

**ARIMA RACE CLUB**  
**RACE DAY REVIEW**  
**DAY 44 SATURDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2010**

**Signal Alert zooms home in style**

RACING for just the second time in his career, Signal Alert was so impressive in victory that he produced one of the fastest 1,200-metre times in the almost 17 years of centralisation when horse racing continued at Santa Rosa Park, Arima. The Glenn Mendez-trained son of Omega Code stopped the clock in 1:10.66 seconds en route to taking the Junior Sammy Group Of Companies Juvenile Sprint Trophy by two and a half lengths. Signal Alert was the least fancied of the three previous winners in the \$150,000 contest, but he made most of the running in the hands of Venezuelan jockey Freddie Manrique and was a very comfortable winner of the feature attraction of the eight-race card.

Second favourite Sacred Trust, who had won her only other start by five lengths, finished well to earn the runner-up berth, ahead of raging favourite Readbetweendlines. This chestnut colt, who had trotted up by nine lengths in his only other start and is owned by race sponsor Junior Sammy, was on the haunches of stable companion Signal Alert until he backed out when they turned for home and eventually ended up 2 ¼ lengths behind Sacred Trust in third. First To Fly, the most experienced horse in the field with three previous starts under his belt, came late and ended up five lengths adrift in fourth, while Undulation rounded out the HI-5. Signal Alert had not been seen since he prevailed by over three lengths on Republic Day (September 24), but the layoff had no effect on the American-bred bay colt and he seems destined to be one of the stars of next year. However owners the Baptiste brothers, known as Errol Stables, must be keeping their fingers crossed as we were never able to see the best of three of their former potential superstars because of injury. And all three - Music Maestro, Cobalt Star and Raw Pleasure - had also begun their careers with back-to-back victories.

Cobalt Star, in fact, won this race three years ago and the brothers collected \$90,000 for Signal Alerts victory in the eighth edition. They lead the owners' pack in this race along with Sammy, who won the first two runnings - with Twice Infallible and Getdjobdone. Mendez, already the leading trainer before this edition, has now been successful on three occasions, following Cobalt Star and Cactus Amour in '07 and '08. Cactus Amour's half-brother was one of three debutants in this year's race, but Lang Amour could only finish ninth of the 13 American-bred two-year-olds. The feature was as early as the fifth race for the first time in a long time and other top two performances also came very early in the day. Dionysus began proceedings in spectacular fashion with a commanding 5 1/2-length triumph in the Conditional Handicap A. The Andrew Aleong-owned three-year-old, who won the Santa Rosa Classic at odds of 30/1 in October and finished third in the Turf Classic last time out, has improved tremendously and stopped the clock in a very quick 1:20.97 for the 1,350-metre distance.

On the other hand, I'm Coming Baby has gone backwards in her last few starts and the Oaks Stakes runner-up could only finish fifth of the seven runners. D'Iceman Cometh was probably even more impressive than Dionysus as he scored a powerful six-length victory in the second race, the Penguin Ice Company Ltd Allowance Trophy. After finishing one-from-last on his Republic Day debut and then nine lengths behind Readbetweenlines in second, this American-bred three-year-old is now operating like a runaway train. D'Iceman Cometh prevailed by over five lengths last time out on November 20 in about a second outside the 1,300-metre track record and produced one of the fastest 1,100-metre (1:04.57) times since centralisation on this occasion. 2008 Stewards Cup runner-up Divine Bull came to challenge as they turned for home, but Wendell Kangaloo's inexperienced chestnut pulled away to score like a real champ.

Trinity Fire, who had not faced the starter since he won over the same trip on June 26, ended up third in the event, which suffered from the absence of Stewards Cup third Filcher. However after the first two races, favourites struggled and the only other to triumph was Give Em Thunder, who came late to deny another Shivam Maharaj-owned horse, Majestic Gold, over 1,750 metres in the \$10,000 Optional Claimer. Right after the son of Arima Race Club (ARC) president Kama Maharaj seemed set to score again, but favourite Ask The Padre 'broke down' close to home and 29/1 shot Playin The Storm went on to take the 1,200-metre \$7,500 Optional Claimer. The curtain event followed with Indian King heavily favoured to prevail over 1,200 metres in the \$20,000 Optional Claimer. But the fifth-placed finisher in the Republic Bank Derby in September could only place sixth as the Rolf Bartolo-bred and owned Eto scored his tenth career victory at the generous price of 6/1.

Terrance Thomas, handler of Derby winner Back On Top, was the only trainer to saddle more than one winner and both D'Iceman Cometh and Playin The Storm were piloted by the day's leading rider Sheldon Rodrigo. Racing continues at Santa Rosa Park on Saturday with the 45th and penultimate round of the ARC's 2010 Season.