

FASTONGRASS WINS BEVERLY J. LEWIS

For immediate release

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Pomona, Calif. (Sept. 10, 2009) -- Jockey Martin Pedroza won his third race on the opening day Fairplex Park card Thursday when he guided Fastongrass to a half-length victory in the \$50,000-guaranteed Beverly J. Lewis Stakes, a 6 furlongs sprint for 3-year-old fillies.

Pedroza committed Fastongrass early in the race as he chased pacesetter and 9-5 favorite Dancing Erin until deep stretch. That's when Pedroza went to work, getting the daughter of Forest Wildcat up in the final strides to win for a \$6.60 payoff.

It was another 1 lengths lengths back to Pretty Katherine, followed by Ride Me Fast and Arosehasitsthorns.

There were three early scratches form the Beverly J. Lewis, Red White and Brew, Miss Dixie Dancer and Bonifacio.

The winner covered the 6 furlongs in 1:17:46.

Fastongrass, as her name implies, had started nine times during her career, all on the turf. She had won three and banked \$93,673.

But how would she handle a conventional dirt track?

"She's been galloping on the training track at Del Mar," said winning trainer Julio Canani, "and I thought she would handle it. She's bred for the dirt.

"In her last race (the San Clemente Handicap, a one mile turf race at Del Mar on Aug. 1) she ran next to last. I know she can't route, but I wanted to try it. So after that, I started looking to this race.

"She's been running good in sprints on turf and now she's won on dirt even though her name is Fastongrass."

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Pedroza, the all-time leading jockey at Fairplex with 561, added three more to that total on opening day, scoring with L' Azia (\$5.60) in the first race, Justinplace (\$3.40) in the third and Fastongrass in the eighth.

Pedroza will be inducted in the Fairplex Park Hall of Fame on Sept. 27 in special winner's circle ceremonies.

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Jockey Joy Scott single handedly put the \$2 pick six and the \$1 win pick nine into carryover mode after winning the sixth race with Somethingaboutmerri at \$132.40.

Last year Black Princess was the highest priced winner of the meet, returning \$142.80 for \$2, while the all-time record in Pomona came in 1976 when Uncle Fox reported home in front for a \$182.20 return.

The \$2 pick six carryover for Friday is \$22,714, while the \$1 win pick nine carryover is \$4,796.