

Booze Cruise



Boozeinablender emphatically becomes the first filly to win the North Dakota Derby in Fargo

By Ryan Roshau, NDHP Media Relations

After ten years of running the North Dakota Derby in Fargo it can finally be said that the Lady is a Champ. The Champ, by what basically amounted to a first round TKO.

Devron Leingang's chestnut filly, the 3-10 favorite in the \$10,000 race, seized the lead early in the race under the careful piloting of the meet's leading rider Don Proctor. The filly had shown speed in the past but going to the lead was uncustomary to the form she showed in winning the HRND Derby in Fargo two weeks ago.

"We kind of knew she likes to run away from the gate so we just figured we'd let her do her thing", Leingang said after the race. "She has good speed galloping, a high cruising speed and if she wants to be on the front, if she wants to be in front, let her do her thing."

Up the backstretch, the filly started to shake free from the early challenges of 12-1 longshot Classi Coyote and midway down the backstretch, that high cruising speed increased to five lengths while others started to drop back. It was almost as if the filly was on, well, *booze control*.

Lexon Backhaus' King Krews started to advance while B. Aferd and Shin Daddy gave belated runs. That trio would fill out the superfecta in that respective order. Around the far turn the race became academic as Proctor and Boozeinablender turned the race into an exhibition, widening her lead with every stride before thundering under the wire in front by over 30 lengths. The marvelous effort was embraced by the crowd who cheered her across the line—as if to say they all knew the reason they stayed there all season. Leingang, after two runner-up efforts in the Derby over the past decade, had finally seen his charge cross the wire first.

"It's pretty exciting, we've missed out with a couple seconds, some thirds, but yeah it's nice to get one," Leingang said with relief in his voice as he walked his filly back to the barn. "It's a little more nerve wracking when you've raised the horse and you're in your home state."

Boozeinablender's victory was historic in two ways. Aside from becoming the first filly to win the North Dakota Derby at the Horse Park (Academy's Win was the last to win the Derby but that 2011 race was in Belcourt), she also became only the second horse to win multiple Derbies in Fargo (Tuffernhell accomplished that feat in 2012).

Boozeinablender in her Horse Park stall

A pair of impressive achievements for a filly that started this meet never having won a race on American soil. But as the sun sets on the 2014 meet, she had two Fargo wins to her credit by a combined total of over 41 lengths.

Amazingly the 30 ½ length win was not a Derby record at the track as Scott Horst's Givem Hell Harley won three year-old race by 34 lengths in 2008. Aside from the coincidence, there is a personal connection between Leingang and Horst, and the owner has made it a point to share some accolades.

"Scott and I the first time we met was the very first year Fargo was open and we met at the racetrack," Leingang said. "Like a lot of racetrack people you meet at the track they become family and soon I trained some horses for him and had a lot of success and now that he's got a stallion we are helping those guys promote their stud and I'm sure glad to do it." Horst and Kris Moen stand Boozeinablender's sire Pie's Prospect in state. "He sired both the (North Dakota) Futurity and now the Derby winner," Leingang said.

And the young owner and his fiancé Mandi Seim also took a moment to thank the horse, the lean chestnut filly with the cool concoction of a name that made Fargo her personal Margaritaville this past month. But three straight wins will be enough for the year as her sophomore campaign has ended. Her rivals will no longer need to search for answers on how to beat her; answers that remain as elusive as that lost shaker of salt.

"She's served her purpose," Leingang said. "She's a non-four now so we're going to let her grow up and see what she turns out to be when she matures."

For this meet she turned out to be as good as any horse can be and the many who finished behind the super filly can claim that there's a woman to blame.



Don Proctor gives assistant trainer Mandi Seim a race recap as Boozeinablender heads to the Horse Park winners circle



Prairie Roses overlook the finish line at the North Dakota Derby

