

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025

# Fairy-tale ending for Intrepid Seelster



SARA CZERLAU

Sarah Anthon gives a fully recovered Intrepid Seelster a big hug.

**HARNESS FOCUS**  
 By Jessica Hallett  
 @JHallettPhoto

The word 'intrepid' is synonymous with someone who is brave, fearless, and valiant. The name is so powerful that it is painted on the side of four United States Navy ships, including the prolific USS Intrepid (1943-1974) aircraft carrier that served in World War II, the Vietnam War, as an asset to NASA, and is now stationed as a national landmark in New York City.

Apt to his namesake, Intrepid Seelster has embodied those distinguishing characteristics from his racing career and into his life after racing.

The son of Camluck and Immortal raced from 1999 to 2001 under the care of Canadian harness racing icon Bob McIntosh. In 65 starts across North America, Intrepid Seelster yielded \$1,037,807 with a record of 18-11-10 and a career mark of 1:50 1/5 at The Meadowlands.

At the age of 4, Intrepid Seelster was retired to stud at Seelster Farms in Lucan, Ontario where he sired winners of \$5.2 million CAD until 2009 when he moved to the United Kingdom to stand at Camden Stud. In total, he sired 301 horses with \$10.66 million earned.

Intrepid Seelster was later sold and he returned stateside. As time moved on, his name lived on through his offspring, but he had fallen into the shadows and out of the spotlight. That was until July of 2024.

Twenty-three years after his racing career and quite some time after his career as a stud concluded, the millionaire made his way

back to the headlines on social media; however not in the positive limelight he had earned.

In a viral post on Facebook, the now 28-year-old horse was shown in a horrific state with every part of his musculature and skeleton protruding in the absence of healthy body fat. His eyes were sad and his demeanor was fatigued. The former millionaire racehorse and 10-time millionaire sire was reduced to a price of \$400 with a prognosis that was undetermined if he'd survive to the next day.

Kim Hale was the winning bidder.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)



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**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

**Jay Bergman: Cleary mapping out a stakes campaign for Oakwood Ardan**

**Derick Giwner: Meadowlands longshots lead to handicapping reflection**

**Whelan hopes patience pays off in Woodbine Mohawk Park series finals**

**On The Backstretch: Profile of trainer Dennis J. Laterza**

**Best Bets & Analysis**

**Idao De Tillard wins Prix d'Amerique; Bartlett scores win #11,000; Last call for Dan Patch hotel rooms; Pick 6 carryover at The Meadowlands**

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"I've been involved with Standardbreds my entire life, originally through racing and then in my 20s, being involved with the retraining and rehoming process. I live in a very small town, Campbellford, which is about 45 minutes east of Peterborough, and Kawartha Downs was and still is what I call my home track," Hale explained.

"In 2020, one of my close friends and I founded an organization focused on Standardbreds and rehoming here in Ontario, because we had owners calling us fairly frequently asking for help. Right then, Covid hit and we figured it would flop, however somehow, we made it through. Over the last few years, we've made a number of American connections and been privy to rescuing and bringing home over 30 Canadian Standardbreds who found themselves in the kill pens in the USA. Here in Canada, they don't 'hold' the horses because the slaughter plant is just a quick trip down the road, so to rescue them here, we have to go to auctions."

And so, fast forward to July 2024 and Hale spotted a freeze-brand on an image of a horse posted to a group chat from the kill pens in Kansas. She looked up the brand and confirmed Intrepid's identity.

"He was in such horrendous shape," Hale said. "I paid his bail fee right then and we made arrangements to get him into care because we didn't expect him to survive the night. The only people who knew at that time was my New Start team and the volunteers in the USA. We had no idea how to go about it. We had rescued some pretty famous horses in the past, but he was clearly by far and away the most well-known and in the worst shape.

"We didn't know how to go about it because we knew it was going to blow up and probably cause some ruckus. Once we had everything in place for his care, then we took to social media to try and share what we knew, as carefully as we could. We didn't know and even now, still have not been able to track down who was responsible for him being like this."

While most harness horsemen try to do the best they can by their horse in finding forever homes and safe landings, it seems to be all too easy to fall beneath the shadows and slip through the cracks, especially years after retirement. The most important thing after that happens is what the horsemen do after they are found in that situation, and in the case of Intrepid Seelster, it was quick to see many horsemen band together to raise money and find him a true forever home.

"Graciously, so many people stepped up to cover his costs, the incredible community of racing and those who simply support equine welfare jumped to get all the funding he needed except his ride home. His incredible care team in Kansas, who truly brought him back from the brink of death, are wonderful caretakers who have seen so many emaciated cases and been able to bring them back to health. Then he went onto Kentucky and finally home to Sarah and Jeff who adopted him and were able to give him a safe retirement home when he was healthy enough to get back here to Ontario.

"Truly, it was an incredible community effort. I'm blessed to have been a small piece of it and been able to know that these connections across North America can save truly lives. He was one of our 83 adoptions we did in 2024 and he's probably going to forever be my most memorable rescue because I had a lot of sleepless nights feeling pretty helpless and wondering if we'd have to share terrible news if he didn't pull through," Hale said.

Though they had no prior to connection to Intrepid, Jeffrey Gillis and Sarah Anthon made the decision to provide him with his forever home with them.

"We didn't have any connection to him other than we had bought a yearling or two sired by him when he stood in Ontario," Anthon said. "I saw the photo Kim posted online the day he was rescued and I showed Jeff. We were both almost in tears seeing a horse in the condition he was in, especially one who had accomplished what he did; he deserved better.

"Jeff said to me, 'should we offer him a home?' I said, 'absolutely, we have the farm, why not?' So I messaged Kim, asked where he was and if we could adopt him. She explained the situation, where he was, and how unstable he was. And she thanked me for the offer but wanted to see

how he does over the next few weeks. They weren't sure he would make it. Once it was clear he was a warrior and fighting hard to live, she said he could come home to us as long as we could make it all work!"

The move took a lot of planning to execute given the state of Intrepid. Once he gained enough strength to be able to ship a distance, Anthon found a landing place with friends in Kentucky until he was able to make the trek to Canada.

"When he was in Kansas out of the kill pen, the idea was to get him halfway home when he was healthy enough. I reached out to good friends of mine from the dog show world, who also breed and race thoroughbreds, and they so kindly agreed to house him for as long as he needed to be 100 percent healthy weight-wise and make the ship home to Ontario. He was there for about six weeks. They are both vets so they decided he was a good candidate for gastrogard and offered to supply that at their cost. He thrived in their care and was able to ship home at the end of November."

And now, today, Intrepid Seelster resides at their 55-acre farm in Ontario, Canada.

Gillis is a trainer based out of Ontario. He has over 1,500 wins and \$31 million earned with two of his most prolific wins in Covered Bridge's display of heroism at the 2023 and 2024 Gold Cup and Saucer. Anthon works full time in real estate while saving time to help with the farm. At their farm, they have four minis, six broodmares in-foal, four yearlings and a number of racehorses in training depending on the time of year.

"We have one full time employee, Sara," Anthon explained. "I love looking after the retired one, the minis, and the breeding part of the operation! Jeff and I always do night chores together after work and I'm usually around on the weekends. We have 55 acres, a half-mile track, and lots of paddocks, so we definitely had the room to let [Intrepid] live out his days spoiled.

"His life right now consists of turnout daily, yelling at the mares due to foal, eating all he can eat, and snuggling with the minis through the stall bars," Anthon added.

Despite all the adversity he had faced and overcome, Intrepid never lost his character or personality.

"He's a funny horse! It's amazing he's so kind after what he went through. He's sweet, a gentle old man, and very easy to have around. He sure loves food and begs for his hay cubes. Paws like a fool, too. He is particularly sharp right now with all the mares inside waiting to foal, he thinks they're pretty exciting.

"We call him Treppy. He's so full of himself, but old so we laugh at his studiness towards the girls. They can't stand him," Anthon laughed.

A millionaire, a sire of winners of over \$10 million, a horse who has overcome the greatest adversity, a friend and pasture-mate, and finally a well-deserved retirement. Intrepid Seelster has not let his past define him, but he has proved the definition of his name in his characteristics as a brave, fearless, and valiant animal.



(ABOVE) KIM HALE PHOTO / (BELOW) SARAH ANTHON PHOTO

**The transformation of Intrepid Seelster from being malnourished to full health was spectacular.**







**NEW**

**\$8,000**

### *Sig Sauer*

Muscle Hill - Sigilwig - Donato Hanover  
2, 1:53.3, 3, 1:49.3 (\$1,151,312)



**\$8,500**

### *Captain Corey*

Googoo Gaagaa - Luv U All - Angus Hall  
3, 1:51.0F (\$1,090,333)



**\$10,000**

### *Greenshoe*

Father Patrick - Designed To Be - Donato Hanover  
3, 1:49.4M (\$1,353,772)



**\$6,000**

### *International Moni*

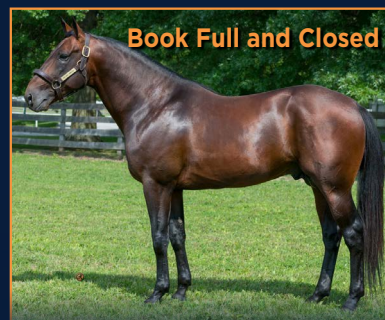
Love You - Moni Maker - Speedy Crown  
2, 1:53.1M; 3, 1:51.4M (\$775,463)



**Book Full and Closed**

### *Captaintreacherous*

Somebeachsomewhere - Worldly Treasure - Artsplace  
p, 3, 1:47.1M (\$3,148,657)



**Book Full and Closed**

### *Papi Rob Hanover*

Somebeachsomewhere - Panera Hanover - Rocknroll Hanover  
p, 3, 1:47.1F (\$927,979)



**\$6,000**

### *Stay Hungry*

Somebeachsomewhere - My Little Dragon - Dragon Again  
p, 3, 1:47.3M (\$1,303,709)



**\$8,000**

### *Tall Dark Stranger*

Bettor's Delight - Precocious Beauty - Art Major  
p, 3, 1:47.1M (\$1,741,645)



**\$6,000**

### *Volume Eight*

Chapter Seven - Lass A Rope - Encore Encore  
2, 1:52.0M (\$434,002)



**\$7,500**

### *Nuncio*




Andover Hall - Nicole Isabelle - Lindy Lane  
3, 1:50.4M (\$3,645,363)  
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# Cleary mapping out a stakes campaign for Oakwood Ardan



## JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [X BergmanJay](#)

What happens when a horse you purchased proves to be even better than you expected?

Trainer Robert Cleary found out what happens when Oakwood Ardan IR (Ireland) emerged as a force early last season, racing up the class ladder at The Meadowlands from the beginning of January and eventually finding a path into the Canadian Pacing Derby.

“We thought he was a good horse when we purchased him,” said Cleary, who started the Sweet Lou-sired 5-year-old in non-winners company.

For Cleary, who has become a master of bringing horses from his native Ireland to the States over the last few years, the arrival of Oakwood Ardan was quite typical. Horses racing in Ireland have a short season and quite often young horses that can be purchased have minimal earnings making them prime candidates for exportation. With so many class levels to race in North America, horses like Oakwood Ardan can earn out before ever reaching the top classes.

Early on Cleary knew that Oakwood Ardan was quite different than the others. “He just showed extreme speed,” Cleary said.

As for racing style, Oakwood Ardan gained a solid reputation racing from off the pace and passing horses in the stretch. He was a throwback, if you will, to an era when closers regularly won at The Meadowlands.

“He just likes chasing horses better and wants to go past them,” said Cleary, explaining the style and the success that came from it.

Oakwood Ardan would win his first two starts in late 2023 and then go on a rampage through the winter that forced his connections to reassess their strategy. As wins and earnings piled up suddenly, there were limited options of where to race and who to race against.

Though staked sparingly, Oakwood Ardan would find himself on the short end when earnings were a factor in determining eligibility to some races, but he did make it into the Canadian Pacing Derby on August 31.

“How many horses have raced in non-winners of 2 in January and then found themselves finishing third in the Canadian Pacing Derby?” said Cleary, posing a question that likely has few names on its list.

Cleary tried to continue with Oakwood Ardan right through the Breeders Crown but an off the board finish in the Crown trials at The Meadowlands ended a long season in late October.

Despite the easy competition Oakwood Ardan had to deal with upon arrival in late 2023, Cleary had the horse campaigning for a full year with limited rest and the results near the end of the season suggested the horse had lost his edge.

Given the fact that Oakwood Ardan surprised Cleary with his talent and ability to tackle the best horses in North America, it’s hard to blame him for how the season turned out.

“He just got tired,” Cleary said. “We put him through a long campaign.”

With lessons learned and now a much firmer knowledge of the enormous talent, Cleary has come up with a more sensible strategy for 2025 and one he hopes will not only put his horse into the big races this year but allow him to achieve well beyond the \$174K he banked winning nine of 16 races in 2024.

“You won’t see him until the summer,” Cleary said, responding to a query of his plans this year.

With the big races on the docket in the summer and beyond, Cleary wants to have his horse in top shape when the big money is on the line. The trainer has shown the ability over the years to win at a high percentage and much of that has to do with not over-racing horses and putting them in classes where they can win. Most of his imported horses have fit the lower classes upon arrival and tacked on wins while still competing below their talent level.

For Cleary, every year seems to find him with more and more talented horses arriving from overseas and working their way up the class ladder. In late 2023 another “Oakwood” made the scene at The Meadowlands and gave the impression of déjà vu for followers of the Cleary stable. Oakwood Heymiki IR was a bit more accomplished when



DERICK GIWNER

**Oakwood Ardan has won 11 of 18 races since coming to North America**

he debuted at The Meadowlands for Cleary as his 1:49 2/5 victory on November 1 would suggest. He would go on to finish the year with four wins in five starts, with his last race on December 28 his lone defeat, a neck loss to current Meadowlands kingpin For Once Inmy Life.

While Oakwood Heymiki’s form indicated he may have as much ability as Oakwood Ardan in 2025, the 5-year-old son of Always B Miki has moved on from the Cleary stable.

“We sold him a few days ago,” said Cleary, who indicated Oakwood Heymiki was now in the Virgil Morgan Jr. stable.

While Cleary has benefited nicely from finding and importing horses from Ireland and Great Britain, others, notably leading trainer Ron Burke, have also entered the fray and have begun finding other prospects. This is of no surprise to Cleary.

“You’ve got two of the best stallions in North America breeding mares over there now,” said Cleary, pointing to Sweet Lou and Always B Miki, the stallions directly responsible for the budding stars mentioned above.

Cleary tries to pry the best horses he can and says that there are key factors that go into his decision making. “I like the fact that they are lightly raced when they are younger,” said Cleary, who understands this is pretty much the opposite of how horses are trained and raced in North America.

Another aspect to the unknown of what horsemen are getting when they purchase from Ireland or Great Britain is the fact that these horses have only raced on small tracks.

Cleary is training 32 currently, with 13 babies all looking good at this time of year. He has a couple 3-year-old pacers returning to action with Makes Sense, a Breeders Crown finalist, prepping for battle. “We’ll take him moderately,” said Cleary of the son of Papi Rob Hanover who was a stakes winner at 2.

Then there’s Rider Hanover, a Captaintreacherous three-quarter brother to world champion Ruthless Hanover that could have a promising future. “We qualified him just once and stopped with him,” said Cleary of the \$90,000 Harrisburg purchase in 2023 and first foal from the dam Rockaroundthetrack in five years following the arrival of Ruthless Hanover.



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## PERFECT STING

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



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# Meadowlands longshots lead to handicapping reflection



## EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner X @harnesseveguy

Handicapping is very much a learning experience that doesn't end the second the horses cross the finish line. Every time you examine a set of past performances and make a wager it is vital to consider what occurred, especially when the results are not in agreement with your betting actions.

As is often the norm during winter racing at The Meadowlands, I was doing way too much reviewing of the program after each race this past weekend. That is no surprise considering that nine of the 28 races were won by horses paying at least \$29. Which is not to say I don't pick horses that might pay big prices but just that the results were somewhat unpredictable.

So, let's examine the nine longshot winners and see if we can learn something.

FRIDAY 1/24/2025

### RACE 1: HEARTLANDBANYSBRO (\$154.40)

First-off, this was an amateur race so anything goes right off the bat. While this 9-year-old seemingly had no form on paper having finished sixth and eighth in his last two starts, the gelding has only made one start in six weeks and none in the last three weeks, so any current form in the program was clearly shaky at best. You'll also notice that he won a race over the track last year and for those that dug deeper via USTA's Pathway system, you'll find that it came in the same class from an inside post.

### RACE 2: ROCKINWITHTHEBEST (\$57.40)

My first reaction when I looked back at this guy was that there was no way to like him on paper. Then I took a third look while writing this column and saw something I missed. In his last start, despite off odds of 60-1, driver/trainer Vinny Ginsburg left hard for position, sat just behind fast fractions and pulled midway on the final turn when he could've waited. While it didn't work out, Ginsburg drove the horse with confidence and this week he was getting a drop in class from Trackmaster 71.5 to 69.

### RACE 3: CONCUR (\$31.00)

Here is one of the races where there isn't much to lure you to this horse, which is surprising since he's one of the lower prices in the group. Those with Harness Eye PPs could see he had won a race over the track each of the last two years and his qualifying line was about as fast as the race was likely to go, but the bottom line is that he had a nice inside trip behind a contested pace in a race where the favorite has proven to be unreliable lately.

### RACE 5: SECOND BRUISER (\$90.20)

Here is another race that immediately jumps off the page as an "anything goes" event because nearly half of the drivers were not Meadowlands regulars. The winner was second in December while one class lower the only time he was on this track last year, so that's a positive. Technically the horse was moving into a new barn (though the Alvarez/Hernandez horses seem to go back and forth) that has won four of 21 starts and having missed 26 days of action there was no way of knowing what his sharpness level would be. All that said, this horse was hard to figure as a gate to wire winner by three lengths.

### RACE 7: CORSINI A (\$112.80)

USTA handicapper Bob Pandolfo had this horse on top, so obviously he was playable on some level. At first glance he was eighth in the same class last time but then you look closer and see that he was at the back of the pack with no shot despite finishing in 27 4/5. In his prior start, Brad Chisholm drove and fired out but got parked. Certainly he could leave hard again and get position. Finally, he won three races over the track in 2024 while no one in the rest of the field won more than one.

SATURDAY 1/25/2025

### RACE 2: MINDTRIP (\$37.20)

Let's start with the fact that the favorite Uriel Blue Chip was grossly overbet which means the price on every other horse was at least a little higher than it should be. Mindtrip actually came out of the same race as the favorite and had a worse trip (first-over). On top of that, he was getting a key driver change to Jordan Stratton. Mindtrip was two for his last 33 over the track so victory was far from likely, but he was a classy veteran dropping in class with viable angles to consider.

### RACE 4: BEACH VIBES (\$29.20)

Beach Vibes was a horse I seriously considered when making my selections. He dropped to this level the prior week but was somewhat dull after sitting a good trip. That turned me off and upon reflection I maintain that not using the horse was the right decision. There was no way to know that there would be so much early action with a number of horses making their way to the front in the opening half. With the outer flow very live and him sitting third-over behind a fellow longshot, everything simply worked out in Beach Vibes' favor.

### RACE 9: SLING SHOCK (\$146.40)

Again, here was a case where the favorite was bet down to 2-5 and really should've been closer to 6-5 off his sparse past performance lines. I really didn't even need to review this race since I picked Sling Shock third and mentioned that he was a trip threat. Well, he sat a golden trip and got up by a head. Everything simply worked out perfectly. You can't bet horses hoping for that scenario, though in this case the price was right.

### RACE 12: SPIRIT OF TRUTH (\$115.40)

There really is no strong explanation as to how this horse paid such a big price. He had won his last race, moved to a slightly better post and was getting a decent driver change to Stratton. He was moving up in class one notch and did win at 82-1 last time but the horse doesn't know the odds. If he is now sharp, why couldn't he handle the small class jump? My pick, the co-2-1 choice, wound up first-over and lost by a neck; things happen!

So what did we learn here? Hopefully something. For me the takeaways are that sometimes the trip just works out and you have to turn the page and tip your cap to the winner. Other times there are legitimate angles which deserve some attention at the proper price. You need to watch the toteboard and ask yourself if the price is right to take a shot. You need to take into consideration that cold weather tends to slow races down and give slower horses a chance to be on par with faster ones. You need to consider that form from three or four weeks ago doesn't necessarily equate to form today.

I'm going to keep all of the above in mind when I handicap this weekend. It is difficult making these determinations without knowing the potential off odds at post time, but in most cases you can predict an overbet horse. I should've known better than to back a couple of them.

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# Whelan hopes his patience pays off in Mohawk Park series finals

By Jay Bergman

Trainer Walter Whelan has had a philosophy purchasing his horses that has proven successful over time. The veteran conditioner has bought inexpensive yearlings with the hope of giving them enough time to develop.

“There’s less pressure,” said Whelan. “If you spend a lot you try to get it back as quickly as possible.”

With that said, Whelan’s horses have gotten better with age and while missing some of the big money at 2 and 3 years of age they find themselves better positioned for success into their 4-year-old seasons. On Friday night Whelan has three such horses entered in a pair of series finals on Woodbine Mohawk Park’s 11-race card, with the Always B Miki-sired gelding A Class Yankee likely his best chance at success in the C\$40,000 Showshoe Final (race 10).

“His whole family tends to get a bit stronger as they get older,” said Whelan while on the track training one of the 50 he currently has in his stable. “His older brother Yankee Clout was the same way.”

Whelan’s affection for this maternal family is deep. After paying \$7,000 for Yankee Clout he upped the bid a year later and plucked A Class Yankee for \$12,000. In 2023, C C Yankee – the first filly from the dam – was purchased for a hefty \$25,000 by Whelan’s connections, with the daughter from the first crop of Papi Rob Hanover making just a few starts in her freshman season in 2024.

A Class Yankee raced competitively on the Pennsylvania Sire Stakes circuit in 2024 and was getting better towards the end of the campaign, so Whelan put him in a few late closers over the winter at Woodbine Mohawk Park. The results have been encouraging as the gelding captured the Valedictory Final at Woodbine Mohawk on December 26, overcoming post 10 in the process. Following a few weeks off A Class Yankee began his 4-year-old season with a solid second-place finish (again with post 10) behind one of Friday’s possible favorites G A Speed Expert.

With a better post in last week’s (January 24) second leg of the Snowshoe, A Class Yankee rallied from sixth at the three-quarter pole to victory, setting him up nicely for the final.

“We had trouble keeping him healthy last year,” said Whelan of the 3-year-old season that saw A Class Yankee earn a shade under six-figures in just 17 starts. A Class Yankee dipped his toes in the top tier Pennsylvania Sire Stakes program and as his trainer suggested, appeared to be finding his best footing towards the end of that series. A Class Yankee was just a neck behind Timeisonmyside in the final Sire Stakes prelim at The Meadows on August 30 in a mile time of 1:49 3/5. It was that kind of effort that led the gelding to race in the Breeders Crown trials at The Meadowlands in late October, a race he finished sixth in after pacing a final quarter in 26 1/5.

A Class Yankee, the 2-1 morning-line choice with Michael Whelan in the bike, is rapidly gaining confidence and Whelan is looking forward to Friday night and beyond.

“He’ll get a break after the race on Friday and then we’ll bring him back later,” said Whelan. “We’re definitely going to stake him.”

Whelan has another horse in the Snowshoe final in Gansbaai, a gelded son of Downbytheseaside that cost but \$11,000 as a yearling.

“He hasn’t been finishing up the way we’d like to see,” said Whelan of Gansbaai. With post seven on Friday, he’ll need some racing luck.

G A Speed Expert (5-2) has been strong in both legs of the Snowshoe but he too may need a bit of racing luck starting from post 10 in Friday’s feature. The 4-year-old by Sportswriter won half of his 16 starts as a



NEW IMAGE MEDIA

**A Class Yankee has won two of his last three starts including the Valedictory final at Woodbine Mohawk Park.**

3-year-old and looks for the biggest payday of his career in the finale.

Whelan is hoping for his own kind of racing luck with Space Cadebt in the C\$37,000 Blizzard Series final carded as race eight on Friday night.

“The rail is a tough place to start from,” said Whelan, “but it’s better than post 10.”

Space Cadebt enters the final with a pair of third-place finishes in the prelims to her credit. A filly by Betting Line that was highly thought of as a 2-year-old and raced in the Three Diamonds elimination, Speed Cadebt didn’t progress as expected.

“It wasn’t the kind of year we thought she would have,” said Whelan.

Space Cadebt did win a couple of races in the fall at Pocono and reached the Niagara Series final here in December.

Perhaps post position will pay off for Whelan as his charge tackles Oh A Legend, a daughter of Bit Of A Legend N who drew post nine in the field of 10. Oh A Legend swept through the preliminaries with open-length victories for trainer Chris Bush and driver Tyler Borth. He was made the 4-5 morning-line choice.

The 11-race Woodbine Mohawk Park card begins at 6:30 p.m. (EST) on Friday.

## Jason Bartlett gets win # 11,000

Jason Bartlett won four of the first six races on Monday night (January 27) at MGM Yonkers Raceway, and the last of those victories was the 11,000th of his driving career.

Bartlett swept the early double with Flip My Chip (1:54 3/5) and Sport Secret (1:55 1/5) for trainers Nick Devita and Jeff Cullipher, then captured the fourth dash with trainer Scott Blackler’s Heza Charttopper A (1:53 2/5). That set the stage for the milestone, and Bartlett got it in the sixth with Doug Dilloian Jr.-trained Orlando Blue A (1:54 2/5).

This made Bartlett just the 14th driver based in North America to have 11,000 lifetime triumphs, joining Dave Palone, Tony Morgan, Aaron Merriman, Herve Filion, Cat Manzi, David Miller, Tim Tetric, George Napolitano Jr., George Brennan, Wally Hennessey, Dave Magee, Walter Case Jr. and Zeke Parker Jr. Bartlett has also driven the earners of over \$161.6 million.

Coming off a 2024 campaign that saw him take his 13th leading driver title at Yonkers, Bartlett has already opened up a double-digit win margin in the standings through just six programs at the oval this year.

In addition to sending out Bartlett’s 11,000th winner, Dilloian Jr. also took Monday night’s featured \$35,000 Invitational Pace with Finvarra A (driven by Yannick Gingras) on the front-end in 1:54 2/5.

An 8-year-old gelding by American Ideal, Finvarra A is owned by David Linker, Brian Loman and Robert Venable and posted his 18th lifetime tally. Finvarra A, who has banked \$265,117, paid \$6.40 to win and led a \$33.00 exacta and a \$138.00 trifecta.

MGM Yonkers Raceway is currently operating on a Monday through Friday live racing schedule with post time each night at 6:45 p.m. (EST).

-release (Yonkers)





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# PAYMENTS DUE FEBRUARY 15\*

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## 3-year-old Trotters

Arden Downs  
Bally's Randy  
Battle of Bunker Hill Trot  
Breeders Crown  
Carl Erskine  
Catholic Cowboy Series (NEW)  
Circle City  
Colonial / Oaks  
Crossroads of America (Filly)  
Currier & Ives  
Delmonica Hanover (Filly)  
Dexter Cup  
Earl Beal Memorial  
Hambletonian / Oaks  
Horseman  
Keystone Classics  
Landmark  
Liberty Bell  
Matron Series  
NY NY Mile  
Pegasus Series  
Pennsylvania All-Stars  
Phil Langley Memorial  
W.N. Reynolds Memorial  
John Simpson Memorial  
Star Destroyer Series  
Thanksgiving Classic Series  
Tompkins-Geers  
MGM Yonkers Trot

## 3-year-old Pacers

The Delvin Miller Adios /Adioo Volo  
Bally's Randy  
Breeders Crown  
Cane Pace  
Catholic Cowboy Series (NEW)  
Circle City  
Horseman  
James Lynch Memorial (Filly)  
Jenna's Beach Boy  
Matron Series  
Keystone Classics  
Landmark  
Liberty Bell  
Matron Series  
Max Hempt Memorial  
Matron Series  
MGM Grand Messenger Stakes  
Monument Circle  
Park MGM Pace  
Paul Revere Pace  
Pegasus Series  
Pennsylvania All-Stars  
Progress Pace  
W.N. Reynolds Memorial  
John Simpson Memorial  
Star Destroyer Series  
Thanksgiving Classic Series  
Tompkins-Geers  
USS Indianapolis Mem. (Filly)

## Open Events

Breeders Crown  
Caesar's Trotting Classic  
Clara Barton Distaff Pace  
Dan Patch  
Dayton Trotting & Pacing Derbies  
Dayton Distaff & Oaks Derbies  
E.T. Gerry Jr. Hambletonian  
Maturity (4-year-old only)  
Hoosier Park Pacing Derby  
Spirit of Massachusetts Trot

## 2-year-old Events

Breeders Crown  
Jim Doherty Memorial  
Kentuckiana Stallion Mgt. Pace  
Kentuckiana Stallion Mgt. Trot  
Peter Haughton Memorial

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# Idao De Tillard triumphant again in prestigious Prix d'Amerique

By Greg Reinhart

Idao De Tillard took control on the last turn in Sunday's Prix d'Amerique at Vincennes Racecourse in Paris and held off challengers to the wire after that to win his second straight edition of the great French trotting race. Despite rainy conditions, the final kilometer time was 1'11"1 (a mile rate of 1:54 2/5), making this the second-fastest edition of the event.

After one false start caused the field to re-form, Don Fanucci Zet (Paul-Philippe Ploquin) got away best and led early but would be overtaken by 2023 Prix d'Amerique winner Hooker Berry (Nicolas Bazire) with about 2,000 meters to go in the 2,700 meter contest. Hooker Berry would then be challenged by Hussard Du Landret (Yoann Lebourgeois), who showed a lead on the outside before he went down to the pylons with about 1,300 left.

While that was going on in front, Idao De Tillard (Clément Duvaldestin) rode cover just off-the-pace in a three-wide position, but he lost the helmet he was following with about 700 meters remaining as Keep Going (Matthieu Mottier), who was giving him a tow, was able to slide down into a two-wide position. Nevertheless, Idao De Tillard powered forward and surged by all the leaders before they turned into the stretch. From there, he kept in front of Just Love You (Alexandre Abrivard) and Go On Boy (Romain Derieux) to secure the triumph. Josh Power (Eric Raffin) and Hussard Du Landret completed the top five.

"The great champions achieve the double. It proves that the first time it was not a stroke of luck," remarked Clément Duvaldestin.

"The work we did on this horse is enormous," said Clément's father and winning trainer Thierry Duvaldestin. Idao De Tillard had been sick in November with leptospirosis (a disease transmitted by rodents), but came back to form with a tally in his last prep race, the Prix de Bourgogne on December 29 at Vincennes, and then today's classic.

Duvaldestin, who also captured back-to-back Prix d'Ameriques in 2011 and 2012 with Ready Cash, trains Idao De Tillard, a 7-year-old Severino stallion, for owner Cyril Sevestre. This was Idao De Tillard's 33rd win from 47 lifetime outings, and he has now earned 2,881,430 Euros.



BRUNO VANDELDELLE PHOTO

Driver Clement Duvaldestin lifts his arms and legs in victory as he crosses the wire with Idao De Tillard.

## MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>

### First Day of Breeding Season

Standing 26 Stallions in 6 Areas

#### ONTARIO PACERS

Beach Glass  
Betterthancheddar  
Betting Line  
Lawless Shadow  
McWicked  
Tattoo Artist\*

#### ONTARIO TROTTERS

Archangel  
My MVP  
Trixtion

#### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Artspeak\* (Kingsmen Equine)

#### NEW YORK PACER

Courtly Choice

#### NEW YORK TROTTERS

Met's Hall  
Six Pack  
Southwind Tyrion\*

#### PENNSYLVANIA PACER

Heston Blue Chip (Diamond Creek Farm)

#### MARYLAND PACERS

Getitoffyourchest\*  
Quik Pulse Mindale  
Wearinmysixshooter

#### DELAWARE PACERS

Classic Card Shark  
He's Watching  
Nutcracker Sweet  
Sports Column

#### DELAWARE TROTTERS

E L Platinum\*  
Molotov Cocktail\*  
Thunderously\*  
Top Flight Angel

\*New in 2025!

\*\*Please note Diamond Creek Farm's Breeding Season starts 2/14. Kingsmen Equine's Breeding season starts 3/1.

[Click here to visit www.winbakfarm.com](http://www.winbakfarm.com) for the 2025 Stallion Lineup!

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# 27th Annual Stallion Season Auction to Benefit New Vocations

Conducted through OnGait.com Feb. 4 - 6, ending at 2:00 pm  
 ("Open Ended Format" All bids in US dollars)

**Huge Appreciation for Each of our Wonderful Breeding Donors**  
**Breedings Still Being Sought and Added Daily - [newvocations.org/event\\_detail/49](https://newvocations.org/event_detail/49)**



## DELAWARE

Anders Bluestone	Ken Wood	3,000
He's Watching	Eric Cherry	5,000
Highalator	Charlie Domback	3,500
Slick Tony	Nola Leager	2,500

## ILLINOIS

Time to Roll	Walker Standardbreds	3,000
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## INDIANA

Best In Show	Premier Acres	3,500
Capt Midnight	Kountry Lane	2,500
Don't Let 'Em	J. Fielding & Brittany Farm	3,500
Helpisontheway	Wiesman Farms	6,000
JK Endofanera	Bluestone Farms	7,500
JujuBee	John Erdner	4,000
Letsdrinkonit	Joe & Tina Seekman	1,200
Loubet	Loubet Syndicate	4,000
Pilot Discretion	Premier Acres	3,500
Rebuff	Bluestone Farms	7,500
Swan in a Million	Barbara Wilfong	2,500

## KENTUCKY

Cuatro De Julio	Cuatro's Faith Farm	4,000
Rattle My Cage	Soderberg Bloodstock	4,000

## MARYLAND

Dapper Dude	David Cohen	1,500
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Capozzo	Mike Ribant	2,000
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Kings Country	Cornerstone Stock Farm	2,000

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Courtly Choice	Blake Macintosh	6,000
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Shadow Play	Blue Chip Farms LLC	5,000
Six Pack	Knutsson, Brittany, Little E	7,500
So Surreal	Jon Kurnit	3,000

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Boston Red Rocks	Rick Berks & Peter Blood	4,000
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Captain Kirk	Prolific Equine	3,000
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Mission Accepted	Knox Services	2,500
Racing Hill	Kevin Greenfield	3,500
Rodeo Romeo	Hagemeyer Farms	1,500
Southwind Ozzi	Vince Ali/Alma lafelice	3,000
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Well Said	
Western Fame	
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J. Snyder & Sugar Valley Farm	4,000
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Bradley Grant	6,000
Del-Valley University	1,500

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Betting Line	
Big Jim	
Cattlewash	
Century Farroh	
Control The Moment	
King of the North	
My MVP	
Trixton	

	<b>In CDN:</b>
All Bets Off Syndicate	6,500
Winbak Farm	5,000
Darlene Carr	5,000
Tara Hills/Cattlewash Syndicate	6,000 us
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Tara Hills & KOTN Syndicate	12,000 us
Joe Sbrocco	4,000
Deo Volente & Caviart Farms	7,500 us

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Artspeak	
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Joe Sbrocco	2,000
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## FROZEN ONLY

Captain Crunch	
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Cedar Knoll Farm (frozen)	5,000
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**How to Bid:** Bid on OnGait.com 12:00 pm Tues. Feb. 4 through 2:00 pm Thurs. Feb. 6 in an open ended format. **All bids are in US dollars.** Minimum raise is \$100. Winning bidders owe a refundable 10% (min. \$100) deposit. Balance is due to New Vocations with a live foal. Winning bidders will be charged \$50 by OnGait for each breeding purchased. **Please do not bid for mares over 20 years old, ones that have been barren two consecutive years, ones due to foal after May 1 or those that are already booked.** For more information, call (937) 205-4667, email [dot@horseadoption.com](mailto:dot@horseadoption.com) or visit [newvocations.org](https://newvocations.org).







**BY DERICK GIWNER**

Is it possible to peak professionally at 73 years old? For Dennis Laterza, who started training horses more than 50 years ago, the statistics say yes. In 2024, the Queens native easily eclipsed his career best in stable earnings and missed his best yearly win total by one victory.

A staple at Yonkers Raceway and Roosevelt Raceway before then, Laterza has seen a lot during his time in the sport and sat down with us to discuss his path, how family has kept him in the industry, his busy work schedule and much more.

On a personal note, Dennis was my trainer when I owned horses and always did the right thing by me. He helped me learn to drive, get my “P” license, and was always encouraging along the way. Dennis literally made owning a horse to drive in the amateur races possible for me. I didn’t ask him about it because I knew he would deflect and not take the credit. He deserves it! Enjoy this week’s On The Backstretch Q&A.

## TRAINER DENNIS J. LATERZA

### How did you get started in harness racing?

My father owned horses. I worked in construction and in the winter time when I was laid off, I would go down to the track and hang out at the barn where his trainer was stabled. That was in 1970. Then I started to own horses. I think in 1972 I owned my first horse with my dad. We started to do well . . . and I got more and more involved. In 1980 I got my trainers license and started out with my dad’s horses and was successful, so I stopped working in construction and started with the horses at Roosevelt Raceway full-time.

### USTA stats only go back to 1991 and show you with 1,446 career training wins (as of 1/26/25). How many do you think you had before that?

I have no idea. Maybe 30 to 40 a year. I didn’t have a lot of horses back then, maybe 10-12 in my barn.

### As someone who has been involved in the sport for six decades, has it changed for the better?

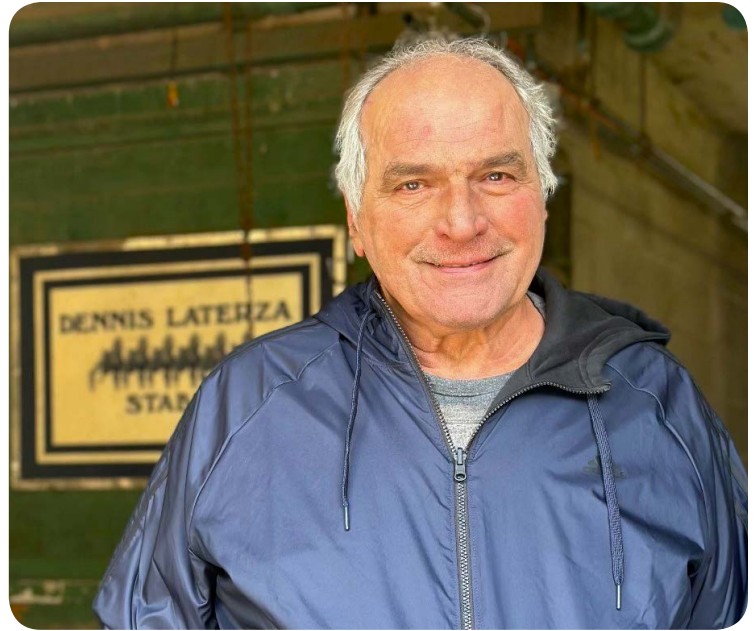
It has definitely changed. It is more of a dollars and sense business. Back then it was more enjoyable. People enjoyed it and made money in it as a hobby. I don’t think it has changed for the better, no.

### Some 50 years into your career as a trainer, have things gone the way you expected when you started?

You have to change with the times. The money got better since the casinos opened. Who would’ve thought that would’ve happened before 9-11. That kept me in it longer. I never expected to be in the sport as long as I have been.

### Did you expect to be a Grand Circuit trainer or were you content as an “overnight” guy?

When I first got in it I never thought I’d be a Grand Circuit guy. I started part time and I was never involved with younger horses because I didn’t have the knowledge to break a horse and make them. So I got involved with buying and claiming horses. As I was going on I thought I was better off claiming and buying because the horses were already made and you knew what you were getting. There was less risk than getting involved with younger horses and coming up with a lot of duds.



COURTESY DENNIS LATERZA

Since USTA started keeping records in 1991, Dennis J. Laterza has sent over 13,500 behind the gate, with most coming at Yonkers.

### You have trained a few stakes horses along the way over the years, right?

I had an owner from Alabama [Roy Dobbins] that I got involved with in 1985. He was breaking the horses and sending them up to me already trained down. He came up with a couple of nice horses and that’s how I came up with a couple of them. I never started breaking horses until maybe the late 1990s. I was always stabled at a racetrack and you can’t really break horses there and do it right.

### In 2024 at age 73, statistically you had your best year with stable earnings over \$1.3 million. What changed to get you to that level?

A lot more horses went through my barn. I bought a lot more horses because I had a new owner for the last three years. He wanted to claim horses and my sons were claiming horses together. The horses we were claiming were winning and staying in the same classes, so there was a lot of turnover.

### Is it fair to ask if retirement is in your future?

I haven’t given it much thought because my son [Dennis A. Laterza] is there. If he wasn’t I might’ve thought about retiring to a warmer climate. I really enjoy working with my sons. I really don’t want to leave them there alone.

### Your son Dennis works in the barn daily with you. What does your son Joseph do?

He’s an owner and helps out in the barn, though not as much as Dennis does.

### How many horses do you have in your barn?

24.

### You focus on Yonkers Raceway but what has been your favorite track over the years? Why?

I liked Roosevelt a lot. Yonkers was always the speed track and you had to have the right horse. It was always tough to race there. In the 90s I raced at The Meadowlands and it was good back then. Those are the only three tracks I really raced at steadily.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14





CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

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

Geez, I've never really had time to get any hobbies [laughing]. I work morning until night.

### What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

It used to be enjoyable. Now it's a job.

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

Don't fall in love with the horses.

### What was your best moment in harness racing?

When my son trained Hill I Am and he won the New Jersey Sire Stakes final at The Meadowlands [2013]. He was owned by my Alabama owned [Roy] Dobbins. That was a big moment and an enjoyable one.

### Which is the best horse you've ever trained?

A horse that I did really good with was Sunrise Stevie. He took a world record for aged geldings at The Meadowlands in the 1990s. Another good one I had that turned out to be a little disappointing was Cumin's Promise.

### You are one of the last people to stable at Yonkers Raceway. Are you surprised that you've lasted there so long?

I am but I've never really given it much thought. I was at Roosevelt when they kept threatening to close and finally did. I was at The Meadowlands and Garden State when they threatened to close the barn area. So I try not to give it too much thought about how much time we have left at Yonkers. I don't worry about it.

### You actually commute from Long Island every day. After 40 years, don't the early mornings and late nights with an hour commute each way wear you down?

No, I just do it out of habit. I leave my house between 5:30 and 6:00 in the morning. I get to the track between 6:30 and 7:00, and I stay there all day because I live too far away to go home. When we get done racing at 9:00 or 10:00, I leave and get home between 10:30 and 11:00 at night. Then it starts all over again the next day.

### Is there anything you wish you would've accomplished in the sport that you didn't?

Nothing comes to my mind because I never really wanted to be a Grand Circuit guy. We raised three children and I never wanted to be away from home. Plus I was stabled at Yonkers and Roosevelt where I didn't have a good setup to have those types of horses.

### We mentioned that your son Dennis followed you into the industry. Were you originally happy that he chose this career?

Not really, but he loves horses. He's been coming down with me since he was 10. He would always come down on Saturdays. He started out wanting to drive and was doing it a bit at Yonkers until it closed down [due to casino construction in 2005]. So he went up to Monticello and got his license, but he realized he couldn't compete with those top-notch drivers, so he decided he'd rather own horses and use catch-drivers. I'm glad he's happy and enjoying it, so now I'm happy he chose it.

### You've worked with a lot of people who have been in the amateur races. Why did you give your time to them?

They became friends. They were coming to the barn and wanted to be helpful, so I helped get them horses or race them.

### Over the years some people have complained about the track at Yonkers. How have you been able to survive there?

Now they dig the track up during the day soft so it is very good and at night they make it harder and tighter for speed. I think maybe my horses are just used to the surface because I train there.

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

I don't like the speed of the game. I wish they'd slow it down and make it more kind on the horses. The speed these horses make can really tear them up. I'd like the surface of the track to be softer with less concentration on speed.



LISA PHOTO

Hill I Am won the 2013 NJ Sire Stakes final for the Laterza barn.

### How do you view the future of harness racing?

I see there being fewer and fewer tracks and the industry getting smaller because the casinos are buying the racetracks up. We don't get the same amount of public interested in the racing anymore, so that also leads it to getting smaller.

### Time for the stretch drive...

**Best Horse you ever saw:** During my time I've seen many good ones come and go. Skip By Night is one I used to like, and Harold Story's mare Scenic Regal. Those come to my mind because I was able to watch them race a lot versus some horse that would come to the track for one stakes race.

**Lasix – Yes or No:** Yes, I think it has to be legal.

**Favorite TV Show:** I don't get much television time. I listen to radio about two to three hours a day and only get time to watch maybe 30 minutes of television.

**Trotters or Pacers:** I like pacers; they are more reliable. With trotters, a lot of them make mistakes or are high strung. I've had a lot of both breeds but pacers are easier.

# Carryovers in play Thurs./Fri.

There are a number of carryovers coming up in the coming days that should warrant your attention.

On Thursday evening, Miami Valley starts first with an estimated post time of 7:20 p.m. for the \$2,860 Pick 5 carryover in race 10. Next up is Yonkers Raceway, which is offering a \$4,613 carryover in its fifth race that is scheduled for just after 8:00 p.m. The Yonkers pool is also guaranteed at \$15,000 as part of the USTA Strategic Wagering program.

On Friday, The Meadowlands has a \$5,153 Pick 6 carryover starting in race eight at about 9:20 p.m. while Cal Expo kicks off its \$3,164 Pick 7 carryover at 10:45 p.m. in race three.

All post times above are approximate and eastern time zone.

## Patel joins Hambletonian Society



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Hambletonian Society is pleased to announce the appointment of Gunjan Patel as co-chief operating officer, effective immediately. Patel, who brings extensive experience in the Standardbred industry, previously served as the social media coordinator and stallion syndication administrator at Hanover Shoe Farms, the world's largest Standardbred nursery.

With a strong foundation in staking, breeding, and event coordination, Patel's expertise is a perfect fit for the Hambletonian Society. Her well-established industry connections and impeccable reputation will be valuable assets as she transi-

tions into her new role.

A Penn State graduate specializing in equine reproduction and animal sciences, Patel has gained hands-on experience at numerous breeding farms and veterinary practices. This includes managing record keeping and operations at some of the most prominent breeding farms in the industry, including Winbak and Hanover. Patel joined Hanover Shoe Farms in 2007, where she developed a broad and diverse skill set across all areas of the Standardbred business.

At the Hambletonian Society, Patel will work closely with the team to gain a deep understanding of the Society's various functions. She will collaborate with key staff members, including John Campbell, President and CEO; Moira Fanning, co-COO; Nadia Tarnawa, head of Staking and Event Eligibility; and Polly Hartzell, head of Accounting.

"We are thrilled to welcome someone with Gunjan's wealth of experience and knowledge to our team," said John Campbell, President and CEO of the Hambletonian Society. "Her contributions will play a significant role in the continued success of the Hambletonian and Breeders Crown events, as well as in the day-to-day operations of the Society."

The Hambletonian Society manages 161 of harness racing's most prestigious events held across 13 North American racetracks under seven state jurisdictions. This includes the \$1M Hambletonian for 3-year-old trotters, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year at The Meadowlands, and the \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks. The Society is also responsible for overseeing the \$7M Breeders Crown, the sport's premier championship series. In addition, the Hambletonian Society administers a wide range of stakes and early-closing races with purse amounts funded through eligibility payments from breeders and owners, as well as sponsorships from race tracks.

Patel's appointment strengthens the Society's leadership team as it continues to support the growth and success of harness racing's most iconic events.

-release (Hambletonian Society)

## DRF Bets Handicapper's Corner

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

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

#### RACE 4

(2) LILLY CLARE was aggressively handled from the 10-hole last week and raced very well to be 3rd. She's sharp as of late and gets the nod with major post-relief.

-John Rallis



WOODBINE  
MOHAWK PARK

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 31

#### RACE 10

The power seems to be on the inside of the gate here and (1) IDEAL SKIES looks like the deserving chalk in this abbreviated field. She won on the barn change and had a bit of a tough journey last time. She should brush to the front tonight if any to her outside leave.

-Derick Giwner



#### RACE 5

(2) TACHYON won eight races at Yonkers last year and overall banked \$170K. Three back he just missed against two classes higher.

-Matt Rose



### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

#### RACE 10

(6) BUILD THE WALL floated away from the gate last week and got unlucky when another horse couldn't clear the lead leaving them both parked. He went a gigantic mile in defeat and deserves another look here.

-Giwner



### FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

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

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

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

DHP PPS

HARNESS EYE PPS

TRACKMASTER PPS

FREE PPS

INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNES



# NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

## DAN PATCH HOTEL ROOM DEADLINE IS JAN. 31

The U.S. Harness Writers Association's (USHWA) annual Dan Patch Awards banquet, presented by Caesars Entertainment, is set for Sunday night (Feb. 23) at Rosen Centre in Orlando, Fla. The deadline to make room reservations is Friday (Jan. 31) and can be made by using the USHWA link to the hotel's [reservations page](#).

The Dan Patch Awards banquet annually honors the best and brightest performers, both human and equine, of the previous season. The award winners are selected by USHWA, with all winners already having been announced except for Pacer of the Year, Trotter of the Year, and Horse of the Year, which will be revealed the night of the banquet. USHWA will hold its annual director's meeting on Saturday (Feb. 22) and its general membership meeting the morning of the banquet.

Tickets for the Dan Patch Awards banquet are \$200. There is also a reduced-priced menu option for children 12 and under. Dinner tickets can be ordered until Feb. 17 by contacting Judy Davis-Wilson at [zoe8874@aol.com](mailto:zoe8874@aol.com) or 302.359.3630. Click here for the banquet tickets reservation form.

All standard rooms under the USHWA block are \$209 nightly (plus applicable taxes). For room reservations, please click [here](#) for USHWA's dedicated hotel link. After the Jan. 31 deadline, attendees must contact the Rosen Centre reservations department directly at 800.204.7234 or 407.996.9842 and ask for the Dan Patch Awards/USHWA rate.

While rooms may later become available, Friday night (Feb. 21), is currently sold out at Rosen Centre. Guests will be able to receive the same USHWA rate at Rosen Shingle Creek but must move to Rosen Centre on Saturday (Feb. 22). Guests must call Rosen Shingle Creek directly at 866.996.6338 or 407.996.6338 and ask for the Dan Patch overflow block.

Also, the deadline to place an ad in the Dan Patch Awards Journal is Friday (Jan. 31). Contact Kim Rinker at [trotrink@aol.com](mailto:trotrink@aol.com). Click [here](#) for the journal advertising form.

For more information, visit the [USHWA website](#).

-release (USHWA)

## LONGTIME OFFICIAL BUD TEETERS HEADS INTO RETIREMENT

Lester "Bud" Teeters has seen more live racing at MGM Northfield Park over the last four decades than anyone. On Wednesday (Jan. 29), he judged his final race from high above the Home of the Flying Turns and will now head off into retirement.

Teeters learned early the value of hard work and dedication, helping his dad train horses as a 14-year-old.

[READ MORE](#)

## MEADOWLANDS 2025 STAKES INFORMATION

With the deadline for stakes nominations fast approaching, The Meadowlands would like to advise horse people that all of the pertinent information for the 2025 season including the final month by month [calendar](#) is currently available on [The Meadowlands website](#).

Stakes payments begin on Feb 15.

Questions should be directed to (607) 972-5500.

All purses are estimates unless otherwise stated and all dates are subject to NJRC approval.

-release (Meadowlands)

## MOLOTOV COCKTAIL JOINS WINBAK FARM OF DELAWARE

Winbak Farm of Delaware is thrilled to announce the addition of Molotov Cocktail, 2, 1:56; 3, 1:52 2/5 (\$428,902), to the stallion roster.

"Molotov Cocktail has excellent conformation and is one of the gamest horses I have ever owned," said Richard Gutnick, Owner. "I have owned both Chapter Seven and Market Share and I put him right up there with them in terms of toughness."

Molotov Cocktail was campaigned by Hall Of Fame Inductee, Linda Toscano, who trained both Chapter Seven and Market Share.

"I bred Molotov Cocktail (with T L P Stable) and have had him since he

was a baby," said Gutnick. "I always thought he had grand circuit potential."

At 2, Molotov Cocktail won five of seven starts.

"Molotov Cocktail had both 2-year-old speed and the ability to trot smoothly over multiple size tracks," said Joe Thomson, Winbak Farm Owner. "He is a son of Chapter Seven, who is continually a leading sire in North America and his offspring have earned over \$77 Million."

His wins included the Kindergarten Stakes at The Meadowlands, New York Sire Stakes legs at Batavia Downs (1:57 4/5), Saratoga Harness (1:58 3/5), Vernon Downs (1:57) and \$200,000 Final at Yonkers (1:56 2/5).

"When Molotov Cocktail won the New York Sire Stakes Final, he triumphed over Cool Papa Bell, who would win the Hambletonian the following season," said Jack Burke, Winbak Farm General Manager. "Molotov Cocktail's half-mile speed should be a fantastic asset to his future Delaware-sired offspring."

At 3, Molotov Cocktail won the Earl Beal Jr Memorial consolation at Pocono Downs in 1:52 4/5 against King Of The North. He was second in New York Sire Stakes legs at Batavia Downs, Saratoga Harness, Yonkers and \$200,000 Final at Tioga Downs (timed in 1:51 4/5).

"At 3, Molotov Cocktail was second by a nose in the New York Sire Stakes Final to Cool Papa Bell in a blistering 1:51 4/5," said Thomson. "Molotov Cocktail should be a great cross for many mares including mares sired by Andover Hall, Cantab Hall, CR Commando, Credit Winner, Glidemaster, and Muscle Hill."

At 4, Molotov Cocktail returned for one qualifier where he was timed in 1:53 3/5.

"Molotov Cocktail had broke his coffin bone at 3 and had the recommended time off to heal," said Gutnick. "At 4, he qualified in 1:53 3/5 but it was discovered that he had rebroke his coffin bone during the race, he always gave 110% and the fact he was reinjured and still finished the mile strongly shows how tough he is."

Molotov Cocktail will stand for \$3,000 in Delaware. For more information on Molotov Cocktail, please visit [www.winbakfarm.com](http://www.winbakfarm.com). The Winbak Farm team is available for helping pick the right cross for your mare, call 410.885.3059 for assistance.

-edited release (Winbak Farm)

## FUNDRAISER FOR FAMILY OF MAKAYLA LAVERTY

Makayla Laverty was killed over the weekend in a tragic car accident. She played an active role in the harness racing industry and many knew her for her infectious smile.

There are multiple fundraising efforts going on for her family to help cover funeral costs. Donations are being accepted here: <https://www.spotfund.com/story/7964d4fe-9e2e-4b70-a192-1b82b9b61f10>

There was a spaghetti lunch and dinner held on Wednesday at Northfield Park.

In addition, horses will be wearing ribbons at both Northfield Park and Miami Valley in honor of her. Donations are being accepted at the tracks as well.

-release

## MILESTONES AT ROSECROFT RACEWAY

Roger Plante Jr. scored the 3,000th win of his driving career when he steered Eli Scott Jr. trainee Killer Waves (\$4.20) to a 1:56 3/5 victory in Rosecroft Raceway's sixth race, a \$4,000 first-level conditioned pace for fillies and mares, on Wednesday (Jan.30).

A native of New Hampshire, the 57-year-old Plante logged his first career start in 1984. Since 2001, he has been a mainstay in the Delmarva region, and he has driven the winners of over \$27 million in his career.

Also on the card, amateur driver Steven Robinson reached a milestone of his own — his 100th career driving victory — when Awesome Times Two (\$3.20) posted a 3-3/4-length, 1:59 2/5 win over Moneyorroses in the Mid-Atlantic Drivers Club pace. The 59-year-old Robinson, who also trains a small stable, first lined up behind the gate in 1994 and has driven off and on in the three decades since, primarily in amateur events.

-edited release (Rosecroft Raceway)