

BECKET BEST

Turns the tables on four-Classical winner Jacqueline in a photo finish to exact a revenge for Indian Derby defeat

On the eve of the big day, trainer S Padmanabhan's said, "it is the big race and the best will prevail." And his words were proved right at the Mahalaxmi Race Course on Sunday when his colt Becket pipped old rival Jacqueline to win the Vandrevala Foundation Indian Turf Invitation Cup.

The race was an exciting affair from the very outset with the best of the business in contention. That it would be a thriller was on the cards after Indian Derby winner Jacqueline went on to create a world record of winning four straight Classic titles.

Jacqueline, coming from Pesi Shroff's stable, was expected to win the Invitation Cup which has come to Mumbai after a hiatus of six

invitation cup

years. But Becket, the property of Harresh N Mehta, Mayurri H Mehta Rep Rohan Bloodstock Pvt Ltd., turned the tables on his most fancied opponent.

Placed last in this nine-runner contest, Becket and Jacqueline were struggling to surge ahead till 1000 metres from the winning post, with Native Knight in lead and Systematic in the second place.

But as the horses crossed the bend towards the home stretch, Jacqueline was perhaps given the reminder. She took the lead from the centre and was ahead of Becket with the Suraj Narredu atop. When it looked like Jacqueline would get there first, Becket put in his best to nose ahead of the four-Classical winner in a photo finish.

"We got to see one of the best races in the recent times... While Jacqueline stole the show during the Indian Derby, it was my colt Becket who had the final laugh here," said S Padmanabhan while talking to DNA just after the event.



SHOWSTOPPERS: Jockey Suraj celebrates after Becket's Invitation Cup win; (inset) actor Bipasha Basu (left) and cheerleaders at the Mahalaxmi Race Course on Sunday

— SALMAN ANSARI.DNA

RESULTS:

1. The Vandrevala Foundation Centre For Mental Health Trophy (2000m): 1. Kalinga Star, 2. Sacred Relic, 3. River Minstrel; 2. The Hirco Japan Cup (1000m): 1. Violetta, 2. Our Fortune, 3. Estevez; 3. The Vandrevala Foundation Center For Multiple Sclerosis Trophy (1000m): 1. Daffodills, 2. Sea Diamond, 3. Ijlal; 4. The Ardeshir Vandrevala Multi-Million (1200m): 1. Dear Henry, 2.

Beyond Stars, 3. Superior Quest; 5. The Maj PK Mehra Memorial Super Mile Cup Gr 1 (1600m): 1. Aboline, 2. Dancing Dynamite, 3. Aristos; 6. The Hirco India Multi-Million (1400m): 1. Aurelian, 2. Forest Flair, 3. Weizhou; 7. The Vandrevala Foundation Indian Turf Invitation Cup Gr 1

(2400m): 1. Becket, 2. Jacqueline, 3. Change Of Luck; 8. The Hirco United Kingdom India Partnership Trophy (1400m): 1. Illiminate, 2. Alize, 3. De Nada; 9. The Vandrevala Foundation Trophy (1200m): 1. Lyrical Lass, 2. Blumaribe, 3. Saints N Sinners.

