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Claimed for just \$10,000, Beach Daze is now a stakes winner

By Bill Finley

In her debut, the New Jersey-bred filly Beach Daze did not show much. At least on paper. In a 2021 Jersey-bred maiden special weight at the Meadowlands, she was eighth, beaten 14½ lengths. But trainer Farrell Mann had a different take. He put the race under a microscope and decided that it was better than it looked.

"Her first race wasn't that bad," he said. "She ran short on the turf and I watched her run and I liked her action and the way she ran. I also liked her breeding. There were a lot of things I liked about her. She was just immature in her first race. It was not the kind of thing where you see a horse run and say that she has got no talent they need to drop her down to the bottom."

So when Beach Daze, who is by Blofeld and was bred by Lenny and Beth Rera, showed up next in a \$10,000 maiden claimer at Parx, the veteran trainer pounced. He claimed her that day for \$10,000. She finished second, beaten 1½ lengths. While that did not mean she was a star, it did show that Mann was right, that she was better than she showed in her debut and probably could win some races somewhere.

"You never know," he said. "I've been in the business for 50 years and I've seen horses that were claimed for little money that did well. A good friend of mine, Steve Appel, claimed a horse named Whistle Pig for \$10,000 and the horse was a \$1,000 short of making \$1 million. I've never really spent a lot of money on a



horse. You do what I do and you always hope that the horse can be something."

Maybe even a stakes winner. Beach Daze has gone on to surpass even Mann's expectations. She finished second against open company in the 2022 Main Line Stakes at Parx and won a \$72,000 Jersey-bred allowance later that year at Monmouth. The best, however, was yet to come. After finishing second in the Spruce Fir Handicap, she became a stakes winner when capturing the Smart N Classy Handicap June 4 at Monmouth. The win increased her career earnings to \$237,580.

Ridden by Adam Bowman, Beach Daze looked beaten on the far turn. She had made a bold move along the rail but couldn't keep up with Mia's Crusade, who shook free from her rivals and opened up by two lengths a furlong out. But Beach Daze found another gear, rallied and got up just before the wire to win by a neck over Riding Pretty.



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"I wasn't worried because I have a lot of faith in Adam Bowman," Mann said. "He's a very patient rider and his horses always give it their all. Every time she runs, in the stretch, she really starts to dig in. Adam has figured her out. So I was confident that she would be right there at the end."

The win ended a streak of five straight races where Beach Daze hit the board but couldn't find her way to the winner's circle.

"I wasn't at all frustrated with her," Mann said. "It wasn't the kind of situation where she was running and wasn't showing the ability to get by horses or coming up short. She just happened to be in situations where a horse may have gotten a real easy lead and opened up a

bunch of lengths and she came running after them. "

For Mann, it was one of the biggest wins of his long career. The 70-year-old veteran, who is based at Parx, first got into the business as an owner in the 1980s. In 1999, he decided to get into training and opened up a small stable on the Mid-Atlantic circuit. Prior to Beach Daze, his best horse was Programable. A New York-bred by Distinctive Pro, he won a Claiming Crown race in 2000.

"I've really enjoyed being a trainer," he said. "I have brought friends and other people into racing and everybody is having fun with it."

Mann wasn't sure what was next for Beach Daze. The Jersey Girl Handicap turned up July 8 at a mile on the turf.

Beach Daze's only other career turf start was her inauspicious maiden voyage. But Mann didn't think she would have any problem and wanted to give her another try. On the firm going, she finished ninth of 11.

He said running in an open company allowance on the dirt is another option.

In the meantime, he's got a New Jersey-bred who has been in top form and versatile enough that she can sprint or route. Adding to her career earnings shouldn't be a problem.

"That she was a Jersey-bred definitely had something to do with why we claimed her," Mann said. "It's always good to have a Jersey-bred in the barn. The purses they run for; it makes life a lot easier on a trainer."

Irish Boolum romps in Friendly Lover Handicap



And if that wasn't enough for the pluck of the Irish on a day they were being celebrated, the winner is trained by Derry, Northern Ireland, native Cal Lynch.

"Whatever the reason is for it I'll take it," said Lynch.

Idle since a listless eighth-place finish in his last outing on March 1 at Parx, Irish Boolum looped past the slow early pace being set by 7-10 favorite He'spuregold and Paco Lopez, and then left the field in his wake with a burst that quickly separated him from his six rivals. The winning time was 1:39.73.

The all-Irish horse-named exacta returned \$170.20 for \$2.

"I know this horse well," said winning rider Angel Arroyo, 3-for-3 after the win with 4-year-old gelded son of Exaggerator. "I knew he was 100 percent ready to go off the layoff. Usually he is far back. I wanted to sit five or six lengths back. But when I saw how slow the pace was for the first half mile I had to move.

"Today the slow pace actually helped me. It kept me closer early on. And when he was ready to go he took off. I had nice position and I was clear and I just let him run."

Lopez, Monmouth Park's leading rider, employed the same early tactics he did in winning the Lady's Secret Stakes the day before, taking the field to an opening quarter in a plodding :25.76 and then to the half in :49.86. It didn't work this time, with Arroyo sensing the slow pace and letting his horse loop the field.

Irish Boolum is owned and was bred by Isabelle de Tomaso, a daughter of Amory Haskell, for whom Monmouth Park's showcase race is named.

"The pace today was so slow early. I guess that's why he was so close early on. He usually gets out-footed," said Lynch. "Angel Arroyo saw the pace was slow and put him right there. He's done nothing wrong against state-breds. They take turns beating each other. There's not a lot that separates them. But today's performance was quite impressive."

Monmouth Park's 51st annual New Jersey Irish Festival June 11 turned out to be a bonanza for hunch players in the featured Friendly Lover Handicap.

Irish Boolum, the second-longest shot in the field at 21-1, powered to an 8¾-length romp over 16-1 Irish Meadow to record his first career stakes win in the \$85,000 one-mile event for New Jersey-breds.



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In posting his fourth win from 16 career starts, Irish Boolum had three wins and four seconds from eight lifetime races at Monmouth Park. Lynch said the nearly 15-week layoff was a much needed one.

"We freshened him a little and it seems like it helped," said Lynch. "Isabella

de Tomaso has been real patient with this horse and let him develop at his own pace last year. He went down to Delaware Park and worked down there with my wife Daniella. That track is a little deeper and it has been playing tough. So his last couple of works have been really impressive.

"We weren't sure we were tight enough coming off the layoff. I thought Kelly Breen's horse [He'spuregold] would be very tough in there. In his last race at Parx, Irish Boolum just didn't handle the track. So we decided to freshen him up and get him back with Jersey-breds."

He'spuregold three-peats in Irish War Cry Handicap

The Irish War Cry Handicap may need to be renamed in the years to come at Monmouth Park.

The He'spuregold Stakes might be more appropriate

He'spuregold, a 5-year-old gelding, rallied from off the pace to collar There Are No Words in the final sixteenth of a mile to win the \$85,000 Irish War Cry Handicap at Monmouth Park July 9 – the third straight year the Kelly Breen-trainee has won the race.

Bred by John Bowers Jr. and owned by Roseland Farm Stable, He'spuregold increased his record to seven wins from 21 career starts – six coming on the grass. The son of Vancouver has won four state-bred stakes at Monmouth Park.

"I kind of envisioned what happened today. I thought Chuck Spina's horse [There Are No Words] would be right there and it would be a little bit of a stretch duel between us and that's what happened," said Breen. "He's a special horse. I'm going through a lot right now

(physically). With the time I've missed (following neck fusion surgery in mid-May), to come back after three weeks with the barn in such good order and this horse in such good order I have to tip my hat to my crew.

"Jesus Gomez is in charge when I'm gone. He's been with me for 20 years. Despite me missing time we're having a good meet and I really think that's a credit to the good help I have."

Ridden by Paco Lopez, He'spuregold returned \$3.60 to win as the favorite in the field of 10 Jersey-breds going a mile on the turf.

The winning time over a course listed as firm was 1:34.01.

"I think this horse wants to go a little longer so I wasn't really comfortable with a mile today," said Lopez. "But he broke well and there were those three horses were having a duel early and I was able to get him comfortable and see everything happening.

"He is so much better as a grass horse.



He's a different horse on the turf. He has won a race on the dirt but I don't know how since he is so good on the grass."

With Crafty Don, Smithwick's Spice, and Leo Monte all dueling for the lead through early fractions of :22.95 and :46.62, Lopez had He'spuregold in fifth, just behind There Are No Words.

Coming out of the turn There Are No Words got the jump on the field and opened a 1½-length lead in mid-stretch before He'spuregold caught him late to win by three-quarters of a length. It was another 8½ lengths back to Smithwick's Spice in third.

He'spuregold now has a 5-1-0 line from seven career starts on the Monmouth turf.

Invader to stand at Pegasus Stud

Pegasus Stud in Colts Neck has purchased the Kentucky-bred stallion Invader, who will stand his first season at stud in 2024 at Pegasus Stud, the facility owned by Carmine Spinella.

Invader, a striking son of War Front out of the graded stakes-winning mare Say (Ire), is a full-brother to Grade 1 winner Fog of War and group stakes-placed stakes winner Naval Intelligence.

His dam Say (Ire) was a group stakes winner and Group 1-placed in the United Kingdom; second dam is three-time Grade 1 winner and multimillionaire Riskaverse (by Dynaformer).



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The deal to acquire Invader was tasked by Carmine Spinella to prominent bloodstock advisor and racing manager Rick Sacco.

"Invader has a world class pedigree, excellent conformation and size. The stakes winner hails from a very live female family. His 2-year-old half-sister by Justify recently sold for \$556,042 at Goffs," Sacco said.

"I told Rick that we had to have a stallion that complemented our current stud Sea Wizard," said Spinella. "I wanted to offer New Jersey breeders a stallion with a top-class pedigree for turf. I'm very excited about standing a horse like Invader at my newly acquired farm and

to offer this type of pedigree."

"Sea Wizard displayed his talent on dirt and is off to a fast start at stud in New Jersey," Spinella added. "The turf program offered for New Jersey-breds at Monmouth Park in overnight and stakes races is awesome."

A \$500,000 Keeneland September Yearling Sale purchase in 2018 by Cromwell Bloodstock, Invader scored by 12¾ lengths in a maiden special weight running 1 mile at Turfway Park as a 2-year-old for trainer Wesley Ward.

The War Front colt followed up that effort in his next start, as a 3-year-old, with another spectacular Turfway Park score in the John Battaglia Memorial

Stakes, winning by almost seven lengths.

A month later, Invader finished a game second, by a neck, in the Grade 3 \$250,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks behind Field Pass. It would be the final start of his 3-year-old campaign due to injury. He returned at 4 to hit the board in all three starts.

Invader's relocation to Pegasus Stud is expected to be a major boost to the lucrative New Jersey-bred program offered at Monmouth Park.

"I'm committed to the New Jersey-bred program," Spinella said. "With the purse incentive structure in New Jersey, there's such good opportunity in the state."

Princess Avary wins Jersey Girl Handicap



Tim Shaw is going to savor this win for a while.

After 22 years as a trainer, and 1,337 starts, Shaw notched his first career stakes win when front-running Precious Avary held on for a neck victory in the \$85,000 Jersey Girl Handicap at Monmouth Park July 8, doing so at odds of 22-1.

The win was the third in a row for the 3-year-old daughter of Divining Rod, all coming since she returned to facing New Jersey-breds.

"It's a great feeling," said Shaw. "It

means the beer is going to be colder, the steak is going to taste better. I've only run two horses in stakes races in my career and she is one of them. Mostly I claim horses and have some home-breds with limited ability. But I never had a real horse who could run like this one."

Racing against older fillies and mares, and stretching out on the turf for the first time, Precious Avary was put on the lead by jockey Silvestre Gonzalez, loped through an opening quarter in :25.08 and a first half in :50.24 and had just enough left to hold off 2-1 Bramble Bay, who was charging up the rail. It was another 1¾ lengths back to Riding Pretty in third.

The winning time for the mile over a turf course listed as firm was 1:37.31.

"She's in very good form right now," said Gonzalez. "She just loves to run – dirt, turf, short, long. She's just game. She comes out of there and gives 100 percent.

"When I broke out of there and I saw there was no speed I put her on the lead and then grabbed her and she rated very well today. She settled in nicely, we got an easy pace and that helped us down the stretch. Right now, she's in a happy place.

She's a Jersey-bred and in these Jersey-bred races she fits very well."

The victory was her fourth straight against state-bred company, the last three coming at Monmouth Park this year.

"I think the change back to Jersey-bred company has given her confidence again," said Shaw, who keeps a 10-horse stable based at Parx. "She had a good race against open company at Penn National to start the year and that was kind of the spark. Then once we were able to get her into Jersey-bred company it seemed her confidence kept building.

"It's a little of a case of being back with her own company thing, being back with some confidence, and she's a 3-year-old filly who is getting better. She's won short turf, long dirt, slop going short, and now turf going two turns. Honestly, I don't know what she wants or what she's best at. As long as Monmouth stays open I think we have to keep her with Jersey-breds."

Bred and owned by Smith Farm and Stable, Precious Avary now has a 4-2-1 line from 10 career starts for earnings of \$201,460.



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