

Fulfilling afternoon

Velazquez on three winners

By ED GRAY

NOTEBOOK

John Velazquez made a rare trip to Suffolk Downs well worth his while yesterday, scoring three stakes triumphs on yesterday's MassCap program.

Prior to guiding heavily favored Commentator to a rousing 14-length victory in the \$500,000 Massachusetts Handicap, the New York-based rider entered the Suffolk winner's circle with Real Estate to celebrate a big win in the co-featured \$100,000 James B. Moseley Sprint.

Real Estate, who was shut off at the start of his last start in the Grade 1 Forego Handicap at Saratoga, shot out of the starting gate to grab the early lead with Cavallo Pazzo in hot pursuit. The Bruce Levine-trained 4-year-old continued to set a blistering pace with fractions of :21 4/5, :44 and :56 1/5 through the first five furlongs of the six-furlong sprint that honors the late former chairman of Suffolk Downs.

Delaware Park-based Cavallo Pazzo turned up the heat at the top of the stretch, but Real Estate was certainly up to the challenge, drawing off to a one-length victory. Suffolk-based Southern Rainbow finished third, nearly six lengths farther back.

"He's so big you can't tell that he's going that fast," said Velazquez following his first ride aboard the son of High Yield. "But he was going as fast as he could."

The Moseley was the first stakes victory for Real Estate, who had won two allowance races prior to his unfortunate journey in his stakes debut at Saratoga.

Velazquez also scored a stakes success in the \$50,000 Drumtop Stakes, one race earlier on the card.

Nick of time

Hall of Fame trainer Nick Zito, who saddled Commentator for his dominating MassCap score, also enjoyed considerable success on yesterday's undercard, visiting the winner's circle two times from three other starters.

Thunders Dove scored her first stakes victory in the \$50,000 Drumtop Stakes for fillies and mares as the 4-5 favorite in a field of six. The Zito-trained 4-year-old quickly found the lead under Velazquez and never looked back to score by three lengths, running the six-furlong distance in 1:09 2/5.

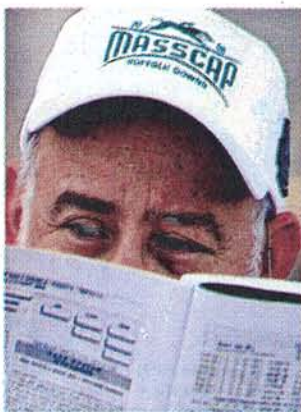
Delaware Park-based Intentional Fever finished second, a little more than a length ahead of Suffolk-based Nijinsky Bullet.

Thunders Dove, who had won back-to-back allowance races at Monmouth Park in her last two



HERALD PHOTO BY JIM MICHAUD

WINNING SMILE: Jockey John Velazquez enjoys the view aboard Commentator in the winner's circle after the 66th Massachusetts Handicap at Suffolk Downs yesterday.



HERALD PHOTO BY JIM MICHAUD/AP PHOTO

THE PAYOFF: Gary Altman of Brookline buries his nose in the program looking for a winner yesterday. At right, trainer Nick Zito smiles as he gets a congratulatory hug after Commentator's MassCap win.



starts, was preceded on the Suffolk racetrack by stablemates Palmer's Approach and Bobby Sands.

Palmer's Approach, an unraced maiden 3-year-old, ran away with the second race, a \$21,400 maiden special weights event by more than 12 lengths. The son of Najran ran six furlongs in a rapid 1:10.56 as the 2.10-1 second choice in a nine-horse field.

Bobby Sands, who was bet down to a 1-5 favorite for the sixth race, was no match for easy winner Brother Joey in the \$24,400 allowance race. The Zito trainee, who had captured a weaker allowance field at Suffolk by seven lengths in July, finished nearly 12 lengths be-

hind the winner.

Hold your horses

Hold On Smokey (\$6.00) had no trouble holding on to a front-running triumph in the inaugural running of the \$50,000 Robert M. O'Malley Stakes, notching a three-length triumph over Rockhurst. Hollywood Left, a New York shipper bet down to even-money favoritism, could only manage a third-place finish in the five-furlong turf stakes.

A winner of four of his last five starts on Suffolk's main track, Hold On Smokey was impressive while winning his turf debut by

running the distance in a snappy 58 1/5 seconds under jockey Jose Lopez.



| Year | Winner |
|---------|-------------------|
| 2008 | Commentator |
| 2007 | Brass Hat |
| 2006 | No race |
| 2005 | No race |
| 2004 | Offlee Wild |
| 2003 | No race |
| 2002 | Macho Uno |
| 2001 | Include |
| 2000 | Running Stag |
| 1999 | Behrens |
| 1998 | Skip Away* |
| 1997 | Skip Away |
| 1996 | Cigar |
| 1995 | Cigar |
| 1989-94 | No race |
| 1988 | Lost Code |
| 1987 | Waquoit |
| 1986 | Skip Trial |
| 1985 | Bounding Basque |
| 1984 | Dixieland Band |
| 1983 | Let Burn |
| 1982 | Silver Supreme |
| 1981 | Soldier Boy |
| 1980 | Ring Of Light |
| 1979 | Island Sultan |
| 1978 | Big John Taylor |
| 1977 | Swinging Hal (1) |
| | Blue Times (2) |
| 1976 | Dancing Champ |
| 1975 | Stonewalk |
| 1974 | Billy Come Lately |
| 1973 | Riva Ridge |
| 1972 | Droll Role |
| 1971 | Chompion |
| 1970 | Semillant |
| 1969 | Beau Marker |
| 1968 | Out Of The Way |
| 1967 | Good Knight |
| 1966 | Fast Count |
| 1965 | Smart |
| 1964 | Smart |
| 1963 | Crimson Satan |
| 1962 | Air Pilot |
| 1961 | Polyad |
| 1960 | Talent Show |
| 1959 | Air Pilot* |
| 1958 | Promised Land |
| 1957 | Greek Spy |
| 1956 | Midafternoon |
| 1955 | Helioscope |
| 1954 | Wise Margin |
| 1953 | Royal Vale |
| 1952 | To Market |
| 1951 | One Hitter |
| 1950 | Cochise |
| 1949 | First Nighter |
| 1948 | Beauchet |
| 1947 | Stymie |
| 1946 | Pavot |
| 1945 | First Fiddle |
| 1944 | First Fiddle |
| 1943 | Market Wise |
| 1942 | Whirlaway |
| 1941 | War Relic |
| 1940 | Eight Thirty |
| 1939 | Fighting Fox |
| 1938 | Menow |
| 1937 | Seabiscuit |
| 1936 | Time Supply |
| 1935 | Top Row |

* — Track record; (1) — 1st division; (2) — 2nd division