



Breeders' Cup World Championships Friday, Nov. 3 and Saturday, Nov. 4

\$1 million Las Vegas Dirt Mile Recap & Quotes Friday, November 3, 2017

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BATTLE OF MIDWAY OUTGAMES SHARP AZTECA TO WIN LAS VEGAS DIRT MILE

DEL MAR, Calif. (Nov. 3, 2017) – WinStar Farm and Don Alberto Stable's Battle of Midway (\$30.40) prevailed by a half-length over pace-setting Sharp Azteca after a stretch-long duel to win the 11th running of the \$1 million Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile (G1) for 3-year-olds and up Friday afternoon at Del Mar racetrack.

Trained by Jerry Hollendorfer and ridden by Flavien Prat, Battle of Midway covered the mile on a fast main track in 1:35.20. The victory was the third for Hollendorfer in the Breeders' Cup and second in the Dirt Mile, having won previously with Dakota Phone at Churchill Downs in 2010. It was the second Breeders' Cup win for Prat and first in the Dirt Mile.

Battle of Midway is a 3-year-old Kentucky-bred son of Smart Strike, who remained perfect in two starts over the main track at Del Mar.

BREEDERS' CUP DIRT MILE QUOTES

Winning trainer Jerry Hollendorfer (Battle of Midway) – "He's a horse for the course. He loves Del Mar. He had run a huge number here (when winning the Shared Belief Stakes). We had a lot of confidence in him coming into this race.

"I talked to Flavien (Prat) and we agreed there was a lot of speed in the race. At the break he was able to follow John Sadler's horse (Accelerate) and got a good position. This horse has always been a fighter and he showed that today. He showed a lot of courage in winning this race."

Winning jockey Flavien Prat (Battle of Midway) – "I let him break and find position and was wide early. I thought there would be more pace. Then down the backside he relaxed well and gave me a really good kick. He was training really well in the morning."

Second-place trainer Jorge Navarro (Sharp Azteca) – "When the four horse (Gato del Oro) went by, it stuck him down on the rail and he had nowhere to go. But, he dug in through the stretch and tried hard. He showed up and I'm really proud."

Second-place jockey Paco Lopez (Sharp Azteca) – “That was a tough beat. I didn't want to go to the lead but my horse broke sharp and the horse (Gato Del Oro) came to my outside. I had to go to the lead. The horse tried all the way. He kept running but just got caught.”

Third-placetrainer Mark Casse (Awesome Slew) – “We couldn't be more proud of him. We thought he came into this race wonderful and he ran his eyeballs out so we're happy. The pace was a little slow. I knew down the backside that we were in a little trouble. I thought we were too close, and going too easy. That tells you something.”

Third-place jockey John Velazquez (Awesome Slew) – “He ran really good. He was in a good position, saved all the ground. We kept running, but he was third best.”

Trainer Bob Baffert (Beaten favorite Mor Spirit, eighth) – “I was afraid that with Mor Spirit going in that I couldn't get enough into him. He just got tired. I was disappointed in Cupid (10th). Maybe it was too short for him. He chased a little bit. If they don't show up, they don't show up. I'm happy for Jerry Hollendorfer. I'm a big fan of his, so I'm happy for him.”

Jockey Mike Smith (Beaten favorite Mor Spirit, eighth) – “I was in a really good spot. He just didn't want it today. That's not him. He just let go.”

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