

**THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2024**

# HAMBLETONIAN BOUND!



**5 NIGHTS A WEEK**

**WOODBINE RACING**  
STANDARD BRED

**\$100,000 GUARANTEED EARLY PICK 5**

Racing Form

**FREE DIGITAL PPs EVERY THURSDAY ON DRF.COM**



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Jay Bergman: What a difference a year makes**

**Jessica Hallett: The gift that keeps on giving**

**Unbeaten Howlenthedhills rolls into Yonkers for Messenger eliminations**

**Derick Giwner: HorsePlay**

**Roger Huston to call the June 28 Triple Crown card at Yonkers**

**'Duke' sets his sights on the first leg of the Triple Crown in Yonkers Trot**

**Best Bets & Analysis**

**Nijinsky heads initial Hambletonian/Breeders Crown Top 10 poll**

**Graduate series continues at The Big M**

**Comments? Questions? Email the Editor [DGiwner@DRF.com](mailto:DGiwner@DRF.com)**



## EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner

[@harnesseveguy](https://twitter.com/harnesseveguy)

We are currently just six weeks away from crowning the 99th Hambletonian champion.

On the morning of June 15, the realistic list of Hambletonian contenders included the near-perfect Karl in a class by himself followed by a group of millionaire T C I and Daiquiri Hanover, who missed by a half-length to the former in his 2024 debut, maybe the unbeaten-in-2023 Security Protected, and the speedy Dame Good Time, among a few others. Following a powerful 1:51 3/5 victory in the Goodtimes at Woodbine Mohawk Park by Highland Kismet, it was crystal clear that Karl and friends have company at the top of the heap.

A lightly-raced son of Father Patrick that never had a charted line as a 2-year-old, Highland Kismet has seemingly climbed at impossible

mountain, going from a non-winners-of-1 victory in on May 2 in his career debut to stakes winner and major Hambletonian contender as the sun set on June 15.

Keeping in mind that a 1:51 3/5 win at Woodbine Mohawk Park is somewhat equivalent to a sub 1:51 mile at The Meadowlands, and that Karl is the fastest 3-year-old trotter of the year at 1:51 over that surface, Highland Kismet is certainly in the Hambletonian conversation, but where did that mile come from?

"We kind of thought he had it in him but it is pretty early in his career to get it exposed. Once I saw the half in 55 I figured we'd get to see what he is made of tonight," said Mark Etsell, who trains the colt for Highland Thoroughbred Farm.

Perhaps even more impressive than the final time was the manner in which Highland Kismet won the Goodtimes. He overcame adversity on the first turn when forced to float out wide, settled down nicely in fourth before uncorking a burst of speed to make the top at the half in 55 3/5, and

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)

## ADIOS PACE BANKROLL BUILDER

**BET \$50, GET \$5**

on select stakes dates in June & July at The Meadows

**Find Out More**

**DRF Bets**

*Adios*  
PACE FOR THE ORCHIDS  
2024

Sponsored by



Follow

**DRF Harness**



**DRF Bets**



# MEADOWLANDS PICKAPALOOZA

**6% REBATE ON  
MEDOWLANDS RACING**



**Learn More**



shrugged off a serious pocket-pulling challenge from Private Access at three-quarters before drawing clear like a composed aged warrior.

With the Goodtimes performance under his belt, Highland Kismet is firmly earmarked for a trip to The Meadowlands in July and hopefully on the first Saturday in August for The Hambletonian.

"We have a mental vision," said Etsell when asked about the upcoming scheduled for his colt. "I don't know if he'll get a start [at Mohawk] or not but the next stake will be the [Stanley] Dancer on July 13 at The Meadowlands."

The Hambletonian eliminations follow two weeks later and Etsell admitted that being in New Jersey for the trotting classic has been on his mind long before he ever set eyes upon Highland Kismet.

"We are always Hambo dreamin'. I have a whiteboard at home and we put on it about four years ago 'a Hambo winner' and it is still there. Maybe it should've said a Hambo participant," said Etsell. "Being in the trotting business that would be a feather in my cap just to have a horse good enough to get there. That's a ways off yet. We'll see what tomorrow brings."



DERICK GIWNER

**Trainer Mark Etsell hopes to make his first career start in the Hambletonian this year.**

and geldings will drop time as they prepare for the Hambletonian, and of course a filly could elect to take a shot versus the boys, though that seems unlikely this year. The possibility also exists that competition could be scared away if a colt like Karl goes out and trots a sub 1:50 mile as he prepares for his date with Hambletonian destiny.

The bottom line is that the Hambletonian is a difficult race to win. Everyone is aiming for it if they have a horse of quality. When it was mentioned to driver Yannick Gingras that his charge Karl would have competition now, he uttered, "I knew it wasn't going to be easy and that there would be others." Gingras would know about how hard it is to win this race as he has been chasing a win for the last 10 years. Will that streak come to an end on August 3 or will Highland Kismet be a horse of destiny?

By definition, Kismet is when unknown forces cause something to happen as if they were meant to be. Maybe Highland Kismet is meant to be a Hambletonian winner . . . or maybe it is Gingras' turn . . . or maybe not. The answer is just six weeks away.

### NA Cup Night News and notes

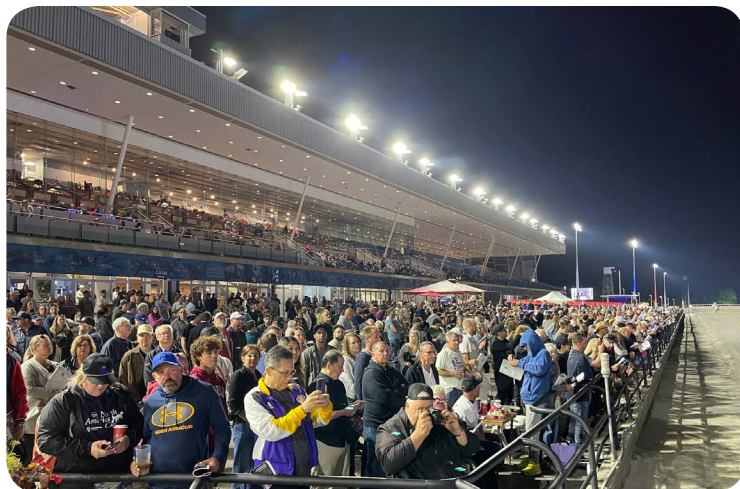
The vibe was great on North America Cup night at Woodbine Mohawk Park. An admission fee was removed this year and the crowd was as good as I've seen on that card in a long time. The card started at 6:30 PM and I didn't notice a thinning of people until about 11 PM after the NA Cup was contested in race 11. Sources tell me that on-track handle was also up. In a world where most harness tracks make 3% on an off-track bet and closer to 20% on an on-track wager, even a \$20,000 bump in live handle is worth well over \$100,000 in simulcast play.

While it has become the norm to see the top U.S. drivers/trainers win the majority of stakes races, whether stateside or in Canada, North America Cup night was a nice change of pace. Four of the six stakes winners

The 68-year-old Etsell, who is just shy of 900 training wins according to Standardbred Canada's TrackIT, has been around the sport for five decades and knows that one race hardly makes a champion. He admits the speed is there but also has the experience to realize that others are more seasoned.

"They have so much more experience than us and they've already been those big miles. Our horse is only five starts in, so he's green as grass, but he gives a really nice effort. All we can do is play it day by day."

Much can change over the next six weeks. Many of the 104 eligible colts



DERICK GIWNER

**The Mohawk crowd remained strong through Race 11 on June 15.**

were trained/driven by Canadian regulars and the top three horses in the NA Cup were all from north of the border.

James MacDonald, two-time defending O'Brien Award winner for best driver in Canada, won two of the six stakes on the NA Cup card, one day after winning a pair of Graduate races at The Meadowlands. That led to the thought: Could a Canadian driver win the Dan Patch award as the top driver from the United States Harness Writers Association?

"I guess it is possible, you just have to win the right races at the right time. Hopefully that will be me this year or another Canadian down the road," said MacDonald. "I wouldn't rule it out. There are great drivers from all around the world. Dexter [Dunn], Andy and Todd [McCarthy] come from New Zealand and Australia, and there have always been great Canadian drivers, like my brother Mark [MacDonald], Jody [Jamieson], and the list goes on and on."

Of course winning a Dan Patch would require more trips to the U.S. to drive on the Grand Circuit. While James MacDonald isn't looking to relocate, he wouldn't mind more stakes work.

"I would love to go down and drive lots but I'm pretty happy with my home in Canada. My son is here and my family is here. So never a permanent move, but more of me on the Grand Circuit wouldn't be so bad," said MacDonald.

Saturday was also a huge night for the Canadian-based trainer Anthony Beaton. Not only did his horses finish first (Nijinsky) and fifth (Legendary Hanover) in the North America Cup but he also won the Mohawk Gold Cup with Linedrive Hanover. The win by Nijinsky was truly a moment of redemption for the soft-spoken Beaton, who was sent to the sidelines from October 2023 until February 2024 on allegations of animal cruelty.

"This is amazing," said Beaton after the NA Cup win. "Excuse my language but it was a crock of shit we had to go through. They should probably do things more proper than that. It is what it is and we got through it. We have a great supporting cast and we're standing here now."

"I told Casie [Coleman], 'if you don't mess these horses up we'll be in the North America Cup winner's circle'"



NEW IMAGE MEDIA

**Trainer Anthony Beaton lifts the North America Cup trophy after watching his Nijinsky win the C\$1 million race.**

# IT ALL CIRCLES BACK TO **HARRISBURG!**



## **\$1M NORTH AMERICA CUP WINNER NIJINSKY**

Nijinsky was sold in utero at the 2020 Harrisburg Mixed Sale (at Timonium), with his in-foal dam Pirouette Hanover consigned by Preferred Equine Marketing, agent for Jeffrey Snyder. She was purchased by Fred Hertrich's All-American Harnessbreds, who then sold Nijinsky as a yearling at the 2022 Harrisburg Yearling Sale. This is where champions are bought and sold.



**Standardbred Horse  
Sales Company**

*The one and only*  
**HARRISBURG**

Yearlings Nov. 4-6 | Mixed Nov. 7-8 | (717) 637-8931 | [theblackbook.com](http://theblackbook.com)

Race Photo: New Image Media



# IT ALL CIRCLES BACK TO **HARRISBURG!**



## **\$305K ROSES ARE RED WINNER TWIN B JOE FRESH**

Twin B Joe Fresh was sold in utero at the 2019 Harrisburg Mixed Sale, with her in-foal dam Fresh Breeze consigned by Preferred Equine Marketing, agent for Brittany Farms. She was purchased by Rob & Tammy McNiven's Twinbrook Farms, who then sold Twin B Joe Fresh as a yearling at the 2021 Harrisburg Yearling Sale. This is where champions are bought and sold.



**Standardbred Horse  
Sales Company**

*The one and only*  
**HARRISBURG**

Yearlings Nov. 4-6 | Mixed Nov. 7-8 | (717) 637-8931 | [theblackbook.com](http://theblackbook.com)

Race Photo: New Image Media



## JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman ✕ [BergmanJay](#)

### *What a difference a year makes*

The six to seven months between the Breeders Crown and meaningful stakes races for 3-year-olds is time spent in search of the unknown. For those who witnessed last year's final stakes races, it is sometimes difficult to fathom how much different horses can perform in less than a year's time and that horses not the measure of last year's superstars can arise from seemingly nowhere to championship level.

The stellar stakes program on June 15 from Woodbine Mohawk Park was a fitting example to the changes that go on behind the scenes but come out in full view with big money riding as horses, drivers and trainers put it all on the line for the fans in attendance and the bettors worldwide.

It was a captivating night of racing to say the least and perhaps fitting that the Woodbine Mohawk Park production was virtually flawless, covering all sides of the action with information for racing fans and bettors alike. The on-air talent was both entertaining and perceptive up to every piece of equipment (and some that didn't exist) while not overbearing despite plenty of time needed to fill between races.

The stars of course were on the track and for much of the night there was a different feeling in the air. Notably to those who watch Meadowlands programs on a regular basis, there was a sense that the margins for error narrowed quite a bit and there was little room literally to find a seam to race even when a driver looked to be choking his horse down. Gone, at least on this memorable occasion, was friendly tucks or easy re-moves. Despite the lack of a hubrail, drivers on the lead managed to keep a straight line for an entire stretch and those unlucky to have had the "perfect trip" in the pocket on 364 days a year were suddenly looking for holes that were never close to coming.

The North America Cup was won by one of the favorites as Nijinsky, getting a perfect tow into the race by stablemate – yet not betting entymate Legendary Hanover – proved the epitome of a 2023 unknown making monumental strides to catch last year's champions, and then in the final eighth go past last year's Metro Pace winner Captains Quarters. The son of Bettor's Delight helped his sire sweep both major sophomore pacing events on the card as the equally brilliant Its A Love Thing put to rest the argument that last year's stars Geocentric or My Girl E J had any kind of hold on the filly division as may have been the case in 2023.

Critical of course to Nijinsky's win was the drive Jody Jamieson put on Captains Quarters as well as the doggedness of James MacDonald behind Legendary Hanover. Two of Ontario's brightest driving stars shut all doors on Todd McCarthy, and his horse Captain Albano was virtually in a figure-four leg lock through the stretch, leaving the course to the inside briefly for a path that was never wide enough. It's hypothetical to suggest even had Captain Albano found room he could have mustered the momentum of the winner, but that's horse racing and an argument for another day. For now, the C\$1 million North America Cup proved quite well that the list of top sophomores with the talent to capture major races is quite long and it would indeed be possible to see a variety of winners at year's end of the major events. Without question any of the top five in the field had license to win had the trip been better for them.

The C\$75,000 North America Cup consolation was far from filled with also-rans and the upset victory by Remember The Alamo was another example of drivers offering no favors. Todd McCarthy on this occasion had Remember The Alamo grinding without cover while Tim Tetrack was locked in the pocket with Mirage Hanover, who for a second straight week was the victim of some horrible racing luck. Remember The Alamo showed true grit in wearing down Clever Cody on the wire and that certainly bodes well for his future in this division as one of a few from trainer Tony Alagna that are likely to just get better as the year goes on. Mirage Hanover may have disappeared from the winner's circle thus far in 2024 but there's an awful lot to like about this son of Bettor's Delight.

Perhaps the biggest difference between 2023 and 2024 has taken place in the role reversals by two of last year's brilliant pacing fillies, the now 4-year-olds Twin B Joe Fresh and Sylvia Hanover. With pretty much all of last year's older mare crop now taking a back seat to last year's sophomores, Twin B Joe Fresh has to date been the more imposing of the

two championship-caliber mares. It's hard to pin point exactly what the major difference is now for Twin B Joe Fresh that wasn't there in 2023, but it's clear from the way Dexter Dunn has driven her that she has the speed, power and handiness needed when major stakes money is on the line. That may be the part of Sylvia Hanover's arsenal that seems to be missing this year. Whether driver Bob McClure is leery to push Sylvia Hanover too fast too early in the race is a major question. Certainly, in last Saturday's Roses Are Red, once positioned behind Twin B Joe Fresh in the early stages, McClure was always in the position of following that mare when she started or waiting and then coming first-over later in the mile. That he chose the latter was a bit puzzling since it put Sylvia Hanover further away from Twin B Joe Fresh at the three-quarter pole. It's a long season and much could change but Twin B Joe Fresh will only gain further respect in this class following her dominating performance.

It's hard to say just how strong the Goodtimes field of sophomore trotters was heading into last Saturday's contest and thus difficult to make any great claims about the brisk final time Highland Kismet won the race in. That said, his emergence in June after not racing as a freshman is a pleasant surprise for those hoping that this year's Hambletonian would not be just a one-horse with one name race. A lot can happen between now and the first Saturday in August but we're hopeful Highland Kismet will gain from his racing experiences. If his Goodtimes win proved anything to me, it was just how much confidence Bob McClure exuded in the race bike. Giving up a few lengths at the start was the first major indicator. When Louis Philippe Roy shoved Private Access's wheel inside McClure heading into the turn, Highland Kismet didn't bobble or break but avoided an incident with incredible poise. That poise came again when Roy thought he could surprise the thought-to-be green Highland Kismet pulling pocket before three quarters.

Saturday showcased some brilliant racing talent at Woodbine Mohawk Park and it was an exciting curtain opener that promises to be a competitive stakes season with some compelling action expected as we swing into summer.

I can't wait!



**WATCH &  
WAGER**  
**RACING ACTION YEAR-ROUND**

**MONDAY - THURSDAY**  
**12:10 PM**

**VISIT**

[www.monticellocasinoandraceway.com](http://www.monticellocasinoandraceway.com)





  
**RED SHORES**  
CHARLOTTETOWN SUMMERSIDE

**Watch & Wager on Red Shores**  
Charlottetown & Summerside racing!

**Elite Harness Action from May to December!**  
**Great fields, low 15% takeout on the Classic Hi-5,**  
**Pick 4, and the guaranteed Isle Pick 5!**

**For race dates and times visit [RedShores.ca](http://RedShores.ca)**



## HARNESS FOCUS

By Jessica Hallett [X @JHallettPhoto](#)

### *The gift that keeps on giving*

Amateur driving can be referred to as the gift that keeps on giving, and while it provides the opportunity for the everyday person to jump into the race bike to win a race, the result is also a conversion of purse money into charitable donations.

Though it may not be as simple as climbing into the race bike, as individuals must be eligible to join their corresponding club by having an "A" or "P" license and must not have earned any money as a professional driver in the last 10 years, it is as simple as charitable donations from the purse earnings of members of each club.

There are 15 listed amateur driving clubs across North America. While a name change can be a common theme in any entity, it isn't often that you see an entire club pick up and change zip codes.

The Florida Amateur Driving Club (FADC) was developed in the late 1990's, spearheaded by Jay Sears with assistance from Joe Pennacchio. In fact, the first race ever contested for the FADC was hosted on September 2, 1998 and won by Pennacchio aboard Sears-trained Samoots. Pennacchio was a lifelong fan of harness racing turned owner, then started driving in the Billings. The CKG Billings inspired the inception of other amateur clubs, including the FADC.

to try and qualify for the finals. I raced four times in the finals, with a second in 2004 and a first in 2005 and 2006."

Spriggs was among one of the first drivers to compete apart of the newly instituted FADC.

"Jay had the vision to expand amateur racing [in Florida] to help promote the sport," Spriggs said. "I joined the club in September of 1998 after Jay had mentioned to me the opportunity to join. I did without hesitation. It was in its infancy and generally raced off the card. I believe our first on-the-card pari-mutuel race was in 2000. Around 2001, I went to race in an amateur club series where our club sent five drivers for a friendly competition [overseas] and then their club would send drivers to Pompano Park to race. It was a great experience where along with the cultural exchange, we made so many great friends."

Over time, the amateur divisions gained traction and support. With work from those involved, the races were able to find their place on the wagering card.

"The one thing that stood out while racing in Germany were the high percentage of on the card pari-mutuel races. Close to half of the races were amateur races and this, in my opinion, was the beginning of regular on-the-card amateur racing being accepted in the United States by the wagering public. It took a lot of work over the years to convince the race-track operator, racing secretaries, local trainers, and the professional drivers to accept what we had to offer," Spriggs said.

While Pompano Park was known to be a melting pot in general, where all the stables flock to spend the warm winter months, it was also a meeting point for a variety of reasons. The amateur club was one of the top reasons for the ability to blend cultures in one spot, even if for only one weekend. The FADC continued to integrate competitions and challenges among drivers from all over all the way until the finale in April of 2022.



JESSICA HALLETT

**Kelly Case, David Ingraham, Bruce Ranger, Jake Huff, Mickey McNichol, SRF Rep, Wally Hennessey, Tomorrow's Rainbow Rep during a 2022 Pro-Am event at Pompano Park designed to help various charities.**

"I was already driving at other places and I approached Jay about starting a club in Florida," Pennacchio said. "He's the one that executed it and had the authority to put it together and that's how we got started. There were some ups and downs and ins and outs. In 2010 we got it going again and in 2012 when Spriggs took over, he just did a remarkable job to making it bigger, with more races and more people involved. He is the one responsible for getting it transitioned to the United States Harness Drivers Club (USHDC), too."

Dein Spriggs took over as President of the FADC in 2012 and assumed the role of President of the USHDC at its inception. Spriggs started driving in 1976 and continued through 1980 on a regular basis. He left the harness racing industry for real estate before returning as an amateur driver in 1998.

"I have raced throughout the US and started with the CKG Billings circuit in 1998," Spriggs said. "The Billings circuit raced at different tracks around the country on a weekly basis from April until November with the final race as the Gold Cup or Silver Cup in November, generally at the Meadowlands. I was coming from Florida on a plane every week

"In 2001, we were fortunate enough to host the World Amateur Driving Championship. In 2015, we did our very first Pro-Am with driving greats Wally Hennessey and David Ingraham, where each pro would have a group of amateur drivers on their respective team," Spriggs added. "The event went over great. The pros each had a charity that they chose for our racing dollars to be donated. The following year we had more Pro-Ams, adding David Miller and Tim Tetrick. Later, in 2016, we hosted the Isle International which had drivers from 11 different countries competing for the championship, while at the same time racing for their specific country's charity. Each of the following years until the close of Pompano Park, we have had a Pro-Am. Once Pompano closed, it was thought of as the end of the FADC, but with a no-quit attitude, the FADC is still alive, now known as the United States Harness Drivers Club [USHDC] racing at Oak Grove in Kentucky, Shenandoah Downs in Virginia, and Cumberland Kentucky, continuing its course with charitable endeavors."

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 9](#)



Another key individual in the history of the FADC and tied to the success of the USHDC is the USHDC Secretary and Treasurer, Tom Eichas, a lifelong horseman.

"I bought my first racehorse when I was 16 years old and was a full-time horse trainer until 1985. After that time, I have owned many horses, sometimes hiring trainers and for quite a few years, training my own at Pompano while I worked a day job," Eichas said. "I happened to buy a reasonable trotter in 1998 and heard about the Club starting up so I raced in the third week of the FADC. Over the years I raced here and there in the amateur races at Pompano and at some point I became the secretary and treasurer under Jamie Marra as president. Dein took over the president's position a few years later and I stayed on in my position."

"After Pompano closed, Dein Spriggs was the driving force to not let the Club just go away after 24 years," Eichas continued. "Dein got us into Oak Grove in 2023 and once he secured that opportunity, we did a corporate name change from the FADC to the United States Harness Drivers Club. Dein also got us into race at the fall meet at Shenandoah and Corbin."

Today, the USHDC rotates their seasons with Shenandoah Downs in Woodstock, VA in the spring and fall, Oak Grove Racing in Oak Grove, KY in the summer months, and Cumberland Run in Corbin, KY in the late fall to early winter months. As the Cumberland and Shenandoah meets overlap a bit in the late fall, the Club balances their times with events carded on different days of the week to accommodate both.

The one interesting difference between racing at Pompano in the FADC and racing across the country in the USHDC has not just been the change of location, but also the change in gait of the races. While the FADC focused on trot races, the USHDC has expanded to incorporate a majority of pacing races.

"The Club races are set at the pleasure of the host track," Eichas explained. "In Pompano, we always had trots because that is how the club was started and the race office complied. With other host tracks that are kind enough to have us, we adapt to the race conditions they write for us."

Over the years, it is estimated that the FADC and USHDC have hosted well over 100 members. Last year, Tony Dinges was the leading driver of the club and this year it is Peter Kleinhans.

The amateur clubs open the opportunity for new faces to become a part of the sport, learning through hands-on experience and getting hooked on the adrenaline rush.

Have you ever heard of the phrase, "Don't quit your day job"? Well, technically, these drivers did not. Most of the drivers a part of the amateur series work full-time jobs in addition to picking up drives on the weekends in their respective clubs. A handful manage and train their own stables, some just take part in ownership of horses, and some have no involvement other than their weekly time in the race bike, making for an interesting crop of drivers. Careers range from those in law enforcement to lawyers, real estate workers and construction managers to engineers and helicopter pilots.

While aiding in bringing people to harness racing, whether in the bike or as a bettor interested in the wagering aspect of the amateur races, the



Joe Pennacchio, Tom Eichas, Rosie Huff, Jake Huff and Dein Spriggs.

overall and ultimate goal pertains to the real winners of each and every race: the charities.

For the USHDC, sometimes charities contact the club or the host race-track, officials or club members also suggest options, and even people from the harness racing community will offer up a charitable opportunity.

"At most host tracks, the 5% driver fees are sent directly to the Club by the horsemen's bookkeeper," Eichas explained. "The Club is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and we choose from the suggested charities to donate to. We also invest in education about amateur racing and harness racing through Facebook, articles, and exposure through video during charity events and donation presentations."

"Our goals are to race amateur races and donate our drivers' fees to as many worthwhile causes as we can. We like to donate to horse related organizations and many of our donations have supported many different types of horse rescue and therapy places. We have also given to places that assist the homeless, cancer assistance and research, religion, harness racing museum, young folks' assistance, military programs, animal shelters, soup kitchens, HIV assistance, scholarships, and many more," Eichas concluded.

According to Spriggs, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been donated to charities by the former Florida club while Joe Faraldo, founder of the North American Amateur Drivers Association which competes at tracks like Yonkers and Monticello Raceways, said \$100,000 to \$200,000 has been generated for charity by that club.

As the gift keeps on giving to drivers and charities alike, together Eichas and Spriggs keep the memory of the FADC alive through the USHDC, with Pompano Park writer John Berry featuring their weekly recaps as he had done in Pompano Park.



**AFTER THEY RACE,  
WE FIND THEM A PLACE**

New Vocations Racehorse Adoption Program accepts horses from all major U.S. tracks.



For more information, visit [newvocations.org](http://newvocations.org) or contact [winnie@horseadoption.com](mailto:winnie@horseadoption.com) / (734) 320-7918



# Unbeaten Howlenth hills rolls into Messenger for Alexander

By Jay Bergman

Trainer Travis Alexander will be in search of his third Messenger Stakes victory in the past four years starting on Friday night when he sends out a pair of serious contenders in two \$25,000 eliminations for the sophomore pacing stakes at Yonkers Raceway. Alexander had first won the leg of the Triple Crown in 2021 with American Courage and then in 2022 with Pleaseletmeknow.

This year Alexander again has a New York-bred son of American Ideal with designs on the prize as the unbeaten sophomore Howlenth hills looks for his sixth straight victory without defeat in the first (sixth race) of the two Messenger trials. Winless in eight tries as a freshman, Howlenth hills has been transformed this year with five consecutive stakes victories heading into the Messenger.

"He was too fast for his own good last year," said Alexander of Howlenth hills. "He could go a 25 quarter but his legs couldn't handle it."

Now as a sophomore, Howlenth hills still has some issues with bumps in stride, but for the most part things have smoothed in such a way to make him a dominant force wherever he's entered.

"He still not perfect. He was good at Vernon, but you could still see some ripples in his gait," said Alexander.

With two Sire Stakes wins including a 1:51 effort over the half-miler at Saratoga, Howlenth hills would seem primed for the half-mile track at Yonkers and he's in a perfect spot having landed post two.

Howlenth hills will again be driven by regular pilot Matt Kakaley, who will also be in search of his third Messenger victory in the last four years.

While likely the public choice on Friday, Howlenth hills faces a solid field of seven that includes Captain Skippy from post seven for trainer Ake Svanstedt. The altered son of Captaintreacherous was lightly raced as a freshman but has come back with a vengeance this year, with a second-place finish in the second leg of the Pennsylvania Sire Stakes at Pocono (May 18) followed by a 1:50 3/5 career-best mile in the third leg at Harrah's Philadelphia on May 26.

Armada Hanover, the half-brother to \$2.2 million winner Allywag Hanover, makes his first start over a half-mile track for trainer Brett Pelling in this division. While lacking a win in his five starts this year, Armada Hanover has hit the board on four occasions including a second behind last year's Breeders Crown champion Gem Quality in a Pennsylvania Sire Stakes leg at Pocono. Armada Hanover drew post four.

Trainer George Ducharme could have a sleeper in Ameritric, who like Howlenth hills has gone from a maiden at 2 to a solid stakes performer this year. Ameritric (post 6) sizzled in New York Sire Stakes action at Buffalo (June 5) with a career-best 1:52 3/5 clocking.

Alexander will send out Sweet Beach Life in the second \$25,000 Messenger trial (race 7) and the Sweet Lou-sired gelding landed the pole position coming off a solid prep over the Yonkers surface on June 11.

"Matt (Kakaley) had him shut down in the stretch," said Alexander of the 1:53 3/5 victory over the Yonkers surface.

Sweet Beach Life looks for his fourth win of the year in the seven-horse field but needs only a fourth-place finish to qualify for the June 28 Messenger Final.



FOTOWON

Howlenth hills goes for his sixth straight win on Friday at MGM Yonkers Raceway.

"He's his own worst enemy. He's got a world of talent but he's hard to control," said Alexander, hopeful that Sweet Beach Life can mind his manners and move to the final.

On May 18 Sweet Beach Life put it all together winning a Pennsylvania Sire Stakes contest in a career-best 1:50 4/5 clocking. On Friday he starts from post one.

Janelle Granny (post 7) is the most intriguing entry in the Messenger this year as the lone horse coming right back from last Saturday's C\$1 million North America Cup to compete just six days later. The Ohio-bred by Fear The Dragon was an outsider in the Cup but clearly a major contender for trainer Scott DiDomenico, who handles the horse for owner Betty Jo Clegg. Janelle Granny was 15 times first or second in 16 starts as a freshman and has returned just as sharp as a 3-year-old.

One of last year's better New Jersey-sired freshman was Wish You Well (post 4). The gelding has returned this year and has been improving with each start while lacking a win in four tries. A son of Bettor's Wish, Wish You Well earned \$196k as a freshman.

Huntingfrochrome also had a solid year as a freshman and has been slow to return to form, but the son of Huntsville hinted that he was back at full strength with a solid second in a New York Sire Stakes event on June 14 at Vernon Downs. Trainer Jenn Bongiorno will use the services of Tyler Butler from post five in this division.

In Friday's co-feature, eight trotters will vie for the final five spots in this year's Yonkers Trot. Trainer Ake Svanstedt has won three of the last five Yonkers Trots, including last year's edition with Up Your Deo. Svanstedt has a pair in Friday's Yonkers Trot elimination carded as race four. Flying Kronos S (post 2) and Southwind Metric (post 8) are both moving to the half-mile track following qualifying mile victories at The Meadowlands. The trainer will also have Situationship in the final as that horse was given a bye along with Security Protected and Sir Pinocchio.

Post time for the Friday card at Yonkers is 7:00 PM (EDT).

Advertise with



For more information or to place an ad, contact:

Derick Giwner at  
[dgiwner@drf.com](mailto:dgiwner@drf.com)

**MULTIPLE  
PLACEMENT  
DISCOUNTS**





## EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner X @harnessseyeguy

Most people are not going to be lucky enough to “come on down” on the Price is Right with the opportunity to win “a brand new car!” The odds of being randomly picked from the audience are low and many people are simply geographically challenged since the game show is taped in California, which is thousands of miles away from much of the U.S. population.

For those in the Northeast with their sights set on walking away with a new car payment-free, there is another longshot possibility at the track. The Meadowlands in New Jersey is in the midst of its yearly car giveaway called HorsePlay.

The object of the “game” is to throw a soft-rubber horse from the track apron into a moving car gliding down the stretch of the track. Everyone who gets their horse successfully into the car qualifies for a random chance to win a \$100 betting voucher and be entered into the drawing for the car

giveaway on Friday, August 2. Plus, all finalists that night win betting vouchers ranging from \$50 to \$500.

In a world where the track apron typically looks abandoned, Horse-Play brings people to the rail to see the horses up close and personal. It allows kids the opportunity to go on the track afterward and pick up the rubber horses that didn't complete their flights into the 2024 Toyota Camry LE, and perhaps more importantly to the little ones, rewards them with free ice cream for their time.

Sponsored by Purple Haze Stables, HorsePlay is a fun promotion that provides people with a reason to show up at the track but more importantly it is an outlet for charity. For every horse that makes it in the car The Meadowlands donates \$5 to a designated charity and another \$5 to the Purple Haze Standardbred Adoption Program to support after-care for horses.

According to Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment's Director of

Marketing and Event Operations Rach Ryan, about 20 horses make it into the car on an average night, though it seemed to be closer to 40 when I was asked to pluck the winner from the bucket on Saturday, June 8.

“There are a lot more [horses] than normal tonight,” said Ryan, thrilled with the larger turnout on June 8.

Apparently the contest is more than simply a chance at a car for some people. One track regular almost missed his opportunity to play as he came running into the winner's circle at the last possible second and fired his horse from a good 10 feet further back than most.

“Did you see that throw? I think I got it in,” said the patron to me as he was trying to catch his breath.

As it turned out, the man was able to throw a strike and got his horse into the back seat of the Camry. Perhaps he should try out for the New York Mets' bullpen.

For those around East Rutherford, NJ area on a Friday or Saturday night at about 8:00 PM, fill out this [form](#) and come on down to the apron to take your toss. You'll have a chance to win a \$100 voucher or maybe a new car, but best of all, you can watch live harness racing for free, which certainly cheaper than going to a sporting event.

## Second-leg winners all return for round three of Graduate at The Meadowlands

The final preliminary legs of the Graduate series for 4-year-olds on both gaits will take place Saturday at The Meadowlands with all four winners from the second round returning for a potential encore performance.

The trotters hit leadoff in races four and six with Winner's Bet and Hasty Bid, respectively, seeking to build a lone win into a streak. Winner's Bet made his 2024 debut a winning one with an impressive 1 1/2 length victory over Ponda Jet last weekend at The Meadowlands in a sizzling 1:50, equalling the track record for 4-year-old trotting horses.

Winner's Bet draws post three with Dexter Dunn in the bike while Ponda Jet gets the six-hole and David Miller in this rematch.

While Winner's Bet seems likely to be the heavy favorite in his division, IHasty Bid is going to have much more competition for that honor in race six. Top Canadian driver James MacDonald came down to drive for Nancy Takter and pulled off a 6-1 upset over Special Way in 1:51 3/5 last time. Now Special Way has a start under her belt this year and figures to be even better, as does Oh Well, who charged home in 26 1/5 to finish third behind Winner's Bet in just start two of the year for the Marcus Melander trainee.

With just six behind the gate, traffic shouldn't be an issue during

the mile contest, though Hasty Bid drew post two, Oh Well (Todd McCarthy) three and Special Way (Tim Tetrick) five on Saturday.

The pacers get underway in race 10 with Coach Stefanos (MacDonald, post four) and Voukefalas (Jordan Stratton, post two) hooking up for the second straight week after the former won by less than a length in 1:47 3/5 last Friday. The lightly-raced Seafire joins this division after finishing second a week ago while timed in 1:47 3/5 as well. Scott Zeron drives the Brian Brown trainee from post three.

In the Graduate finale on the card, No Control (Stratton, post four) looks to build on his 29-1 upset last week for trainer Tan Micallef. He'll be tested here from first-leg winners Seven Colors (Dunn, post two) and Huntintheastdolar (Yannick Gingras, post six) as well as Ken Hanover (Miller, post three), who was compromised by an outside post most recently.

The top 10 in each Graduate division will return on July 6 at The Meadowlands for a pair of \$250,000 (Est.) finals.

Trotting mares also compete on the card in race eight, the third leg of the Miss Versatility. With the winners of both opening legs - M-M's Dream and Call Me Goo - not entered, Saturday's contest looks like a wide-open affair.

Post time at The Meadowlands on Saturday is 6:20 PM (EDT).

# 'Duke' seeks first leg of Triple Crown in MGM Yonkers Trot

By Ken Weingartner

Duke Of Walner will head to Friday's lone MGM Yonkers Trot elimination looking for his first win of the season, and trainer/co-owner Lucas Wallin hopes the trip to MGM Yonkers Raceway coupled with several equipment changes can help the colt get the job done.

The Yonkers Trot is the first jewel in the Trotting Triple Crown, followed by the Hambletonian in August and Kentucky Futurity in October. Eight 3-year-old male trotters will meet in the Yonkers Trot elimination, which goes for a purse of \$25,000. The top-five finishers from the elim will join bye recipients Security Protected, Situationship, and Sir Pinocchio in the \$300,000 guaranteed final on June 28 at The Hilltop.

Duke Of Walner enters the elimination off a second-place finish behind Amazing Catch in a conditioned race on June 10 at Mohegan Pennsylvania's Pocono Downs, where he was beaten by a neck in 1:53 4/5. Duke Of Walner went to the lead and set fractions of 28, 56 3/5, and 1:25 2/5 before being passed in deep stretch.

Amazing Catch's win time is the eighth-fastest of the season by a sophomore male trotter on a five-eighths-mile track. The colt, trained and driven by Ake Svanstedt, was a Grand Circuit winner last year who finished second in the Peter Haughton Memorial and third in the William Wellwood Memorial.

"I thought I was going to give (Duke Of Walner) a good confidence booster the last time and then Ake came with that horse, so that didn't work out," Wallin said with a laugh. "I was hoping for a win when he got to the lead with those fractions, but he didn't race bad. He was fighting all the way to the end. Ake's horse is a very nice horse. It's no shame to get beat by him."

Prior to his most recent start, Duke Of Walner had raced only on the mile ovals at The Meadowlands and Red Mile. Last year, he won a preliminary leg of the Kentucky Sire Stakes and finished third in the KYSS Championship Series final.

Although Duke Of Walner has never raced on a half-mile track, such as Yonkers, Wallin is hopeful the colt will respond well to the smaller oval.

"I think he's going to get around Yonkers good because we train on a half-mile track," Wallin said. "My feeling is that he's going to be better the smaller the tracks are, to be honest with you. We'll have to wait and see if I'm right."

"We're going to do a couple of changes to try to get him a little better. He's been racing with an open bridle and stay-in cotton (in his ears) for every start this year. We're going to switch it up a little bit and change the

bridle and put pop-outs on him for the first time. We're going to train with it to see if he's OK with it, but I think those are a couple changes that are going to help at the end of the race."

Duke Of Walner is a son of Walner out of the Love You-sired mare Nashville Lindy. He was purchased under the name Grand Ole Lindy for \$90,000 at the 2022 Lexington Selected Yearling Sale and is owned by Berg Bros. Racing, Joe Sbrocco, Daniel Plouffe, and the conglomerate Lucas-WallinJAFRacingMyFab.

The colt is a half-brother to Grand Circuit winner Shake It Off Lindy. His family also includes millionaires Lookout Victory and Possess The Magic as well as O'Brien Award winner Musical Rhythm and stallion Swan For All.

For his career, Duke Of Walner has hit the board in eight of 13 races and earned a check 12 times. He has banked \$136,250.

"He's probably been training better than he's raced so far, but he's been racing OK," Wallin said. "He's been racing against tough horses all his life. But he looks super good, and I think he's going to get better and better. That's been my plan, at least."

Duke Of Walner will start Friday's Yonkers Trot elimination from post six with Matt Kakaley in the sulky. He is part of a betting entry with Nancy Takter-trained Bargain, a Grand Circuit winner last year (defeating eventual O'Brien Award recipient T C I) and runner-up in the New York Sire Stakes championship. The entry is 7-2 on the morning line.

"Kakaley knows Yonkers well and he drove (Duke Of Walner) in his last start, so he knows the horse," Wallin said. "Even if he's a pretty nice horse to drive, it's always good for them to know what they're sitting behind."

In addition to the Yonkers Trot, Duke Of Walner is staked to the Stanley Dancer Memorial, Hambletonian, Earl Beal Jr. Memorial, Canadian Trotting Classic, Kentucky Futurity, and Breeders Crown.

"We have some interesting races for him this year," Wallin said, "and this is one of them."

The Svanstedt-trained entry of Flying Kronos S and Southwind Metric is the 2-1 morning-line favorite in the Yonkers Trot elim. Svanstedt will drive Flying Kronos S, last year's Kindergarten Classic Series final runner-up to Dan Patch Award recipient Karl, from post two. Southwind Metric will leave from post eight with driver Dan Dube. Both colts are eligible to the Hambletonian.

Yonkers on Friday also will host two eliminations for the MGM Grand Messenger Stakes for 3-year-old pacers. Racing begins at 7 p.m. at Yonkers.

## Hall of Famer Roger Huston to call Triple Crown card at MGM Yonkers Raceway

Even in retirement announcer Roger Huston is a busy man. On Friday, June 28 the 81-year-old will make the 6.5 hour trek from his home in western Pennsylvania to MGM Yonkers Raceway in New York to call the first legs of the Standardbred Triple Crowns – the \$300,000 MGM Yonkers Trot and \$250,000E MGM Grand Messenger Pace.

"I probably put 500 to 750 miles on my car each week," said Huston, who travels from Pennsylvania to Ohio weekly to work for the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association and also fills in at Northfield Park and The Meadows as an announcer on occasion.

Huston, a member of the Communicator's wing of the Harness Racing Hall of Fame who is also well-known as the voice of the Little Brown Jug, has called over 184,000 races in his lifetime at 160 race-tracks. While some may think MGM Yonkers Raceway will be an addition to the list, according to Huston he actually appeared there in 1995 as part of a drivers' challenge promotion between Yonkers, Freehold, The Meadowlands and The Meadows.

"The top four drivers at each location faced off against the hometown drivers and I went with them and called the races," said Huston.

Huston will be able to cross one race off his bucket list on June 28 as he completes the Triple Crown six-pack. The Pacing Triple Crown

consists of the Messenger, Cane and Little Brown Jug, all races Huston has called in the past. The Ohio native was able to call the Hambletonian live on NBC in 1979 at DuQuoin and has announced the Kentucky Futurity on radio, but 2024 will mark the first time he's called the MGM Yonkers Trot.

"I'm thrilled to add that last Triple Crown race to my long résumé and I'm really looking forward to it as much as I look forward to anything else," said Huston, who is known for bringing energy to every call, whether it is a \$4,000 claimer or the MGM Yonkers Trot.

Both Triple Crown races will be part of a monster card at MGM Yonkers Raceway that will also feature the NY NY Mile and Park MGM Pace.

In addition to the special guest appearance by Huston on the microphone, fans attending the races live on June 28 will be treated to an outdoor market on the track apron. An integration of the casino and track worlds will take place as patrons from both sides of the gambling world will be welcomed to enjoy special food stands, live music and other promotional items as part of a Triple Crown Fan Fest.

MGM Yonkers Raceway conducts live racing on a Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday to Saturday schedule with a post time of 7:00 PM (EDT).

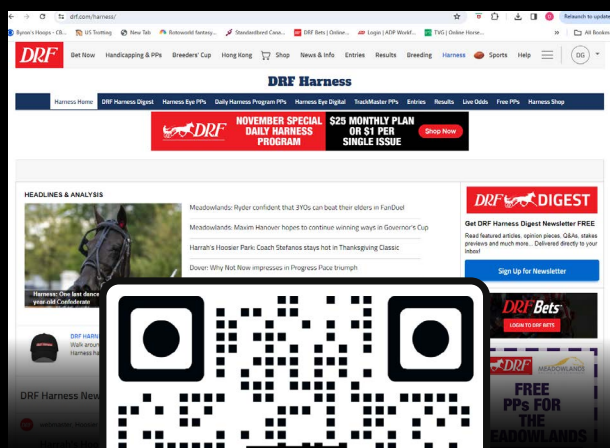
-release (Yonkers Raceway Media)





# DRF HARNES

## YOUR HOME FOR STANDARDBRED RACING



Visit us online for PPs,  
news, entries, results  
**DRF.com/Harness**



Sign up for our  
**FREE weekly newsletter**

- Industry News
- Opinions
- Interviews





# Nijinsky tops first Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll

By Ken Weingartner

Pepsi North America Cup winner Nijinsky leaped to the top of the rankings in the season's first Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll released Tuesday, garnering 20 of 35 first-place votes and totaling 322 points for a 50-point cushion over No. 2 Twin B Joe Fresh.

Nijinsky is 5-for-5 this year, with his other victories including his North America Cup elimination, a division of the Somebeachsomewhere Stakes, and a division of the Ontario Sire Stakes. The 3-year-old male pacer has earned \$455,155, which leads all horses in North America.

Twin B Joe Fresh, a 4-year-old female pacer, has three wins and a second in four starts this season. Her triumphs include last weekend's Roses Are Red Stakes and the Betsy Ross Invitational. She received four first-place votes.

Karl, a 3-year-old male trotter and returning Dan Patch Award winner, was No. 3 in the Top 10. He is unbeaten in three races, all in the New Jersey Sire Stakes series, including the final. The colt received 11 first-place votes.

Rounding out the top five in the poll were Fan Hanover Stakes winner Its A Love Thing and Goodtime Stakes champ Highland Kismet.

The next five were Cutler Memorial winner Jiggy Jog S, Armbro Flight winner Call Me Goo, Borgata Pacing Series and Camluck Classic champ Hellabalou, North America Cup runner-up Captain's Quarters, and Auger Memorial winner Ruthless Hanover.

The Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll does not determine Horse of the Year. The members of the U.S. Harness Writers Association vote on all Dan Patch Award division winners plus Trotter of the Year, Pacer of the Year and Horse of the Year.

Rankings based on the votes of harness racing media representatives on a 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis.

## HAMBLETONIAN SOCIETY/BREEDERS CROWN POLL: WEEK 1 – 6/18/2024

Rank	Name (1st Votes)	Age/Sex/Gait	Record	Earnings	Points	Pvs
1	Nijinsky (20)	3cp	5-5-0-0	\$455,155	322	--
2	Twin B Joe Fresh (4)	4mp	4-3-1-0	\$177,725	272	--
3	Karl (11)	3ct	3-3-0-0	\$150,000	248	--
4	Its A Love Thing	3fp	5-3-2-0	\$268,824	173	--
5	Highland Kismet	3ct	5-4-1-0	\$109,135	144	--
6	Jiggy Jog S	5mt	1-1-0-0	\$70,398	119	--
7	Call Me Goo	4mt	5-4-1-0	\$140,479	104	--
8	Hellabalou	6hp	11-2-3-2	\$355,200	90	--
9	Captain's Quarters	3cp	4-2-2-0	\$205,313	75	--
10	Ruthless Hanover	7gp	2-2-0-0	\$56,500	51	--

ALSO: TCI 46; Little Rocket Man 43; M-M's Dream 37; Linedrive Hanover 35; Lit De Rose 28; Funtime Bayama 19; Carbine, Elista Hanover; Mambacita 11; Spaaaanzano 9; Winner's Bet 8; Sabonis 7; Hasty Bid, No Control, Taurasi 6; Captain Albano, My Girl EJ 5; Desperate Man, R Melina 4; Gaines Hanover, Jurassic Hattie, Security Protected 3; Admiral Hill, Blackhawk Zette, Coaches Corner, Coach Stefanos, Oakwood Ardan IR, Sylvia Hanover, Topsy Moni 2; Covered Bridge, R Liza, Tactical Mounds 1.

## BLAH BLAH HEADLINE FOR MEADOWLANDS OR WHATEVER COMES IN

blah blah blah text - just put a link on read more

READ MORE

DRF Bets

Handicapper's Corner

SIGN UP NOW

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, JUNE 20

### RACE 4

(1) HER CURRENCY, a Grass-roots winner at the end of May, followed that up with a good 3rd to a filly that came back to take a check in a Gold race. She should be tough in here.

-Garnet Barnsdale



## FRIDAY, JUNE 21

### RACE 13

(4) DAIQUIRI HANOVER is a serious horse who chased home Karl in the Valley Victory last year and just missed versus T C I in his 2024 debut. He should crush these in preparation for bigger and better things.

-Derick Giwner



### RACE 9

(4) MAN DONTFORGET ME has won three in a row, as soon as I stopped selecting her on top. Classy mare figures to have a clear path to the lead and can win on the front or from right in behind.

-Matt Rose



## SATURDAY, JUNE 22

### RACE 4

(3) WINNER'S BET equaled a track record in his first start of the year while debuting for trainer Nancy Takter. I wonder what he can do when he's at his peak level..

-Giwner



## FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Meadowlands Analysis		Friday	Saturday
Yonkers Analysis	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DHP PPS	HARNESS EYE PPS	TRACKMASTER PPS	FREE PPS
---------	-----------------	-----------------	----------

INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNES

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

## GILLESPIE PROMOTED TO WOODBINE MOHAWK PARK RACE SECRETARY

Woodbine Entertainment today (6/19) announced the promotion of Jim Gillespie to Standardbred Race Secretary at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

The promotion of Gillespie comes as Tony O'Sullivan, current Race Secretary, is set to depart from Woodbine as of Friday, July 5.

"We want to thank Tony for his contributions to Woodbine over the last two years," said Bill McLinchey, Vice-President of Standardbred Racing. "We wish Tony nothing but the best as he embarks on a new career path."

Gillespie has been the Assistant Race Secretary since November 2020. A lifelong industry participant, Gillespie spent several years driving and working with his father, trainer Tim Gillespie, before joining the Race Office.

"Jim is a great replacement for Tony, having had time to grow in our Race Office," said McLinchey. "Anyone that's spoke or dealt with Jim knows he has a great knowledge and passion for the sport and we're confident he'll succeed in his new role."

Gillespie will oversee the daily duties of the Standardbred Race Office, including all draws for Woodbine Mohawk Park and Grand River Raceway.

Gillespie will officially begin his new position on Monday, July 8.

-release (Woodbine)

## BIG SKEWY N EQUALS PLAINRIDGE TRACK RECORD

Big Skewy N shipped in to Plainridge Park from Pocono Downs at Mohegan Pennsylvania on Tuesday afternoon (June 18) and tied the track record for aged pacing geldings after he scorched the track in 1:49 2/5 in the co-featured \$20,000 Open Handicap pace for horses and geldings.

Big Skewy N (Drew Monti) got away sixth from post eight as Alex Having Fun (Bruce Ranger) took the lead past the 27 second opening quarter. Alex Having Fun then got to the half in 54 4/5, and Big Skewy N pulled first-over to get in the mix.

[READ MORE](#)

## USTA LAUNCHES BETA VERSION OF EQUINE HEALTH & WELLNESS DATABASE

The U.S. Trotting Association announced on Monday (6/17) the launch of the beta version of a new Equine Health & Wellness Database (EHWD). The initial phase is for the collection of data. When sufficient data is available, it will all be made available to the public.

Any current USTA member that is connected to a horse including veterinarians, owners, trainers, caretakers, track or state employees, as well as race officials can contribute to assist in the collection of data through their USTA My Account. The link to submitting an incident report for a horse can be found under "Miscellaneous." Anyone can sign up for a free My Account by clicking here.

"The EHWD will allow the industry to identify clusters and types of racing injuries, help all of us investigate the causes, and act as a data repository that can be mined when developing safety measures and policies going forward," said USTA Executive Vice President and CEO Mike Tanner. "Thankfully, the incidence of Standardbreds that experience catastrophic injuries is, and always has been, extremely rare."

[READ MORE](#)

## DSBF PACING FILLIES COMPLETE SECOND ROUND

Jo Ann Looney-King's Curtsyforpurrseco (\$2.10, Tim Tetrick) was the fastest winner in a trio of \$20,000 Delaware Standardbred Breeders Fund (DSBF) eliminations Tuesday at Harrington Raceway with a 1:56 1/5 triumph in the second leg of stakes action.

Tetrick urged the daughter of Roddy's Bags Again first-over near three-quarters where she responded willingly and cleared pace-setter Bad Nella Monella, then drew away from the field for her fourth win of the season. Slipinsidewayz finished second, while Bad Nella Monella held third. Trained by Jim King Jr., "Curtsy" has won 10 of 20 career starts.

[READ MORE](#)

## BAKERS DOZEN OF 2-YEAR-OLD QUALIFIERS CONTESTED AT PHILLY

Thirteen fields of 2-year-olds faced the starting gate Tuesday morning at Harrah's Philadelphia as they continued to prep for their imminent introductions to the pari-mutuel wars. The fastest time in each division, as split by sex and gait, turned out to be achieved by two horses except in the 2-year-old colt pace, where Oogleville earned distinction as the fastest performer of the day at 1:56 1/5.

A Huntsville colt out of Oogle Google, Oogleville moved to the lead in quarter two and stormed home in 55 2/5 to be an impressive winner for driver Todd McCarthy, trainer Per Engblom, and the ownership of Morrison Racing Stables.

[READ MORE](#)

## ADMIRAL HILL CHARGES TO TRACK RECORD IN KY SIRE STAKES TALLY

Per Engblom's pacing titan Admiral Hill again exerted authority over his peers to muscle a near gate-to-wire victory in the \$50,000 Kentucky Sire Stakes (KYSS) third round at Oak Grove Racing, Gaming & Hotel on Monday (June 17) while also going the fastest mile ever paced over the track by an aged gelding.

Starting from the outermost post in the quintet, Admiral Hill (driven by Yannick Gingras) floated off the wings and towards the front through a 26 1/5 first quarter carved by stablemate Blue Lou (Dexter Dunn), leaving from the pylon post. Once on the helm, Admiral Hill filled his lungs to a 54 3/5 half and breezed up the backside when blitzed by For Once Inmy Life (Andy McCarthy), who stayed at the pace-setter's throat by three-quarters in 1:21 1/5 and all through the final turn. Gingras hit the pedal at the top of the stretch with a few taps of the whip, and Admiral Hill accelerated for the finish to a wrapped-up win by a length in 1:48 3/5. Tip Top Cat (Todd McCarthy) closed from second-over for second with Blue Lou taking third and For Once Inmy Life fading to fourth.

[READ MORE](#)

## OSS GOLD SERIES TILT WON BY R LIZA AT MOHAWK

R Liza ran her record to four wins from four starts this year with a 1:53 4/5 victory in a C\$140,000 Ontario Sires Stakes Gold Series contest for 3-year-old trotting fillies on Monday night at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

Driven by Jody Jamieson, R Liza got away in the pocket but moved to the outside past the 27 2/5 quarter and cleared No One (Bruce Richardson) to become the new leader just before the 57 second half-mile marker. Jamieson continued an easy tempo to three-quarters in 1:26 1/5 as Lexus Angel (Trevor Henry) stalled from first-up, and race favorite Willys Home Run was second-over on the dull cover.

[READ MORE](#)

## MERCK, USTA REACH PARTNERSHIP MILESTONE IN EQUINE CARE

Merck Animal Health, known as MSD Animal Health outside of the United States and Canada, a division of Merck & Co., Inc., Rahway, N.J., USA (NYSE:MRK), is pleased to recognize a 50,000-microchip milestone as part of its ongoing partnership with the U.S. Trotting Association.

[READ MORE](#)

## NYSS SEASON BEGINS FOR 2-YEAR-OLD FILLY PACERS

Send It Down Slim turned in the faster mile in the two \$51,000 (approx.) races in the New York Sire Stakes for the 2-year-old pacing fillies at Buffalo Raceway on Wednesday afternoon (June 19) while Cowgirl Hanover went gate-to-wire in taking the second division.

It was a great day for driver Mark MacDonald as he posted four victories on the card while trainer Ray Schnitker had three wins, one in the Sire Stakes and two in the Excelsior Series.

In the first race that featured four young ladies, Chanceoflightning (Jordan Stratton) set the fractions with a quarter of 30 3/5 and half in 1:00 4/5. Send It Down Slim (MacDonald) was sitting patiently in the garden spot and popped first-over heading down the backstretch, quickly taking the lead.

[READ MORE](#)