

Hardwood Chips wins debut in three-way photo

Columbus, OH --- Hardwood Chips rallied off the final turn to overtake Maple Point and Near The Limit to win the Open Handicap Trot at Scioto Downs on Friday night. The 5-year-old gelding was timed in 1:56.1 over a track rated good after day-long rains.

J.D. Wengerd sent Near The Limit to the front at the start while the favored Maple Point settled in the pocket behind the leader. Driver Chip Noble kept Hardwood Chip third most of the mile, then stirred up his trotter to catch the leaders in the final strides. Hardwood Chip won by a neck while Maple Point had a neck over Near The Limit.

Deep Chip, second favorite in the betting, launched a first-over attack past the half-mile marker, but he stalled in the stretch.

Hardwood Chips is owned by Paul Acker of Marion, Ohio and trained by Frank Todd, Jr. He was making his first start after three qualifiers at Scioto.

In the Filles and Mares Open Handicap Pace, heavy favorite Don't Blame Her drew off easily in the stretch to score in 1:54 for owner Matthew Toler of Bidwell, Ohio. Dan Noble drove for trainer Virgil Morgan, Jr.

Danika Hanover and Yndra Hanover took turns on the lead as Noble kept Don't Blame Her in the middle of the pack until the winner began her relentless move to the top. Don't Blame Her overtook Yndra Hanover entering the stretch while Mexicali Rose rallied to grab second money from Yndra Hanover.

Once again, Ohio Hall of Famer Chip Noble and son Dan dominated the drivers at Scioto as each scored a trio of victories on the 10-race card.