

## Curalina Gets CCA Oaks After 'Chatterbox' DQ

By **Jeremy Balan**, | July 26, 2015 6:48 PM | 339 Comments | Racing, Northeast Region



Photo: Coglianese Photos

Curalina wins the CCA Oaks.

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Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners' **Curalina** secured her second straight grade I victory July 26, but this one came via disqualification in the \$300,000 **Coaching Club American Oaks (VIDEO)** at **Saratoga Race Course**.

After it appeared pacesetter **I'm a Chatterbox** was pulling away in the stretch with Florent Geroux, Curalina found more and re-rallied to the outside, but could not get past I'm a Chatterbox, who held on by a nose at the wire.

But after reviewing replays, Saratoga stewards ruled I'm a Chatterbox came into Curalina's path deep in the stretch and disqualified the top finisher to second, installing the Todd Pletcher-trained Curalina as the winner.

"He took her out and she bumped me, and my horse switched to the left lead," said Curalina's jockey, John Velazquez. "Now I'm unbalanced, and then I had to get after her to get her back in, and I just missed the wire. I knew two jumps before the wire, I was going to get him. When she got bumped and went to her left lead, she lost her balance, I lost my balance. I had to get back on her and just missed it. No doubt in my mind, I was going to get her."

"In this particular case, our filly was knocked off stride in a critical point in the race and got beat a couple inches," Pletcher added. "In my eyes, it probably made the difference. I'm sure there are other people that feel differently, but based on what Johnny said, just watching it there, I would have to agree."

I'm a Chatterbox, sent immediately from the outside post, set fractions of :23.54, :46.99, and 1:11.27 through six furlongs, with Curalina tracking just off the pace. I'm a Chatterbox hit a mile in 1:36.72 and finished the 1 1/8 miles in 1:49.74.

"I thought she ran very well coming off a long layoff like that," trainer Larry Jones said of his filly, who last raced third in Longines Kentucky Oaks (gr. I) May 1. "She took a little time off and was good to go. We set very legitimate fractions and still to hold on, I'm thrilled with the horse. The jock rode a great race, he didn't do anything to cause it. He stuck with the right hand the whole way. She kind of jumped the tracks where the gate comes across, but you need to get the horse back over somehow. That's just the way it goes."

Curalina, a daughter of **Curlin**, paid \$3.90, \$2.60, and \$2.10 across the board. I'm a Chatterbox brought \$3.40 and \$2.60, while hard-closing **Include Betty**, two lengths back, brought \$3.20 to show for her third-place finish.

Include Betty, who became a winner at the top level with a victory in the Mother Goose Stakes (gr. I) last time out June 27 at Belmont Park, sat in the back in the field seven—16 1/2 lengths behind after the first half-mile—before flying late to capture third.

"It was a perfect trip—ideal trip," Include Betty's jockey, Drayden Van Dyke said. "The fillies in front obviously never stopped running. We had a beautiful trip. She tries every time. She's such a sweet filly and she gives 100% every time. Running third in one of these races is big. She hits the board every time."

**Danette** closed for fourth, followed by **Chide**, **Keen Pauline**, and **Conquest Eclipse**, to complete the order of finish. **Wonder Gal** was scratched.

Bred in Kentucky by CASA Farms I, out of the Graeme Hall mare Whatdreamsrmadeof, Curalina has \$666,800 in earnings with a 4-1-0 record from five starts. She's won four straight races, including back-to-back grade I scores in the Coaching Club American Oaks and the Acorn Stakes at Belmont June 6.



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**BluePedal** · 3 months ago

I saw Geroux using his whip to intimidate Curalina and Velasquez about to do the same thing when he got close enough.

I'm A Chatterbox IMO is on the verge of being a star. I have rarely seen past performances lines like hers from a horse. Leading all the way one day to Coming from last to win on another. Get her to relax just off the lead please? With a better jock please?

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**Neigh Sayer** → [BluePedal](#) · 3 months ago

They knew she was right and ready and that distance has a short run to the first turn and with that outside draw, they decided to get out so they weren't stuck wide. That is not her game. Now that this article has died down, I'll say it. Curalina was not going by her. Chatterbox will likely never be on the lead again. If they meet again, my money is on Chatterbox.

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**Forbidden Apple** · 3 months ago

I'm A Chatterbox did all of the work, wire to wire. Yet another gift to team Pletcher. It was horse racing and nothing else.

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**roy** · 3 months ago

on saturday uncle vinny was placed first after a extremely bogus DQ...and again pletcher was placed fist off another bullish DQ ... NYRA needs to stop kissin the culo of pletcher being he donates money to the association...they arent helping matters for others by catering to specific people thats very unfair n bias

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**Delrene** · 3 months ago

All the fillies ran their hearts out. Some will/will not agree with stewards decision. What bothered me more is the whipping of the horses. Relentless at the end.

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**Christine Dix** · 3 months ago

Even the BH replay shows the head on shot if you watch it long enough. Curalina was a head in front of IAC a stride after the wire. If she didn't get bumped and lose her momentum she would have won by a head.

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**dance with fate** · 3 months ago

Kudos to both Curalina & I'm a Chatterbox. Curlin's super great but also sentimental about Lost Soldier (love for Lost in the Fog), Chat's damsire. Hope all these beautiful fillies are fine.

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**James Madison** · 3 months ago