



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **BATTLE OF NORMANDY COMFORTABLY WINS GRADE III, \$300,000 RIVER CITY**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Nov. 9, 2024)** – New York invader **Battle of Normandy** tracked pacesetter **Wonderful Justice (GB)**, surged to the front leaving the final turn and extended his lead down the stretch to comfortably win Saturday's 45<sup>th</sup> running of the \$300,000 River City (Grade III) at Churchill Downs by 1 ¾ lengths over **Reckoning Force**.

Battle of Normandy, owned by **West Point Thoroughbreds LLC** and **Woodford Racing LLC**, ran 1 1/8 miles over a "firm" Matt Winn Turf Course in 1:48.79 to defeat eight other 3-year-olds and up and collect his first stakes win.

**Luan Machado** rode the winner for Hall of Fame trainer **Shug McGaughey III**, who won the race for the second year in a row and third time overall. **Smokin' T** was victorious a year ago and **Eminency** won the seventh renewal in 1984 with when the race was carded at one mile on the main track.

**Wonderful Justice (GB)** set relaxed fractions of :24.77, :49.88 and 1:14.05 as Battle of Normandy raced within a half-length off his right hip. Leaving the final turn, Battle of Normandy poked his head in front and then rushed to a 1 ½ length advantage at the top of the stretch. Reckoning Force, who raced in mid-pack down the backstretch, rallied between horses inside the final sixteenth of mile but no match for the easy winner.

"He was a bit head strong going into the first turn but I tried to get him to settle as much as I could going onto the backside," Machado said. "He was so full of himself and just dragging me the entire time. I watched his last few races and you could see with the blinkers he liked to be pretty close. He's a very impressive moving colt. We weren't going too fast early so I was confident turning for home he'd still have a lot of energy left. He just took off when I asked him and finished up very well."

Battle of Normandy returned mutuels of \$10.32, \$4.94 and \$3.50 as the 4-1 fourth betting choice. Reckoning Force, at 7-2 under **Tyler Gaffalione**, paid \$5.02 and \$3.34. It was another three-quarters of a length back in third to **Gigante** under **Cristian Torres**, who paid \$4.96 to show at odds of 7-1.

**Cash Equity (FR)**, the mild 3-1 favorite under **Mike Smith**, finished fourth and was followed by Wonderful Justice (GB), **Masteroffoxhounds**, **Emmanuel**, **Public Sector (GB)** and Hades. **Harlan Estate** were scratched.

The victory for Battle of Normandy was worth \$178,800 and increased his earnings to \$643,195. He sports a record of 5-3-1 in 13 starts.

This was Battle of Normandy's sixth appearance in a graded stakes before finally breaking through with a win. At 2, he was second in the With Anticipation (GIII) and, as a 3-year-old, he finished third in the Dueling Grounds Derby (GIII).

Battle of Normandy has won his last four starts. He prevailed under allowance conditions in his previous three starts in New York at Aqueduct and Saratoga.

Battle of Normandy, a 4-year-old son of City of Light out of the Kitten's Joy mare Adorable Miss, was bred in Kentucky by **Gage Hill Stables LLC** and **William S. Farish**.

## UPPER CASE WINS \$295,000 DREAM SUPREME UNDER ROMAN

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Nov. 9, 2024) – OXO Equine LLC's 4-year-old filly Upper Case** ran down tiring pacesetter **Accomplished Girl** down the stretch and out-kicked **Mystic Pleasure** inside the final furlong to collect her first stakes victory with a 1 ¼-length triumph in Saturday's 19<sup>th</sup> running of the \$295,000 Dream Supreme (Listed) at Churchill Downs.

Ridden by **Evin Roman** for trainer **Paulo Lobo**, Upper Case ran six furlongs over a fast track in 1:09.88. For Roman, the winner of a 2017 Eclipse Award for Champion Apprentice Jockey, it was his first win in 20 mounts at Churchill Downs after shifting his tack from Northern California where he was the leading rider at Golden Gate Fields to the Kentuckiana area earlier this year.

The complexity of the sprint for fillies and mares was altered at the start when expected pacesetter and even-money favorite **Spirit Wind** left the stalls slowly and spotted the field about 1 ½ lengths. Accomplished Girl found herself on the lead down the backstretch with Mystic Pleasure and **Spirit** chasing as Upper Case tracked from fourth down on the rail a couple of lengths behind. After fractions of :21.71 and :44.66, the field hit the top of the stretch and Upper Case tipped out three-wide to display her closing late kick. She grabbed the lead between horses with an eighth of a mile to run and easily turned back a run by Mystic Pleasure.

"I'm so grateful for this team of (owner) **Larry Best** and Paulo for giving me these opportunities," said Roman, who honed his craft at the famed **Escuela Vocacional Hipica** jockey school in his native of Puerto Rico. "I sat a beautiful trip today and this filly keeps getting better each start."

The win was worth \$183,450 and improved Upper Case's career earnings to \$393,964 with a record of 4-6-0 in 14 starts.

Prior to the Dream Supreme, Upper Case finished a half-length back of Mystic Pleasure in an Oct. 13 allowance race over 6 ½ furlongs at Keeneland.

"She's like a fine wine and getting better with age," Lobo said. "We were glad to get this stakes win with her today. She has run well at Turfway in the past and it could be a possibility getting her back there this winter. We had talked about possibly retiring her but we will talk to Mr. Best and make a decision about what to do next."

Upper Case, the 9-2 third betting choice, returned \$11.24, \$5.06 and \$2.54. Mystic Pleasure, the 2-1 second choice under **Florent Geroux**, paid \$3.66 and \$2.20. Spirit Wind, with **Mike Smith** up, was another three-quarters of a length back in third and paid \$2.10 to show. Accomplished Girl, Awesome Treat and **Into Love** completed the order of finish. **Girls Weekend**, **Lure'em In** and **Miss Arlington** were scratched.

Upper Case is a daughter of American Pharoah out of the Smart Strike mare Rigged Smart and was bred in Kentucky by **Thor-bred Stables LLC**.

The Dream Supreme is named after the six-time graded stakes winner who won the Derby City Distaff at Churchill Downs in 2001. Trained by **Bill Mott**, **Dream Supreme** won two Grade I sprints in her 16-race career and earned \$1,007,680 between 1999-2001.

## RIVER CITY QUOTES

**Luan Machado (jockey, Battle of Normandy, winner):** "He was a bit head strong going into the first turn but I tried to get him to settle as much as I could going onto the backside. He was so full of himself and just dragging me the entire time. I watched his last few races and you could see with the blinkers he liked to be pretty close. He's a very impressive moving colt. We weren't going too fast early so I was confident turning for home he'd still have a lot of energy left. He just took off when I asked him and finished up very well."

**Tyler Gaffalione (jockey, Reckoning Force, runner-up):** "He ran a good race and battled hard to the wire to get second. We just ended up not being able to catch the winner late and were second best."

## DREAM SUPREME QUOTES

**Evin Roman (jockey, Upper Case, winner):** “I’m so grateful for this team of (owner) Larry Best and (trainer) Paulo (Lobo) for giving me these opportunities. I sat a beautiful trip today and this filly keeps getting better each start.”

**Paulo Lobo (trainer, Upper Case, winner):** “She’s like a fine wine and getting better with age. We were glad to get this stakes win with her today. She has run well at Turfway in the past and it could be a possibility getting her back there this winter. We had talked about possibly retiring her but we will talk to Mr. Best and make a decision about what to do next.”

## ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK

Churchill Downs Racetrack (“CDRT”), the world’s most legendary racetrack, has been the home of the Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility and Race and Sports Book. [www.ChurchillDowns.com](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).

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