

FAIR GROUNDS RACE COURSE

News Story from Race Track Website

Spanish Empire Upsets Tenpins In Louisiana Handicap



NEW ORLEANS - Spanish Empire (\$25.60), a newly turned 4-year-old who has improved significantly since joining leading trainer Steve Asmussen's barn, won the biggest race of his career as he captured the \$60,000 Louisiana Handicap at Fair Grounds on Friday by one length over heavily favored Tenpins. Comic Truth was third. The time for 1 1/16 miles on the fast main track was 1:43.58.

As usual, the multiple graded-stakes winning Tenpins flashed good early speed from his inside post, but longshot Fitzroyal duelled with him through the opening stages as they set fractions of 23.85 and 48.12. Spanish Empire stalked the top pair, then pounced as the field was arriving at the top of the stretch. The 4-year-old son of Pleasant Colony took a clear lead in the stretch, then began shifting about but was still able to hold on over a resurgent Tenpins.

"I was able to ease in behind them and take back," said winning jockey Eddie Martin, Jr. "I just took my time from there on out. Down the backstretch, I gave him a little notch and off he went."