Derby Trial and Jim Dandy (gr. II).

Bred in Florida by Milan Kosanovich and out of the Wild Again mare Go Donna Go, Macho Again won for the sixth time in 18 starts and has now earned \$1,475,247. He is trained by Dallas Stewart, who said the Aug. 8 Whitney Handicap (gr. I) at Saratoga would be the next goal for Macho Again, who ran in the Travers last season and was second to Big Brown in the Preakness (gr. I).

The winner paid \$17.40, \$6.20 and \$3.60. The exacta (2-7) returned \$140.20 and the trifecta (2-7-3) was \$372.20.

Macho Again captures Stephen Foster

by [Mike Curry](#)

Courtesy of The Thoroughbred Times

June 13, 2009

Macho Again unleashed a sustained charge from the outside and held off multiple Grade 1 winner Einstein (Brz) and United Arab Emirates multiple classic winner Asiatic Boy (Arg) to win the \$660,000 Stephen Foster Handicap (G1) on Saturday at Churchill Downs.

The clean trip made all of the difference in the 1 1/8-mile Stephen Foster for Macho Again as he closed unimpeded from the center of the track under Robby Albarado, while Einstein and Asiatic Boy were forced to wait behind foes before finishing strongly.

A multiple Grade 2 winner, Macho Again shook free near the eighth pole and had enough stamina to fend off both Asiatic Boy and Einstein for a one-length victory. The four-year-old [Macho Uno](#) colt completed the distance in 1:49.75 on a track rated as fast to improve to six wins in 18 career starts. Trained by Dallas Stewart for owner West Point Thoroughbreds, Macho Again boosted his earnings to \$1,475,247.

Macho Again won the Jim Dandy Stakes (G2) last year and finished second in both the Preakness Stakes (G1) and Super Derby (G2). He won the New Orleans Stakes (G2) in March at Fair Grounds.

"He's danced a lot of dances. For a horse like this, you've got to be a Grade 1 winner to be a Kentucky stallion," West Point President Terry Finley said. "That was the reason we brought him back this year.

"We're in the racing business and we love the game. We really think that in 2010, if everything stays on track, we'd love to come back and defend our title in the Stephen Foster."

Asiatic Boy edged 6-to-5 favorite Einstein by a nose for second. Bullsbay and Arson Squad finished in a dead heat for fourth.

Macho Again's victory spoiled Einstein's bid for his third straight Grade 1 win on a third different surface. The seven-year-old Spend a Buck horse won the Santa Anita Handicap (G1) on March 7 on the synthetic Pro-Ride surface at Santa Anita Park and entered the Stephen Foster off a victory in the Woodford Reserve Turf Classic Stakes (G1) on May 2 at Churchill. Einstein was bidding to join Lava Man as the only horses to win Grade 1 races on turf, synthetic, and dirt surfaces and become the first to accomplish the feat in the same year.

Finally made it controlled the pace in the Stephen Foster through an opening quarter in :24.13 and a half-mile in :48.13. Einstein was reserved in fifth, while Macho Again trailed the field.

On the final turn, Albarado swung Macho Again to the outside and he accelerated willingly. Einstein was trapped behind horses and jockey Julien Leparoux was forced to check when both Einstein and Asiatic Boy moved toward the same opening. Macho Again got the jump on Einstein and was never seriously threatened after surging clear.

"I'm on the horse to beat, so of course they're trying to beat me. I had nowhere to go; I just had to wait," Leparoux said. "I was in a pretty good spot, but I had nowhere to go. So I just waited and when he got room at the eighth pole, he finished strong. He was probably the best horse, but that's horse racing."

The winner's circle had a familiar feel for West Point, who also won the race in 2007 with [Flashy Bull](#), a gray or roan son of 1994 Horse of the Year [Holy Bull](#), who stands at Darley in Lexington. Macho Again is by Macho Uno, a son of Holy Bull who stands at Adena Springs in Paris, Kentucky.

"He's a great horse. We had a great rider. We put it all together today," Stewart said. "He proved himself. I think we've got a lot of good things ahead of us. He's won major races on major tracks from down in New Orleans to Saratoga [Race Course] to here. He's all dirt horse is what he is."

Stewart said Macho Again will be pointed to the Whitney Handicap (G1) on August 8 at Saratoga.

Macho Again comes up big in Foster

By Marty McGee

Courtesy of The Daily Racing Form

June 15th, 2009

LOUISVILLE, Ky. - The elation of victory and the exasperation of defeat resulted from markedly different journeys around the Churchill Downs racetrack Saturday when Macho Again, always clear of trouble, won the [Grade 1 Stephen Foster Handicap](#) while heavily favored Einstein had a brutal trip.

Macho Again gave jockey Robby Albarado his third straight victory in the \$660,000 Foster Cap by rallying from last in a field of eight to prevail by a length over Asiatic Boy. Einstein finished a nose back in third and a neck ahead of a dead heat for fourth between Arson Squad and Bullsbay.

While Macho Again bided his time through the early stages of the 1 1/8-mile Foster, Einstein, the 124-pound highweight and 6-5 favorite under Julien Leparoux, was encumbered by traffic most of the way. Down the backstretch, Bullsbay and jockey Jeremy Rose had him pinned behind rivals toward the rail, and down the homestretch, Einstein first was trapped behind Asiatic Boy and Researcher - and then Bullsbay and Researcher again - before shaking free when it was far too late.

"They had him in a tough spot," said Helen Pitts, the trainer of Einstein. "It was hard for Julien to really do anything."

Leparoux seemed perturbed at how the race unfolded and said to reporters: "I'm on the horse to beat, so of course they're trying to beat me."

The triumph perpetuated a knack for winning in key spots by Macho Again, a gray 4-year-old by Macho Uno. Already a millionaire, the colt had won 5 of 17 previous starts, including the Derby Trial, Jim Dandy, and New Orleans Handicap. Trainer Dallas Stewart acknowledged beforehand that the colt was somewhat inconsistent, but exclaimed with glee moments after Macho Again crossed under the wire: "I told you he was more in than out!"

Macho Again, carrying 117 pounds, gave the West Point Thoroughbreds syndicate its second win from the last three runnings of the Foster, adding to their 2007 score with Flashy Bull. Albarado rode Flashy Bull and Curlin last year to win the Foster, the annual highlight of the post-Kentucky Derby segment of the Churchill spring meet.

"The race set up great for us today," said Albarado.

Macho Again paid \$17.40 to win and earned \$396,924, upping his career total to \$1,475,247. He covered the 1 1/8 miles in 1:49.75 on a fast track.



Reed Palmer Photography

Macho Again gives jockey Robby Albarado his third straight victory in the Grade 1 Stephen Foster on Saturday. Bullsbay (left) was second and Einstein (rail) third.

After the dead heat for fourth, the running order for the 28th Foster was Researcher, Finallymadeit, and Alphabet Magic.

Einstein was trying to follow Lava Man in becoming just the second horse to win Grade 1 races over three different surfaces. He was coming off wins in the Santa Anita Handicap over Pro-Ride in March and the Woodford Reserve Turf Classic in May.

The Foster anchored a day of five graded stakes. In the others, Florentino (\$9.20) won the Jefferson Cup, Successful Dan (\$6.40) took the Northern Dancer, Miss Isella (\$5.40) captured the Fleur de Lis, and Keertana (\$14.80) won the Regret.

