

ALL HAIL: COURTLY CHOICE WINS MEADOWLANDS PACE

David Miller flashed a wide smile as he guided Courtly Choice to the winner's circle after winning the \$701,830 Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace.

The monkey was off the Hall of Famer's back. After 19 failed efforts, Miller finally owned a victory in the Meadowlands Racetrack's signature event for 3-year-olds.

Courtly Choice rallied to win the Pace by 1¼ lengths on Saturday night.

"That was sweet," Miller said. "Really sweet."

The Pace was an obvious omission on Miller's glittering resume. "The Buckeye" is second on the sport's all-time money list with \$222 million in the bank. His best previous Pace finish was a second with Always B Miki in 2014.

The sweetness of the moment spread in many directions, including trainer Blake MacIntosh, who also savored the victory in his Pace debut.

"I believed in this horse," said McIntosh, the former assistant to Casie Coleman. "He just had some back luck earlier in the year."

And it was a winning gamble for the ownership group that ponied up \$61,690 to enter last week's eliminations. The faith of Hutt Racing Stable, Mac And Heim Stables, Daniel Plouffe and Touch Stone Farms was rewarded with the \$350,915 first-prize check.

Most importantly, it was moment of redemption for Courtly

Choice, who failed to make the finals in the North America Cup and the Hempt.

The colt served notice his moment was at hand with a sharp first-up victory in last week's Pace elimination. And then he finally put it all together for the richest victory of his career.

The race seemed primed for a 57-1 upset when a dead-game Dorsoduro Hanover, handled by Matt Kakaley, battled his way to the front at the top of the lane.

But Courtly Choice was tracking his every move and angled wide under Miller's urging to score the victory.

"The trip worked out good," Miller said. "The couple of horses I thought would leave from the outside left. I was able to get Matt in front of me and nobody else moved. On the last turn, I was real happy with my spot."

The time was 1:47 1/5 on the warm evening.

Courtly Choice paid \$4.40, \$3.20 and \$2.80 as the 6-5 favorite. Dorsoduro Hanover returned \$28.20 and \$8.80.

Stay Hungry paid \$3.20 to show as the best finisher among trainer Tony Alagna's trio in the race.

Jimmy Freight, the other supplement, was fourth followed by Thinkbig Dreambig, Nutcracker Sweet, This Is The Plan, Babes Dig Me, Hayden Hanover and American History.

KEEPING PACE: All-source wagering on the 14-race program totaled \$4,083,390, an increase over Pace Night 2017 of \$259,761.

1st ELIMINATION - 7/7/18 - 1:49.0

Horse	Driver	Trainer
1 Stay Hungry	Douglas McNair	Tony Alagna
2 Hayden Hanover	Andy Miller	Julie Miller
3 Thinkbig Dreambig	Jordan Stratton	Jimmy Takter
4 Nutcracker Sweet	David Miller	Jimmy Takter
5 This Is The Plan	Tim Tetrick	Chris Ryder
6 Ideal Feeling	Corey Callahan	Michael Deters
7 Captain Deo	Brett Miller	Tony Alagna

2nd ELIMINATION - 7/7/18 - 1:48.2

Horse	Driver	Trainer
1 Courtly Choice	David Miller	Blake MacIntosh
2 American History	Yannick Gingras	Tony Alagna
3 Dorsoduro Hanover	Matt Kakaley	Ron Burke
4 Jimmy Freight	Louis Roy	Andrew Harris
5 Babes Dig Me	Brett Miller	Tony Alagna
6 Odds On Lauderdale	Scott Zeron	Tony Alagna
7 Grand Teton	Andrew McCarthy	Jimmy Takter
8 Fashiononthebeach	Tim Tetrick	Jim Campbell

\$701,830 FINAL - 7/14/18 - 1:47.1

Horse	Driver	Trainer
1 Courtly Choice	David Miller	Blake MacIntosh
2 Dorsoduro Hanover	Matt Kakaley	Ron Burke
3 Stay Hungry	Douglas McNair	Tony Alagna

RACE 8	PACE	1 MILE	MEADOWLANDS PACE	\$701,830	Quarter times:26.0, 53.0, 1:20.3, 1:47.1	TEMP: 80-0	TRACK: FAST	OFF: 9:48			
5	Courtly Choice	5 6 ⁶ 1/4	6 ⁰⁵	4 ⁰¹ 1/2	2 ¹	1 ¹ 1/4	1:47.1	26.2	*1.20	David Miller	Blake MacIntosh
10	Dorsoduro Hanover	10 5 ⁴ 1/4	5 ⁰³ 3/4	2 ⁰ HD	1 ¹	2 ¹ 1/4	1:47.2	26.4	57.80	Matt Kakaley	Ron Burke
1	Stay Hungry	1 7 ⁷ 1/2	7 ⁰⁶ 1/4	6 ⁰³ 1/4	3 ² 1/2	3 ¹ 1/2	1:47.2	26.1	4.20	Douglas McNair	Tony Alagna
4	Jimmy Freight	4 3 ¹ 1/4	3 ² 1/2	5 ² 1/2	4 ³	4 ¹ 3/4	1:47.3	26.3	5.10	Louis Roy	Andrew Harris
8	Thinkbig Dreambig	8 9 ¹⁰ 1/4	10 ⁰⁸ 3/4	10 ⁰⁰ 6 1/2	9 ⁵	5 ⁴ 1/4	1:48.0	26.1	9.90	Jordan Stratton	Jimmy Takter
6	Nutcracker Sweet	6 8 ⁸ 3/4	8 ⁰⁷ 1/2	8 ⁰⁵ 1/4	8 ⁴ 3/4	6 ⁴ 1/2	1:48.0	26.2	13.10	Brian Sears	Jimmy Takter
2	This Is The Plan	2 4 ² 3/4	4 ³ 3/4	7 ⁴ 1/4	7 ⁴ 3/4	7 ⁵	1:48.1	26.4	54.40	Tim Tetrick	Chris Ryder
9	Babes Dig Me	9 10 ¹¹ 3/4	9 ⁷ 3/4	9 ⁶ 1/4	10 ⁵	8 ⁵ 1/2	1:48.1	26.2	143.00	Brett Miller	Tony Alagna
7	Hayden Hanover	7 1 ¹	2 ¹ 1/4	3 ¹	5 ³ 3/4	9 ⁵ 3/4	1:48.2	27.3	31.20	Andy Miller	Julie Miller
3	American History	3 2 ⁰¹	1 ¹ 1/4	1 ^{HD}	6 ³ 3/4	10 ¹⁰	1:49.1	28.3	4.90	Yannick Gingras	Tony Alagna

Winning Owners: Hutt Racing Stable, Mac & Heim Stables, Daniel Plouffe, Touch Stone Farms
 Winning Trainer: Blake MacIntosh

Exacta (5-10) 107.20
 Trifecta (4-5-9) 523.40
 10-cent Superfecta (4-5-9-7) 146.16