

Record return at Mohawk for Shipps Commander

Shipps Commander gave a command performance in the first \$69,650 division of The Nassagaweya Pacing Stakes for two year olds at Mohawk Raceway in Campbellville Sunday night.

It turned out to be a profitable victory for his owner, Mississauga developer Harold Shipp, who purchased the Direct Scooter colt for \$40,000 as a yearling. It was also profitable for the fans who bet the horse.

Shipps Commander returned a record \$290.10 for a \$2 win ticket. Perhaps even more surprising than the fact that Shipps Commander won was that John Campbell, harness racing's most victorious driver, was at the helm for the big payoff.

"That's the most I've ever paid," grinned Campbell. Shipps Commander fired from seventh at the top of the stretch and paced to a head victory in 1:56.4 over Judge Ryan and Harbor Loop.

Last week Campbell reined the colt to a fifth place finish in the \$70,000 Champlain Pacing Stakes.

His win Sunday was only his second in

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seven season starts and boosted his bankroll to \$44,641.

"He raced better this week," said Campbell. "He's quite green and he's improved a lot. He did surprise me. I thought we'd do well to get a cheque, especially out of the eight hole. But he felt strong at the head of the stretch."

Shipps was fortunate to get to Mohawk just in time to see his colt win. "That's probably the most surprising win I've had since I've been in the sport," he beamed.

Trainer John Burns was also somewhat surprised at his colt's effort. "He had a bad post but what amazes me is the finesse that driver — John Campbell — has."

Shipps Commander will be entered in the eliminations for The \$800,000 (estimated) Metro Pacing Stakes, Canada's richest harness race for two year olds. Eliminations go post-ward on Sept. 15 and the final takes place Sept. 22.

Happy Family paced to a 1:56.2 winning effort for driver Doug Brown over Prudhomme and Stats Fun in the second \$71,150 Nassagaweya division.

Trained by Stew Firlotta for Brian Webster, Ray Bednarz and Jack Robillard, it was his sixth win in 10 starts and increased his bankroll to \$119,550 on the year.

Silver Almahurst, with driver Gord Waples at the helm for trainer Keith Waples, ran a :28.3 opening quarter, a :58.6 half and a 1:27.2 before Happy Family assumed command.

In the third \$69,650 Nassagaweya division the Abercrombie colt Artsplace paced a 1:55.1 head victory over fast driving Three Wizards. Battle Station finished third.

It was win number six in eight starts for the ultra-consistent Artplace, who's trained by Gene Riegler for George Segal and Brian

Monieson of Chicago. Campbell reined the colt to the win, which boosted his purse account to \$86,182.

"Three Wizards is an extremely tough colt; I had to get after my colt all the way down the stretch," remarked Campbell.

In the fourth and final Nassagaweya division, worth \$71,150, June's Baby benefitted from a pocket trip to get up in the final stride and defeat pacesetter Silky Stallone in 1:55.6 for driver Ron Waples. Deal Direct got up for show money.

It was the fifth win in 12 trips postward and increased his purse earnings to \$496,988 on the year.

June's Baby is owned by Sarah June Racing Stable and is trained by the Mark Lancaster stable while racing at Mohawk. Assistant trainer (for brother Mark) Bill Lancaster explained that June's Baby has only been in their stable for three weeks and that trainer Warren Harp deserves all the credit.

"He's a class horse, very athletic. He got a good trip tonight and we just hope we can keep things rolling up here."

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Peewee selects awesome in capturing tournament

The Milton peewee baseball selects captured the final tournament of the season in Newmarket by winning five straight games, including the title contest over Ajax 4-2.

Milton dodged a bullet in the first inning of the final. They had captured a 1-0 lead on Chris Browning's single to drive in Jay Black. But in the Ajax half of the inning Milton pitcher Nolan Milec fired 35 pitches as he faced eight batters. He gave up two walks and three hits but no Ajax runners crossed the plate.

"Our gloves are hot," said coach Scott Anders. "Ajax was so afraid to steal because our catcher, Lonny Hunt, has a rocket for an arm."

Milton scored three more runs early when Milec and Brian Nykoruk walked, worked a perfect double steal and scored on Devin Richardson's single. Mike Amantea scored Richardson moments later with his single.

"Milton played great defensive ball," said Anders. "Our fielders were nailing baserunners everywhere and that made the Ajax runners afraid to go for the extra base."

Ajax scored two runs in the fourth when eight batters came up and pounded out four hits. They also worked a couple of walks. Milton managed a fly out-throw out double play when Black snagged a fly and fired to the plate to nail the Ajax runner tagging up. The inning ended on a ground ball to Neil Bagley at short.

In the fifth with a 4-2 lead Nigel Harding hit a hard single and then stole second, but he was stranded.

The game tightened in the Ajax sixth. With two on and none out manager Anders went to left-handed pitcher Cory Bourgon.

Bourgon struck out the first batter he faced but walked the next to load the bases. Anders, calling the pitches from the dugout, had Bourgon mix up sliders and fastballs, but the count went full.

The batter fouled off the next two sliders and Bourgon delivered a fastball, which got past the Ajax hitter for the second out, just as Hunt behind the plate noticed the Ajax runner coming in from third to steal home. He applied the tag and Milton sidestepped another threat to win the game.

"This win is the best. Not only did the kids deserve it by we played our own game," Anders said.

"Ajax does not like to lose and we beat them twice (also in the round robin). They are a dirty team and it feels good to beat them. The kids deserve it, they were awesome."

Milton reached the final by beating Guelph, Newmarket, Ajax and Bolton.

In the tournament opener Milton claimed an 8-2 victory over Guelph. Hunt started things off for Milton with a walk and a steal in the first. Two batters and two outs later Browning walked and stole second to put runners on second and third so Darryl Milec could cash both.

Milton gave Guelph a run in the second to make it 2-1 Milton. Bourgon walked and even-

tually scored in the Milton third inning after a pair of singles by Black and Milec. In the fourth Milton gave Guelph another run, but they needed three hits to get it.

In the fifth-inning Milton slammed the door shut when Hunt walked, stole a base and was sacrificed home by Bourgon.

Black also took a walk and stole three bases to score another Milton run. Browning also walked and stole before Nolan Milec smashed a triple to score a pair of Milton runners and push the score to 8-2.

In the second game of the tournament Milton stopped Newmarket 3-1. Hunt led off with a single, stole second and started for third on Bourgon's sacrifice bunt. Hunt rounded the bag and scampered in to the unguarded plate.

Milton managed some great defence to keep Newmarket off the board in the first but they counted once in the second on a pair of hits and the score was tied 1-1.

In the fifth Milton cranked it up again. Darryl Milec popped a two-out single and stole second and third. Brother Nolan scored him on his hard hit double and Nykoruk scored Nolan with a single. Milton led 3-1, and that's where it ended.

Milton pitcher Jamie Walker threw 40 pitches against 10 batters over three innings to earn the win.

Milton took on Ajax next and claimed a 9-3 win. Darryl Milec faced nine batters from the hill and gave up only a single run in his two inning stint.

Hunt walked, stole second and scored on Bourgon's single. Bourgon stole second and scored on Black's single. Darryl Milec walked and then Nolan Milec crushed a three run homer to give Milton a big lead.

Ajax managed a run in the third frame and two runs, on five walks and three hits, in the fourth.

Milton wanted more and in the fourth Browning tripled to lead off another run barrage enroute to a 9-3 win.

The perfect record in round robin play put Milton into the semifinals against Bolton.

Milton was ready and they rocked Bolton in the first for four runs on five hits, including doubles by Hunt and Bourgon and an inning capping triple by Nolan Milec.

Milec threw 29 pitches in three innings of work, giving up two runs and four hits while facing 13 batters.

In the second inning Richardson singled and scored on a passed ball after stealing second and third. Bagley stepped up to the plate and delivered a home run to come out of his slump in a big way.

The third inning was the clincher as Milton sent 15 batters to the plate and scored 12 runs. A walk, two singles, a double, and a three run homer by Browning were just the beginning. At the end of the frame Milton led 17-2. The teams traded runs to make the final 18-3. Milton advanced to the championship against Ajax.

Milton's season record was 17-5.



The classic pose

Adam Finkbeiner competed in the Honda Hit, Run and Throw baseball skills competition at SkyDome on Sept. 9. He finished third in the Rookie Ball competition for seven and eight year olds. More than 2,000 youngsters took part in local and regional playdowns, culminating in the SkyDome finals. Milton's Jason Neal also made the finals.

Reding records field hockey wins

Bishop Reding Catholic Secondary School girl's field hockey teams went to Shell Park in Oakville to compete in a pre-season tournament recently.

Halton high schools were all represented. The Reding seniors took the title with a 4-0 record.

They beat Oakville Trafalgar 1-0 on a goal by Maria Sweeney, then they took Queen Elizabeth Park 2-0 with Sweeney again scoring and teammate Joanna Miller adding another.

Reding also defeated Burlington Central 1-0 on a Miller goal and then Lord-Elgin (Burlington) went down to defeat 1-0 on Sweeney's

third goal of the tournament.

The junior squad managed a 2-0-2 record, which was good enough for first. They battled to a scoreless tie with Queen Elizabeth Park before beating White Oaks (Oakville) 2-0, with both goals by Diana Frehs. She also scored in the final game against Notre Dame (Oakville) to secure a 1-0 win. In between Reding also had a scoreless draw against Nelson (Burlington).

"The games usually aren't this low scoring," said Reding senior coach John Picone.

"In the tournament the games were only 30 minutes long, less than half a regular game."