



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **MY MANE SQUEEZE WINS EIGHT BELLES PRESENTED BY SYSCO**

**LOUISVILLE, KY (May 3, 2024)** – William Butler and WinStar Farm’s My Mane Squeeze took command at the three-sixteenths pole and posted a two-length victory over Impel in the 69<sup>th</sup> running of the \$534,300 Eight Belles presented by Sysco (GII) for 3-year-old fillies Friday afternoon.

Trained by Mike Maker and ridden by Luis Saez, My Mane Squeeze completed the seven furlongs on the sloppy main track in 1:22.85.

Asternia set the pace with Halina’s Forte chasing in second through fractions of :22.46 and :45.23 as Saez kept My Mane Squeeze in the clear in third.

On the far turn, My Mane Squeeze went after the leaders and quickly took over at the three-sixteenths pole and cruised to her first stakes victory in open company.

My Mane Squeeze returned \$15.84, \$7.70 and \$5.52. Impel, ridden by Florent Geroux, returned \$5.42 and \$4.36 and finished 4 ¼ lengths in front of Asternia, who paid \$8.98 to show under Manny Esquivel.

It was another length back to Halina’s Forte with Do Gooder, Lady Moscato, favored Denim and Pearls, Accommodate Eva, Tanya Showers, All Things Go and R Harper Rose.

### **EIGHT BELLES QUOTES**

**Luis Saez (jockey, My Mane Squeeze, winner)** – “My horse handled the off track beautifully today. She traveled great the entire backstretch and was in a very comfortable position. You can tell by my silks that they are still clean and I think that helped her down the lane. We stayed out of all the kickback and she got stronger as we got closer to the wire.”

**Mike Maker (trainer, My Mane Squeeze, winner)** – “Well we did a lot of schooling at Oaklawn. She wasn’t acting like herself. She was in season in the paddock and she was bad in the gate. That was out of character. We did some schooling and it looks like it paid off. Maybe the outside post helped, she wasn’t in gate too long. But the previous start just wasn’t her. I was happy the way she saddled, and then when she loaded in the gate and she was behaving I was happy, and then the way she broke it was like, we’ll see if she’s good enough. The plan all along has been the (June 7) Acorn so we’ll take it one step at a time.”

**Florent Geroux (jockey, Impel, second)** – “It was a good race for her. She gave it a good try. I don’t think the track bothered her. She seemed to be fine on it. I can’t be complaining though. I’ve had a pretty good day today.”

### **ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK**

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