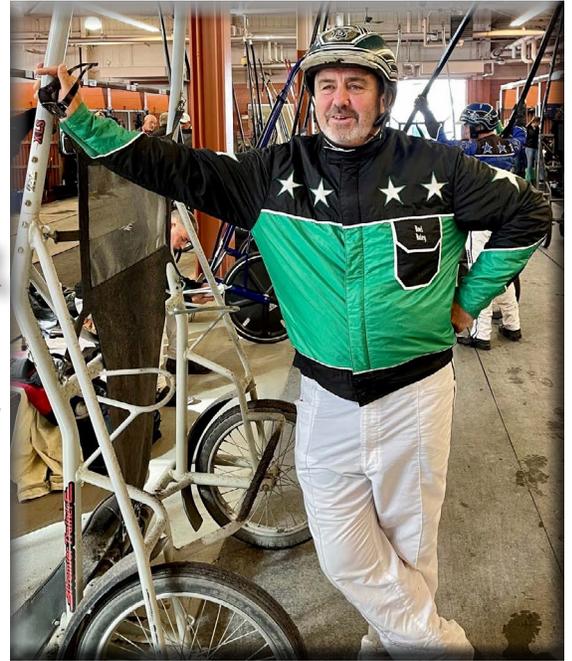


THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2024

DALEY LOADED WITH HORSEPOWER FOR 2024

Trainer Noel Daley's barn includes Captain Albano, Sig Sauer, Buy A Round & Miss I La among 60 in training



DERICK GIWNER



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [X BergmanJay](#)

Noel Daley sits 6th in North American stable earnings all-time with \$72.3 million.

For the most part, over the last decade or so trainer Noel Daley has gone to the yearling sales with a tight budget and an eye for trotters. With the enormous success of just one colt, Pebble Beach, Daley has seen his outlook change as ownership has tilted the stable in the direction of pacers. As he looked out on the coming stakes season, Daley is equally fitted with quality from both gaits that could lead him not just into the sport's biggest races but perhaps the winner's circle.

Daley finished the 2023 with a pair of high-caliber colts from both gaits, with Captain Albano expected to be one of this year's premier sophomore pacing colts and Sig Sauer, a Muscle Hill-sired colt, with Hambletonian aspirations.

"Captain Albano had a nice break and we brought him back in January. He's filled out nicely and grown a bit. He was already a very good looking horse last year," said Daley of his hopeful star. "We're taking our time with him and he should be ready to race sometime in May."

Captain Albano carried a six-race winning streak into last year's Breeders Crown for freshman pacers but was upended at the finish in the contest at Hoosier Park when 23-1 shot Gem Quality went sailing by.

"It was disappointing," said Daley. "Looking back, I think he may have gone a bit too much in his Breeders Crown elimination and wasn't the same horse for the final."

Despite the defeat, Captain Albano earned \$445K on the season with seven wins in nine starts and a 1:49 2/5 record to show for it. Captain Albano banked more than Pebble Beach did as a freshman in 2021.

For Daley, Pebble Beach changed the direction of his racing stable before he became a star.

"I was training 80 percent trotters," said Daley. "I had one of my owners call me up and ask me to look at a yearling he liked. He was an Ohio bred but when I saw him, I really liked him too."

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)



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TATTOO ARTIST

(Hes Watching - Stylish Artist - Artsplace)
p,2,1:52s; 1:47.1s (\$3,245,658)



NJ

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Sub-1:50 Wins!*

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- Canadian Pacing Derby Champion at age six.
- Out of Breeders Crown Champion Stylish Artist (\$940,022).

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2024 FEE: \$10,000 (U.S.)

TRIXTON

(Muscle Hill - Emilie Cas El - Garland Lobell)
2,1:54.4s; 3,1:50.3 (\$968,696)



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Hambletonian Champion!

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- First crop of ON-eligibles race in 2024!

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FEE: \$7,500 (U.S.)



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SIX PACK

(Muscle Mass - Pleasing Lady - Cantab Hall)
3,1:49.1 (\$1,973,661)



NY

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Sub-1:50 Twice!*

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- Won the Allerage Open Trot (1:49.2) and TVG (1:50) at age four.
- Sire of 21 2YO winners from his first crop.
- Sire of stakes winning 2YOs Sunkist Beauty (\$97,750), Blazing Deo (\$91,150) & Mr Bluebird (\$69,694).



NEW to Winbak New York!
NEW FEE: 7,500 (U.S.)

LAZARUS N

(Bettors Delight - Bethany - Christian Cullen)
p,1:48.4, BT 1:46.3 (\$3,103,100)



NJ

*The Heir Apparent to
Bettors Delight!*

- The richest son of Bettors Delight standing in the U.S.
- Over \$4.5 million in progeny earnings from just two crops.
- The sire of Voukefalas p,3,1:49.2 (\$591,655).
- Nine \$100,000+ earners and 22 in 1:53 already!

Standing at Deo Volente Farms.
NEW FEE: \$5,000 (U.S.)



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(Always B Milki - Shebestingin - Bettors Delight)
p,2,1:49.2; 3,1:48.1 (\$1,861,447)



NJ

*Undefeated Breeders Crown
Champ at Two!*

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- Led all N.A. horses in 2021 earnings with \$1,327,147.
- Never missed the board in 26 career starts (26-17-8-1).
- Bred a full book of mares in his first two years at stud.

Standing at Deo Volente Farms.
2024 FEE: \$10,000 (U.S.)

The Downbytheseaside-sired colt was Pebble Beach, and with his success Daley found himself looking at more pacing yearlings each year and adding to the point where the stable is now almost equally split between pacers and trotters, with roughly 30 babies in training now from the 60 horses in the stable.

Ironically, not only did Daley look for more pacers but he actually started spending more as well. In prior years there were just a handful of six-figure types that Daley and ownership would come away with at the auctions but last year the numbers escalated on both the pacing and trotting side.

“I actually spent \$310,000 on a pacing filly,” Daley said, recalling last year’s Lexington Selected auction. “I got together with the partners and we decided to go up to \$250,000 on the filly. They were kind of surprised that I was the winning bidder.”

Daley was talking about the filly named Champagne Room, a daughter of See You At Peelers from the first crop of Papi Rob Hanover.

“I spent \$175,000 on a Papi Rob colt that I thought I would get for \$100k,” said Daley. “I’m glad I did.”

While the \$310,000 figure looks high, there is a positive spin on the bloodlines with the Daley’s purchase a half-sister to the dam of last year’s outstanding juvenile pacing filly Geocentric.

On the trotting side, Daley remains quite strong for the coming season and Sig Sauer is largely the reason.

“He won four of his five starts,” said Daley. “I probably shouldn’t have started him in Kentucky. He didn’t warm up that well.”

Sig Sauer made a break in his final start of his juvenile campaign and Daley stopped with him for the season. The colt earned \$279K during his brief campaign and was dominant in New Jersey.

A \$200,000 yearling purchase in the fall of 2022, Sig Sauer has the pedigree that could see him go very far as a sophomore and perhaps land Daley and his partners in the winner’s circle in major sophomore events this year. The dam’s side of the pedigree includes 2022 Hambletonian Oaks winner Fashion Schooner as well as her Breeders Crown-winning sister Broadway Donna.

Daley is extremely high on a pair of sophomore trotting fillies getting ready to return and he put Buy A Round just a notch above Miss I LA on his current list.

“We had seven 2-year-olds from the 24 we started with last year that made six figures,” said Daley.

Miss I LA just hit that plateau with a fourth-place finish in last year’s Kindergarten Series final at The Meadowlands. Miss I LA was also a Grand Circuit winner in competition at The Red Mile last fall.

Buy A Round, another by the top sire Walner, earned \$355K as the leading trotting filly in New Jersey. She too was a Grand Circuit winner at The Red Mile on a pair of occasions and was on the wire and just a neck short in third in her final juvenile start, the Breeders Crown last October. According to Daley, both sophomore fillies, as well as Sig Sauer, are pointing towards New Jersey Sire Stakes events at The Meadowlands in May.

On the pacing filly side, Daley feels that Miraculous Deo is good enough to have her day against the premier sophomore pacing group.

“She’s got tremendous gate speed and it wouldn’t surprise me if she captured a big race or two this season,” said Daley. “I’m not sure she could slug it out with Burke’s fillies [My Girl EJ, Pass Line] but I think she could be there with them.”

A \$172K winner as a 2-year-old, Miraculous Deo closed out her juvenile campaign with a solid third-place finish timed in 1:50 3/5 in the Three Diamonds at The Meadowlands, just a neck behind Breeders Crown winner My Girl EJ, the race’s runner-up.

Unlike some of his contemporaries, Daley takes a very measured approach with his 2-year-olds and conceded that his group only began to go two trips just recently.



CURTIS SALONICK

Noel Daley trainee Captain Albano won the 2023 Dan Patch Award for 2-year-old pacing colts.

“We’ve probably only been in around 2:30 while some other trainers have gone much faster,” said Daley. “I’m not going to be bringing them up to The Meadowlands for fast training trips.”

Instead, Daley will take his time as has been his custom and give his freshman a chance to mature naturally before they reach the big stage.

“I’ve got a lot of nice 2-year-old trotting fillies again this year,” said Daley. “I’ve got a few colts that I like a lot too.”

Daley ponied up for a spot in this year’s Mohawk Million and on Wednesday was one of the lucky finalists for a coveted spot in that September 21 race at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

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p, 2, 1:53.1h; 3, 1:47.1 (\$1,345,754)
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CONFESSIONS

By Keith Gisser

Show me the money

If the most popular topic of discussions in the sport these days are not environmental contamination or unpublished new Bute rules enforced by clueless bureaucrats, it is probably “how do we get people back to the tracks?”

Social media is awash with suggestions for new promotions, giveaways, entertainment and more. But here is a simple solution. Put more money in people’s pockets. This is a proven, successful strategy and it is easily implemented. How?

The most obvious way is reducing takeout. It is generally agreed that the best takeout rate to benefit both the track and the player is in the 10% ballpark. That allows the track to make money and because of increased churn, the track will make back most of that money. If I go to the track with \$100, I may well bet \$250 or more by the time the night is over (assuming I cash a few tickets). If players are getting back 90 cents on the dollar compared to 80 cents (Blended takeout – WPS and exotics is generally around 20% at most tracks, but higher at some), that clearly helps bettors wager more money. The most heinous move that separates players from their money is the high takeout on exotics because it’s harder to compute –you can see the WPS pools by horse, but generally you only see payoffs on exotics, with the total bet into the pool.

I’ve never been one to play Super Hi-Fives or any wager with more than four legs (or positions in a single race). But if tracks increased consolation pools and carried over somewhat less to the jackpot, there would be an immediate improvement in handle. And the big payoff is still going to be big enough to make the jackpot chaser happy.

Another concept -- reducing breakage (the rounding off of payoffs) to the penny seems insignificant, and I have mentioned before that I thought it was ridiculous . . . until I experienced it at Oak Grove and realized what a great idea it was. I wrote about this a couple years back. In a state that breaks to the nickel like New York, breaking to the penny would be more significant on lower payoffs (which are abound at half mile tracks) than on longshots, at least as a percentage of payoff.

In Ohio, where we break to the dime, the advantage to the player doubles. Let’s take a \$100 win wager at 2.0-1 as an example. In New York, that wager could actually return anywhere from \$300 to \$309, but would still only pay \$300. With penny breakage it could pay all the way up to \$309. In Ohio, the range is \$300-\$319 for the actual price, while only paying \$300, because

Ohio breaks to the dime. With penny breakage you would get the \$319 payoff. It’s not a huge margin, but over a 12-race card, it could add up.

Many tracks use guaranteed pools to drive handle, but these are not the panacea they appear to be. It is rare that a track misses its target and, unfortunately, often that means dragging post time even longer than we have become accustomed to on a race to race basis. One race at Delaware, Ohio last year dragged eight minutes past post and when the windows closed, they had miraculously made their guaranteed pool.

One easy place to put more money in players’ hands is with consolation pools on jackpot bets. We all want to hit the Powerball or Mega Millions, but most of us would still be happy with four of six numbers. That would pay \$500 on a \$2 ticket. On Jackpot wagers with bets of at least five legs, tracks could easily distribute a slightly smaller amount to the grand prize and pay more of a consolation if nobody hits the wager. Paying that smaller amount out to more players would increase play on the wager, increasing the actual payouts, but more importantly, increasing churn for the rest of the night.

Finally, we need more wagering promotions. Players Clubs are great, although the rewards tend to be minimal. Some wagering platforms offer wagering matches, an area that the sports betting sites excel. I receive offers daily for my Bet MGM sports account. And while I have no interest in a 33% odds boost on an NHL parlay (sorry Garnet), shoot me a wager match or odds boost on college basketball and I will make a play (Huge thank you to the St. Mary’s Gaels for covering last week in the West Coast Conference Championship. It’s a game I probably wouldn’t have played, except for that odds boost MGM gave me).

Now, suppose that with your Players Club card you could designate a wager for a 20% odds boost. Or if that technology doesn’t exist, let the track designate one or two races a night to provide the odds boost or a wager match – up to a certain limit of course. If my wager value doubles, I am A) more likely to bet the race or B) more likely to bet the maximum match on the race. We increase handle as the track is basically seeding (adding its own funds) to the pool. They may take a loss on that race, but that extra money comes back through the windows many times, increasing handle.

I’m not saying these are the only ways, or even that all of them will meet with universal approval. Just throwing them out there for thought. Who doesn’t like free money? That’s it for this month. Now go cash. If we could only cash with that 33% odds boost!

Slot owners drawn for Mohawk Million

Woodbine Entertainment Wednesday (March 20) held the slot draw for the 2024 Mohawk Million at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

A total of 21 groups or individuals submitted for a slot in this year’s event for two-year-old trotters. The slot fee for this year’s edition was lowered from \$100,000 to \$50,000.

With only 10 slots available, an open draw was held to determine this year’s slot owners. Below are the owners selected:

- Blair Corbeil
- Brad Grant
- Coyote Wynd Farms
- Diamond Creek
- Gino Toscani
- Hunterton Farms
- Noel Daley
- Pryde Stables Inc.
- Rankin & Venneri
- Tara Hills Stud

All 10 slot owners now have until June 3, 2024 to submit the remaining \$25,000 of the \$50,000 slot fee.

The 2024 Mohawk Million will be held on Saturday, September 21 at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

-release (Woodbine)



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Gingras lines up behind power for Borgata leg two at Yonkers

By Jay Bergman

The MGM Borgata series has taken its toll on many a pacing warrior over the years, but some are stronger and more enduring than others. That appears to be the case for This Is The Plan, a now 9-year-old son of Somebeachsomewhere that captured the rich final from post eight in his debut in the series in 2021 and is primed for action this Monday (March 25) in the second leg of the series at MGM Yonkers Raceway.

Hall of Famer Yannick Gingras has been fortunate to sit behind the Burke-trained gelding for much of his career including the 2021 Borgata final victory and is optimistic about his chances this week and going forward.

"I was very happy with the way he raced in his start last week," said Gingras of the second-place finish behind Covered Bridge in a division of the opening leg of the series. "I trained him before his qualifier in about [1]:55 or [1]:56 and he was good."

Gingras will sit behind This Is The Plan this Monday with the pair landing post one in the final of four \$50,000 divisions carded as race 10 on the program.

"I have to give all credit to the Burkes for getting horses to come back year after year at this level. He's not the first horse they've had that's come back – Foiled Again, Atochia, Clear Vision, they all made multiple appearances in this series," said Gingras.

A winner of \$3.1 million in his career, This Is The Plan's class and experience may be enough on Monday as well as the draw. This Is The Plan will meet another Borgata Final champion in the 2022 winner Funatthebeach N (post 5) in Monday's division.

Last year's Borgata Final victor Hellabalou drew post three in the first \$50,000 division on Monday (race 4) and Gingras is hoping for a quick turnaround in form following a disappointing fourth-place finish in the opener.

"They told me he scoped sick after that race," said Gingras. "I'm sure they'll get him turned around."

The Burke Brigade has a history of bounce-back performances and Hellabalou could return to form in this field of six.

Joining Hellabalou in the race is another horse that achieved success in last year's Borgata that also failed on the front end in the first round of action. Idealsomemagic A (post 6) started quickly and cut a wicked clip before fading on the final turn in the opening round. He'll return with George Brennan this week and could be much tighter for the effort.

Backstreet Shadow (post 5) makes his debut for trainer Travis Alexander. The veteran performer has made over \$1.5 million through his career with 44 lifetime wins to his credit.

Gingras will be up against it in the sixth race division of the MGM Borgata with Sumomentsomewhere A, an import from the Burke stable that has shown talent since arriving on these shores.

"I spoke to Mark Weaver [co-owner] a few months ago and he told me he really liked this horse," said Gingras. "I was very happy with the way he finished last week."

That effort was a second to Desperate Man in the opening leg, one of three first-leg winners that he'll have to meet again in this overcrowded division.

"There are three winners from the first leg in there, so we'll have to try to work out some kind of trip," said Gingras of his horse's chances from post six.

Linedrive Hanover's 1:51 2/5 mile was the fastest of four divisions in the opening leg and the 6-year-old by Betting Line drew inside his main rivals for Monday's second round, landing post two. Covered Bridge, a



CHRIS BROKATE

This Is The Plan won the 2021 MGM Borgata series and looks for a leg-two win on Monday.

1:52 3/5 winner, landed post three while Desperate Man, a 1:51 4/5 victor, will start from post four in this contentious division.

Gingras hopes an improved post and better trip may serve Semi Tough well in the ninth race \$50,000 MGM Borgata division.

"He really was much sharper in his three wins before the series than he felt last week," said Gingras of the fourth-place finish by Semi Tough in the series opening leg.

Semi Tough entered the series having won five of his first eight races of the year. "Maybe it was the outside post or sitting last with him," concluded Gingras, who will start from post two on Monday with the 8-year-old.

"I thought Stalbaum's horse [Rocknroll Runa A] raced very well in the first round," said Gingras of the 1:52 1/5 opening leg winner. Rocknroll Runa A drew post four with Mark MacDonald for Monday's contest.

Pleaseletmeknow (post 1) hails from the strong Travis Alexander stable. Two new additions to the series come in the form of Strengthfromabove (post 3), the first horse former Brett Pelling assistant Besim Odza has entered in the series, as well as Magic Four N (post 6), a horse now trained by Pelling after arriving from Christi Noble's stable in Ohio for the MGM Borgata.

The 12-race card at Yonkers Monday starts at 7:00 PM (EDT) and features a \$10,000 GTD Pick 5 in the fifth race.

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Anthony Napolitano seeks Game of Claims sweep at Pocono

By Derick Givner

The Game of Claims Finals are being contested at Pocono Downs Mohegan Pennsylvania from Saturday (March 23) to Monday (March 25) and driver Anthony Napolitano is hoping to take home a large chunk of the driver checks as he steers leg winners in all three contests.

Napolitano's best chance of success will come behind Nob Hill Flash in the \$20,000 tenth race on Monday's 15-race program that kicks off at 1:00 PM (EDT). Claimed in all three legs of the series, owner Karen Lynne Taylor and trainer Pierre Paradis won the shake for the 7-year-old following last week's 11-length romp in 1:52 2/5 for trainer Darren Taneyhill.

Unbeaten in three Game of Claim races, Nob Hill Flash will be making his second start for Paradis as he won leg two for the conditioner. While leg one saw the gelding win for the Cory Stratton barn, one constant through all three starts has been Napolitano in the bike.

"The mile that horse went [March 18] was really nice. I never asked him. That was a barn change and now he's back with Paradis, so I don't know if he'll be as sharp, but he's definitely a nice horse," said Napolitano, who added that the horse had a perfect trip in his first two wins of the series. "I'll definitely put him in play and see how he feels."

Nob Hill Flash, a career winner of just under \$180,000, starts from post one in the field of eight.

Two races earlier Napolitano will get a behind another multiple-leg winner in McNulty Z Tam for owner Jose Cervantes and trainer Lesley McDaniel in a \$15,000 final. In the second round the 8-year-old won by more than five lengths and he followed that up with a two-plus length score last Monday.

"He's got a little bit of class for that bunch. He used to be a semi-decent horse," said Napolitano. "The first week I wasn't expecting much but he wound up racing good. Then he won and won again."

Starting from post six and with no apparent early speed, Napolitano may be at the mercy of the pace scenario, as could three-leg winner Rock King Deo (post four).

"I think he's got a shot. They got him sharp and he'll be there if it pans out," concluded Napolitano

Saturday's Game of Claims drive for Napolitano comes behind 12-1 morning-line long-shot The Best Tyme Ever in a \$35,000 final scheduled as race 10 of 14 on the afternoon card. The Mike

Watson trainee won leg two of the series in 1:52 2/5 with Napolitano but was used hard while making two moves to a 54 4/5 half last weekend before fading to fifth for the driver.

"He won't go on the front but I moved him back [to the lead] because the horse [Jason] Bartlett had in the race, I drove the weekend before and he was running off with me and Bartlett was already going to the whip," said Napolitano on his race tactics from March 16. "I'm going to try to trip him out this week.

No matter how hard he is pulling I'm going to stay in whatever spot I land in because he's just no good on the front unless they go really slow.

"With some of these series races or bigger races at smaller tracks, these guys think it is the Hambletonian and they all want to leave out of there, so it could be a dog fight to the half. I don't know how it will work out but if everyone takes a seat and I get a good trip with mine, he definitely has the potential to win."

Owned by Piotrow Racing LLC, the 6-year-old has a strong record in 2024 with five wins in nine starts. He'll start from post five on Saturday.



Nob Hill Flash has won all three legs of his Game of Claims series starts.

HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

Pointing to an article on craigslist.com, Ohio Harness Horseman's Association Executive Director Renee Mancino wrote on Facebook that MGM Northfield is "floating the potential sale of their operating rights". Mancino speculated that the company could be looking to raise capital as MGM Yonkers perhaps nears approval for a casino license. She also mentioned many possible candidates to take over at Northfield. You can read the post [here](#).

In adjacent news, Westfair Business Journal reported on March 18 that MGM has asked for a zoning change in preparation for the possible award of a full casino license at its Yonkers Raceway location. There isn't much if anything about the track in the article

but plenty on what a new casino with table games and more could look like. That story is available [here](#).

The Paulick Report had a piece by Ray Paulick on Monday stating that an amendment has been submitted in Kentucky that would establish a reserve account of up to \$900,000 should any Standardbred track in the state host an international harness racing event offering at least \$5 million in purses and awards. That would seemingly open the door for The Red Mile or another Kentucky track to host the Breeders Crown in the future. Certainly interesting news. You can read the full story [here](#).

Conrad ready for Harrah's Hoosier Park's Friday night lights

By Ken Weingartner

Carson Conrad has driven at Harrah's Hoosier Park in the past, but Friday will be a little different for the 19-year-old. The fifth-generation horseman will compete at the central Indiana oval for the first time on opening night.

"It's awesome," said Conrad, an Indianapolis native who has four drives on Friday's 15-race card at Hoosier Park. "Obviously, I'm excited because I've been waiting all winter. It's different driving on the first night than just coming in during the middle of the year. A bunch of people are going to be watching, but you can't let that affect you. You just have to pay attention and do your thing.

"I'm driving with some great drivers; we're going to be back all together again and get started up."

Conrad, the son of trainer-driver Charlie Conrad, notched four of his 25 wins in 2023 at Hoosier Park. He had 13 victories at the Indiana fairs — good for a top 10 finish among drivers on the circuit — and added eight triumphs competing in Kentucky. His horses hit the board in 88 of his 242 starts and earned \$214,808.

In 2022, Conrad drove 121 times, had five wins, and \$75,842 in purses. He began his career in 2021, racing 13 times and getting his first win at the Fayette County Fairgrounds in Connorsville.

"I've never even had a hint of doing anything else," Conrad said about working with the horses. "To see myself improve in the three years of driving, and the amount of success I had last year, has been amazing. I was lucky to sit behind some really good horses last year, at least they're good in my eyes, and it seemed I was always in the right spot at the right time to make the right move.

"My dad has helped me learn a lot of patience. Patience is a big key in this game. If you don't have patience, if you get over antsy, it doesn't go so well. I've learned to feel the race and when to make my moves."

Conrad enjoys racing at the fairs and hopes to participate on the circuit even more in 2024.

"I love the fairs," he said. "I guess it goes back to when I was young, I was at every county fair with my dad. It brings back good memories. And I like the people I'm around, I like driving with everybody at the fairs.

"Hopefully, I can drive at the fairs a little more this year. That's where you start. You start doing good at the fairs and you move your way up."

Conrad's four drives on Friday at Hoosier Park include sitting behind 3-year-old male pacers Hereisthedesire and Rockin Cosette in separate \$15,000 divisions of the Jarrod Duncan Memorial and with 3-year-old female pacer Rockinwithdave in a \$15,000 division of the Rosie Harness Memorial. The races are conditioned events for Indiana-sired horses.

Rockinwithdave won six times at the fairs last season and finished second in the Governor's Cup Series championship. Hereisthedesire and Rockin Cosette also won multiple races on the fair circuit. All three are trained by Conrad's father.

"Hereisthedesire is just a shifty horse," Conrad said. "He can do everything. He can leave, he can duck. He can do it on the front, he can do it from behind. I've never had a horse with this much raw speed before. He just has to put his mind to it.

"I liked Rockin Cosette a lot at 2 and he never got rolling, and when he did get rolling, the next start he would draw bad. I like him even more this year. He trained down awesome and qualified really good. I think he has the potential to be a good horse for us, and another horse for me to learn from and be successful with.

"Rockinwithdave had some issues about halfway through the year and went off her winning ways, but she still had a good year. I think she is going to learn a bunch in her first few starts this year."

In addition to working with his dad and younger brother Carder with their



DEAN GILLETTE

19-year-old driver Carson Conrad won 25 races during 2023.

own eight-horse stable, Conrad helps at the stable of Amy and Kyle Husted.

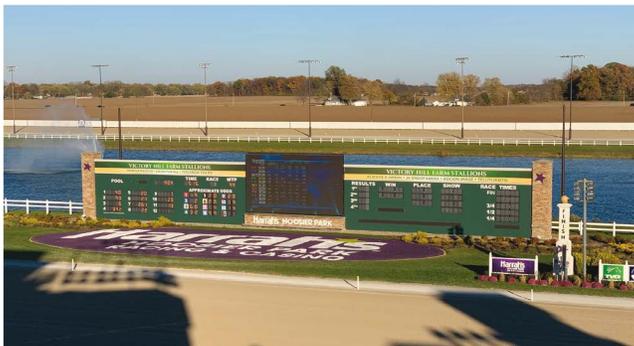
"I can't put into words how excited I am for this year," Conrad said. "Me and my dad and my brother have an amazing group of horses, I think. I want to be as busy. I don't want to lose any ground. I'll be all right if these horses are as good as I think they are."

Racing begins at 6:15 p.m. (EDT) on Friday at Hoosier Park.



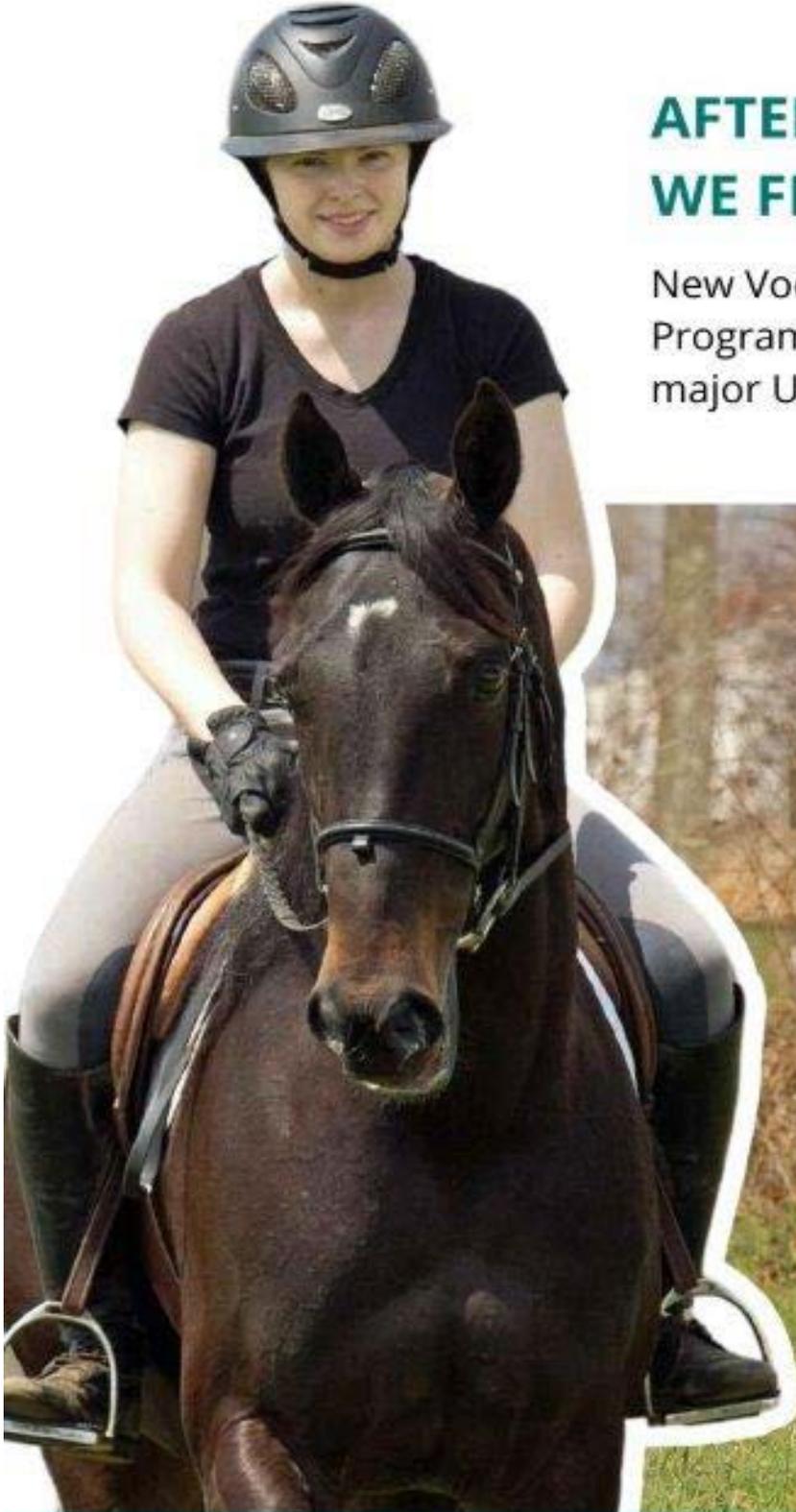
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BY DERICK GIWNER

At 26 years old, Tyler Miller is one of many “young gun” drivers and trainers currently competing in harness racing. From a family that is rich in Standardbred history, Miller has been steadily improving his numbers across the board since deciding to compete full-time in 2021.

A regular at Freehold, The Meadowlands and Rosecroft, Miller took time out of his schedule to chat about his journey, what the future may hold and the involvement of young people in the sport. Enjoy!

DRIVER TYLER MILLER

How did you get started in harness racing?

I started going to the track to watch races that my dad was in and then helping my parents out with their stable around freshman year of high school. The rest is history.

Your dad Andy is a prominent driver and mom Julie is a top trainer. What have you learned from each along the way?

From my mom it was more of the training side and how to prepare a horse so they are fit for the race. From my dad it was more how to take that fit horse and put it in the best spot to have an opportunity to succeed.

Do you think having those connections helped your career kick start more quickly?

The connections definitely helped, but I don't know if it helped from a quickness standpoint. I think it helped more people know who I was and made them want to see what I can do. It definitely opened a door and allowed me to put a foot in and walk through it.

Was there ever a chance you wouldn't become a driver?

Once I started working around the horses, I kind of knew that is what I wanted to do and being a driver was kind of my goal. I tried other opportunities to make sure that was what I wanted to do. I went to Ryder University and got a Bachelor's degree in business management. I sort of got out of the business; well, you never really get out of it when you're in my family, but I got away from the horses for a couple of years and really lived the college lifestyle to see if a corporate job was for me, and it definitely was not.

Your first win came in 2018 and since then your win total and earnings have grown each year. Are you happy with the progression?

I'd say I'm happy with it. It is definitely a grind and a slow methodical process, but if you just keep at it and never give up, the strong survive through everything.

Do you think you are a better driver today than let's say a year or two ago?

Almost definitely; just the comfortability and I'm able to get more out of a horse than I was when I first started. Mostly though it is the confidence and comfortability.

Is confidence that important?

Oh yeah. You have to have confidence in your horse and think your horse can do the best for you.



JAMES LISA/LISA PHOTO

Tyler Miller won 188 races in 2023 and is on pace to eclipse that total in 2024.

What is your favorite track to race at? Why?

To me it is The Meadowlands. It is such a great track and venue. They do such a great job there. Jeff [Gural] and Jason [Settlemoir], they put on a great product, and it isn't just the current racing but the history of that place on both sides. It is just amazing to look up and be a part of probably the best track in the country.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of harness racing?

Just taking time and relaxing with my family and enjoying life a little bit with the people who make life worth it. When you race almost every day you kind of use the days off to recover and be around the people who mean the most in your life.

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

I've watched almost every single episode of Law & Order Special Victims Unit and a couple of the other ones.

What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

The first word that comes to mind is resilient, because you have to be resilient to be in this business. You definitely get knocked down more times than you get picked up. You lose more than you win, so to be able to use that as fuel to win as much as you can is something that is great about the sport.

What is the best advice you've ever gotten about harness racing?

If you are patient and show up when you're asked to, things will come your way. Be patient, show up and work hard are the three key ingredients.

Along those lines, right now you are currently driving at Rosecroft, Meadowlands and Freehold. Is that what you mean by showing up?

I'm putting a lot of miles on the truck, that's for sure.

What made you decide to go to Rosecroft regularly?

One of the trainers I drove for and had success for [Maria Alravez] in New Jersey started racing down there and they asked me if I would go down and drive their horses.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

What was your best moment in harness racing?

One of the coolest moments was a year or two ago. It was my mom's birthday and I won her 2,000th training win, and I had four or five wins that day.

Which is the best horse you've ever driven?

One of the horses I drove maybe a few years ago was Sandbetweenmytoes for Jim Campbell. He had won the Breeders Crown the year before. It was when a lot of the [regular drivers] were gone and I got to sit behind him and I won at the Meadowlands in 1:48 3/5, which is my fastest mile mark. It was so cool to sit behind a horse of that caliber. On the trotting side, there was a horse named Angel Nation who I really loved to sit behind. We bought him privately and he won three or four in a row in Pennsylvania and was in the Vincennes race on Hambletonian Day. Just to be able to drive on that day goes into the 'best moments' category. With the history of harness racing on Hambletonian Day, just to be in the program is a feat in its own.



LISA PHOTO

Tyler Miller ranked Angel Nation as one of his all-time favorite horses to drive.

As a younger person, how can harness racing attract that audience?

To be able to keep the attention of younger people we need to have more action. Something like prop bets or things like that.

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

Just to be able to get younger interest into the sport. Over the last couple of years I do think there has been more youth interest. A couple of years ago there wasn't any young drivers around and now there are probably five to 10 people under 30 who have a steady driving career.

How do you view the future of harness racing?

I hope it is around for my sake and all of the other young people in the business. You can look at from both sides, that it is a dying business and we need to find ways to help it survive for another 50 to 100 years or you can look at it from where a program like PA [Pennsylvania] can get weaker but the Midwest is flourishing. Ohio and Kentucky have really stepped up the game in comparison to the east coast with the money that is being race for. When you see what is going on in the Midwest it makes you think this sport can survive for 50-plus years.

What does a day in the life of Tyler Miller look like?

I wake up and head to my parents stable to help them train whatever is on tap that day; whether it is babies, or 3-year-old or just racehorses. Then I grab lunch and relax a little before going to a racetrack somewhere, whether it is Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania or New York.

Looking at it from now, what is the perfect outcome for your career?

The goal for my career is to be one of those top Hall of Famers who travel on the Grand Circuit and drive the best horses in the country. I'd love to be a part of that and hopefully win some of those big races along the way. That would be pretty cool in my book.

So unlike some young drivers who seem content to race at home for good overnight purses, you want more?

They are content racing where they are at and that is fine too, but I know I want to drive the best horses I possibly can.

You are the eighth Miller I've interviewed for this series, many who are your relatives. Does that really speak to this sport as a family affair?

I think so, especially in my family and the Ohio Millers, it really speaks to the family affair of the business. Once you kind of get the bug you can't seem to get rid of it. I love doing this. To be able to not only make a career of this for myself but then to be able to share it with my family and everyone around us, it is just great.

Time for the stretch drive...

Best Horse you ever saw: I might be biased here but Lucky Jim. He just loved to race. He knew when it was time to go and he loved to race.

Lasix – Yes or No: I believe it helps horses.

Trotters or Pacers: I prefer trotters. I love sitting behind any horse I can but there is nothing better than a nice trotter, just the way they move and the power is just a feat of its own in the sport.

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McCarthy looks to keep clicking with Incaseyouidntknow in Blue Chip Matchmaker

By Ken Weingartner

Andy McCarthy enjoyed success with Incaseyouidntknow in last year's Blue Chip Matchmaker Series for older female pacers at MGM Yonkers Raceway and the tandem began this season's event on the right foot with a win in the opening round a week ago.



MIKE LIZZI

Incaseyouidntknow and driver Andrew McCarthy.

Incaseyouidntknow and McCarthy have teamed up for six starts in the series dating back to last year and posted two wins, a second, and two thirds. Their only time outside the top three came in the 2023 final when they started from post seven and finished sixth.

Last week, Incaseyouidntknow won the third of three Matchmaker divisions by a nose over Intothemysticmoon in 1:53 3/5. Her time was the second fastest of the three splits, sandwiched between Lit De Rose's 1:53 2/5 nose triumph over Delitfulcatherin N and Tony's Mom's 1:53 4/5 one-length victory over Treacherous Penny.

"She was really good," McCarthy said about Incaseyouidntknow, a 6-year-old daughter of Always B Miki-In Deep Thought owned by Maryland's James Magno and Joseph Fonte. "I think she's a really good mare for that series. It looks like the mile she put in (last week) was as good as any of them. She definitely fits."

Incaseyouidntknow won 14 of 38 races last year and earned \$264,608 while racing primarily at Yonkers, Harrah's Philadelphia, Bally's Dover, and Harrington Raceway. For her career, she has 31 victories in 83 starts and \$519,569 in purses.

On Friday, Incaseyouidntknow will compete in the first of three \$40,000 second-round Matchmaker divisions. She will leave from post one in a field of six and is the 2-1 morning-line favorite. She faced three of her Friday rivals — Intothemysticmoon, Coachellabound N, and Avf Claire — in last week's opener. The remaining two mares, Treacherous Penny and Karma Seelster, were second and third, respectively, behind Tony's Mom last week.

"It looks like a pretty good spot this week," McCarthy said. "She seems to like Yonkers. She is one of those mares that doesn't mind being on the outside, which is usually tough on a half-mile track. She does have a bit of gate speed if I can tell her to get out of there, but she doesn't mind first-over. I think her versatility is what makes her good for that series and that track."

Incaseyouidntknow, who is stabled with New York-based trainer Cory Stratton for the Matchmaker and with Delaware's Les Givens for her other Mid-Atlantic engagements, had been driven by McCarthy only twice in her previous 26 races prior to last week.

"It will probably take me a start or two just to get in tune with her again," McCarthy said. "She is kind of a lazy mare, so it's pretty much all timing with her. She will go forward, it's just a matter of getting her to do it when you want her to do it. Hopefully, we can continue to get along together."

The Blue Chip Matchmaker features five preliminary rounds where horses receive 50 points for winning, 25 for second, 12 for third, eight for fourth, and five for fifth. In addition, all starters in each round receive 25 points. The top-eight horses at the completion of the prelims are eligible for the \$125,000-added final on April 22.

"It's a long series," McCarthy said. "If you can do well enough where you don't have to go every week, it probably makes a big difference by the time the final comes around."

Dougs Babe A, who finished third behind Incaseyouidntknow and Intothemysticmoon last week, is the 8-5 favorite in Friday's second division, with Dexter Dunn in the sulky for trainer Nifty Norman. Lit De Rose, trained and driven by Pat Lachance, is the 6-5 favorite in the third group.

Racing begins at 7 p.m. (EDT) at Yonkers.

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 and value plays. 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, MARCH 21

RACE 6

(5) LEXUS ANGEL was ready to roll last week coming off a decent debut effort. She got hammered at the windows and had no trouble converting; call to repeat.

-Garnet Barnsdale



WOODBINE
MOHAWK PARK

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

RACE 9

(10) PRIMO PADRE has never been in this cheap at The Meadows and the last time he raced a class higher than this the result was a five-length victory. He can overcome the bad post.

-Derick Gwerner



RACE 11

(4) LUCKY ARTIST A woke up with last week's dropdown and was second best. Landing a similar spot tonight she should be tight enough to prevail.

-Matt Rose



SATURDAY, MARCH 23

RACE 6

(5) BOILER MAKER displayed some positives signs when he took to the rim and stayed on rather well late in the mile. Six-year-old is capable of a big mile and dropping in for a tag tonight I expect we'll see it.

-Gwerner



FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis [Thursday](#) [Friday](#) [Saturday](#)

Meadowlands Analysis [Friday](#) [Saturday](#)

Yonkers Analysis [Thursday](#) [Friday](#)

DHP PPS

HARNESS EYE PPS

TRACKMASTER PPS

FREE PPS

INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNES

NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

TOURNAMENT TIME AT THE MEADOWLANDS

This weekend, patrons at The Meadowlands will be in a tournament tizzy, as The Big M brings back a competition that's an old favorite and offers another that's as popular as any in all of American sports.

In fact, you could call The Big M "Tournament Central".

After a brief hiatus, The Meadowlands is bringing back a live money handicapping contest on Saturday (March 23) night.

There is no entry fee (\$100 live money bankroll required) for players and the prize pool is a guaranteed \$5,000, which will be fully funded by The Big M. The night of the contest, players must register/check-in at the Clubhouse Lobby by 6:20 p.m., and a \$100 betting card must be purchased to participate, as this is a live money/wagering contest.

The contest format:

- Contestants must bet a minimum of 10 Meadowlands races
- \$10 minimum bet per race; no maximum bet
- Win, Place, Show and/or Exacta wagers only
- One horse per race
- Unlimited entries allowed per person
- Players keep all pari-mutuel winnings

For complete contest rules and regulations, go [here](#).

In addition, harness racing handicappers will no doubt consider themselves college basketball experts for the next few weeks, when the FanDuel Sportsbook will be buzzing with action on the NCAA Men's College Basketball Tournament.

-edited release (Meadowlands)

NO RACING AT WOODBINE MOHAWK PARK NEXT WEEK

Woodbine Mohawk Park is closed from March 24 to March 29. Training and racing resume on Saturday, March 30. There will be an early post time on Saturday evening of 6:10 p.m.

HARRAH'S HOOSIER PARK'S 2024 LIVE RACING SEASON BEGINS FRIDAY

Harrah's Hoosier Park Racing & Casino will kick off its 31st season of live harness racing on Friday, March 22 with a 15-race card. A total of 140 horses have been entered for the season opener which gets underway with a first post of 6:15pm.

Harrah's Hoosier Park will welcome fans back to the track with Fan Appreciation Days – a variety of giveaways, food and drink specials, and promotions on Friday, March 22 and Saturday, March 23.

[READ MORE](#)

DESPERATE MAN NOW A MILLIONAIRE AFTER BORGATA SERIES TRIUMPH

Desperate Man, the 2021 Horse of the Year in Canada, became a millionaire in U.S. dollars after taking the first of four \$50,000 flights of the opening leg of the MGM Borgata Pacing Series for older horses and geldings on Monday night (March 18) at MGM Yonkers Raceway. Also collecting victories were Rocknroll Runa A, Covered Bridge and Linedrive Hanover.

[READ MORE](#)

\$5,006 PICK-5 CARRYOVER SATURDAY AT MGM NORTHFIELD PARK

The Pick-5 sequence went unsolved on Wednesday night (Mar. 20), spiraling a \$5,006 carryover into the Saturday night (Mar. 23) program.

The \$1 wager beginning in race six will feature an estimated pool of \$40,000 and as always sports the player friendly 14% takeout.

Post time for the 15-race program on Saturday is 6 p.m.

-edited release (Northfield)

PAPER HEART WINS DONNA DUNN MEMORIAL FINAL AT THE MEADOWS

Paper Heart again enjoyed escort service from GD Cool Otoole and again kicked by her in the lane to capture the \$16,800 final of the Donna Dunn Memorial Pace for 3- and 4-year-old fillies and mares Wednesday at Hollywood Casino at The Meadows.

In last week's preliminary leg, Paper Heart stalked GD Cool Otoole

from the pocket and blew by late to score in a swift 1:53 3/5. On Wednesday, the fractions were slower but the results the same as Paper Heart drew off for Dave Palone to triumph in 1:55 2/5. Keen Cathy was a ground-saving second, 3 lengths back, with 19-1 long shot Gamine third.

Jason Shaw trains Paper Heart, a 3-year-old daughter of Heston Blue Chip-Paper Cut who has won five of her last six starts, and owns with Fortunate One LLC and Cory Kreiser.

Wednesday's card also featured the \$19,200 Filly & Mare Open Handicap Pace, which saw Alexa Skye and Always Gonna B You duel for the early lead. After Alexa Skye won that skirmish, she sprinted away from the field late to down Always Gonna B You by 6-1/2 lengths in a sharp 1:51 1/5. Fighting Evil completed the ticket.

Palone piloted the 7-year-old daughter of Somebeachsomewhere-Pirouette Hanover, who soared over \$500,000 in career earnings, for trainer Virgil Morgan, Jr. and owners Let It Ride Stables Inc. and Odds On Racing.

-edited release (Evan Pattak for MSOA)

HHYF TRAVEL SEASON SOON TO BEGIN

With spring flowers blooming, the Harness Horse Youth Foundation (HHYF) is making final preparations for their busy summer travel schedule which begins officially at Shenandoah Downs on April 21.

"Actually we have already started our 2024 efforts to promote and educate about the industry. Several 4-H groups in New Jersey have visited Freehold Raceway as well as me doing a few presentations to horse leaders," explained Ellen Taylor HHYF Executive Director. "At HHYF, we are focused on our mission - 2024 is business as usual. The feeling of helping a young person experience harness racing for the first time is unmatched!"

Below is the complete HHYF itinerary to date:

Programs Requiring Preregistration

To register and for further information, use this link: <https://hhyf.org/summer-programs/>

April 21: Shenandoah Downs, Woodstock VA

June 21: Darke County Fairgrounds, Greenville OH

June 24: DeLong Stable, Anderson IN

June 25 – 29: Leadership Program, Crimmon Lane Farm, Anderson IN

July 10: Oak Grove Racing, Oak Grove KY

July 15: The Red Mile, Lexington KY

July 24, 25: Goshen Historic Track, Goshen NY

July 30, 31: Gaitway Farm, Manalapan NJ

Open To The Public Events

March 20 – 24: American Youth Horse Council Symposium, Fort Worth TX

March 29 – 31: Indiana Equine Roundup, Cloverdale IN

April 11 – 14: Equine Affair, Columbus OH

April 27: Life & Times of the Great Dan Patch Bday Celebration, Oxford IN

July 12 – 14: BreyerFest, Lexington KY

July 27: American Dream, East Rutherford NJ

August 3: Hambletonian, East Rutherford NJ

October 23 – 26: National FFA Convention, Indianapolis IN

Private Events

Prairie Crossing Elementary School, Oxford IN

Hearts & Horseshoes Fair Winds Farm Tour, Cream Ridge NJ

Westfield Washington School Field Trip, Anderson IN

Harrison County Ag Day Field Trip, Corydon IN

HHYF continues to seek contributions to fund this year's events but deeply appreciates those who have already donated including Fair Winds Farm, Standardbred Breeders of PA, US Trotting Association, Lindy Farms/AFF, Meadows Standardbred Owners Association, VA Harness Horsemen's Association, Cameo Hills LTD, Fair Island Farm, Barely Able Stable, Bluebird Meadows, Hambletonian Society, Thompson Family Foundation, Southern Oaks Training Center as well as many individuals.

-release (HHYF)

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