

## KEYFLOWER BENEFITS FROM MILLION-DOLLAR RIDE TO WIN U.S. DEBUT FRENCH 4YO GARNERS \$72,200 FROM PURSE AND SANTA ANITA INCENTIVES IMPORT FIGURES TO IMPROVE OVER LONGER THAN THIS ONE-MILE ROUTE



*Keyflower is guided by Flavien Prat to authoritative score at Santa Anita on Saturday in her United States debut.*

Keyflower won her United States unveiling and 4-year-old debut on Saturday at Santa Anita with authority by three-quarters of a length going a mile under a brilliant bit of reinsmanship from fellow French import Flavien Prat.

“We got a great ride from a veteran who had the good sense to stay close to the pace, when most riders would have taken back anticipating a fast pace,” noted Barry Irwin. “Sometimes a jockey will cause his own undoing by reading the form too closely and instead of riding their horse as it wants to be ridden, they fall for the bait of trying to ride the race on paper instead of how it comes up in actual time. Fortunately for us, Monsieur Prat knows how to ride in the moment.”

Moraz, which by all rights should have dictated the race from her rail draw, was taken back, and her late run fell flat and short as she finished second while never landing a blow or looking like she would get on even terms with Keyflower.

Longshot Cordiality set a measured pace with speed horse Rocking Redhead perched outside of her, as fractions began moderately and proceeded to get even slower as the race unfolded. A :23 1/5 opening quarter was followed by a half in basically 48 seconds and three-quarters basically in 1:12.

Keyflower raced mostly in fourth place and was steered outside to join the fray while 3 wide curving for home. When Prat pushed the button, the race was all over, as the filly employed a :23 1/5 final quarter to win while having raced 30 feet farther than the runner-up according to Trakus.

Final time of 1:35-flat was excellent under the circumstances with the slow early fractions. The Team Valor International and Gary Barber-owned filly carried co-topweight of 124 with two others, giving two pounds to most of the others in the field of 9 runners. [LINK](#)

Keyflower earned \$43,202 from the purse, a \$25,000 bonus for winning her first Santa Anita start as a new horse coming into the State of California and \$4,000 payment for travel from outside of the State, for a total of \$72,200, which as former CPA Barber said “Is better than many stakes races.”

Movie mogul Barber was joined in the winners' circle by his brother Cecil (both were born in South Africa) and long-time Team Valor partners Richard Murphy (mayor of Los Alamitos) and Roger Straus.

Keyflower ran an 84 Beyer speed figure, as compared to the 91 she earned when beaten 1 3/4 lengths in the Grade 1 E.P. Taylor Stakes last fall at Woodbine going a mile and a quarter on soft turf. The win and prize money improved the filly's career stats to 10-3-2-2 and earnings of more than \$127,000.

The winner is the first horse trained for Team Valor by French émigré Leonard Powell, whose recently deceased father David Powell was a longtime friend, agent and partner with Barry Irwin going back to the 1970s, when B. Eye used to publish his French racing and international bloodstock articles when Irwin was the editor of The Thoroughbred of California magazine. Irwin kept several mares at the senior Powell's Normandy farm and bought several horses for import from him. Powell found horses for the late Bobby Frankel when Irwin brought that Hall of Fame trainer to France for the first time.

Keyflower is among 20 stakes winners sired by the Green Desert Group-winning sprinter Kheleyf, which died last year 2 1/2 weeks before the filly won the Prix Occitannie. He stood first in Ireland and later in France. He was a perennial leading sire of juvenile winners.

The winning filly's second dam was a half-sister to the brilliant Hurricane Run, the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe hero and European Horse of the Year.