



Visionaire might find classic distances beyond his scope

Kentucky Derby presented by Yum! Brands (G3) hopeful Visionaire earned his first stakes victory by a nose on March 8 as he rallied from last to first through a thick fog to catch Texas Wildcatter in the final strides of the \$250,000 Gotham Stakes (G3) at Aqueduct.



Benoit & Associates photo

The three-year-old Grand Slam colt completed 1 1/8 miles on a sloppy track in 1:44.60.

Visionaire entered the Gotham off a third-place finish behind Pyro and Z Fortune in his stakes debut in the Risen Star Stakes (G3) on February 9 at Fair Grounds. He has won three of five career starts and earned \$228,260.

The Michael Matz trainee now appears headed to the Toyota Blue Grass Stakes (G1) at Keeneland Race Course on April 12.

Bred in Kentucky by Reiley McDonald, Visionaire is the second winner out of stakes-placed winner Scarlet Tango, by Grade 2 winner French Deputy. This season, Scarlet Tango is carrying a full sibling to Visionaire.

French Deputy broodmares thus far have combined to yield seven graded stakes winners, including 2007 San Rafael Stakes (G2) winner Notional, by In Excess (Ire), and 2007 Ohio Derby (G2) winner Delightful Kiss, by Kissin Kris.

Scarlet Tango's half brother, Dale's Prospect, by Pioneering, was a stakes-winning sprinter in Maryland.

Visionaire's durable Grade 3-placed multiple stakes-winning grandam, Silver Tango, won seventeen of 47 lifetime starts in five seasons. She

Visionaire, ch. c., 2005				
Grand Slam 95 808 fls, 42 SWs SI 1.75 DI=3.24	Gone West 84 6 wins, \$682,251, SW 1095 fls, 90 SWs SI 2.64 DI=4.52	Mr. Prospect 70 1178 fls, 181 SWs SI 5.08 DI=3.95	Raise a Native 61	Native Dancer 50 Raise You 46
		Secrettame 78 15 fls, 3 SWs DI=3.17	Gold Digger 62	Nashua 52 Sequence 46
	Bright Candles 87 5 wins, \$405,091, SW 12 fls, 2 SWs DI=2.08	El Gran Senor 81 398 fls, 55 SWs SI 3.18 DI=2.43	Secretariat 70	Bold Ruler 54 Somethingroyal 52
Scarlet Tango 98 3 fls, 1 SW DI=2.43	French Deputy 92 4 wins, \$195,200, SW 707 fls, 38 SWs SI 1.63 DI=8.00	Deputy Minister 79 1141 fls, 89 SWs SI 3.25 DI=3.67	Tamerett 62	Tim Tam 55 *Mixed Marriage 52
		Mitterand 81 7 fls, 2 SWs DI=3.44	Northern Dancer 61	Nearctic 54 Natalma 57
	Silver Tango 88 17 wins, \$474,892, SW 10 fls, 1 SW DI=2.11	Silver Badge 71 247 fls, 7 SWs SI 0.61 DI=1.36	Sex Appeal 70	Buckpasser 63 Best in Show 65
	Royal Tango 80 12 fls, 2 SWs DI=7.00	Key to the Mint 69	Graustark 63 Key Bridge 59	Bold Ruler 54 Plum Cake 58
		Sugar Plum Time 72	Northern Dancer 61 Victoria Regina 58	Bunty's Flight 53 Shakney 64
		Vice Regent 67	Speak John 58 Blue Moon 48	Bold Ruler 54 Fortunate Isle 59
		Mint Copy 70	Round Table 54 Glamour 53	Hail to Reason 58 Silver Fog 44
		Hold Your Peace 69	Silver True 64	What a Pleasure 65 Princess Tiki 61
		Laredo Lass 71	Princely Pleasure 71	Cyane 59 Dancer's Gem 61
		Poker 63	Tango in Paris 71	

won ten stakes races, most of which were at Maryland tracks with nine of her stakes wins at seven furlongs or less.

Visionaire hails from the sixth crop of Grand Slam, who stands for \$35,000 at Ashford Stud in Versailles, Kentucky.

Grand Slam's two previous Kentucky Derby (G1) starters finished unplaced in 2004 behind Smarty Jones. Limehouse, out of a Dixieland Band mare, finished fourth and Master David, out of a Sadler's Wells mare, finished 12th.

Visionaire's paternal grand sire, Gone West, captured the 1987 Gotham. Gone West's broodmare sire, the great Secretariat, remains the only Gotham winner, from 55 previous runnings, to win the Kentucky Derby.

Despite his come-from-behind running style, Visionaire's pedigree does conjure some doubts as to whether he can succeed at a classic distance.

A valuable source of quality sprinters and milers, even up to 1 1/8 miles, Grand Slam is yet to sire a runner who won or placed in an American classic. Moreover, the bottom half of Visionaire's pedigree appears heavily slanted towards speed with none of the distinct elements suggestive of stamina as observed in most classic winners.

Visionaire's first two dams were dedicated sprinters as was much of his immediate family. Further back, the regional stallions Silver Badge and Princely Pleasure add little in the way of staying power. On paper, 1 1/8 miles looks to be Visionaire's limit.

Rommy Faversham is a pedigree specialist and author living in Los Angeles. More of his work is available at <http://www.equicross.com>.

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