

**MISSION ACCEPTED, McWICKED WIN 250G HARVEY, ROONEY INVATIONALS**  
**BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway**

YONKERS, NY, Saturday, October 12, 2019—It was sort of a shame to refer to these as ‘undercard events,’ but favored Mission Accepted (Yannick Gingras, \$5.90) and McWicked (Brian Sears, \$6.90) were as advertised Saturday afternoon (Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>), winning Yonkers Raceway’s \$250,000 Harry Harvey and Dan Rooney Invitational Trot and Pace, respectively.

The Harvey saw Mission Accepted work out a perfect, second-over sojourn behind Rich and Miserable (Tyler Buter). The latter, Eye of a Tiger AS (Jason Bartlett), Will Take Charge (Jordan Stratton) and Emoticon Hanover (Dan Dube) were all part of the early scrum in the mile-and-a-quarter event.

It was Will Take Charge who led through intervals of :28; :56.2 and 1:26, with Rich and Miserable out for a second move. The one engaged the leader in and out of the 1:54.4 mile marker, with Mission Accepted—from post position No. 2—ready for his cue.

Reprising the International, the second-over was first, as Mission Accepted went wide and widened, winning by 2¾ lengths in an added-distance 2:23.4. An out-the-duration Custom Cantab (Dave Miller) was tremendous for second, with a tiring Will Take Charge, Speeding Spur N (Brian Sears) and Eye of a Tiger AS settling for the minors.

For Mission Accepted, a 4-year-old son of Manofmanymissions co-owned (as Burke Racing) by (trainer) Ron Burke, Weaver Brussemi, Knox Services and David Willis, it was his fifth win in 20 seasonal starts. The exacta (two wagering choices) paid \$16.80, the triple paid \$60.50 and the superfecta paid \$440.

“He just overachieves,” Gingras said. “I couldn’t have asked for a better trip and he gives 120 percent.”

While pondering whether that’s even possible, a word about McWicked...and that word, said with love, is freak.

Last season’s Dan Rooney champ became this season’s Dan Rooney champ, doing it the hard way.

McWicked ground down 9-5 choice Jimmy Freight (Scott Zeron), then held off Micky Gee N (Stratton) by a nostril in 1:51.1.

It was the 40<sup>th</sup> career win for McWicked.

From post No. 6, he was away fourth as Jimmy Freight two-moved around None Better A (Bartlett), throwing down a swift quick gauntlet (:26.2, 55.1, 1:22.4) along the way.

McWicked methodically moved toward the leader early in the lane, with Jimmy Freight giving way...albeit grudgingly. After Micky Gee N and Jimmy Freight, locals The Real One (Pat Lachance) and Theartofconfusion A (Austin Siegelman) picked off the leftovers.

For second choice McWicked, an 8-year-old son of McArdle owned by S S G Stables and trained by Casie Coleman, it was his sixth win in 15 '19 tries. The exacta paid \$74.50, the triple paid \$369.50 and the superfecta paid \$1,710.

“I was happy where I was able to get away and I knew I’d have to chase someone,” Sears said. “I’m glad for him. He’s battled foot issues during the summer and he’s such a pleasure to drive. He’s given me a lot of thrills.”

McWicked and his now \$4,878,342 career bankroll show few signs of letting up.

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(FFI...Frank Drucker, Yonkers Raceway Publicity Director, 914-968-4200)