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HISTORY AT ARAPAHOE PARK

Aurora, CO (July 24, 2016) – Fourth time was the charm for two horses in stakes races trained by O.A. Martinez Jr. on Sunday. Lady Jila made Arapahoe Park history as the first Thoroughbred ever to win the same stakes race four times at the Colorado track in the Columbine Stakes. Magical Twist won the Mount Elbert Stakes for the first time in four attempts in the race.

Lady Jila has risen from a horse who was competing in \$5,000 claiming races at Arapahoe Park in 2012 to one of the most accomplished horses to race in Colorado. The 9-year-old mare who seems to get better with age held on by a neck in the 1 1/16-mile, \$35,000 stake that she also won in 2013, 2014, and 2015.

“We’ve had a heck of a ride with her,” said jockey Mike Ziegler, who has piloted Lady Jila in 13 of her 14 wins at Arapahoe Park. “She has such a big heart, and she gives me everything she’s got if I ask her. I mean, she’s been passed going down the lane before and come back and win the race for me. She’s one of my all-time favorites, and I’ve been riding for almost 30 years. So that’s saying a lot.”

The daughter of sire Jila and dam Papparratzi bred by owner Mike Barro won her 23rd race in 55 lifetime starts for earnings of \$292,766.

“We were just hoping at one time that she would break her maiden for \$5,000 in Phoenix,” Barro said. “Here she is six years later, seven years later and still winning races, still winning stakes races. We’re just amazed. On the threshold of \$300,000 earned, it’s just an incredible ride we’re on.”

While Barro said the final decision would be based on the horse’s health and fitness, he is eyeing a fifth Columbine win in 2017 when Lady Jila is a 10-year-old.

Just a few stalls down in Arapahoe Park’s Barn 10 where Lady Jila goes by “Jill,” her stablemate Magical Twist finally reached the peak of the Mount Elbert Stakes after finishing second in 2013, second in 2014, and third in 2015 in the 1 1/16-mile, \$40,000 stake for Colorado-breds. Magical Twist was kept closer to the pace by jockey Tracy Hebert than in his previous Mount Elbert attempts en route to a 3 3/4-length win.

“I told [Hebert] to stay closer to the pace this time, and he executed it perfectly,” Martinez said.