Artesian Wins \$500,000 New Jersey Classic In Come-From-Behind 1:50.4 Over Sloppy Track

By Tom White 6/2/2003

Artesian, longshot (\$112.60)winner of the \$275,000 Berry's Creek Final two weeks ago at The Meadowlands, edged out 1-2 favorite Radar Sign to capture the \$500,000 New Jersey Classic by a half length Saturday night at The Meadowlands. Artesian (\$11.20) paced a lifetime best of 1:50.4 on a rain-soaked track rated "sloppy."

Trained by Sam DePinto and owned by Mark Wojciechowski of Columbus, NJ, Artesian carried Hall of Fame driver Mike Lachance to his fifth victory in the New Jersey Classic. Two of Lachance's NJ Classic winners went on to capture the Little Brown Jug, Shady Character in 1998 and Bettor's Delight in 2001.

Artesian will get his chance to add the Jug to his accomplishments on Thursday afternoon, September 18 at the Delaware, Ohio County Fair.

A \$32,000 yearling purchase, Artesian picked up his third win in nine starts this year and 11 of 16 in-the-money finishes for a career bankroll of \$504,765. Wojciewchoski inherited Artesian when his uncle, Donald Bruhn, passed away from diabetes on March 15, 2003.

"The way he raced his last two starts, he's been on top of the game," said Lachance. "I knew I just had to wait to get him into the stretch and let him go. I didn't think I was going to get to him (the pacesetter Radar Sign). He's opened four or five lengths on me."

Although Radar Sign is not eligible to the Jug, third through fifth place finishers Dream Wave, General Challenge and The Globe are eligible to the 58th Jug Classic.

Jug eligibles didn't fare as well n the \$Hoosier Cup where Jr. Mint won over Quality Western and Odds On Dana in 1:53.1. Quality Western and Odds On Dana are paid up for the Jug.

Coming up next weekend is Saturday's \$300,000 Burlington at Woodbine in Ontario; the \$125,000 Pennsylvania Sires Stakes at The Meadows; and the \$60,000 New Jersey Sires Stakes at The Meadowlands.