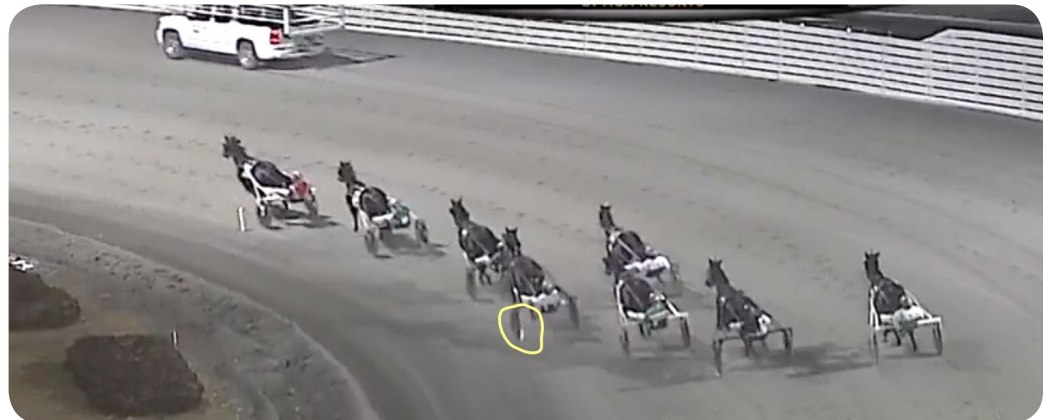


THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022

Making the wrong call

Judges at Yonkers Raceway recently made a pair of decisions which left some doubt as to the rules and how they are being interpreted



YONKERS RACEWAY VIDEO SCREEN SHOT

The fourth horse goes just inside one pylon on the first turn in a race at Yonkers Raceway.



EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner

[@harnesseveguy](#)

Something fishy has been going on at Yonkers Raceway. To be more precise, I find the need to question the action of the Judges lately. While admittedly the decisions have not been nefarious, they certainly warrant a closer look.

First we take you back to the sixth race on February 25. Eurobond was sent off at 3-5 and got away slowly from post one. As driver Matt Kakaley guided him around the first turn they clearly cut inside one pylon and grazed another towards the racing surface side of the track (so they didn't go inside). This incident happened on the first turn and it was hard to make a case that an advantage was gained.

Fast forward to the finish and Eurobond comes charging home to defeat Barry Black on the wire by an inch or so. Justifiably, the Judges immediately post the inquiry sign to investigate. After

about three minutes Eurobond was disqualified and placed second.

While I didn't agree with the decision because there was no advantage gained, the Judges made a call and in the end that's fine as long as they do so consistently. But that was only the beginning of the story. Ten days after the disqualification the decision was reversed. You heard right, the disqualification on Eurobond was rescinded and he was made the winner.

The connections of Eurobond appealed the decision and brought to the table evidence that Barry Black (the horse who was placed first) also went inside a pylon coming off the second turn during the same race; something clearly missed by the Judges in the moment. Presented with the new information the Judges asked the connections to drop the appeal and in turn the decision would be reversed.

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“There is no written rule so it is tough with New York,” said Eurobond’s trainer Michael Spaccarelli. “It is at [Judges] discretion, so it is tough. They handled it well after I brought it to their attention.”

While the connections of Eurobond would now receive the winner’s share of the purse, all of the people that bet on him at 3-5 in the win pool or likely in large amounts of the \$72,541 of other exotic pools got nothing!

“The only people who suffered is the betting public,” said Spaccarelli.

The Judges, who are in place to ensure the integrity of the sport and protect the wagering public, screwed them over. While the actions were certainly unintentional, one has to wonder whether the three people in the booth were properly reprimanded for missing Brennan’s horse leaving the course or simply for potential negligence if you feel going inside one pylon on the first turn is not an actionable offence. Additionally, there seems to be clear video evidence that Jason Bartlett driving Magical Journey went inside a pylon off the third turn and they were not placed back from seventh to eighth. Not that it matters on a wagering front, but it does speak to the issue of consistency in the decision-making process.

On top of the above, the fact that it only took three minutes to make the decision to disqualify Eurobond implies that the Judges were confident that they made the correct ruling. That is scary!

In the interest of complete transparency, I reached out to the New York Gaming Commission in early March after the incident and expressed my concerns about the actions of the Judges along with the non-existence of clearly defined “racing inside the pylons” rules. My thought was that this communication would bring light to the situation and prevent further issues. I wasn’t inclined to write anything because there was no need to throw anyone under the bus when hopefully it could be addressed internally.

Like the Judges on February 25, I was mistaken.

On March 29 at Yonkers another pylons incident occurred that had me shaking my head. Gotafoolishdesire was sitting the pocket and went inside four consecutive pylons (he did hit the last three but was clearly on the non-racing side of the track). Driven by Jim Marohn, Jr., ultimately the pacing gelding finished second by a neck and was disqualified to third.

The placing was 100% justified, though the execution left me wondering. The top five finishers in the race were separated by just 2 1/4 lengths and the horse that was fourth was directly behind Gotafoolishdesire at the wire. Certainly the advantage gained was enough to place it behind at least the fourth-place finisher and perhaps the fifth? At the very least, that the Judges took more than five minutes to deliberate shows they put ample thought into the final result.

Perhaps blaming the Judges at Yonkers for the multi-pylon decision is misplaced. The common denominator in many pylon-related decisions in New York seems to be the lack of clearly outlined rules on the issue. Reviewing the **NY regulations**, only 4117.2 (c) and 4117.4 (r) apply.

4117.2 (c): “... in races contested at a track without a continuous hub rail ... Any horse or sulky that may partly leave the course shall be disqualified one or more positions, as appropriate, if, in the opinion of the judges, such occurrence has had a material effect on the finish of the race.”

4117.4 (r): “The following shall be deemed racing infractions: Crossing the inside limits of the course.”

In the wagering section of the NY regulations it states that the Model Rules of Racing from the Association of Racing Commissioners International will take precedent if something isn’t covered in the document. RCI mentions the following about hubrail violations:

“If at a racetrack which does not have a continuous solid inside hub rail, a horse or part of the horse’s sulky leaves the course by going inside the hub rail or other demarcation which constitutes the inside limits of the course, the offending horse shall be placed one or more positions where, in the opinion of the judges, the action gave the horse an unfair advantage over other horses in the race, or the action helped the horse improve its position in the race. In addition, when an act of interference causes a horse or part of the horse’s sulky to cross the inside limits of the course, and the horse is placed by the judges, the offending horse shall be placed behind the horse with which it interfered.”

Thankfully not all states allow the Judges such wide discretion when considering pylon violations. Both New Jersey and Pennsylvania are quite clear and remove much of the gray area from the decision-making process.

New Jersey, which adopted new pylon rules on July 21, 2021, as well as Pennsylvania, follow the USTA rule. That basically says the following:

- Going inside one pylon results in a Judges decision as to whether the horse had an unfair advantage.
- Going inside two consecutive pylons results in the horse automatically

being placed behind all horses lapped on that horse.

- Going inside three or more consecutive pylons results in the offending horse being placed last.

“The issue is that a horse that is 10 lengths in front in the stretch would be DQ’d under the USTA rule, which seems unduly harsh for a transgression that doesn’t affect the outcome. Judging is just that, application of judicial discretion,” said a source from the New York Gaming Commission, who intimated a willingness to consider alterations of the rules if it was in the best interest of the sport.

The 10-length comment brings up an interesting point of whether the three-pylon rule is too harsh. Is there a happy medium that would satisfy New York while bringing more clarity to the situation? What if the rule read, “If a horse goes inside three or more consecutive pylons they are automatically placed last unless they are at least three lengths ahead of the horse that finishes directly behind them at the finish line. If the horse is three or more lengths clear it becomes a Judges decision on whether the horse should be disqualified.”

Of course, even if New York adopted the USTA language that would not have changed the Eurobond fiasco. Sure, appeals occur and the decisions of Judges are overturned, but these are usually tight calls where you can easily make valid arguments for both points of view. Two such decisions which immediately come to mind are the What The Hill Hambletonian and the Charlie May Meadowlands Pace disqualifications. Both were appealed, and while neither has been overturned (at least not yet), I think anyone who bet those horses and were denied the opportunity to cash a ticket could stomach a change in the outcome via a court ruling. A quiet side arrangement where a bad decision is reversed, that is much harder to accept.

Doesn’t the public deserve to know that the Eurobond decision was reversed? If the incident went through the appeals process this information would’ve been public knowledge rather than swept under the rug so the hundreds or thousands of people who bet on the horse and were wrongfully stripped of their profits were left in the dark. To me that is not protecting the public.

Judges, like umpires, referees, and officials in all sports make mistakes. The system involves humans and thus is fallible. That may not be ideal but it is acceptable, as long as transparency exists and efforts are taken to improve for the future. Hopefully the pylon incidents at Yonkers serve as a learning experience.



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Halftime breakdown of the grueling Borgata Pacing Series



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [BergmanJay](#)

With three rounds completed in this year's Borgata series it's time to take a deeper look at the group as a whole and what the final field may look like once the final two rounds (April 11, April 18) are completed. Following a second leg that was raced during a bitterly cold and windy night (for the season), the third round this past Monday (April 4) was contested under ideal conditions, with less than ideal results for chalk players.

Is there a favorite for the final?

Perhaps the third leg gave some indication of the identity of a would-be favorite for the final and it appears to be a similar horse as in 2021. Leonidas A was a solid winner in the opening leg withstanding a speed mission by Tattoo Artist on his way to victory. A few minutes too late for an appointment for Lasix administration found Leonidas A forced to take the second round off, something that in hindsight appealed to his owner Steve Finkelstein (Jesmeral Stable).

"I think it may have been the best thing for him," Finkelstein said prior to Monday's third leg. "He was in a tough field and drew post seven, so it wasn't going to be an easy race anyway."

Leonidas A was one of only two favorites to take Borgata divisions on Monday night, with Austin Siegelman putting him on the point and winning easily in 1:51 2/5.

"He won all of his preliminaries last year," said Finkelstein, "Then he ran into a roadblock in the final."

While much of last year's Borgata final centered around the explosive gate acceleration of This Is The Plan looping the field from post eight, Finkelstein's perspective recalls Backstreet Shadow languishing on the rim throughout the mile hampering his horse's chances of reaching a contending position. While it's hard to say what Backstreet Shadow could have done differently considering he was following a parked-out Western Joe in that mile, it's easy to see how an owner of one horse might feel compromised when there are three horses from one stable up against him.

The trainer was Ron Burke and two weeks ago it appeared he had the inside track to multiple spots in this year's final again with defending champion This Is The Plan dominant in his debut and the highly-regarded Covered Bridge seemingly primed for the series. A few weeks later and everyone is wondering what's wrong with This Is The Plan as he couldn't maintain contact with Tattoo Artist from the pocket and had to settle for a tie for fifth in a seven-horse field. Covered Bridge has gotten points each week but remains winless in the series, nonetheless. On a positive note, Semi Tough bounced back for Burke following a disappointing second leg to upset American History and company giving the "Brigade" a much-needed win.

Nandolo N was able to grind coverless to victory in the first two legs and seemed on his way to a third win in identical fashion for driver Jason Bartlett on Monday night, but got nipped on the line by longshot Funatthebeach N and driver Jordan Stratton.

"It turned into a sprint," said Stratton, "And I was able to nip him. He [Nandolo N] started to fight back after the wire."

Stratton's respect for Nandolo N aside, the race provided a cautionary tale if you will about Nandolo's talent and perhaps weakness when it comes to the future legs in the series and a final. The gelded son of Betterthancheddar appears to do his best work when horses don't get in his way and the pace is consistent. Nandolo N captured the first two legs with final quarters of 28 and 28 2/5 but this past Monday was outprinted by the winner in a 27 2/5 final panel.

If there was one certainty of what we've seen so far in 2022 is that horses that were clearly superior at times in 2021 now seem somewhat vulnerable to trips and competition. It's not just This Is The Plan that has befuddled betters and experts alike, Nicholas Beach holding on by a nose after controlling the pace against what appeared to be an average group doesn't at this point resemble the same horse that paced in 1:47 2/5 a year ago at The Meadowlands. Granted it was just his third start of the season and a 1:51 1/5 clocking is still a respectable for the class, but he seemed



GEORGIA PANAGI

Leonidas A has the looks of a horse to beat in the April 25 Borgata final at Yonkers Raceway.

all-out to hold off Pat Stanley N, a horse that was racing in non-winners of \$7,500 in February at Yonkers. This isn't to demean Pat Stanley N, a runner-up in all three of his Borgata legs, but to suggest that Nicholas Beach will need to step up his game to reach the final and be competitive in it.

Perhaps one of the more puzzling horses in the series is Tattoo Artist, a blistering-fast son of He's Watching with the capacity to lose the competition on the third turn only to succumb late in the stretch, as he has done twice for driver Dexter Dunn in the opening and then third leg. Tattoo Artist blazed a 26 4/5 opening quarter seating his rivals and then smoked a 27 2/5 third quarter, essentially grinding pocket-sitter This Is The Plan into submission. Poseidon Seelster, disappointing at 8-5 with a third-place finish behind Nandolo N in the second leg, made a scorching move for driver George Brennan around cover and ate up ground to take the fastest division in 1:51 flat.

What's interesting about Poseidon Seelster's performance is that most of the horses that were pushed hard during the brutal conditions during round two saw their performances impacted negatively this past Monday. American History and Jacks Legend N were one-two around the track during heated fractions in leg two. In leg three both cut the mile with little dispute early and weakened. American History was done by the top of the stretch and Jacks Legend N lasted a bit longer but still could not finish out his mile.

Of the five winners this past Monday night what sticks out most is the impact the stallion Mach Three and his sons and grandsons have on the sport. Mach Three is the sire of Leonidas A, a horse Finkelstein purchased for \$90,000 just a few years back. Mach Three's son Somebeachsomewhere sent out Semi Tough, Nicholas Beach and Funthebeach N, and Somebeachsomewhere's son Sunshine Beach was responsible for Poseidon Seelster.

Looking towards the fourth leg there are currently 15 horses in contention for the final eight berths and that may force the hand of one or two conditioners to enter rather than miss a leg and lose a chance to make the final. With horses receiving 25 points just for showing up, a fourth- or fifth-place finish could give a participant an edge over a horse missing a week.

Leonidas A and Nandolo N appear the clear leaders in the Borgata at this point, but it would hardly be a surprise to see trainer Ron Burke's horses emerge in rounds four and five.

Poseidon Seelster and Nicholas Beach are two horses that need to back up their victories in leg three, not just to secure spots in the final, but perhaps take down the top prize.

There were times in the past that people (including me) suggested that this series had too many preliminary legs and needed to be shortened. Given the performances we've seen to date, the Borgata format is working to perfection.

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Making a fantasy element a new reality for Harness Racing



AT THE TRACK

By Darin Zocali [@AtTheTrack7](#)

As the Major League Baseball season begins this week, I will have participated in five fantasy baseball drafts by opening day. Season-long knockout pools and 13-run pools are set to begin. With the Masters Tournament having teed-off by the time you read this on Thursday, I have entered a variety of contests where I select players who I think will perform well. I set a lineup of golfers and hope that they are in contention come Sunday. This past Monday night the NCAA Tournament concluded following a month's worth of bracket pools, knockout pools, box pools, etc.

It seems as though every sport has some contest element outside of directly wagering on that sport. But for harness racing, these contests are few and far between. Sure, there are handicapping contests in harness racing and the Meadowlands Survival Challenge has always proven to be popular among the harness racing faithful. But it feels as though there is a bit of a gap between what is available within harness racing compared to the other sports we follow.

Thoroughbred racing now has StableDuel, a fantasy horseracing style game in which players are allotted a mythical amount of money to spend on horses each day at a variety of racetracks. They select the horses they want on their roster and then based upon the results of those races, the horses earn points throughout the day. There are free contests and there are contests that you can enter for quite a bit of money.

I admit, there are bigger fish to fry in harness racing, but I am curious why such a contest, or some variation of it, doesn't exist in harness racing?

There are contests that exist, but they are rather limited. Standardbred Canada and Trot Magazine have had a long-standing fantasy points contest. Last year it had over 1,100 entries. The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association offers a yearly contest involving the Grand Circuit races and harness racing in Ohio and there is also a weekly contest for Western Fair. But there isn't an industry-wide contest that ties it all together.

Close to 20 years ago, the thoroughbred meet at The Meadowlands had an on-track fantasy horse racing game. Those in attendance selected horses, jockeys and trainers throughout the racing program who would earn points based on the results and the winners would receive prizes at the end of the night. With the amount of money wagered on harness racing at The Meadowlands, an online version of such a game would have to attract some attention.

Is this something that would bolster harness racing onto the same platform as the March Madness Brackets? Of course not. But not every single idea for harness racing has to be the biggest idea ever conceived. There can be smaller, easier things that harness racing can do to help attract attention to the sport.

There is no limit to what harness racing can potentially introduce. There can be games and contests that are specific to certain racetrack and meets. There can be contests that focus on the grand circuit or specific stakes races. There can be fantasy drafts and auctions where at the start of the year you select a series of marquis horses that you will then follow throughout the year as they earn points in the sport's biggest races.

I know in years past there has been a contest similar to what I have described for the Little Brown Jug, the Little Brown Jug Fantasy Stable Contest. But I honestly don't know if that contest still exists.

When it comes to sports, we can shy away from talking about it, but many sports have reached the popularity they enjoy, like the NFL, because of gambling. The NFL was always the darling of the Las Vegas sportsbooks and obviously that has expanded throughout the country as states continue to legalize sports betting. In addition to wagering on the games, fantasy football was a catalyst for building interest in the sport. It's a game that I began playing when I was 13 years old and because of fantasy football I knew who the third wide receiver on the Denver Broncos was in 1996.

As I mentioned earlier, the NCAA Tournament is propped up by gambling and bracket pools. It causes people to study basketball teams

from schools that some people have never heard of to help them fill out their brackets each March. Perhaps something similar could occur in harness racing. Harness racing customers who follow certain racetracks or racing circuits could possibly become more engaged and those who don't follow those entities could become fans.

When it comes to harness racing, I prefer the larger racetracks for wagering purposes. I focus on The Meadowlands the most and spend some time handicapping Woodbine Mohawk Park. Half-mile track racing has just never been my particular cup of tea. But if I were involved in a months-long game or contest that included half-mile racetracks, I could become more involved and perhaps I would end up wagering more on those racetracks than I have in years past.

As I stated earlier, this isn't a ground-breaking idea that I think will propel harness racing into a new stratosphere of popularity and there are far bigger changes that can help advance the sport. But, this is an idea that is easy to implement, wouldn't cost a lot of money and doesn't have any downside. Sometimes keeping things simple and easy works.



AROUND THE FLYING TURNS

By Matt Rose [@DRFHarnessMatt](#)

The three weekly co-features, namely the Open Pace for both males and females and the Open Trot, are staples on the MGM Northfield Park overnight schedule. Week in and week out they offer some of the most entertaining races on their given card. Three horses specifically come to mind as the leaders in their respective divisions – pacing mare Adorabella, pacing gelding Bernie, and trotter Winning Shadow.

As a racing season progresses, it's common to see frequent changes with the "top dog" in each division, but in the example of the three aforementioned horses, it's amazing how long they have consistently remained at the top.

In the case of Adorabella, the 6-year-old pacing mare from the Sam Schillaci stable, it was a slow and steady rise to the top. Always a decent mid-level conditioned pacer, about a year ago something clicked with her. Once she made it to Queen of her division, she hasn't come close to relinquishing her throne. Win or lose in any given week, the race goes through her. Coming off her 2021 season with close to \$100K earned, the Vincent Costa, Jr.-owned mare already has over \$80K in the bank this year on the strength of seven wins in 12 starts. She can go to the lead, grind first-up or sweep off cover. Trip doesn't matter with this versatile mare.

The pride of the Jessica Millner stable is none other than the 6-year-old pacing gelding Bernie. Small in stature, he is huge in talent. Coming off a season with over \$180K earned, he already has won \$73,590 this year and is 11-for-11 in the money. Whether it's battling with Southwind Amazon or whatever Ron Burke throws at him from his endless supply of talented stock, it's truly enjoyable to watch Bernie in action every week.

Perhaps the most impressive Northfield regular is trainer Jordan Hope's 7-year-old gelding trotter Winning Shadow. How about these numbers: 21 for 42 with over \$236K earned in 2021, and already 6 wins in 11 trips this season, with four runner-up finishes. He looks so smooth on the track, overcomes any trip and can just smell the wire.

Keep in mind that these three horses remain so remarkably consistent despite almost always having to start from an assigned outside post, obviously making the journey more difficult.

I find myself fantasizing sometimes how these three horses would stack up against the top overnight or even stakes competition at some other major tracks. Could Bernie make an impression in the Borgata series at Yonkers? Adorabella in the weekly Yonkers F&M Open? How about Winning Shadow squaring off with the top aged trotting talent on the Grand Circuit? We may never get those answers, and I'm fine with that because it means I get to continue watching them at Northfield.

Father Patrick

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Weiss series kicks off at Pocono with top-tier potential

By Jay Bergman

The first round of the Bobby Weiss series for 3-year-old colt and gelding pacers kicks off a stakes-filled 15-race card at The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono on Saturday afternoon (4/9) with the first of five \$20,000 divisions likely to set the tone for a most competitive series. Though just six horses were drawn into the third race division, it appears to have three with impressive potential locking horns.

Shake It and All The Chips have collectively won all five starts this year entering the Weiss, while All Or Nothing is perfect on the season, winning his first pari-mutuel start over the Pocono surface on March 20. Scott Zeron drove All Or Nothing, a son of Always B Miki, in that win and knows the colt quite well.

"He's a big horse that's very talented," said Zeron of All Or Nothing. "I trained him last year and really liked him, but he broke a bone."

All Or Nothing drew the pole position for Saturday's first round action and Zeron is quite cautious even though he likes his chances. "We'll find out more for sure," Zeron said. "There are some very good horses in there."

Trainer Chris Ryder has one of those pair of nice sophomores in Shake It and the trainer was happy with the progress the gelded son of Heston Blue Chip has made thus far.

"I thought he handled the track well at Harrah's [Philadelphia]," Ryder said on Monday. "I'm not sure how the rest of the season will go but I think we have at least a good New York Sire Stakes horse."

Shake It won his first two starts of the year at The Meadowlands on the front end with a 1:51 2/5 mile his fastest clocking. On opening day last Sunday (April 3) he cruised around the five-eighths oval at Harrah's Philadelphia, defeating a non-winners-of-5 group in a comfortable 1:52 2/5 mile. With regular pilot Dexter Dunn scheduled to race at The Meadowlands on Saturday night Ryder will employ Jason Bartlett for the Weiss opener.

All The Chips is an altered son of Betting Line that earned \$53,663 as a 2-year-old in just five starts, with his best effort a win in a Pennsylvania Sire Stakes event on July 18 in 1:52 2/5. All The Chips has returned this season for trainer Cory Mumford with two straight scores at Dover Downs and seems more than ready for his 2022 stakes debut. Matt Kakaley is scheduled to drive All The Chips from post six.

The last race on Saturday's program could prove contentious as well with Captaingiddyupngo, a well-bred son of Captaintreacherous, making his local debut following a third-place finish in a prep race on



All Or Nothing has never tasted defeat in his one start and three qualifiers, winning all four by 27 combined lengths.

CURTIS SALONICK

April 2 at The Meadowlands. Captaingiddyupngo hails from the powerful Tony Alagna stable and starts from post four in the Weiss division for pacers.

Trainer Ray Schnittker believes the sire Huntsville will be a dominant force in New York and beyond. Huntsville's son Greg The Leg (post two) has stamped himself as a potential player in the Empire State already this year with a pair of solid front-end victories. Mark MacDonald hopes to keep the gelding's winning streak alive in this division.

Saturday's card also includes the second leg of the Weiss for sophomore colt and gelding trotters and Zeron drew well once again with the Linda Toscano-trained Emma Talking in race 11, the third of three \$20,000 divisions. "I like that horse," said Zeron. "He's in with some nice ones as well."

Emma Talking, a Chapter Seven-sired colt, has a first and second-place finish in two starts this year and likely needs some experience. He should get battle-tested in this division that includes first-leg winner El Toro Loco (post six), a gelded son of Walner that has captured both of his races this year including a 1:55 effort at The Meadows on March 17. Tyler Buter guides El Toro Loco.

That Ole Bar Stool has captured three of his five starts this season and makes his Pocono debut from post seven in this division with Matt Kakaley at the helm. That Ole Bar Stool took a 1:55 1/5 record winning from post eight at Dover Downs on March 7.

Pocono's 15-race Saturday program has a first post time of 1:30 p.m.

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Down Under star Amazing Dream set for U.S. debut Saturday at The Meadowlands

By Ken Weingartner

New Zealand-born Amazing Dream is ready to begin what her connections hope is an amazing journey in North America. Sent from Down Under to trainer Linda Toscano, the 6-year-old female pacer arrived in February with 24 wins – including 10 Group 1 races – and more than \$1 million in earnings. She finished worse than third only five times in 48 starts.

On Saturday, Amazing Dream will make her North American debut in the \$31,500 Fillies-and-Mares Open at The Meadowlands. She will start from post seven in a seven-horse field with Todd McCarthy in the sulky.

The mare, by Bettor's Delight out of Christian Dreamer, was New Zealand's 3-year-old Pacing Filly of the Year and left home as the second-richest stakes-earning mare in Australasian history. She has been owned since March 2021 by Enviro Stables, Richard Gutnick, Tom Pontone, and Joseph Lozito Jr.

In her final start Down Under, Amazing Dream, who was trained by Mark Purdon in New Zealand and his son Nathan in Australia, finished third against male rivals in the Hunter Cup. She has qualified twice in the U.S., with her most recent effort a 1:52 4/5 triumph at The Meadowlands. She paced her last quarter mile in 26 2/5.

"She's a pleasure," Toscano said. "She really hasn't done anything wrong. She's fit right into our routine pretty much exactly like an American horse would. Nathan told me not to worry about her traveling or settling in; she's got more frequent flyer miles than most people we know. She's done a lot of traveling and settling into different places.

"Any time you have a mare that's professional, that's a good thing for me. She takes care of herself, and her work ethic seems really good. They say she can be a little keen, a little on the grabby side, but that's OK; she wants to beat everybody. But for the most part, she's just a professional. I'd say that's the best part about her, her temperament."

Amazing Dream is eligible to the ongoing Blue Chip Matchmaker Series at Yonkers Raceway, but with only two of five preliminary rounds remaining, the New Jersey-based Toscano decided to send the mare to The Meadowlands for her first race.

"We couldn't make the [Matchmaker] final, so I thought it was better to race her here and get her started this way," Toscano said. "It's home."

Amazing Dream, who knocked off the boys four times in major races Down Under, will have plenty of opportunities to tackle the sport's top mares on the North American Grand Circuit when the time is right.

"She's got everything," Toscano said. "She has to step up and be able to go with the big girls. She raced against the boys down there, so we're hoping. Her strength down there was distance. I think that's the reason she was able to compete against the boys the way she did because her staying power was just amazing. Now, she will have to sprint. We'll just take it one step at a time. She's a good horse, and usually good horses find a way to win."

Amazing Dream is the 5-2 morning-line second choice in her race Saturday at The Meadowlands. Another New Zealand-bred, Majorca, is the 9-5 favorite. Trained by Dylan Davis, the 7-year-old mare is 3-for-3 since arriving in the States.

Racing begins at 6:20 p.m. EDT at The Meadowlands. Saturday's 13-race card also includes a \$34,500 Open/Preferred Handicap Trot (race seven) in addition to the Fillies-and-Mares Open (race 12).



KEN WEINGARTNER

Amazing Dream, a 10-time Group 1 winner in her homeland, makes her Meadowlands and U.S. debut on Saturday.

SMEDSHAMMER STRIKES TWICE TO OPEN BRENNAN TROTting SERIES

Trainer-driver Trond Smedshammer began the 2022 edition of the John Brennan Trotting Series on Wednesday night (April 6) at Yonkers Raceway by winning two of the five \$25,000 divisions that took place.

[READ MORE](#)

OPEN HOUSE AT DIAMOND CREEK FARM IN JUNE

Diamond Creek Farm will hold its 5th Annual Open House at its Pennsylvania Farm on June 4.

[READ MORE](#)

BORGATA FINAL TO OFFER "WIN AND YOU'RE IN" CHANCE

The winner of the Borgata final will get an invitation to the \$500,000 Aria Pace on October 15. The Aria is accompanied by the \$500,000 Robert Miecuna Invitational Trot and the \$1,000,000 MGM Yonkers International Trot on what promises to be a spectacular day of racing.

"With five legs and a final, the Borgata is one of the most difficult stakes to win. We felt the Aria invitation was a nice bonus for the horse that was able to come out on top," said Racing Secretary Joe Frasure.

-edited release (Yonkers)

PRIDECREST LOOKS FOR STAN BERGSTEIN WIN AT CAL EXPO

Sunday's program at Cal Expo includes the \$10,000 Stan Bergstein Trot and the \$10,000 Distance Derby as part of a 11-race card.

Track record-holder Pridecrest is fresh from a smashing Open win last week and gets top billing in the Bergstein while taking on a field that includes arch-rival and Gary Budahn winner Mandeville.

Meanwhile, last week's elimination heat victors Marlon's Magic and Impressive Art will square off in the Distance Derby, which is decided over a demanding mile-and-a-half and should prove quite a contentious affair.

Post-time is 5:45 P.M. locally in Sacramento, California.

-edited release (Mark Ratzky for Cal Expo)

OHHA FRESHMAN FOCUS STARTS NEXT WEEK

The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association (OHHA) will kick off its Freshman Focus series Tuesday, April 7 at 7PM with trainer Steve Carter on the Association's Facebook page. Roger Huston sits down with Carter to discuss his Ohio two-year-olds currently in training.

Freshman Focus will air every Thursday night featuring a different trainer. The show is available on the OHHA Facebook page.

The show will also be available on the OHHA YouTube channel.

Freshman Focus is presented by Eldorado Scioto Downs, Sugar Valley Farms, and The Ohio State Veterinary Medical Center.

-release (OHHA)

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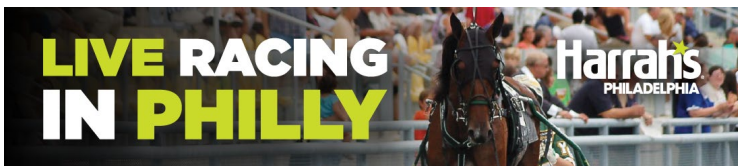


BY DERICK GIWNER

When Ashley Tetrick was called into action as an outrider at Balmoral Park in 2005 she knew nothing about harness racing. Now more than 15 years later she is married to a Hall of Fame driver and participates in the sport as an owner, breeder, publicist and so much more.

A native of Illinois and graduate of Purdue University, Tetrick is a staunch believer in horse aftercare and recently joined the USTA Board of Directors where she serves as co-chair of the marketing committee. Her vision of creating a line of apparel for “Tetrick Racing” has also taken off and recently NBA MVP Nikola Jokic wore a Tetrick hat and shirt on national TV.

We sat down with the multi-faceted Tetrick to discuss marketing, her life in harness racing and much more. Enjoy!



OWNER/BREEDER/USTA DIRECTOR ASHLEY TETRICK

How did your path in harness racing begin?

I grew up with riding horses in Crete, Illinois, which was the home of Balmoral Park. When I was about 18 years old they needed an outrider at Balmoral Park and Tony Morgan’s wife Penny was a good friend of mine. I had rode rodeo horses with her and she called and said, ‘get to the track now, we need an outrider.’ That’s where it started. I had never looked at a Standardbred or touched one before that day.

Among other things, you’re known as the wife of Hall of Fame driver Tim Tetrick. How did the two of you meet?

I was outriding at the track. So we met there and were friends for a couple of years and started dating about 2006.

From the time I first started seeing you at Grand Circuit races some 15 years ago you’ve always been so friendly and inviting. Is there a nasty side to Ashley?

No. I don’t like inefficiency. If someone says they are going to do something I plan that they are going to do it. If they don’t I’m very persistent, but there certainly isn’t a nasty side. I’m pretty laid back.

For many years Tim had a reputation for being a “bad” loser in that he didn’t take the losses well. As the person who sees him every night, has that changed?

No. He doesn’t bring work home. He’s harder on himself than he is on those around him and sometimes people take that wrong. If he’s frustrated they think it is at them or the horse, but 99% of the time he is frustrated with himself. He holds himself to the highest standard and he’s really an incredible horseman.

What is the biggest pitfall of being married to a harness driver?

You don’t see them very often. He misses the milestones, like our



LISA PHOTO

Tim, Ashley and Trysta Tetrick can often be found at the track on major racing days.

daughter walking or talking or first barrel race or first accident at the farm if she falls off.

What kind of car do you drive?

Chevy 3500 Dually.

Favorite dinner meal? Snack?

Anything I don’t have to cook; Banana.

What is your favorite track to visit? Why?

Red Mile. There is nothing else in the world like it. I especially love when the grandstand is close because I love being close to the horses . . . when the paddock was right next to the grandstand, I loved that. Every track should have their people close to the horses

What is your favorite big event in racing? Why?

I love the Breeders Crown. It is the epitome of everything. You got to watch the horses grind all year. The upsets are sometimes incredible, and those that prevail the entire year and win their Breeders Crown, that’s hard to do.

How often are horses or racing on your mind?

Constantly. Not much time goes past where we aren’t focused on horses in our own little stable, broodmares, babies or riding horses. I have seven or eight horses in the backyard always.

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ON THE BACKSTRETCH

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What is your favorite thing to do outside of hanging out at the track?

Barrel Racing. So going to or entering a rodeo.

What is your favorite sport to watch? Team?

Right now basketball. I love March Madness but it has also been really fun watching the Denver Nuggets play with the connection to Nikola Jokic.

What is one thing about you most fans/bettors don't know?

Probably that I'm just as horse-obsessed as my husband.

What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

Incredible.

What was your best moment in harness racing?

When Crimson And Chrome, who we bred, won at The Meadowlands. Just having a horse that you bred win a race at The Meadowlands is just amazing. Timmy winning the Hambletonian is a close second, but for me watching that little horse win was pretty awesome. I'm sure [Tim] will not appreciate that at all [laughing]. Crimson And Chrome is a really nice horse to be around, my daughter loves him. He is a family horse.

How many horses to you and Tim own and how many do you breed each year?

We only have two broodmares and we own parts of seven to nine race-horses.

Do you enjoy breeding?

I love it but it is hard. It is not for the faint of heart.

Your daughter Trysta seems to enjoy her time at the track. Do you see her being involved in the industry? Would you encourage it?

I absolutely would encourage it. I think that being a horseman it doesn't matter what you do in life. When you are a horseman first you can do just about anything. I would encourage her but I have no idea what she will do. She is very methodical and a thinker. Timmy and I are more emotional. Who knows the path she will be on?

You were doing a podcast called BossMares for a while. Why did you stop?

We've been trying so desperately to get back together but our schedules are just so crazy, between Winnie [Morgan Nemeth], Emma [Pettersson] and myself. We are still on hold and waiting for us to be able to get together again.

You are on the USTA Board of Directors and co-chair of the marketing committee. Do you feel your presence can and/or is bringing change?

Absolutely. It is very difficult to be one of the youngest on that very vast Board of incredible people, but I'm so thrilled and fortunate that I feel respected among my peers and I think they are excited to hear what I have to say. We've got some things in the works right now that I think are very exciting for our sport and I'm thankful to Mike Tanner and President Russell Williams for taking my opinion into consideration.

If you could get one thing done as co-chair, what would it be?

Probably launching Harnessracing.com, the url the USTA acquired, to be the premier location for all things harness racing.



COURTESY ASHLEY TETRICK

Ashley Tetrick is more than comfortable on a horse and competes in barrel racing.

There was some talk at the Board of Directors meeting as to what harnessracing.com would be vs. ustrotting.com. Can you speak about that?

I don't think people recognize is how incredible ustrotting.com really is and how many niche markets it serves, and serves them really well. One of the things I feel it lacks is that it is built to be useful for the trade of harness racing, but it is too vast to be used for consumer marketing. A lot of the things within ustrotting.com that are suitable for the consumer, we can just pull out and allow it to stand alone at harnessracing.com and really draw the line in the sand by separating our trade media and consumer media so we can serve our new and green followers better.

On April 3 NBA MVP was on ABC's broadcast wearing a Tetrick Racing hat and shirt. How huge is that for the sport?

It is so good for harness racing as a whole, not just because he put that on but because he respects and loves harness racing so fervently. We had given him some stuff when he came to jog horses a couple of times, but it was a genuine choice on his part. He did it on his own.

Can you see Jokic being an ambassador of sorts to boost Harness Racing's popularity?

Yes, but I think we need to be very cognizant and careful with people like Nikola and Charles Oliveria because we don't want to make them feel we are exploiting them to grow our own sport. I think that if everyone recognizes that "genuine" factor, that is what will grow the sport. It is the grassroots factor of why those guys like harness racing, not the limelight reason.

In addition to Jokic, many celebrities have been seen wearing Siegelman Racing apparel. Can we make racing more mainstream?

100%. I don't know how they do it but I think it is terrific and needs to be appreciated. Maybe our drivers and trainers need to turn an ear to that. There is a market here that is valued and we should all invest in ourselves and brand ourselves. I hope that is what people notice and do.

You manage TetrickRacingGear.com which sells merchandise to the general public. Has that been a profitable venture?

It is insane. We've sold to over 19 countries, but with the pandemic /distribution problems that the country has been facing, I can't keep things in stock as fast as they sell. It is time-consuming, yes. It is a lot of work, yes. But it is so positive for the sport as a whole. Maybe some young marketing person will step up and take it on for all the drivers and trainers. I'll be glad to hand it over. It blows me away every time someone sends me a letter and says their son or dad or brother or grandfather got it for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

ON THE BACKSTRETCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Christmas and they wear it every day; that a little boy wouldn't let them wash his shirt or a grandfather wouldn't take off his hat. This sport is so much more appreciated than a lot of us give it credit for.

One thing I noticed is that your prices for shirts, hats, etc. are very reasonable. Was that important?

Very important. I wanted everything to be attainable. We make very little from the sales. We just utilize the profits to reinvest in the idea and let it grow. Our margins are very slim.

Tim also competed versus UFC Champion Charles Oliveira in a match race. What was that experience like for you and Tim?

We loved it and it was so wonderful. Charlie loves horses as much as we love horses, which was so humbling and we so appreciated it. The fact that we had to get that done in just five days, and if it wasn't for Tom Grossman at Blue Chip Farms, that would've never happened. I could never say thanks enough to Tom because he was really the driving force. Irv and Vic, they went above and beyond to get Charlie some colors. The USTA helped so much and their coverage was great. It was just proof that we can do great things if we put our heads together.

If you had the power to change one thing in the sport, what would it be?

I would educate. What Vince Lombardi is to football I would love to be to harness racing. I think we have to teach people how to watch harness racing and teach them how well our horses are cared for and appreciated. These horses do great things even when they are off the track and retired. We have a very bad stigma/perception and we need to be as transparent as we can to show people how awesome these horses are, because clearly telling them isn't working.

You mention off the track. Aftercare is very important for you, no?

100%. My strength is that I was a riding person before I was ever involved with racehorses. They are two very parallel universes. Although they are the same, their paths just run alongside each other. Sometimes bridging that gap is just difficult – for the horses to understand and the owners to understand. So we need to make it easy for people to recognize that maybe not racing that guy or gal those last two starts and sending them to an organization like New Vocations and letting them have a great future is the best way to go. If everyone took one extra step to do that it would be great. This ride that New Vocations has had over the last 30 years, they assist so many horses and are so well respected because they always do the right thing. They have really good horsemen that are closing that gap and educating the horses for that transition.

How do you view the future of harness racing?

It is going to be rough for a little while, with everything going on with HIPA and the Thoroughbred cloud hurts us sometimes. We just have to focus on educating what Standardbreds are like and keep doing what we need to on a grand scale. If we do, we'll get through it.

Time for the stretch drive.

Best Horse you ever saw: Shartin N.

Lasix – Yes or No?: Yes.

Favorite TV Show?: The Cowboy Channel. It is an app on your phone that you can stream to any television. That would be the perfect place to house racing. We should have a contract with them for big races like the Breeders Crown and Hambletonian. It could be interesting rather than going the national route of CBS Sports. You get access to the exact demographic that is watching it and you can promote and reach out to them.

Trotters or Pacers?: Pacers.

DRF Bets Handicapper's Corner

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At DRF Harness we strive to provide the best handicapping information in the sport. Each week we'll use this space to bring you some of our handicappers' best bets, value plays and horses to watch. Use this information as one of your tools when wagering or simply click on the link above and head to DRF Bets to wager now.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7

RACE 1

(2) HIGH MINDED raced in the Blue Chip Matchmaker Series on 3-18, then against males at Pocono on March 26. She was also interfered with in the latter contest. She should find this company much more reasonable.

-Greg Reinhart



FRIDAY, APRIL 8

RACE 7

(5) HENDERSON SEELSTER showed some signs of life last week with a nice effort. Classy veteran may not be the horse he once was but certainly can do at this level.

-Derick Giwner



RACE 7

(2) EASYRUNNER HANOVER wasn't as good racing first up last week and she gets McNair back now. That teamster sent her down the road two starts back and he should be blasting with here in this spot.

-Garnet Barnsdale



SATURDAY, APRIL 9

RACE 2

(2) NO DRAMA PLEASE gets a key class drop tonight in his fourth start of the year and has no excuses for failure.

-Giwner



FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park (THU)	Analysis	Mohawk Park (FRI)	Analysis
Meadowlands (FRI)	Analysis	Mohawk Park (SAT)	Analysis
Yonkers (FRI)	Analysis	Meadowlands (SAT)	Analysis

DHP PPS HARNESS EYE PPS TRACKMASTER PPS FREE PPS

Want full-card analysis? Visit [DRF.com/harness](https://drf.com/harness)

NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

BOOK FOR LONG TOM FULL AND CLOSED

Midland Acres has announced that the 2022 book for the multiple stakes-winning son of Muscle Hill, Long Tom is now full and closed.

Long Tom's first crop of 2-year-olds raced in 2021 and earned nearly \$700,000, ranking him among Ohio's leading trotting sires.

A multiple Grand Circuit stakes winner at 2 and 3, Long Tom 3,1:52 1/5 (\$410,513) is by leading trotting sire Muscle Hill and a half-brother to the pair of multiple stakes winners In Range 3,1:51 4/5 (\$793,037) and Tight Lines 1:51 2/5f (\$625,074). His dam is from the maternal family of Yankee Duchess, the third dam of Muscle Hill, thus Long Tom carries three doses of this modern foundation mare with a 4x5x5 cross.

Midland Acres extends a sincere thank you to Long Tom's shareholders and all breeders that have supported him over the past five breeding seasons.

--Midland Acres

3-YEAR-OLD NJ-SIRED TROTS COMING SOON TO THE MEADOWLANDS

The Standardbred Breeders & Owners Association of New Jersey (SBOANJ) and The Meadowlands wish to remind trainers of the new 3-year-old races for trotters sponsored by the SBOANJ that will serve as a lead in to the 2022 New Jersey Sires Stakes (NJSS).

These races will be considered overnights but will be restricted to those horses eligible to the NJSS and will be scheduled for consecutive Fridays, April 22 and April 29.

The new races will be written as NJ Sired 3YO trots (written as separate races for C&G and fillies) that are Non Winners of 3 Pari-Mutuel Races or \$50,000 Lifetime.

Should there be too few entered to accommodate separate filly races, they will be combined and the condition would be adjusted to read; Non Winners of 3 (Mares 4) Pari-Mutuel Races or \$50,000 (Fillies \$75,000) Lifetime.

The purse for all races will be \$25,000.

The NJSS dates follow up the next Friday with legs set for May 6 and May 13 and the finals May 27.

-release (Meadowlands/SBOANJ)

USTA SEEKS MEMBER SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE

The U.S. Trotting Association is seeking a qualified and professional member services representative who will report directly to the Assistant Registrar.

The deadline to apply is Friday (April 15).

While this position is considered remote, there may be occasions when you will need to work onsite to attend team meetings or gather information, therefore the ideal candidate should reside in Ohio.

The member service representative will have direct contact with the public, members and non-members, on a daily basis. The representative will process all aspects of registration and membership services, answer phone and email inquiries as well as assisting members through online services when applicable.

The position requires excellent customer service skills, attention to detail and the ability to multi-task in a fast-paced environment.

To read the complete job description and information on how to apply for the member service representative position, [click here](#).

-release (USTA Communications)

CHARITY HANDICAPPING CONTEST AT THE MEADOWLANDS

Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment is seeking local New Jersey charities interested in having a night at the races for a good cause in the track's annual Charity Handicapping Contest, scheduled for Saturday, May 14, 2022.

The Charity Handicapping Contest is a free handicapping contest open to 501C3 organizations. The Contest offers a \$15,000 total donation/prize pool, with all ten charities receiving a donation. Prizes will be awarded as follows: 1st Place: \$5,000, 2nd Place: \$3,000, 3rd Place: \$2,000, 4th Place: \$1,500, 5th Place: \$1,000, 6th-10th: \$500

"This has become one of our favorite events to host at the track," said Jason Settlemoir, COO and GM of Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment. "It not only feels great to give back to our community, it also is wonderful to see all

the charities with their friends and family enjoy a night at the racetrack."

Participating organizations will also have the opportunity to make winner's circle presentations and be featured on the track's jumbotron.

Interested not-for-profit organizations must apply to participate by emailing Rachel Ryan at rryan@playmeadowlands.com by Monday, May 2nd. The email must include:

1. Charity/Non-Profit Name
2. 501C3 letter
3. Charity/Non-Profit Mission
4. Website URL & Social Links
5. Charity Representative/s that will be onsite for the contest on May 14th.

If more than ten organizations apply, ten will be selected via a random drawing. Selected organizations will be notified by Friday, May 6th.

-edited release (Meadowlands)

NEW LIGHTS, NEW POSTS AT H3R FOR 2022 SEASON

With a little less than one month away from the start of the 2022 harness racing season at the Hippodrome 3R, positive news is abounding.

For the first time in nearly two years, the racetrack will feature spectators at the facility for opening day on Sunday, May 1, 2022 and there will also be a new lighting system for the track that is being installed now.

The winter snow has been removed from the track and the first qualifying day for the horses will be on Saturday, April 16 at 11:00 am.

"We are very positive for a great season in 2022," said Claude Levesque, President of the Quebec Jockey Club. "We can now welcome back racing fans without doing temperature checks or having to wear masks. Trois-Rivieres has always been a fan friendly track where people can watch from the rail and nearly touch the horses as they race by.

"Over the winter the QJC received a grant from the Quebec Ministry," Levesque explained. "It was for \$200,000 for new lights at the track. We will have them all installed by the start of the new season and have adjusted our post times mid-season on Friday's starting July 15 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The new lights with our HD cameras will make for sharp viewing quality for our racing fans at the track and those watching via simulcasting or computer viewing."

H3R post times will be 12:00 noon every Sunday starting May 1. Friday's start off on June 3 with post time at 4:00 pm. Then on Friday, July 15, first race post time goes to 8:00 pm. The last Friday race card is August 26. The 40-day race meet will run through November 13.

For a complete racing calendar, [click here](#).

The stakes race begins in July and will feature both the Breeders Trophy Series for 3-year-old trotters and pacers and the Future Stars Series for 2-year-olds of both gaits. All of the finals for the series will take place on Sunday, September 11. The Super Sunday card will feature \$500,000 in total purses and is the richest day of horse racing in all of Quebec.

H3R is hosting the Quebec/Eastern Ontario Regional Driving Championship on Sunday, June 26 and the Lucien Bombardier Pace for two-year-old fillies will be held on Sunday, October 2.

For more information, visit www.hippodrome3r.ca.

-release (Steve Wolf for the Quebec Jockey Club)

NEW WAGERS OFFERING LOW TAKEOUT TO DEBUT AT CUMBERLAND

First Tracks Cumberland is pleased to announce the addition of two new low takeout wagers beginning opening day Friday (April 8).

Joining the ranks of our reduced 16% takeout Pick-4 and Pick-5 will be a daily Pick-6 and a Hi Five (Pentafecta). Both new wagers are non-jackpot, and both carry a low base wager of \$0.20.

The Pick-6 will payout at a 75/25% level, 75% carryover if no perfect tickets. The Hi Five will carryover 100% if no one correctly selects the first five correctly. The Pick-6 will be on races 3-8, with the daily Hi Five being the final race on the card.

Post time for the Spring/Summer meet is set for 3 p.m. on both Fridays and Saturdays, with racing continuing each weekend through July 23.

Qualifiers will be held once a week on Saturdays at 2 p.m., before the start of the pari-mutuel card.

More information can be found on our website: <https://firsttrackscumberland.com> and on our Facebook page: First Tracks Cumberland.

-edited release (First Tracks Cumberland)