

Hickfromfrenchlick seeks New York glory

by Frank Drucker, publicity director, Empire City at Yonkers Raceway

Yonkers, NY --- For years in Boston Celtics green, Larry Bird taunted, tortured and tormented New York. Saturday night (Sept. 22), his "nickname-sake" tries to take it.

Hickfromfrenchlick drew post position six in the 2-year-old pacing colt and gelding event during Yonkers Raceway's \$1.8 million New York Night of Champions. The race, sponsored by the state's Agriculture and Horse Breeding Development Fund, is the fourth of a 12-race card and the third of eight consecutively-contested \$225,000 Sire Stakes finales.

Hickfromfrenchlick is no stranger to the spotlight, having won the \$100,000 Lawrence B. Sheppard Pace in mid-July. The son of [So Surreal](#) returned to Westchester in late August, picking off divisional leader — and Saturday's pole-sitter — Melodies Major in a New York Sire Stakes event in 1:53.3.

It was off to Vernon Downs after that and a down-the-road, life-best 1:51.3 state-bred romp. For the season, he's won four of six tries and amassed \$120,541, though he did not fire in his final NYSS try at Batavia.

"Stuck behind some bad horses who had no reason to pull," Ray Schnittker said.

Fortunately for Hickfromfrenchlick's co-owner, trainer and sometimes chauffeur, nights of that sort have been few and far between. Schnittker drove that night, as he did at Vernon, but will be at The Meadows Saturday, so he enlists Tim Tetrick this time around.

"Training down, he was good, so I'm not surprised," Schnittker said of the \$47,000 Goshen purchase who is also owned by Nolamaura Racing and Thomas Spatorico. "He had a :27-and-change last quarter (in a Landmark event) at Goshen, so I knew he was ready.

"I trained his mother (My Girl's A Star) and she had a record of (1):52.2 as a 2-year-old.

"I told Mark (MacDonald) he was going to win the Sheppard, so just don't screw it up, which he didn't."

Any such guarantees for Tetrick before he and Hickfromfrenchlick Saturday night?

"No one can out-leave Melodies Major if they wanted to, but I think (Hickfromfrenchlick) can get around some of the others, and if he's close, he wouldn't stun me."

Regardless of Saturday's outcome, Hickfromfrenchlick is finished for the season.

"He's done everything we've asked," Schnittker said.

Post time for New York Night of Champions is the usual 6:50 p.m.



Katy Gazzini photo

Lawrence B. Sheppard Pace winner Hickfromfrenchlick looks to wrap up his 2-year-old campaign with victory in Saturday's New York Sire Stakes final at Yonkers Raceway.