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Heartswideopen Wins Rainbow Derby,
Next Challenge Is Derby Triple Crown

RUIDOSO DOWNS, New Mexico (July 19, 2008) – Javier and Manny Rodriguez’s Heartswideopen is now an All American Derby win away from becoming the second All American Futurity winner to sweep the Ruidoso Downs’ derby triple crown with her dominating victory in the Grade 1, \$446,439 Rainbow Derby on Saturday afternoon at Ruidoso Downs.

The only other All American Futurity winner to return the following summer and win the Ruidoso, Rainbow and All American derbies is world champion DM Shicago, who was conditioned by Heartswideopen’s trainer Carl Draper.

“I can’t separate those two great horses,” Draper said after being asked if he is more confident of Heartswideopen’s prospects in the All American Derby than he was with DM Shicago at the same point in his career. “I am just lucky to have had them.”

Ridden for the first time by Bonifacio Perez, Heartswideopen broke straight from the outside post position and soon took command of the 440-yard dash.

“My horse was with her for a little while,” said Cody Jensen aboard runner-up Strong Hope. “But, she is such a great horse. My horse ran a great race.”

Heartswideopen crossed the finish line a length in front of Strong Hope while being timed in :21.095 for the quarter mile. That time ended a record of three-straight 440-yard races under :21.00 for Heartswideopen. She was the fastest qualifier to the Rainbow Derby with her :20.976 trial win.

The champion daughter of Feature Mr Jess and Dashing Phoebe had also won her last two grade 1 stakes, the All American Futurity and the Ruidoso Derby, from the outside post position, but in each of those races she drifted towards the outside rail before rallying for the victory. In the Rainbow Derby, she broke straight and true. “I wasn’t worried about that [her drifting out], but I was concerned that the inside of the track may have been faster earlier today,” Draper said.

Also, Draper wasn’t concerned about the jockey change on Heartswideopen. Oscar Hernandez had ridden her in nine of her 10 prior starts, including her three previous Grade 1 stakes wins. Hernandez came back from knee surgery for the Ruidoso summer season, but

suffered a setback and will be sidelined for the rest of the year. "I feel sorry for Oscar," Draper said. "But, I have to take care of business. Bonifacio is a top race rider who has ridden for me."

Perez knew the enormity of a Rainbow Derby win on Heartswideopen's resume and had never been aboard the filly before getting a leg up in the saddling paddock before the race. "I had never been so nervous in my career," Perez said. "But when I got on her and petted her, she relaxed and I knew we would get along."

Mike Abraham's Strong Hope ran second behind Heartswideopen for the second-straight time in a Grade 1 derby. The Royal Quick Dash son finished a half length behind Heartswideopen in the Ruidoso Derby. "It's no disgrace to run second to her," said trainer Fred Danley. "I'll take it everytime."

R.D. Hubbard and Johnny T.L. Jones' Noconi finished third in the Rainbow Derby, three quarters of a length behind Strong Hope, to complete the identical 1-2-3 finish of the Ruidoso Derby. The homebred Mr Jess Perry son is affirming his reputation as the best maiden in quarter horse racing with five seconds and three thirds from 10 career starts, mainly against top stakes company. The Paul Jones-trained gelding was a close second in the Hobbs America Futurity and third in the Grade 1 Ruidoso Derby.

The \$223,219 first-place check raised Heartswideopen's career earnings to \$1,705,125 and moved her into ninth-place on the all-time leading money-earning list for quarter horses. She is the third-richest female of all time and less than \$50,000 behind second-place mare Dashingly. Last year's world champion Blues Girl Too is the all-time leading money earning female at \$2,032,328.

Heartswideopen now should be considered the prime contender for the 2008 world champion crown, which is also a title won by DM Shicago in 2005 when he swept the three Ruidoso Downs' derbies. Last year, she was the overwhelming choice as the champion two-year-old and champion two-year-old filly. She soundly defeated 2007 champion two-year-old gelding Illegal Memories in the Rainbow Derby.

The complete order of finish in the Rainbow Derby was Heartswideopen, Strong Hope, Noconi, Rock Solid Jess, Brighton Beach, Illegal Memories, SF Royal Bank, Eye Of Glory and Possum Fust.