

July 9, 2014

PANAMA HAT PUTS ON AN AMAZING SHOW IN IRELAND, 3 WINS IN A WEEK GELDING HAS TEAM VALOR GOBSMACKED WITH 4 IN A ROW SINCE JUNE 19 OLIVER TRAINEE CRUISES TONIGHT, IS APPROACHING FOLK HERO STATUS

Team Valor International has enjoyed quite a unique ride with 3-year-old gelding Panama Hat in Ireland over a 20-day span in which he dominated 4 consecutive handicap races, including 3 in one week.



Chris Hayes takes a peak back on July 9 at Naas as Panama Hat pulls away to his fourth straight victory, including 3 in a 7-day span by a combined 12 lengths.

Yes, he is indeed a Thoroughbred!

"We have never had a horse like this," Team Valor CEO Barry Irwin said after the handsome chestnut wrapped up the "four-timer" with a 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -length score on June 9 at Naas racecourse, just two days after a 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ -length romp at Roscommon. "I am pretty sure we have never had a horse win two races in a week, let alone three. The best part is that you can tell this horse really enjoys what he is doing."

Panama Hat will receive a well-deserved break now. He has built up a nice following, both on the Emerald Isle and in the U.S., since emerging with his first career win on June 19

when he went straight to the front and drew off to score by 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ lengths at Leopardstown under jockey Chris Hayes. The script was just about identical in the next three, as he and Hayes played catch me early and poured it on in the stretch. Video of the 3 wins in one week is [here](#).

The schedule has been an eye-opener for American-based Team Valor but is not that foreign for trainer Andy Oliver, who has handled the horse with the most starts in Ireland in each of the last three seasons.

"Once these horses get good and take their races well while having their opponents over a barrel, I have done really well with this kind of schedule," he said.

Panama Hat has been good enough to elevate his Timeform rating from 60 to 97 in the 4-race span.

Oliver's record this year for Team Valor is as impressive as Panama Hat's. Between sharp maiden winner Grandma's Hands and Panama Hat, he is 5 for 7 this year for the stable, with a second-place finish in one of the losses. Irwin bought both horses as yearlings at the 2012 Goffs Orby sale in Ireland.

Goffs representative Joe Hopkins referred to Panama Hat's action-packed hot streak as "one of the most impressive things" in horse racing this year.

From *IrishRacing.com* comes the following:

Panama Hat Relishes Busy Spell



Jockey Chris Hayes has been Panama Hat's partner in each of his 4 wins.

Panama Hat continued his progression up the ranks at Naas this evening with another convincing success to bring up the four-timer in the Stuart Insurances Supporting Console Handicap. Again Chris Hayes (doubling up after his win on Little Rooster in the first) was soon dictating on the Andy Oliver-trained Team Valour-owned chestnut and from over a furlong out there was only going to be one winner.

At the line the 5/4 favourite had three and a quarter lengths in hand over Stronger Than Me.

"He's very genuine. Kevin (Manning on Teoirim) didn't let me go today and that actually played to my strengths as he's a horse that idles in front.

"The only reason we've gone from the front is that there's been no pace on.

"He seems to have enjoyed it though so we decided not to change.

"He deserves a break and from what I hear he's going to get one. I'll look forward to riding him when he runs again."

Monday's recap from *IrishRacing.com* follows:

Three Up and More To Come From Hat

The seriously progressive Panama Hat brought up the hat-trick when landing the concluding Roscommon Herald Handicap with a degree of ease rarely seen in this sphere.

Chris Hayes again made all on the chestnut and up the straight it was a matter of how far for the Team Valor International-owned three-year-old.



Panama Hat draws off Monday at Roscommon.

Heavily eased from a furlong out, the even money favourite still had four lengths to spare over Drummore Road.

Winning trainer Andy Oliver reflected: "He did it well. We were lucky with the ground as he was declared yesterday on yielding with rain forecast.

"I'm not sure that he wouldn't go on that but he obviously handles what he had there so well.

"He had a lovely straightforward run and we'll see where we go from here. The handicapper might have a bit more to say.

"I'm very pleased with him as he's loving his racing and taking it well and Chris gave him a great ride."



Panama Hat has thrived with the addition of cheekpieces to focus his vision as he races.



Trainer Andy Oliver has 5 wins and a second-place finish from 7 starts this year for Team Valor.

From *IrishRacing.com* on July 2 comes the following:

Panama Hat Tops It Off In Style

The Andy Oliver trained Panama Hat, under Chris Hayes, made all to win the concluding Bobbyjo Bistro Great Value Packages Handicap at Fairyhouse today.

The winner quickened well in the straight for a four and three parts of a length win over Sar Oiche Andy Oliver later stated "he did it well and Chris gave him a great ride. It was nice and straightforward and he just hit the front and picked up the pace as he liked.

"He loves the fast ground and is progressing as a three year old and will get a mile and a half.

"He's a big strong sound horse and is enjoying his racing and we'll keep him at what he likes. Hurdling won't be high on the agenda of the syndicate which owns him but he certainly could be a horse for that in the future."

"He's in again at Roscommon on Monday but it depends on how the handicapper treats him."