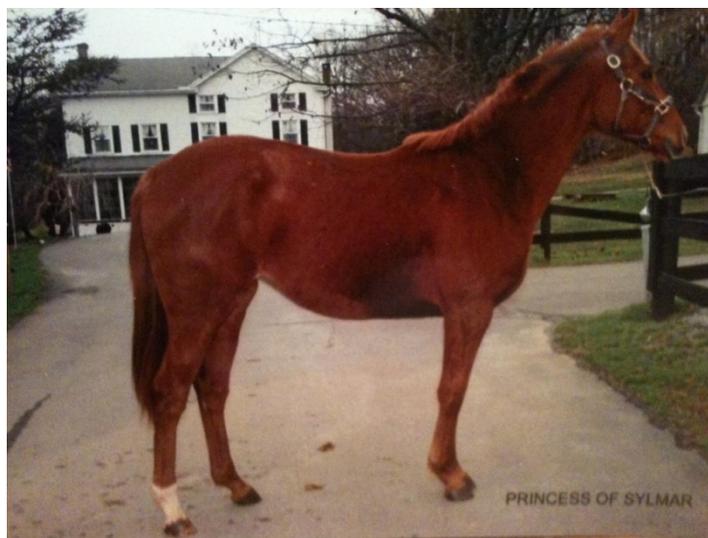


**\*\*Please see the attached photos of Princess of Sylmar breaking her maiden at Penn National on November 8, 2012. Credit B & D Photography. Also attached is a yearling photo of Princess of Sylmar, credit Sylmar Farm\*\***



**HOLLYWOOD**  
*Casino*  
AT PENN NATIONAL RACE COURSE

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**Princess of Sylmar: From Penn National to Kentucky Oaks Victress**

**Grantville, PA (Saturday, May 4, 2013)** – When Princess of Sylmar broke her maiden by 19 lengths on November 8, 2012, at Hollywood Casino at Penn National Race Course, it was clear that she was a very talented filly.

That talent was on full display Friday as she became the first filly to advance from the Penn National maiden ranks and win the Grade 1, \$1 million Kentucky Oaks at Churchill Downs, scoring at 38-1 for owner Ed Stanco of King of Prussia Stable, trainer Todd Pletcher, and jockey Mike Smith.

“She’s still our little filly from Pennsylvania,” said Stanco, the morning after winning one of the most prestigious races in North America. “Words can’t describe what it was like watching her win. When I saw her come into the stretch in fourth, I thought she was going to run third. Then when she took the lead I said, ‘Oh my God, she can win this race!’ It’s totally overwhelming; it really is. We went to the infield for the presentation and looked back at 100,000 people and it was totally surreal.

“We woke up this morning and said it was a great time, and even though the thrill will eventually wear off, we know we own a filly that might be one of the best in the world.”

Princess of Sylmar’s story began in 2008 when Stanco retired his stakes-placed Catienus mare Storm Dixie and sent her to Sylmar Farm in Christiana, PA, approximately 30 miles from Stanco’s hometown of Malvern, PA.

Originally scheduled to be bred in 2009 to Grand Slam at Ashford Stud near Versailles, KY, a last-minute audible had to be called and she was instead bred to Majestic Warrior, a regally-bred Grade 1 winning son of A.P. Indy who also stands at Ashford.

After the breeding, Storm Dixie was sent back to Sylmar Farm, which is owned and operated by Betsy and Ronald Houghton and their children Bernie, Robin, Wendy, and Michael.

Bernie, a Penn National-based trainer with close to 300 lifetime wins, is the one who actually foaled Princess of Sylmar.

“We liked her a lot and I knew she was going to be something special,” Bernie said. “She did everything right.”

Bernie’s mother Betsy raved about Princess of Sylmar’s demeanor.

“The thing we loved the most about her was that she always had the most wonderful temperament,” Betsy said. “She never gave us a hard time, she never got nervous, and that really helps them in a race. Every time she worked at our farm, her workmates could not keep up with her.”

Princess of Sylmar was not without her quirks, however, and a decision the Houghton’s made may have made all the difference in cementing her future success.

“She hated the sound of the starting gate,” Betsy said. “So my husband Ronnie decided to try putting cotton in her ears to block out the sound, and now everything she does is with cotton in her ears!”

The Houghton’s had Princess of Sylmar on their farm from the day she was foaled until she was sent to Pletcher’s operation at Belmont Park as a 2-year-old last summer.

She debuted at Penn National in a five-and-a-half furlong Maiden Special Weight for Pennsylvania-breds on October 12, 2012, finishing fourth.

“We knew she was good, but we wanted to take it one step at a time, and starting in PA-bred company at Penn National seemed like a good place for her debut,” Stanco said. “Todd [Pletcher] told us she would be fine when she stretched out to a mile. So I said let’s ship her back to Penn National and stretch her out, and we all know how that worked out.”

Going off at even money odds that day, Princess of Sylmar delighted the crowd at Penn National with a 19-length victory, and then went on to win three straight races, including two stakes, over the inner track meet at Aqueduct Racetrack. In her final prep for the Oaks, she ran second in the Grade 2, Gazelle on Aqueduct's main track.

With her victory in the 139<sup>th</sup> running of the Oaks, she became the second Pennsylvania-bred to win the Oaks in the last three years, with Plum Pretty winning in 2011. Overall, four Oaks winners have hailed from Pennsylvania.

"I'm really, really happy for Pennsylvania racing and also for Penn National," said Betsy Houghton. "It's a huge feather in the cap of Penn National."

Princess of Sylmar's name comes from the farm where she born and raised, and the name Sylmar comes from the road that the Houghton's used to live on – Sylmar Road. It was partially in Maryland and partially in Pennsylvania, thus Sylmar.

Storm Dixie, proud mama of Princess of Sylmar, has a yearling filly by E Dubai and is currently in foal to Petionville.

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*Hollywood Casino at Penn National Race Course is a Penn National Gaming property that offers guests the most exciting and unique entertainment experience in Central Pennsylvania. The venue features more than 2,463 slot machines, 53 banked gaming tables, and a 16-table Poker room. Live thoroughbred and simulcast horse racing is offered year-round. An array of dining options are available including the award-winning Final Cut Steakhouse, winner of three consecutive Wine Spectator Awards of Excellence; Mountainview Dining, a 500-seat restaurant overlooking the one-mile racetrack; SkyBox Sports Bar, and the popular 350-seat Epic Buffet.*

*Penn National Race Course, located minutes from Hershey and Harrisburg, PA., opened on August 30, 1972, and has presented top-class live thoroughbred racing for more than 40 years. The original track was taken down in 2006 and the new Hollywood Casino at Penn National Race Course, a fully-integrated gaming and racing facility, opened on February 12, 2008.*

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