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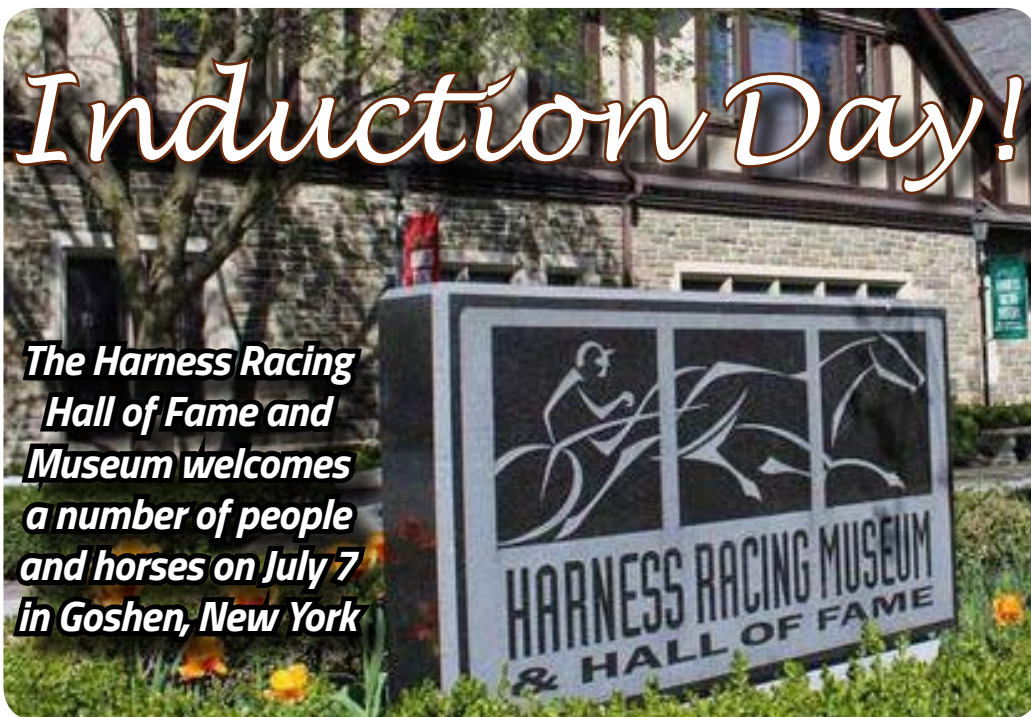
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Comments? Questions?
Email the Editor DGwinner@DRF.com



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman ✕ [Bergmanjay](https://www.bergmanjay.com)

Harness racing's Hall of Fame is a structure that embodies the rich history of our sport. On Sunday (July 7) a worthy group of new members with accomplishments in all facets of the industry will be enshrined at a ceremony in Goshen, New York.

Though great horses were the inspiration for the Hall of Fame, honors tend to fall to those who have cared for the horses and those who have driven them to great heights on the sport's biggest stages. Trainer Jim Campbell may have stood in the shadow while his big brother John was winning an historical number of major races on his way to induction into this very Hall, but that didn't mean he wasn't working. Jim Campbell was as busy behind the scenes, and

eventually that hard work would lead to great success on the track.

Jim Campbell has over the years cultivated some great talent and captured the sport's biggest races, sometimes even two of the sport's biggest races on the exact same day. Such was the case just two years ago in 2022 when the Campbell-trained Cool Papa Bell captured the Hambletonian just an hour after his Fashion Schooner had won the Hambletonian Oaks at The Meadowslands.

Jim Campbell's dedication to the sport and most importantly the owners that have supported him, is quite evident in the journey through the annals of the sport's history and to his rightful spot in Goshen. Campbell gained acclaim way back in 1995 when his brother John drove Tagliabue for his stable to capture his first Hambletonian and returned to the sport's biggest stage in 2009 to join Broadway Schooner in the winner's circle when she captured his first Hambletonian Oaks.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)

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While longevity alone should not be a requirement for admission into this Hall of Fame, the test of time for Jim Campbell has come with the long bond he has enjoyed with owners. Jules Siegel, who owned and bred Fashion Schooner, has been the beneficiary of a long association with the trainer and Cool Papa Bell's owner Scott Farber is a second-generation supporter of Jim Campbell's work.

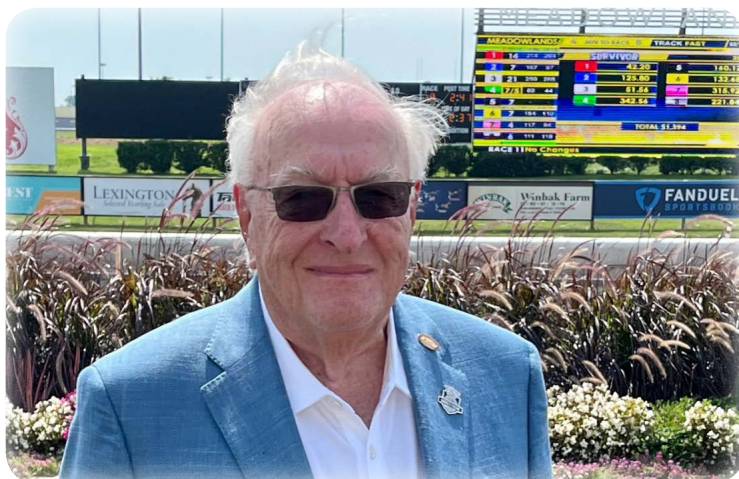
Owner and breeder David McDuffee has been a lifetime supporter of the sport. While owning and breeding are two necessary parts to the racing business, McDuffee's involvement has meant more than that to

this sport and for that his induction is most richly deserved. More specifically when speaking of McDuffee, one must remember the options available and decisions made when it came to sending a few horses off to a second career or seeing them return to the racetrack. In the case of Bee A Magician, a horse McDuffee co-owned, a return to the racetrack was both good for the owners and good for the sport as the champion trotting mare would follow up an undefeated Horse



DERICK GIWNER

Jim Campbell has seen his barn earn more than \$54 million in his career.



DERICK GIWNER

David McDuffee has owned racing greats like Bee A Magician, Pizza Dolce and Bella Bellini.

of the Year campaign in 2013 – winning all 17 of her races – with 42 more starts over the following three years. When she retired, Bee A Magician had won 45 races and over \$4 million.

Many owners with top racing mares sell them before they become broodmares as the risk and timeline change. Then there are owners that fall in love with a filly or mare and the bloodlines that produce champions. Such was the case of McDuffee with a trotting filly he campaigned in 2002-03 with trainer Brett Pelling named Pizza Dolce.

Pizza Dolce was a multiple stakes winner as a freshman and returned

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

CONGRATULATIONS

to all of the 2024 Hall of Fame inductees, including



David Brower, Jim Campbell and David McDuffee

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as a sophomore to capture the Kentucky Futurity filly division on her way to career earnings of \$668k.

Pizza Dolce's retirement from racing paid near-immediate dividends when her first foal Bella Dolce arrived in 2005. The Kadabra-sired home-bred (McDuffee shared ownership in the Ontario-based stallion), would go on to an impressive stakes-winning career, capturing 15 of her 29 career starts for earnings of \$730K.

Like her mother before, McDuffee would try Bella Dolce as a broodmare but this time results were not as quick. McDuffee kept trying to find the right stallion for a mare he really believed in. It would take eight attempts but finally in 2018 the right horse arrived with Bella Bellini, a filly and first offering from the mare by Bar Hopping the winning combination.

Bella Bellini was, as we now know, not an instant hit. In fact far from it considering she went winless in seven starts as a 2-year-old in 2020. McDuffee believed in Bella Bellini, as did trainer Nifty Norman. So instead of selling her, McDuffee staked her as a 3-year-old and she rewarded him with a Hambletonian Oaks trophy and a Breeders Crown win in 2021.

McDuffee had options following Bella Bellini's sophomore year but he didn't waver. Clearly recognizing the value his trotting mare brought to the stage and the sport, he raced her as a 4-year-old.

The definition of a true sportsman, David McDuffee earned a rightful spot in the Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame added a communicator's wing many years back to honor those that have told the story of the great achievements on and off the racetrack.

The sport lost one of its best suddenly and shockingly in 2022 when Dave Brower passed away at the age of 53. Most of the racing industry got to know Dave through his work at The Meadowlands, first as an on-air analyst. He would go on to co-host Hambletonian broadcasts from the track and later would go beyond New Jersey with annual appearances during the Grand Circuit at the Delaware County Fair for the Little Brown Jug and accompanying stakes, and then for two weeks each year at Lexington's famed Red Mile.

I got to know Dave during an earlier period in his life as he looked for a way to get into this sport after graduating from St. John's University and got the attention of Sports Eye staff members. As editor of the publication at the time, I hired Dave on the recommendation that he was bright, hard-working and loved the sport, attributes shared by most of the paper's staff.

Dave became a chartcaller at The Meadowlands for the publication, a job that was not easy to master. With 10 or more horses to write about following each race, it would be easy to overlook something that happened during the race to one or more. Dave was thorough while not being wordy. He had a gamblers mentality, something of incredible value to a publication designed for the betting public.

What shined most when Dave would later take his talents on-screen at The Meadowlands was his incredible perspective of the horses, drivers and trainers that he had honed his skills on by watching on a nightly basis. One must know not just how to watch a race but what to watch for to understand what valuable information Dave was bringing to the public. Handicappers can be separated by the ones that read a program well and those that need no program because they have memorized what they have seen on the track. Dave knew what he saw and was able to seamlessly convey that information to a public in a way that resonated with the sport's fans and bettors alike.

For a life too short spent promoting the sport, Dave Brower's story should be told in the Harness Hall of Fame.

Veteran trainer-driver Ed Lohmeyer and communicator Tim Bojarski will enter the Hall on Sunday as well. Lohmeyer would be competitive among the sport's elite drivers at Yonkers and Roosevelt Raceways. He would later develop young horses, most notably the champion Pacific Rocket, who came on the scene as a freshman in 1993 and go on to earn \$2.3 million in his career.



(ABOVE) CHRIS TULLY / (BELOW) THSI-BC

Broadcaster, handicapper and author Dave Brower (above) passed away suddenly in 2022. Ed Lohmeyer (below) was associated with top horses like Pacific Rocket and Pacific Fella.

Tim Bojarski's commitment to the history of the sport has been evident in his columns in Hoof Beats and beyond. He's helped promote the sport whenever and wherever he can through the years, most deserving in placement among the best in the Communicator's wing.

This year's equine Hall of Fame class is rich with stars from the last decade. Mission Brief, Tall Dark Stranger and Gimpanzee accomplished so much on the track to justify a permanent spot in the Hall. Wiggle It Jiggle it in my mind stands alone for the value he brought to the sport, not just when he won races. It is often forgotten in history what the elements are to prove greatness. In the case of Wiggle It



Jiggle it was heart while battling the best of his generation, horses that likely would have been the best in any generation. The bitter struggles between Wiggle It Jiggle it, Freaky Feet Pete and Always B Miki made 2016 perhaps the most watchable year the sport has ever seen. That came a year after Wiggle It Jiggle it defied all odds winning the Little Brown Jug. A winner of 37 of his 50 races during his 3 and 4-year-old years (2015-16) Wiggle It Jiggle it gets an honor he's deserved for some time.

HOF dinner tickets are \$150 and are available by calling 845-294-6330.

The Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame, 240 Main Street, Goshen, New York is open 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and there is free admission this weekend. Historic Track will be racing with a post time of 1:00 p.m., July 5-7.

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Meadowlands Pace eliminations bring together 3-year-old elite

By Jay Bergman

The top five finishers from the C\$1 million North America Cup contested three weeks ago (June 15) at Woodbine Mohawk Park were all present in the entry box on Tuesday morning (July 2) when a total of 17 sophomores entered for the Meadowlands Pace. On Saturday, two \$50,000 elimination races will be held to determine the 10 finalists for the \$700,000 estimated final on July 13.

Trainer Anthony Beaton will be bringing North America Cup champion Nijinsky in along with fifth-place finisher Legendary Hanover, with the two drawing separately on Saturday.

"I thought they both raced well in the North America Cup, but it was the trip that made the difference," said Beaton, with the understanding that Legendary Hanover got the worst of trips but still hung on well to finish fifth behind his stablemate.

On Saturday Legendary Hanover drew post three in the first elimination (race 7) and Beaton is confident in his colt and hopeful a victory in the trial would give the sophomore some post relief in the final he did not get in the North America Cup.

"I had to decide what to do with both following the North America Cup," said Beaton. "I sat down with Casie (co-owner Coleman) and we mapped out a plan. With qualifiers here on Tuesday we decided to train them instead and skip the qualifiers."

Beaton said that the pair of Legendary Hanover and Nijinsky trained together a mile in 1:55. "They went a solid last half and a big last quarter."

So, despite three weeks on the sidelines Beaton is happy with the way Legendary Hanover is coming into Saturday's contest.

Driver James MacDonald has done an outstanding job sitting behind Legendary Hanover since the Huntsville-sired colt showed up on the scene in Ontario last year. He'll be in the bike on Saturday against a solid group that includes last year's Metro champion and North America Cup runner-up Captain's Quarters (post 4). Jody Jamieson did everything right behind Captain's Quarters in the North America Cup but got outstripped in the stretch.

Two horses that failed to advance to the North America Cup final hope for better racing luck on Saturday in the first elimination. Mirage Hanover had no luck in either Cup trial or consolation, going first-over in the trial and losing by just enough to have to draw for the final spot; a draw he did not win. In the consolation Mirage Hanover got stuck in traffic and had plenty of pace but no room finishing third. He then bounced back in a major way in last week's final prep for The Meadowlands Pace with a career-best 1:49 1/5 victory, pacing a final quarter in 24 3/5, albeit wind aided. Tim Tetrick guides Mirage Hanover from the pole position.

Gem Quality, last year's Breeders Crown champion, was a disappointment on the front end in his North America Cup trial. Trainer Chris Ryder elected to put his colt on the Lasix program, and he debuted with a solid third-place finish behind Mirage Hanover in the June 29 contest over the Meadowlands surface. Gem Quality drew post two in this elimination that also includes, in post order, Number Cruncher (post 5), Ivy Park (post 6), Better Is Nice (post 7), Miki Ray (post 8) and North America Cup consolation winner Remember The Alamo (post 9).

North America Cup winner Nijinsky landed post five among eight sophomores in the second \$50,000 elimination (race 8) and brings top pilot Louis Philippe Roy with him to battle in New Jersey for the first time. The son of Bettor's Delight is a perfect five-for-five this year after winning just once in 10 attempts as a freshman.

"He's just been great all year long," said Beaton of Nijinsky. "In the Cup he got the trip and got the job done. There are a number of horses in this division that are very close and the trip matters in these big races."

Beaton was perhaps a touch modest since Nijinsky has won in a variety of ways this year while facing the best horses in North America each time. Versatility matters when money is on the line and driver Roy has



NEW IMAGE MEDIA

Nijinsky won the North America Cup and takes aim at the Meadowlands Pace starting this Saturday.

many options with Nijinsky.

Trainer Noel Daley had high hopes going into the North America Cup that his defending Dan Patch winner Captain Albano would capture the prestigious event but had to settle for a fourth-place finish behind Nijinsky. A bit of revenge could be in the works this week or perhaps in the final. Captain Albano drew post four in his first race since the North America Cup.

"The trip just didn't work out like we planned," said Daley of the North America Cup. "Todd (McCarthy) left with him and he got away much faster than we expected. The last place I wanted him to be was in the pocket behind Captain's Quarters."

That trip worked out horribly as Captain Albano tried to go to the inside in the stretch in the North America Cup and was shut off by Captain's Quarters. Once he moved for room to the outside the race was pretty much over.

"Well, we definitely learned something," said Daley, referring to the gate speed Captain Albano exhibited. "I can tell you one thing, he won't be letting Captain's Quarters go by like that the next time."

As for this Saturday, Daley has Captain Albano near top form but suggested he would try to have him even better for the final.

"I really didn't have much choice either racing or qualifying him before this race," said Daley. "He's pretty much got four straight weeks with this race and then the Adios elimination and final."

Though there is one less horse in this elimination than the first, it may be deeper in overall talent with Funtime Bayama (post 6) making his debut for new owners and new trainer Andrew Harris in his Meadowlands debut. The North America Cup third-place finisher, a son of He's Watching, has been on the board in all 13 of his career starts racing in Ontario. His Meadowlands debut puts Dexter Dunn behind him for the very first time.

Another newcomer to this group is the late-developing Mccrunch for trainer Nancy Takter. A son of Captain Crunch, Mccrunch (post 2) has shown blistering speed in winning five times this year, including a 1:49 effort on May 31. Yannick Gingras will handle the lines.

Captain Luke (post 8) was never in the hunt in the North America Cup finishing sixth. He'll have to overcome the outside draw for trainer Tony Alagna, who entered three horses in the eliminations and drew posts seven, eight and nine.

Nuclear (post 1), Its Saturday Night (post 3) and Huntingforchrome (post 7) round out the eight horse field.

Saturday is Fan Appreciation Night at The Meadowlands. The Cafe, Rooftop Terrace and Backyard will offer hot dogs, pretzels, popcorn and soda (limit five of each item per transaction) for \$1. Available for \$2 will be Bud and Bud Light drafts. There will also be fireworks at 11 PM.



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Next Generation at Scioto places Ohio's 2YOs into the spotlight

By Derick Gwerner

Those looking to get a view of the future of Standardbred racing in Ohio need only stop in at Scioto Downs on Saturday (July 6) as the track hosts a quartet of \$150,000 Next Generation races for 2-year-olds.

The Next Generation races are the featured attraction on a power-packed card that also includes two \$100,000 Grand Circuit races for fillies – Moni Maker for trotters and Nadia Lobell for pacers – and Ohio Sire Stakes events for male pacers and trotters.

Thirty-six rookie performers – many making their first pari-mutuel starts – will go behind the gate from races seven to 10 in the Next Generation series and it is no surprise that Virgil Morgan Jr., who is seeking his 30th straight training title at the Scioto Downs meet, has a trio of hopefuls signed up for the series.

In the 2-year-old filly pace, Morgan sends out an Odds On Racing (Dana Parham) homebred named Odds On Chesapeake from post seven with Luke Hanners listed to drive. The Downbytheseaside-sired youngster comes off a pair of nondescript qualifying lines, something Morgan admits is by design.

"She trained down really good and has a really good attitude," said Morgan. "I don't put a lot of heat on mine in the qualifiers and I like them to stay on a helmet, keep the bit in their mouths and keep the earplugs in if they wear them. All of those things were done with her and she had pace late in both of her qualifiers. Dana has quite a few pacing fillies and we felt of all the ones we had that she was the most advanced at this time."

While it is difficult to determine where the public will sway in a 2-year-old race, Prolific Fire could get the bulk of the attention at the windows. Raised by Brian Brown, the Catch The Fire filly was recently purchased by Greg Luther Racing and subsequently qualified at Hoosier with a 1:55 2/5 victory. She'll start from post five with Brett Miller listed to drive.

"With today's 2-year-olds, there is a lot of money involved with purchasing them and stud fees. When there is something like this series, owners want to take advantage of it, as I do, but at the same time, to have a first lifetime start in a stakes race on the first week in July, only the strong survive."

-Trainer Virgil Morgan Jr.

What Morgan's filly pacer lacks in flashy qualifying lines, his trotting filly entrant Travel Nurse certainly makes up for it. The daughter of Enterprise out of Poster Pin Up, who has produced three six-figure winners, Travel Nurse rolled to a 2:03 2/5 win on the engine in her first morning work at Scioto and followed it up with a pocket-pulling 2:01 1/5 win in her most recent try.

"She is a homebred for Joyce and Dick Mc Clelland out of a really good mare," said Morgan, who will watch Travel Nurse leave from post five with Brett Miller in the bike. "The filly has been good from day one and has done nothing wrong. She was well in-hand in both qualifiers."

Two of the nine in the field for the filly trot already have pari-mutuel

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 9](#)

THE NEXT GENERATION

SEE OHIO'S TWO-YEAR-OLD STARS
Saturday, July 6



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experience. Aunt Lilly, being sent out by The Stable, was a 6-5 winner at The Meadows recently in 1:58 4/5 and will leave from post six with founder Anthony MacDonald in the bike. Another Uncle Peter-sired lass, Up starts from the outside post nine with Brady Brown back in the bike after a 1:58 2/5 win, also at The Meadows.

Morgan's final Next Generation entrant comes in the 2-year-old colt pace with De Dragon. Also owned by Odds On Racing, the gelded son of Fear The Dragon only just joined the Morgan Jr. barn and blew out his first mile for the trainer with a 1:54 4/5 win by 10 lengths at Scioto.

"He's a recent acquisition that we purchased after his last qualifier. Needless to say, he was pretty good in his first start," said Morgan.

After two qualifying races without Lasix for trainer Jeff Nisonger, Morgan Jr. added the medication prior to his first start and will race all of his horses in the series with it.

"I have my own theories on Lasix," said the trainer. "I think all horses have pulmonary hemorrhaging at one time or another and I personally think Lasix is a great thing. It is therapeutic and needed in our business."

Starting from post two with Hanners in the bike, De Dragon is sure to get plenty of wagering attention, but he's not the only one in the field with good-looking lines. A number of the 2-year-olds in this field have qualified in the 1:55 range and the Ron Burke-trained Swingtown (post eight, Chris Page) owns the fastest mile of the bunch after a 1:54 2/5 winning qualifier on June 18 at The Meadows.

Burke may also have one of the favorites in the 2-year-old colt trot as he sends out Memory Vault from post six off a 1:59 4/5 score. Page will drive

the son of Uncle Peter, who may have his hands full with the undefeated Pink Panther (post two) for the team of Betty and Nick Clegg.

With 21 of the 36 Next Generation starters making their career debuts on Saturday, it brings to the surface whether it makes sense for a stakes race to lead-off the season for these yet unproven youngsters.

"It is kind of a double-edged sword. It is a great thing but it is a lot of pressure for the first lifetime start, and I try to shy away from that to do what is best for the horse," said Morgan, Jr. "You'll see some horses possibly ruined for the year in this race by people overdriving them and getting too aggressive in their first lifetime start, and that's unfortunate. But it

goes for so much money and if things are done right, it is a good thing.

"The race comes with a lot of hype and you have to pony up money to get into it. With today's 2-year-olds, there is a lot of money involved with purchasing them and stud fees. When there is something like this series, owners want to take advantage of it, as I do, but at the same time, to have a first lifetime start in a stakes race on the first week in July, only the strong survive."

Given the above statements it is no surprise that Morgan Jr. would

like to see his horses race more conservatively and there is a method to his mentality. Over the last three years only three of the 10 winners in Next Generation races have been successful on the lead.

"Nobody likes to win more than me but I would venture to say that the statistics aren't really good if you land on the front in these races. In most cases it will be beneficial to those who have late pace. So I would like all of them to stay on a helmet and get good trips, but once the gate folds it is up to our drivers," said Morgan Jr.

The Scioto Saturday card gets underway at 5:50 PM (EDT) and offers 15 live races. The Sire Stakes go in races one, five and 12 while the two Grand Circuit stakes are races 11 and 13.



Hail Mary joins MGM Yonkers International Trot field

One week after announcing defending champion Vivid Wise As as the first participant in the 2024 MGM Yonkers International Trot, Hail Mary has accepted the second invite to the \$1,000,000 event slated for September 7 at historic Yonkers Raceway.

Despite being a late bloomer who didn't debut until well into his 3-year-old season, Hail Mary has put together an impressive résumé across Europe, winning 28 of 50 career starts and north of \$1.6 million for owner Mehdi Yazdanpanh under the Stall Mary AB banner. Trained in his early years by Robert Bergh, the now 8-year-old son of Googoo Gaagaa switched to the Daniel Redén barn prior to his 6-year-old season where he remains to date.

Hail Mary, who owns a lifetime mark of 1:50 2/5, has victories in the Swedish Trotting Derby, Breeders Crown, Aby Grand Prix and a number of other Group I races during his time on the track. He made an unsuccessful attempt at the Prix d'Amerique earlier this year, but with regular driver Orjan Kihlstrom, who will make the trip to New York for the MGM Yonkers International Trot, recently won the Group I Jamtland Grand Prix (June 9) for the second consecutive year.

According to Yazdanpanh, Hail Mary will prep for the MGM Yonkers International Trot with races at Årjäng on July 13 and to defend his title in the Hugo Åbergs Memorial on July 30, before making the exciting journey to the United States.

"We have not participated [in the International Trot] before but

we are really look forward to racing Hail Mary at Yonkers," said Yazdanpanh.

The MGM Yonkers International Trot will be the centerpiece of a spectacular afternoon card (12:15 PM EDT post time) on September 7 that also features a pair of \$250,000 Invitationals for older horses and the \$1.8 million finals of the New York Sire Stakes.

Goshen races to be livestreamed

This weekend's races from Friday (July 5) through Sunday (July 7) at Goshen Historic Track will be livestreamed on the track's [YouTube channel](#).

Following is the schedule of races:

Friday, July 5 – New York County Fair Races

Saturday, July 6 – NY Sire Stakes Pacers, 3-Year-Old Landmarks and C.K.G. Billings

Sunday, July 7 – NY Sire Stakes Trotters, 2-Year-Old Landmarks and Hall of Fame Trot

First post time each day is at 1 p.m. and gates open at 11 a.m.

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CONFESSIONS

By Keith Gisser

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

A while back I mentioned that I was part of a study by Stanford University analyzing sports wagering patterns and results. The study leaders have agreed to an interview once the study is published, but wrapping up the survey earlier this month got me thinking.

In harness racing, ever since I graduated from splitting \$2 wagers four ways with my buddies in hope we would make enough to pay for pizza, I have kept pretty careful records. I kept track of what I bet and what I cashed for on a daily basis, and computed weekly, monthly and annual return on investment (ROI) for every year from 1978 through today. I moved from typically wagering \$20-30 a card in my late teens to \$50-100 and then often to several hundred per card, before tapering off as marriage and family responsibilities took precedence. These days I also keep track of ROI on WPS, exactas/daily doubles and Pick 3s/trifectas. On the rare occasion that I play a superfecta or Pick 4 I keep track of that too.

I simplify my record-keeping. I am primarily a win bettor. Obviously Pick 3s, Pick 4s and daily doubles are more similar (you are just worried about picking winners) than exactas are, but in many jurisdictions, the takeout increases with the number of "legs," since it's easier to "hide" the usurious takeout on that bigger payout. It's similar to what the sports books do on three or four leg parlays.

These days, with online platforms like <https://bets.drf.com>, record keeping is even easier still, even though currently my primary investment in the sport is buying and racing horses rather than gambling on them. Gambling yielded me a higher ROI.

I have been fortunate enough to show a profit in 40 of 45 years, the largest being about \$22,000, the smallest just barely \$100. The biggest losing year, I lost about \$7,300, but that was the only year I lost more than \$5,000. I am not saying this to pat myself on the back, but to show how important I think that record-keeping is in gambling.

If you don't keep careful records, it is very easy to slide down a slippery slope of wagering far more than you should – of trying to make it all up too quickly, when in reality your play should increase when things are going well and decrease when you are on a cold streak.

When it comes to the spread of sports wagering, we are seeing increased calls to gambling help lines, far more so than we did with the spread of online horse racing. I was reading an article online, I don't remember where, that discussed the huge increase and that's when it hit me.

I don't keep records of my sports wagering. Granted, other than during March Madness and the various pro sport playoff seasons, I don't wager much on sports. But it clearly contributes to the increase in problem gambling. Many sports bettors are betting simply because they want some action on the game (or in-game, which for me is a fool's mission) or while they are at the bar watching. And don't get me started on the effects of alcohol and gambling.

Among the questions the Stanford survey asked were how much of a payment would you take monthly to stop gambling? How much would it have to be to cut your betting in half? Without logging in, how much do you wager? How much do you wager on particular sports and how much do you wager on parlays?

It gave me a very interesting insight into my sports betting, forcing me to be more thoughtful. In the last leg of the three-part survey, held over 60 days, we were told that we could get a \$5 accuracy bonus based on our answers to those numbers (Total pay for the survey was \$5 for the first leg, \$5 for syncing your account to their app, \$10 for the second leg and \$25 for completing everything).

Even though I do no record keeping on my sports wagers, I earned a \$4.98 bonus, meaning that my feel for my wagers is pretty accurate. And I have to attribute that to my experience with horse wagering record keeping.

Look, I am not sure if this survey method can be applied to horse wagering, but I am eager to discuss it with them. All I know is that participating was useful for me.

That's it for this month. Stakes season is revving up and so are the freshmen. So go cash. But keep track of your wagers and ROI.

First-crop stallions on display in Pennsylvania Sire Stakes

Attention, all you Pennsylvania studs who've been dominating sires stakes. You're about to meet rivals from the first crops of two new shooters who are determined to take some of your cash away.

Those new players are Papi Rob Hanover and Tall Dark Stranger, and filly pacers from their first crops will be heavily represented in Thursday's \$180,221 PA Sires Stake, known as the Sand Tart, at Hollywood Casino at The Meadows. The Independence Day card blasts off at 12:45 PM and also features a \$100,000 PA Stallion Series event for freshman filly pacers.

Of the 17 fillies scheduled to compete in the Sand Tart, six — more than one-third — are by Papi Rob Hanover or Tall Dark Stranger, a total that matches the six produced by Captaintreacherous or Sweet Lou, two longtime pillars of the PA breeding industry.

And who wouldn't want to have a Tall Dark Stranger or Papi Rob Hanover? Tall Dark Stranger was the 2020 Horse of the Year and banked more than \$2 million in his racing career. For his part, Papi Rob Hanover paced to a world-record 1:47 1/5.1 in an elimination of the 2020 Delvin Miller Adios Pace for the Orchids, his final race before injuries forced his retirement. That remains the all-age pacing mark at The Meadows.

Papi Rob Hanover and Tall Dark Stranger youngsters are plentiful throughout the sport and ready to do battle on many fronts. According to Harnesslink, there are a combined 213 freshmen of the two new sires racing or set to race.

You don't have to tell Hall of Fame trainer Linda Toscano about the Papi Rob Hanovers.

"I saw that amazing mile he raced in his Adios elimination," Toscano said. "I liked the horse and thought he would be a good sire."

In the Sand Tart, she'll be sending out a pair of Papi Rob Hanover youngsters: Odds On You (race 6, post 6, Andrew McCarthy), a homebred for Carl Howard and Odds On Racing, and Allegra Hanover (race 3, post 3, McCarthy), whom Toscano purchased for \$90,000 for owners Jablonsky Held Stable, South Mountain Stables, JAF Racing LLC and Camelot Stable Inc.

Odds On You, a larger filly, is eligible to most of the rich stakes, but Toscano has chosen a different approach for Allegra Hanover, who's on the small side.

"She won both her baby races, and she handles like a little sports car," said Toscano. "We're starting her out in Pennsylvania, and she'll be eligible to more as the year goes on."

At this point of the season, it's too early to predict what impact first crops might make, but Toscano is certain about one thing.

"I don't see any reason why Papi Rob Hanover and Tall Dark Stranger both can't be top sires," she said. "I think everybody's excited about the new sires. It makes buying yearlings a little bit easier."

-edited release (Evan Pattak for MSOA)

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 or contact winnie@horseadoption.com / (734) 320-7918

Bartlett enjoying the ride into Zweig Memorial with Sir Pinocchio

By Ken Weingartner

Jason Bartlett will look to continue a memorable season with Sir Pinocchio in Thursday's (July 4) \$300,000 Dr. Harry M. Zweig Memorial for 3-year-old trotters at Vernon Downs, less than a week after the two teamed up for Bartlett's first-ever win in the MGM Yonkers Trot at Bartlett's home track.

The fact that triumph came after Bartlett watched his oldest son, Kobe, receive his high school diploma made the day's events even more special.

"It was a great day," Bartlett said, adding with a laugh, "I'm getting old, I guess. With him graduating, it kind of puts things in perspective."

Bartlett has been the leading driver at MGM Yonkers Raceway a dozen times in his career, and is atop the standings again this season, but until this past Friday never captured the track's signature event. That changed with Sir Pinocchio, who won the Yonkers Trot — the first jewel in the Trotting Triple Crown — by a half-length over Situationship in 1:54 4/5.

"It's eluded me for a long time," Bartlett said. "It seems like I've been so close, had the right horses, done great in the eliminations, and then it just never worked out in the finals. So, halfway down the lane, when I knew I was winning it, I was like, thank God. It was good to finally get it done."

Bartlett needed to hustle to Yonkers following his son's graduation ceremony. The drive from the family's hometown, Goshen, N.Y., is roughly an hour under optimum conditions.

"It was kind of stressful," Bartlett said. "I was trying to enjoy the moment there, knowing I had to get to Yonkers. I watched him accept his diploma — one of our best friends gave it to him because he's on the school board, so that part was good too — walk back to his seat, and I was literally sprinting to my car."

"I was just trying to embrace the moment and then switched over real quick to business. I made it in enough time, though. It definitely was all worth it."

The Yonkers Trot victory was the second Grand Circuit score of the season for Bartlett and Sir Pinocchio, following their triumph in the Dexter Cup at Freehold Raceway in May. For the year, Sir Pinocchio has four wins and three seconds in seven starts, good for \$293,426 in purses.

Sir Pinocchio's earnings lead all trotters in North America. Bartlett, incidentally, tops all drivers in North America in the same category, with \$5.39 million in purses.

A homebred son of Met's Hall-Lady Cromwell owned by Carolyn Atherton, Sir Pinocchio went off stride in three of seven races last year, but also displayed talent, such as when he won the New York Sire Stakes Excelsior Series championship from post eight at Batavia Downs in 1:59. It was one of two wins last season for Sir Pinocchio, who is trained by Ed Hart.

"Last year, he was such a good colt, but you never got to see it because he had a few breaking problems; he would make breaks for no reason," Bartlett said. "But me and Eddie knew that if he came back good, we could have a really, really good year with this horse. He's showing



MIKE LIZZI

Sir Pinocchio winning the MGM Yonkers Trot.

everybody now kind of what we expected last year."

Sir Pinocchio will head to the \$300,000 Zweig Memorial Open at Vernon Downs as the 3-1 second choice on the morning line. Ron Burke-trained millionaire T C I, who has 13 wins and two seconds in 15 career races, is the 5-2 favorite.

T C I, unbeaten in three starts this season, will start from post four with regular driver David Miller. Sir Pinocchio will leave from post one.

"He's got a great attitude," Bartlett said about Sir Pinocchio. "He's very handy, and he's quick as a cat for a trotter. He can switch gears really fast. He can race from the front, the back, any size track. He's just a good horse."

"Winning for Eddie Hart is always special," Bartlett added. "He's a great guy. Him and his wife, they do everything by themselves, and they work their tails off. For them to have success like this, it's great."

Sir Pinocchio is not staked to the remaining two legs of the Trotting Triple Crown, the Hambletonian on Aug. 3 at The Meadowlands and Kentucky Futurity on Oct. 6 at Lexington's Red Mile.

Three of the Top 10 horses in the most recent Road to the Hambletonian rankings put out by Meadowlands announcer/analyst Ken Warkentin are in the Zweig Open: T C I, Security Protected, and Daiquiri Hanover. Four other horses in the nine-horse field are also eligible to the Hambletonian: Amazing Catch, Bargain, Dame Good Time, and Wild Ticket.

Vernon Downs also will host the \$128,000 Zweig Memorial for 3-year-old female trotters. R Melina is the 3-1 morning-line favorite, leaving from post one with Tyler Buter driving for trainer John Butenschoen. The field also includes Warrawee Michelle, a Breeders Crown champion in 2023 who is making her seasonal debut for trainer/driver Ake Svanstedt.

All nine fillies in the race are eligible to the \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks on Aug. 3 at The Meadowlands.

Racing begins at 6:05 p.m. Thursday at Vernon Downs.

New Jersey budget to include appropriations for purses

New Jersey's horse racing industry will receive a \$20 million appropriation for purses as part of the state's fiscal year 2025 budget signed recently by Gov. Phil Murphy. The appropriation will be divided equally between Standardbreds and Thoroughbreds.

Funds allocated for Standardbred racing include money for overnight purses at the Meadowlands and Freehold, as well as for the New Jersey Sire Stakes and breeder awards.

The state first introduced the purse appropriations in 2019. The initial legislation covered a five-year period, totaling \$100 million, through 2023. The state renewed the funding for 2024.

Last week, the state Senate and Assembly both approved legislation that would extend the appropriation annually through fiscal year 2029. That bill, which passed 76-0 in the Assembly and 40-0 in the

Senate, has been sent to the governor for his signature.

"We are extremely grateful to the Legislature and Gov. Murphy for their continued support," Standardbred Breeders & Owners Association President Mark Ford said. "There is no doubt the previous appropriations strengthened our industry and fostered growth, whether it be in breeding or racing."

"Thank you to everyone who supported our efforts and helped deliver our message to the legislators and governor. The SBOANJ board, TrotPAC, and our policy partner AMG will continue to work with the Legislature to ensure that our industry's future remains bright."

-release (SBOANJ)

RACE OF THE WEEK

9 VERNON THU

1 Mile Trot. DR. HARRY M. ZWIG MEMORIAL 3 YEAR OLD OPEN - MAIN EVENT (DECLARATION FEE - \$4,000 + \$27.50 STARTING FEE - DETENTION BARN BY 8 PM WEDNESDAY) Purse \$300,000

1ST HALF LATE DOUBLE (9-10) | EXACTA - TRIFECTA | 10 CENT SUPERFECTA

1 SIR PINOCCHIO

3:15.44 Q \$41,918

3-1 J. Bartlett 17-3-5-1 (.176)

br g 3, by Met's Hall, Lady Cromwell by Chapter Seven

Carolyn Atherton, Scarsdale, NY

E. Hart 6-1-3-1 (.167)

Br - Carolyn Atherton, NY

Last 4 Sts-\$214,233

1:54.4 YR

1:58 VD 7/8

24 VD 2 0 2 0 \$35,183 24 Tot 7 4 3 0 +\$293,426
23 * 1 1 0 0 +\$10,000 23 Tot 7 2 1 2 \$48,427
22 VD 0 0 0 0 -Life 14 6 4 2 \$341,853

28 Jun24	8YR	fst ⁷ 30	29	-58	1:26	1:54	D-MGM Y TROT	300000	2	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JaBartitt	EdHart	29	29	28	28	1:54	90	+2.6w	4.40	SirPinchoStutshipBargain	Led,batld 1st qtr safely-7
14 Jun24	5VD	fst ⁷ 30	26	-55	1:24	1:52	D-EBC 3YOCT	101500	7	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	JaBartitt	EdHart	26	28	28	29	1:53	93		2.30	StutshipSirPincho ThinkMnky	-7
3 Jun24	8MR	fst ⁷ 40	29	-59	1:28	1:56	NYSS	58100	1	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JaBartitt	EdHart	29	30	29	28	1:56	87	+4.3w	*.05	SirPincho FlyBy CrazyBrth	Rtk,own way,held-6
27 May24	9VD	slv ⁷ 40	26	-56	1:23	1:51	NYSS	39233	6	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	4 ³	2 ¹	2 ¹	JaBartitt	EdHart	26	24	29	27	1:51	103		5.00	DmeGodTime SirPincho Devastate	-7
18 May24	5PCD	slv ⁷ 40	27	-56	1:25	1:53	W4-7PM	17000	4	3 ²	3 ²	3 ²	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	JaBartitt	EdHart	27	24	29	27	1:53	93	+1.7w	*.60	HndDvDarsSirPinchoDedneHale	Chl,held at bay-7
4 May24	10HdCt	fst ⁷ 50	30	-59	1:28	1:56	DexterCup	134900	6	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JaBartitt	EdHart	30	29	28	28	1:56	82	+8.7w	2.10	SirPincho BlackhwZ StookHnv	-8
17 Apr24	7YR	fst ⁷ 50	29	-59	1:28	1:57	W3MT5	16000	7	3 ²	3 ²	3 ²	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JaBartitt	EdHart	29	30	30	28	1:57	77	+1.8w	*.85	SrPnchEIMsrGdsMknwll	1st up,led 3/4 handily-8

2 SECURITY PROTECTED

21:52.4 (1) \$21,947 SHS-HBG \$250,000

6-1 Ti. Tetrick 0-0-0-0 (0.000)

b c 3, by Father Patrick, Thatsnotmyname by Windsons Legacy

Bradley J Grant,Milton, ON, CA Order By Stable Ab,Boras,SD

M. Melander 6-2-0-3 (.333)

Br - Order By Stable Ab,SD

Last 4 Sts-\$87,787

1:53 Pcd 5/8

1:52.4 Lx1

24 VD 0 0 0 0 -24 -4 3 0 0 \$87,786
23 VD 0 0 0 0 -23 -11 4 2 3 \$354,754
22 VD 0 0 0 0 -Life 15 7 2 3 \$342,540

28 Jun24	8YR	fst ⁷ 30	29	-58	1:26	1:54	D-MGM Y TROT	300000	1	xip7ds	7ds	7ds	7ds	7ds	7ds	TiTetrick	MarMelndr	29	29	28	28	1:54	90	+2.6w	*1.20	SirPincho Stutship Bargain	Speed,bk 1st tm-7
8 Jun24	10PCD	fst ⁷ 20	28	-56	1:25	1:54	PASS-3YOCT	72587	3	5 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	BrxBoyd	MarMelndr	28	28	29	28	1:54	84	+2.8w	*.30	SrPnchBlackhwZCoorsHnv	Down road,all out-7
31 May24	4Mw	fst ⁷ 30	28	-57	1:25	1:53	PASS-3YOCT	72968	7	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DaPalone	MarMelndr	28	29	28	28	1:53	92		*.70	SecrtyPrt BlackhwZ LzTheSpk	-8
19 May24	8PCD	fst ⁷ 60	27	-56	1:24	1:53	All-Stars	30000	6	5 ⁵	5 ⁵	5 ⁵	5 ⁵	5 ⁵	5 ⁵	TiTetrick	MarMelndr	28	29	27	27	1:53	90	+2.4w	*.50	SecrtyPrt WntHnv Ordained	3d ov,own wile-8
27 Apr24	8M1	fst ⁷ 50	29	-58	1:25	1:52	Qua	423000	2	4 ⁴	4 ⁴	4 ⁴	4 ⁴	4 ⁴	4 ⁴	TiTetrick	MarMelndr	30	28	27	27	1:54	91		nb	Karl WntSldr SecrtyPrt	Rail,angld lane,nw bid-7
25 Nov23	5M1	fst ⁷ 50	27	-56	1:24	1:52	VlyVctry	423000	1	3 ¹	3 ²	3 ²	3 ⁴	4 ⁹	4 ⁹	TiTetrick	MarMelndr	28	28	28	28	1:53	83	+4.3w	15.00	Karl DaighHnv WntSldr	Shole,laded-8
18 Nov23	1M1	fst ⁷ 50	28	-56	1:24	1:53	Qua	20000	5	3 ⁵	3 ⁶	3 ⁴	3 ⁷	3 ¹²	3 ¹²	TiTetrick	MarMelndr	29	27	28	28	1:55	77		nb	TactApSmbachHnvSecrtyPrt	Sat,angld,outfinsh-5

3 WILD TICKET

3:15.32 (7/8) Q \$24,011 LEX-SEL \$200,000

12-1 Ma. Melander 0-0-0-0 (0.000)

b c 3, by Chapter Seven, On The Wild Side by Muscle Hill

Amo Stb Inc,Lighthouse PntFLK Kiehlern,SD Heights Stb,NY;Mantoro LLC,Greenwich,CT

M. Melander 6-2-0-3 (.333)

Br - Al J Libfeld,ON, CA

Last 4 Sts-\$73,991

1:53.2 TqD 7/8

1:55.1 TqD 5/8

24 * 2 0 0 0 \$70,366 24 Tot 3 2 1 0 \$72,033
23 VD 1 0 0 0 \$8,656 23 Tot 10 2 1 2 \$117,306
22 VD 0 0 0 0 -Life 13 4 2 2 \$189,339

14 Jun24	6VD	fst ⁷ 30	28	-57	1:25	1:53	D-EBC 3YOCT	101500	3	1 ¹	2 ¹	3 ¹	2 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DeDunn	MarMelndr	28	29	27	27	1:53	89		2.00	WildTicket FlyBy DmeGodTime	-8
27 May24	8VD	gd ⁷ 40	28	-59	1:28	1:55	NYSS	39233	5	2 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DeDunn	MarMelndr	28	30	29	27	1:55	78		*.30	WildTicket Notinghm VctrLszlo	-7
10 May24	13M1	slv ⁷ 50	27	-57	1:26	1:53	3-4ocnw2	14500	9	6 ¹⁰	5 ⁵	4 ³	4 ²	2 ¹	2 ¹	DeDunn	MarMelndr	29	29	28	26	1:53	82	+4.5w	*.90	PpLrdWtckLzOnThBl	2w pst 1/4,tck,ov,rot-9
27 Apr24	1M1	fst ⁷ 50	29	-58	1:28	1:54	Qua	423000	1	2 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	MatMelndr	MarMelndr	29	29	29	26	1:54			nb	WildTicketMarshHlBrghStr	Pkt,led bef 1/2,safely-7
25 Nov23	5M1	fst ⁷ 50	27	-56	1:23	1:51	VlyVctry	423000	1	3 ¹	3 ²	3 ²	3 ⁴	4 ⁹	4 ⁹	BrSears	MarMelndr	28	28	28	28	1:56	69	+4.4w	11.10	WntSldr DaighHnv Waterfall	Led,shuld,empty-9
18 Nov23	8M1	fst ⁷ 40	28	-57	1:26	1:55	VlyVctry	20000	4	1 ¹	3 ²	3 ²	6 ²	8 ⁶	8 ⁶	BrSears	MarMelndr	28	29	29	29	1:56	69				-10
27 Oct23	13HdP	fst ⁷ 60	26	-56	1:25	1:51	D-BrCrown-F	700000	8	9 ¹⁴	8 ⁹	9 ⁸	9 ¹²	7 ¹³	7 ¹³	BrSears	MarMelndr	29	28	28	27	1:54	84		166.70	Karl TCI SecrtyPrt	

4 T C I

2:15.14 (1) \$29,920 SHS-HBG \$150,000

5-2 Dv. Miller 0-0-0-0 (0.000)

b c 3, by Cantab Hall, Nicole's Promise by Dream Vacation

Burke Rq Stb,PA;Hatfield Stbs & Knox Services,OH;Weaver Brusconi,PA

R. Burke 2-0-1-1 (.000)

Br - Concord Stud Farm LLC,NJ

Last 4 Sts-\$264,762

1:52.2 Mw 5/8

*1:51.4 Lx1

24 VD 0 0 0 0 -24 -3 3 0 0 \$89,761
23 VD 0 0 0 0 -23 -12 10 2 0 +\$123,870
22 VD 0 0 0 0 -Life 15 13 2 0 +\$138,631

29 Jun24	9M1	gd ⁷ 70	27	-57	1:26	1:53	REYNOLDS	34750	6	2 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DaMiller	RoBurke	28	29	28	27	1:53	87		*.10	TCI TonyAdams Caballero	-9
8 Jun24	12PCD	fst ⁷ 20	26	-57	1:25	1:53	PaSS 3YOCT	72187	6	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DaMiller	RoBurke	26	30	28	27	1:53	88	+2.8w	*.05	TCI DaighHnv Ordained	Own clip,all out-6
31 May24	6Mw	fst ⁷ 30	27	-56	1:24	1:52	PASS-3YOCT	72586	3	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DaMiller	RoBurke	27	28	28	28	1:52	98		*.10	TCI Ordained CoorsHnv	-7
18 May24	1M1	fst ⁷ 50	28	-57	1:25	1:53	Qua	423000	7	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DaMiller	RoBurke	28	28	28	27	1:53			nb	TCI AlamoMsn VctrLszlo	Led,opnd up,handily-7
3 May24	2M1	fst ⁷ 50	28	-57	1:27	1:54	Qua	423000	3	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	DaMiller	RoBurke	28	29	29	27	1:54			nb	TCI BrghStar Waterfall	Pkt,2w bef 3/4,safely-5
27 Oct23	13HdP	fst ⁷ 60	26	-56	1:25	1:51	D-BrCrown-F	700000	5	1 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	DaMiller	RoBurke	26	29	28	27	1:52	94		1.30	Karl TCI SecrtyPrt	-10
6 Oct23	3Lx1	fst ⁷ 10	28	-56	1:24	1:51	INSTALION	67800	5	1 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	DaMiller	RoBurke	28	28	28	26	1:51	93		1.08	Karl TCI StrMetric	-7

5 DAQUIRI HANOVER

3:15.31 (1) \$12,503 LEX-SEL \$170,000

5-1 A. Stvanstedt 7-2-1-0 (.286)

b c 3, by Bar Hopping, Dab Hanover by Donato Hanover

Ake Stvanstedt Inc,Wrightstown,NJ;Stable Why Not,Delray Bch,FL;Tomas Andersson,SD

A. Stvanstedt 9-2-1-0 (.222)

Br - Hanover Shs Farms Inc,PA

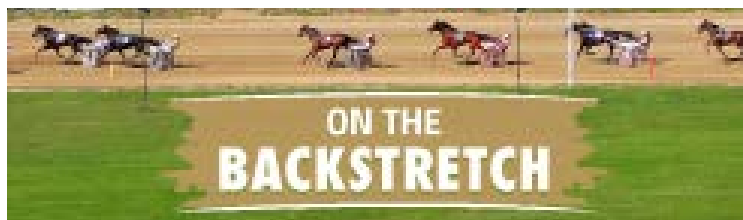
Last 4 Sts-\$136,047

1:53.1 M1

1:55.2 Pcd 5/8

24 VD 0 0 0 0 -24 Tot 2 1 1 0 \$25,006
23 VD 0 0 0 0 -23 Tot 5 1 2 0 \$141,000
22 VD 0 0 0 0 -Life 7 5 1 0 \$166,006

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BY DERICK GIWNER

Jay Hochstetler is climbing the harness racing ladder in a hurry. Since starting a full-time barn in 2021 the 31-year-old trainer has seen his stable increase its earnings by a substantial amount. In 2023 that total was \$1,536,528 and got home “Rising Star” honors from the United States Harness Writer’s Association.

Based in Indiana at Hoosier Park, Hochstetler has branched out on the Grand Circuit recently and will start Ponda Jet in Saturday’s Graduate series final at The Meadowlands. While he races nearly five days a week at this time of the year, the opinionated Illinois native found some time to discuss his time in the sport and much more. Enjoy!

TRAINER JAY HOCHSTETLER

How did you get started in harness racing?

I’m a fourth generation horseman so I was born into it, but I didn’t really get into it until I was 15 or 16; I was more worried about sports before then. I started to help my dad out at the barn and it took off from there.

With such a strong family involvement, was there ever a chance you wouldn’t be involved in the sport?

Oh yeah. I went to college and I started in economics and thought about it. I did well in school but I’d come home every summer and got closer and closer to [harness racing] so I decided to stick with it.

Your dad Homer has almost 1,500 driving wins and well over 2,000 as a trainer. Can you talk about what you’ve learned from him?

He’s my mentor in just about everything. I’m very fortunate to have him. He’s an excellent horseman. He’s got decades of experience and the success to go along with it.

You are now in your fourth full year of training and last year won the Rising Star award from USHWA. Is your career progressing as you expected?

Last year was definitely a bit of a shock. We’ve done well but last year was above my expectations. I’d like to replicate last year but it will be tough. I think we have some good horses this year. I’d say I’ve exceeded where I expected to be at this point.

Where are you stabled and how many horses do you have?

I’m stabled right at Hoosier Park and we have 25 horses.

What is your favorite track to race at? Why?

The Red Mile. I went down there every year as a kid because my mom [Connie] works down there and it is the best surface for the horse. I love the atmosphere. It is just special.

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

I’m a pretty big sports guy, especially soccer and basketball. I also play video games to get my mind off of the races at night.

I read that you are a Chicago Bulls and a New York Yankees fan. How does that happen?

I’ve started to really get into the [Indiana] Pacers since I live here and got to go to the games now at affordable prices. I grew up in Chicago, so I have a natural tendency to root for some Chicago teams. The reason I



DEAN GILLETTE

Jay Hochstetler had a career year in 2024 and was voted “Rising Star” by the United States Harness Writer’s Association.

ended up with the Yankees is because George Steinbrenner owned Balmoral Park, so when they were winning the World Series I always got free hats when I was 6, 7, 8 years old and started to root for them.

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

I was a very, very good volleyball player. I played all through high school and was all-conference there. There are not a lot of scholarship teams for men’s volleyball but I played for the club at University of Kentucky and made the all-national team in my senior year in Kentucky.

What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

Pressure, but it is a good thing.

What is the best advice you’ve ever gotten or given about harness racing?

My dad stresses to keep it simple. People want to throw a ton of equipment [at a problem] and make changes when the slightest thing is wrong but sometimes you just have to let a horse work through it.

What was your best moment in harness racing?

Definitely winning the Dan Patch [2023 with Ponda Warrior]. I’ve watched that replay enough to make me sick, but it doesn’t get old.

Which is the best horse you’ve ever trained?

Ponda Warrior, no doubt.

According to my research you were the 2009 Illinois Amateur Driver of the Year. Why didn’t you pursue driving?

I went to college, so I couldn’t consistently drive all the time. By the time I was 18 we had a stakes barn, so they really didn’t have horses for me to learn on and get good at it. I think I get way too anxious and I don’t have the mindset for it. I found that I was much better at training than driving.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 15](#)

You did quite a bit of writing for Horseman & Fair World years ago. Do you miss that aspect of the sport?

I still write an article once a month for the Midwest Harness Report. That is enough to give me my fill of doing it. I do miss it. I loved working for Kathy [Parker] and Gordon [Waterstone]. They taught me so much about not only writing but in terms of the business. There were times I thought that was the path I should go down, doing that alone. I'm happy I still get to dabble in it.

On social media you tend to be vocal and it gets you in trouble at times. Is it hard to keep your opinion to yourself?

I think I'm getting better than I used to be. I liked to argue every chance I got, especially when I was younger. I've learned to pick my battles as I've gotten a little older.

Let's talk horses now...What are your expectations for Ponda Jet in Saturday's Graduate Final?

Obviously Winner's Bet is going to be really tough to beat, but [Ponda Jet] put in two super performances. If he stays his healthy self he can definitely be second, and if Winner's Bet has a bad day or tough trip, there is no reason he can't contend for [the win].

Do you see Ponda Jet as the type of horse that can keep getting better and move to that next level?

I do because he's a horse that has taken a lot of mental growth. He's had the physical tools most of his life and every couple of months he seems to get a little bit smarter and easier to drive. Him being able to sit in holes now is something he couldn't do at 2 and hardly could do as a 3-year-old. He's a lot handier of a horse now. All things considered he is moving in the right direction, and you have to be able to do that as a Grand Circuit horse.

What will we see from 2024 Dan Patch winner Ponda Warrior this year?

I'm hoping to race him this week at Hoosier. He's eligible to the Haughton at The Meadowlands. If he puts in a strong performance I'll probably send him out for that. Besides that he has Grand Circuit races at Hoosier, the Canadian Pacing Derby and the Breeders Crown.

Where is last year's Indiana champion 2-year-old filly trotter Ponda Title?

She had a brutally unlucky injury. I don't even know if you can call it an injury. She has a genetic spine condition that basically made her untrainable, so she is already bred to Temporal Hanover. They said she's always had it but there were no symptoms until this winter.

What's the deal with the "Ponda" name? Where did it come from?

That is from the Ponda Acres farm. They name all of their horses with Ponda and I've just been fortunate to buy a lot of good horses from them. The first one we bought was Ponda Warrior. They raise really nice horses and have good mares. I just buy from them. I've never trained for them or anything like that. I've become friends with them because I've bought a bunch and done well for their broodmares. It has just been good luck.

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

I've had one on my mind the last couple of days that sticks out a lot. I think one of the best things we could do is to find a different avenue for our broadcasting and get rid of Roberts. I think we spend a lot of money with them and don't get a good enough return on the quality and accessibility of our signals.

I did see you complaining on X about not being able to see some races in HD. Is that a big problem?

On my TV apps it is very spotty and their website is caveman quality.



DEAN GILLETTE

Ponda Warrior winning the 2023 Dan Patch at Hoosier Park.

They don't even have a phone app. You have to go through their website with a browser and if you go off you have to log back in every time. All of these tracks have converted to HD and I don't think they are getting their bang for the buck for it.

How do you view the future of harness racing?

I think it is going to be regional and some places will falter and others will succeed; we are already seeing that. The reason that we've struggled over the last few decades is that we've been happy to stay in the status quo and eventually when you do that long enough it hurts you. It might be that some regions have to change.

As a younger person involved in the sport, how do we increase that type of audience?

It's tough. I think the pari-mutuel model is the superior way to gamble, as a person who also does sports gambling too, but sports betting has done a much better job of marketing the ability to gamble on it and do well.

What role does your wife Amy play in the Hochstetler organization?

She's a veterinarian. Her primary practice is Thoroughbreds in Shelbyville at Horseshoe Indianapolis but she still moonlights as my veterinarian half the week and I'm very fortunate to have a person that cares as much as I do about my horses to provide ideas on how to help them.

What does a day in the life of Jay Hochstetler look like?

I'm at Hoosier Park all morning until we feed lunch around noon, training all the horses and taking care of them. I have a farm about 20 minutes from the racetrack and I fiddle around there most of the afternoon. We race five days a week here, so it is right back in the thick of it by six o'clock at night.

Time for the stretch drive.

Best Horse you ever saw: Muscle Hill.

Lasix – Yes or No: Yes, until they provide a suitable alternative.

Favorite TV Show: Peaky Blinders.

Trotters or Pacers: Trotters.



"New" Communicators Hall of Fame exhibit debuts Saturday

The United States Harness Writers Association (USHWA) will celebrate the opening of the new, interactive Communicators Hall of Fame (CHOF) kiosk, inside the Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame at Goshen, NY, on Saturday, July 6, 2024, with a special ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 am.

"The most collaborative and expansive exhibit update this year has been the Communicators Hall of Fame," noted Museum Director Janet Terhune. "In association with a committed group of members from the United States Harness Writers Association, the Museum has designed and implemented a new look and digital framework to celebrate the accomplishments of those elected to the Communicators Hall of Fame. This effort is likely to lead the way in other digital installations and updates that will renew and refresh the Museum's overall presentation."

"We are so thrilled and thankful to the Museum for housing the members of the Communicators Hall of Fame as we move into the future via this new display," Michael Carter, USHWA President, announced. "Our recognized Hall of Fame members—which includes writers, publicists, and other top communicators within the harness racing industry—deserve to have first-rate recognition, and this modern kiosk does just that."

With space limited within the Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame, the decision was made to showcase the CHOF members in an upgraded, modern format. The CHOF kiosk will allow visitors to search for a member alphabetically and will present the CHOF member's biography and pertinent information in a digital format, along with accompanying photographs.

An informal, light brunch will be served following the ceremony, which is free and open to the public.

-release (U.S. Harness Writers Association)

ONE-TWO SEPARATED BY A POINT IN TOP 10

The Week 3 edition of the Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll released Tuesday found the top-two horses separated by one point — equaling the closest margin for No. 1 since 2020 — and a three-way tie among a trio of newcomers for 10th place.

Nijinsky remained No. 1 for the third week, but by the slimmest of margins over Karl. Nijinsky, who was idle, received 15 of 35 first-place votes and totaled 309 points. Karl, who won a division of the Reynolds Memorial last week, garnered 14 first-place votes and 308 points as he moved from third to second in the rankings.

The most recent occurrence of one point separating the top two came in Week 8 of 2020 when Ramona Hill was No. 1 over Tall Dark Stranger.

Twin B Joe Fresh, who won the Perfect Sting, added a first-place vote and eight points from a week ago, but dropped from second to third. She was followed by Six Pack winner Jiggy Jog S, who moved from sixth to fourth, and idle Its A Love Thing.

Four newcomers joined the Top 10, with Reynolds division winner T C I entering at No. 7, and Brower Memorial winner Abuckabett Hanover, Crawford Farms Open winner Southwind Tyrion, and idle Winner's Bet deadlocked at No. 10.

Call Me Goo and Ruthless Hanover dropped from the Top 10.

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.

Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown Standardbred Poll: 7/2/2024

Rank	Name (1st Votes)	Age/Sex/Gait	Record	Earnings	Points	Pvs
1	Nijinsky (15)	3cp	5-5-0-0	\$455,155	309	1
2	Karl (14)	3ct	4-4-0-0	\$167,125	308	3
3	Twin B Joe Fresh (4)	4mp	5-4-1-0	\$233,412	289	2
4	Jiggy Jog S (2)	5mt	2-2-0-0	\$126,648	214	6
5	Its A Love Thing	3fp	5-3-2-0	\$268,824	168	4
6	Highland Kismet	3gt	6-5-1-0	\$116,800	166	5
7	T C I	3ct	3-3-0-0	\$89,761	107	--
8	Captain's Quarters	3cp	4-2-2-0	\$205,313	51	8
9	Hellabalou	6hp	12-2-3-3	\$359,880	42	9
T10	Abuckabett Hanover	6hp	4-2-0-1	\$94,827	38	
T10	Southwind Tyrion	6ht	3-1-0-0	\$74,472	38	
T10	Winner's Bet	4ht	2-2-0-0	\$50,000	38	--

-Ken Weingartner

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, JULY 4

RACE 2

(5) CATCHMEONTHEBEACH was first-up last week and he should be able to make front in this field at which point he will be hard to catch.

-Garnet Barnsdale



WOODBINE
MOHAWK PARK

RACE 7

(7) DEVASTATE is a fast horse who only needs to mind his manners; qualifier was smooth.

-Derick Gwerner



FRIDAY, JULY 5

RACE 4

Other than being a touch green behind the gate in his last qualifier, (3) FALLOUT has done everything right in the morning. Full brother to millionaire Blue Diamond Eyes and 1:51 2/5 winner at 2 Captain Kirk seems to have some ability.

-Gwerner



RACE 2

(6) JIVE DANCING A simply did not produce in the Devita barn so connections move her back to Camilleri and faces the softest field she's seen in ages; lots of positives.

-Matt Rose



SATURDAY, JULY 6

RACE 6

(4) GRACE HILL found her groove last week at Scioto and seems ready for a big mile.

-Gwerner



FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park

Thursday

Friday

Meadowlands

Yonkers

Thursday

Friday

Friday

DHP PPS

HARNESS EYE PPS

TRACKMASTER PPS

FREE PPS

INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNES

NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

MIKE WILDER REACHES 9,000 CAREER WINS

Mike Wilder collected career win 9,000 when he captured Wednesday's 11th race at Hollywood Casino at The Meadows with Distant Drums.

A native of Springfield, Ohio, Wilder launched his harness racing career at the age of 14, driving matinees and working for the small stable of his stepfather, Dave Ritter. Ironically, Ritter exited the business just as Wilder was deciding to make it his career, signing on as caretaker for the stable of Randy Owens and later, Virgil Morgan, Jr. He was itching to make it as a driver, but early on, assignments were hard to come by.

[READ MORE](#)

TRACK RECORD NYSS WIN AT BUFFALO FOR CHAPVIOUS

It was a day early but Chapvious provided the Fourth Of July fireworks in the \$108,200 New York Sire Stake event for the 2-year-old filly trotters at Buffalo Raceway on Wednesday (July 3) as she broke the track record with a three length victory over Devious Babe in 1:58 2/5.

The heavily backed Chapvious (\$2.10) easily beat the previous mark of 1:59.0 established by Amal Hall on July 11, 2018.

[READ MORE](#)

BRITTANY YEARLING ROSTER NOW AVAILABLE

In what will be the final consignment from one of the world's greatest breeding farms, the roster of Brittany Farms' 2024 sale yearlings is now available on the farm's website, britfarm.com.

The yearlings — all dual eligible — will be sold at the Lexington Selected Sale commencing on Monday, Sept. 30 and concluding on Friday, Oct. 4 at the Fasig-Tipton Newtown Paddocks.

[READ MORE](#)

COWGIRL HANOVER REPEATS IN NEW YORK SIRE STAKES

Cowgirl Hanover improved to two-for-two in the New York Sire Stakes program and in her career with a 1:56 2/5 triumph in Monday afternoon's single \$106,300 New York Sire Stakes test for rookie pacing fillies at Monticello Raceway.

[READ MORE](#)

TOM AGOSTI APPOINTED AS BATAVIA RACE SECRETARY

Don Hoover, Director of Live Racing at Batavia Downs, has announced that Tom Agosti has been named as the new race secretary for Batavia Downs starting with the 2024 summer/fall live meet.

[READ MORE](#)

TROTTER'S GOLD BACK AS THE HAMBLETONIAN OFFICIAL BEER

- In celebration of the 99th edition of America's greatest harness race, the Hambletonian Society, Meadowlands Racetrack, and Ghost Hawk Brewing Company have again teamed up to provide fans and guests with Trotter's Gold 2024.

Labeled "Trotter's Gold 2024", the Clifton, NJ-based brewery has produced a 5% abv American Golden Ale brewed with Pilsner malt and Simcoe hops to create the balance between cereal grain flavors and citrus fruit.

It is available for sale this Friday, July 5th, at the track.

The 16oz beer can label features the 2023 Hambletonian winner Tactical Approach.

The \$1 million Hambletonian is slated for Saturday afternoon, Aug. 3 as the finale to the championship meet at the Meadowlands Racetrack. The post time is noon.

Everything Hambletonian can be found at <https://playmeadowlands.com/hambletonian-news/> and hambletonian.com.

-release (Meadowlands)

NEW YORKERS INVITED TO ENJOY RACING AT COUNTY FAIRS

Friday's start of the 2024 New York Sire Stakes County Fair Series

at Goshen Historic Track is the perfect family-friendly opportunity to watch and learn about New York's harness racing and its contribution to the state's agricultural industry. The annual series of non-wagering races featuring 2- and 3-year-old Standardbred horses starts at 1 p.m. on Friday and continues throughout the Summer.

The New York Sire Stakes serves as a model for state-bred racing programs and is the nation's oldest harness racing program of its kind. Goshen Historic Track, established in 1838, is the world's oldest active harness racing track.

"Harness racing has always been and continues to be an important part of the cultural makeup of the Empire State," said Agriculture & NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund (Fund) Chair Brian O'Dwyer. "These races provide a great opportunity for all New Yorkers to see why for themselves. We encourage New Yorkers to visit fairs and enjoy the races taking place all summer across New York State."

Conducted by the Fund, the County Fair Series is an ideal introduction to the sport of harness racing. These "earn as you learn" non-pari-mutuel races across the state provide Standardbred horses and their drivers valuable on-track competitive experience. Horses have the opportunity to rise in class to the Excelsior series, and ultimately, the New York Sire Stakes Series, where the best New York-bred 2- and 3-year-old Standardbreds compete.

The 2024 County Fair Series will occur throughout July and August at fairs across the state, concluding with a September 1 Series Finals at Goshen:

- July 5, 1 p.m.: Goshen Historic Track (Orange County)
- July 8, Noon: Plattsburgh (Clinton County)
- July 15, 2 p.m.: Dunkirk (Chautauqua County)
- July 16, 12:30 p.m.: Lowville (Lewis County)
- July 16, Noon: Hemlock (Livingston County)
- July 18, Noon: Afton (Chenango County)
- July 23, 11 a.m.: Boonville (Oneida County)
- July 25, 1:30 p.m.: Batavia Downs (Genesee County)
- July 29, 1 p.m.: Malone (Franklin County)
- July 30, Noon: Morris (Otsego County)
- July 31, Noon: Horseheads (Chemung County)
- August 1, Noon: Gouverneur (St. Lawrence County)
- August 6, Noon: Norwich (Chenango County)
- August 6, Noon: Cobleskill (Schoharie County)
- August 9, Noon: Owego (Tioga County)
- August 12, Noon: Palmyra (Wayne County)
- August 12, Noon: Bath (Steuben County)
- August 14, Noon: Westport (Essex County)
- August 20, Noon: Trumansburg (Tompkins County)
- September 1, 1 p.m.: Goshen Historic Track – County Fair Series Finals

The 2024 County Fair Series Program details all County Fair race schedules, conditions and more. For more information, visit nysirestakes.com.

-release (NYSS)

SELECT EUROPEAN YEARLING SALE: THE CATALOGUE IS ONLINE!

Occurring on Tuesday, August 27, the first edition of the Select European Yearling Sale will take place at the Elie de Brignac Complex at Deauville. In partnership with the Scandinavian Selected Sales, the sale will kick-off the highlight of the year, the Select Yearling Sales.

A total of 95 yearlings by the best stallions worldwide are catalogued including MAHARAJAH, the leading sire in Sweden and Italy, that will be represented by eight lots, as well as the top Swedish stallion READLY EXPRESS (four lots), that won the Prix d'Amérique and has notably produced CALGARY GAMES, that also has his first crop on offer, with seven lots catalogued. Four yearlings by the champion VARENNE, the leading sire in Italy for a number of years, will also go under the hammer.

Also on offer are eight lots by FATHER PATRICK, the sire of the Swedish sensation FRANCESCO ZET, as well as GREENSHOE that will be represented by three yearlings. CHAPTER SEVEN will have two of his offspring go under the hammer, with sire having notably produced JOVIALITY, that has won more than €2 million in earnings, as well as Breeders' Crown winner GIMPANZEE, who will be represented by one yearling from his first crop.

-edited release (Arqana Trot)