NIATROSS OVERCOMES CONTROVERSY DECISIVELY

The victory by Niatross in the 1980 Meadowlands Pace was swift — 1:53.1 — and decisive [four and a half lengths], but it was not without its mystery.

Only a week earlier, the legendary colt, who had a perfect 13 for 13 record at two, had suffered only his second career loss when he broke stride in the second of three eliminations for the Pace. In what many consider to be his most impressive and courageous race, Niatross regained his composure, hit the pace and managed to finish fourth, just qualifying for the final.

The miscue followed his race two weeks prior at Saratoga where he had fallen over the hubrail.

While there were some doubters and the pressure mounted on trainer-driver and co-owner Clint Galbraith, the colt showed his grit in his victory in the final and went on to Horse of the Year honors for the second consecutive year with 24 wins in 26 starts.

Entrymates Storm Damage [Bill Haughton] and Tyler B [Bill Herman], finished second and third, respectively.

When Niatross’ son, Nihilator, won the 1985 edition, they became the only father-son duo to capture the rich [first million-dollar race] and prestigious Meadowlands Pace.

Niatross would never lose another race and went on to win Pacing’s Triple Crown.