

Bloom Racing's Snapper Sinclair, winner of Kentucky Downs' Fasig-Tipton Turf Showcase Juvenile, showed he's as adept on dirt as he showed on grass as a 2-year-old, finishing second at 41-1 odds in the \$400,000 Risen Star Stakes at the Fair Grounds on a head-bob and by the narrowest of lips to 21-1 shot Bravazo. The performance puts the City Zip colt on course to run back in the \$1 million Louisiana Derby and entrenches him on the Kentucky Derby trail.



"I don't think I've ever seen a photo that's less and not been a dead-heat," said Jeff Bloom, who heads the partnership that campaigns Snapper Sinclair, the first horse he's had with Hall of Fame trainer Steve Asmussen. "What was so tough is he was in front, in front, in front — missed it — in front, in front. It was like the only time the other horse got the head bob.

"It's two different sets of emotions. Because the first set is 'Oh my gosh, Snapper absolutely validated himself. He ran a huge race, and we're right there at the finish in the Risen Star.' And afterwards, it's like, 'Oh my gosh, he deserved to get the photo; I sure hope he gets the photo.' And then you don't get it. So for a second you forget about how huge he ran and (it's more) how devastating that you lost. But after you've had time to reflect, I'm not going to lie to you, the sting, the pain of losing that ridiculous photo hurts. But at the same time, there are a lot of fun and exciting things in his future and his progression and development is so impressive. So it's a lot of emotions going all over the place, really."

Snapper Sinclair, an \$180,000 Ocala 2-year-old purchase, started his career on dirt at Belmont Park, finishing sixth. He ran back at Saratoga on grass, prevailing by four lengths to earn a shot at the Kentucky Downs stakes, which proved a 1 3/4-length score over Untamed

Domain. Breaking from post 11 in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile, Snapper Sinclair had a troubled trip and wound up 12th of 14 at Del Mar.

Back on dirt in the Fair Grounds' Grade 3 Lecomte, Snapper Sinclair finished a respectable third, defeating the two horses that beat him when they ran back in the Rise Star. He was ridden in both races by Adam Beschizza, a Fair Grounds newcomer who is tied for third in the standings with 40 wins.

"His step forward in the Lecomte, going back to dirt since his turf experiences, we thought he ran remarkably well that day in a situation where he had insane pressure on a track that really wasn't playing favorably to speed," Bloom said. "And then he got bothered a little bit down the stretch and only missed second by a neck. So we expected to see him move forward off of that. So it's not like we were surprised. But Steve and his team have done an exceptional job helping the horse develop and mature, and we've seen that evolution play out on the track."

"He's improved leaps and bounds since the Lecomte," Beschizza said after the race. "He's probably just started to grasp the fact of the dirt. He's putting himself in the right position. Everything went to plan today and it just goes to show he's a very versatile horse on both surfaces. There's a big future in him. He's going to win some nice races."

What might be Snapper Sinclair's best surface?

"I don't even know how to answer that," Bloom said. "Look what he's already done on the turf and what he's already done on the dirt. He's kind of a typical City Zip that shows they have an enormous amount of versatility and heart. I think he's just a really good racehorse and he's able to acclimate or adjust to whatever surface he's given."

"Just getting a horse to the races is so difficult. But to have one of the few horses that is a legitimate contender for America's horse race, the Kentucky Derby, is off-the-charts exciting."

Bloom did not discount that Snapper Sinclair might return to run at Kentucky Downs this fall or next.

"That's the beautiful thing," he said. "We do have options. Obviously he's exceptional on the turf. The fact that he can handle turf and dirt just really does afford you that opportunity for all kind of exciting

options. He ran so well at Kentucky Downs, it's nice to have that in your back pocket there."