



English Illusion

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Own: 4U Thoroughbred Racing Stable Inc

Ch. g. 5 (May)
Sire: English Channel (Smart Strike) \$25,000
Dam: Stormy Illusion (Woodman)
Br: Douglas J. Reddington (Ont-C)
Tr: Pion Sylvain(43 B 6 3 .18) 2018:(44 9 .28)

Life	27	4	2	6	\$350,097	98	D.Fst	0	0	0	\$0	-
2018	6	1	0	2	\$100,700	98	Wet(204)	0	0	0	\$0	-
2017	9	1	1	1	\$107,216	90	Synth	10	2	0	\$116,967	85
Wo	14	2	2	3	\$193,218	98	Turf(323)	17	2	2	\$199,328	98
							Dsh(343)	7	2	1	\$172,480	98

15Sep18-1W0	fm	1 1/2	491	1:13.12	8042	253	3+	NorthDanc-G1	96	9	10	10	10	64	62	31	Hernandez R M	L119	34.45	107	-	Johnny Bear ¹	Mekintaal ¹	English Illusion ²	Briefly lack path,game		
29Aug18-2W0	gd	1 1/2	504	1:15.2	84	2:29	3+	HaltonB100k	88	5	16	42	43	21	11	111	Hernandez R M	L118	8.70	86-13	EnglishIllusion ¹	JohnnyBear ⁴	KingndHisCourt ⁴	Led 1/8th, drift, held			
5Aug18-1W0	fm	1 1/2	502	1:14.2	82	2:29	3+	OC c-45k/SAL25k	83	5	13	11	10	52	31	31	Da Silva E R	L119	3.65	102-04	RoyIntrigue ¹	Lookin4Brvo ²	EnglishIllusion ¹	Angled out, str,rallied			
Claimed from Sangreal Investments LLC for \$45,000, Vella Daniel J Trainer 2018(as of 8/5): (69 4 13 6 0.06)																											
23Jun18-BW0	fm	1 1/2	501	1:14	2:82	2:29	3+	Singspl-G3	57	4	8	31	2nd	63	79	72	Calaghan S	L118	55.10	82-04	Shahroze ²	Pumpkin Rumble ¹	Final Copy ^{1k}	Stalk 2-3w, weakened			
23Jun18-BW0	fm	1 1/2	521	1:15.1	38	2:01	3+	Alw 89361nc	79	6	19	75	85	74	70	89	Garcia Alan	L119	53.75	80-13	FinalCopy ¹	DnshDyformer ¹	NobleThought ¹	3-4w,never contentious			
24Jan18-9GP	fm	1 1/2	484	1:15.1	412	1:52	4+	OC 35k/c-N	86	2	18	42	43	42	44	44	Lezcano J	L121	5.10	75-21	Arch Daddy ¹	Bernay ¹	Culture Carrier ¹	Up close,steadid,evened			
30Dec17-5GP	fm	2	1439	2:09	42	3:24	3+	HALnJrknB100k	86	4	18	81	80	85	84	53	Lezcano J	L117	23.50	86-19	Run Time ²	Bullards Alley ²	Gold Shield ¹	Taken back,4w,need more			
10Dec17-1W0	fst	1 1/2	1173	1:44	32	3:24	3+	Valdstry-G3	80	10	12	74	10	91	71	78	Garcia Alan	L118	9.15	77-17	Leaven in Malibu ²	Melmin ¹	Ethical Funds ¹	Midslight,steady 3/4			
19Nov17-BW0	fst	1 1/2	1174	1:43	2:33	2:45	1+	Alw 8047nc	85	7	19	75	73	83	74	1nk	Da Silva E R	L117	7.40	88-10	EnglishIllusion ^{1k}	PumpkinRumb ^{1k}	EthicalFunds ¹	Shuffled far turn, up			
13Oct17-3W0	fst	1 1/2	52	1:17	2:07	2:32	3+	Alw 86258nc	79	1	5	42	44	13	21	31	Da Silva E R	L117	*1.90	90-15	Pumpkin Rumble ¹	Portreem ¹	English Illusion ¹	Dueld str,passed late			

WORKS: Oct5W0 tr:1.5f gd 1:03 B 5f Aug21W0 tr:1.5f shy 1:04 B 3f Jly28W0 5f fst 1:01 H 5f 5f

TRAINER: Turf(43 21 \$5.66) Routes(40 17 \$4.67) Stakes(4 25 \$4.85)

● Trainer Sylvain Pion and 4U Thoroughbred Racing Stable will carry Canada’s hopes in this edition of the Grade 1 Pattison Canadian International. If English Illusion pulls off the upset, it will add one more chapter in an already feel-good story.

● Looking at the possibility of adding a horse to his barn on the Woodbine backstretch, Pion scouted out a particular horse that might be a strong prospect for running long on turf. When he saw English Illusion in the paddock, he liked what he saw. “I like my distance horses and he’s a good horse. The main thing that I was thinking about was the Turf Endurance Series (a four-leg grass series with expanding distances, contested at Woodbine). I have Artistico – who leads the Series – and I thought if anyone else is going to come and beat him, it could be English Illusion. We could have gone there and he would have been an all-star, but we had the Halton Stakes.”

● Set at ‘about’ 1 1/2-miles on the Toronto oval’s E.P. Taylor Turf Course, English Illusion, who was claimed for \$45,000, won the Halton by 1 1/2-lengths in 2:29.72 over ‘good’ ground on August 29.

● With the win, English Illusion’s career path took another turn, specifically, a date in the Grade I Northern Dancer Turf Stakes on September 15. The competition was tougher, but Pion felt his horse would run big. And he did, finishing third to International rival Johnny Bear in the 11-/2-mile race.

● “There was no more discussion about that. It didn’t feel like a losing situation. I was very fortunate. He came from a great barn, a great trainer (Dan Vella) and good people who take great care of their horses. Sometimes it’s a change of scenery that helps. Sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn’t.”

● “He’s coming into the race in really good shape or else I wouldn’t be going,” said Pion. “I know the competition will be a lot tougher than the last one, but he’s earned the right to be here. This is his home turf. They’re going to have to run to beat him. He works hard.”

● And so do Pion and his family. “To be a successful trainer, you need good horses and you need patience. You also need great help. I’m very lucky because I have a lot of great people helping me – my dad (Raymond), my son (Kristofer, groom of reigning Canadian Horse of the Year, Pink Lloyd), my wife (Terri). Nobody has a specific duty. We work as a group and we work well together. That’s the group that shows up seven days a week and takes care of 11 horses.”

Owner – 4U Thoroughbred Racing Stable Inc.

Four people with a shared love of racing – that’s how 4U was forged. Ron McRae, brothers Dave (Ron’s son-in-law) and Steve Robinson, along with Rob Loescher (Dave and Steve’s cousin), comprise the ownership group that began in 2015. While they started out modestly, winning just one race in their first year, 4U has enjoyed success, including a career-best 2018 campaign. As of October, they’ve won four races, with three seconds and three thirds, from 15 starts. “They are great guys and they just love the sport and their horses,” said Pion. Some of their top horses: Niigon’s Glory, Artistico and Dixie Whistler.

Trainer – Sylvain Pion

It was in Sylvain Pion’s DNA to become a horseman. His father, his father’s uncle, a grandfather – the Pion name has been synonymous with racing in Ontario for a long time. Sylvain was at Fort Erie for many years before setting up shop at Woodbine. He also worked for trainer Scott Fairlie before he had discussions with owners – the 4U Racing Stable – who were looking to get involved in thoroughbred racing. It’s been a successful move for Pion, whose top horses have included Dixie Whistler (\$110,336) and Niigon’s Glory (\$163,813), two horses that he also claimed, as well as Turf Endurance star Artistico.

Jockey – Rafael Hernandez

Rafael Hernandez was born in Puerto Rico and spent his formative years there before beginning his riding career at Tampa Bay Downs in 2004. Hernandez went on to be based at a range of tracks. While dominating at Fairmount, Hernandez caught the eye of high-profile trainer Wesley Ward and made the decision to move his tack to Gulfstream in 2014. Hernandez’s first mount at Woodbine produced his first graded stakes win in the 2014 running of the Grade 3 Grey. Next year, he relocated here and established himself as one of the top riders, with 16 stakes victories, including the 2015 Queen’s Plate with Shaman Ghost. Two years ago, Hernandez won 135 races, before winning 166 in 2017. This season, he has 140 wins as of October 5.