

Florida-bred Weekend Recap

Vangilder Ventures to New Mexico To Win Charles Taylor Derby

BY BROCK SHERIDAN

Florida-bred Vangilder came from off the pace Saturday at Albuquerque Downs to win the \$70,000 Charles Taylor Derby and earn the first stakes victory of his career.

Trained by Steve Asmussen for Chuck Hovitz of Sunnyvale, Tx., Vangilder shipped into Albuquerque Downs from Lone Star Park where he had most recently finished fourth against top level allowance horses going a mile on the turf on June 23. Prior to that, the 3-year-old son of Paynter took a first level allowance race at Lone Star at a mile on the main track on May 12. Those were the first two starts under Asmussen as Vangilder had previously been trained by Keith Desormeaux at Santa Anita earlier in the year and by Bret Calhoun in three starts at Churchill Downs and Fair Grounds as a juvenile.

In winning the Charles Taylor, Vangilder also provided jockey Alfredo Juarez Jr. with his 3,000th career win.

The Charles Taylor saw a field of eight 3-year-olds going a mile-and-one-sixteenth on the main track for a purse of \$70,000 and Vangilder was the 6-5 favorite.

Florida-bred Irish Polo broke on top in the Charles Taylor Derby before Iron Britches took over as the frontrunner while Vangilder and Juarez settled toward the back of the field as they went into the first turn. Iron Britches set comfortable fractions of :23.60 for the first quarter and a half-mile in :47.12 while leading by two-and-a-half lengths moving into the second turn.

Vangilder began to advance around the second turn but was forced seven-wide as Iron Britches led them into the run for home after six furlongs in 1:11.40. Irish Polo took the lead for a brief time in mid-stretch before Vangilder advanced past him to win by three-quarters of a length in 1:43.38 on the fast track. Walker Stalker also put in a late run to get second, a neck in front of Irish Polo in third. They were followed by Iron Britches, Chest Candy, Gold Buyer, Pasamonte Man and Prince Pierce.

Vangilder earned \$42,000 for the win and pushed his career earnings to \$97,962.

"Steve [Asmussen] is a savant," Hovitz said after the win. "He picked this race out for him. Alfonso [Juarez] had to rouse [Vangilder] to get him going, but once he did, he galloped out strong."



Florida-bred Vangilder/COADY PHOTO

It was the third win in eight career starts for Vangilder, who is out of the Parade Ground mare High Speed Goldie. It was the second stakes-winner for High Speed Goldie as she also produced Tranquility Lake Stakes-winner Shenandoah Queen. Both Vangilder and Shenandoah Queen were bred by Thomas and Lori Fackler's Best A Luck Farm LLC located in Reddick, Fla.

"[Vangilder] was always a nice colt but we thought he would do better as he got older because of his size," Lori Fackler said. "[High Speed Goldie] was a big, good looking mare also but we don't have her anymore."

The Facklers consigned Vangilder to the 2018 Ocala Breeders' Sales March Sale in the name of Best A Luck LLC and it was there that Hovitz purchased her for \$30,000.

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