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THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 2025

HAMBO DAY BLUR



The action was fast at The Meadowlands on Hambletonian Day and at least for Editor Derick Giwner the day flew by as well

NICKI SHERMAN/DRF HARNESS



EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner

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

Is it possible for a seven hour racing card to be too short? That was my takeaway one day after spending my late morning, afternoon and early evening at The Meadowlands on Hambletonian Day.

In an era when people want fast and constant action, asking for anything to be drawn out longer seems very much against the grain. Before you start examining my mental health, consider that I'm not suggesting that any program of races should extend past five hours at a maximum but more that Hambletonian Day, at least when the weather is as picture-perfect as it was on August 2 in New Jersey, can be the rare exception when there simply wasn't enough time to do and see everything I wanted.

I'm very grateful for the many interactions I had during the day with people ranging from my old Brooklyn buddies Billy Risley and Ricky Migdal, who now owes me \$1 for losing the bet on who would

be the favorite between Maryland and Super Chapter in the Hambletonian, to track President/CEO Jeff Gural. However, looking back, there were so many people I never got the chance to connect with and places at the track I didn't visit.

Hambletonian Day is one of maybe a handful of events during the calendar year – Dan Patch Awards, Lexington/Harrisburg sales, Breeders Crown, etc. – when you get to chat with people face to face that you haven't laid eyes on in months or even a year. While I just saw him a month ago, it would've been nice to connect with Garnet Barnsdale and yet our paths never crossed. I didn't see Gordon Waterstone either, even though he was certainly in attendance. Interestingly I ran into his former boss Kathy Parker a half-dozen times. It is so random.

I kept meaning to head down to see 2009 Hambletonian winner Muscle Hill but got sidetracked every time and somehow I missed 2012 champion Market Share leading the Hambletonian post parade. I started walking to the VIP tent on the track apron to say hello to a few people but ended up in a conversation that took me off track again. Many missed experiences!

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)

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The above said, I thoroughly enjoyed the good conversation I was able to participate in. Stefan Melander, 2001 Hambletonian winner with Scarlet Knight, was on site with his camera in hand as usual. He said this was his first Hambletonian since 2014 and that he was here to root on his nephew Marcus Melander, who had four in the Hambletonian and finished second and third.

It was a good chat with Jeff Gural on the west deck. Normally it is very hot out there on Hambo Day but on Saturday it was perfect. He asked what I thought of his new plan to increase the purses of stakes and while I agreed that the idea was reasonable, I outlined a few issues, including the inequity of cost for a stallion breeding 40 horses versus one that handles 120. My other major issues is the lack of clear explanation on how the money will be distributed among the stakes races. Is it split evenly among all races, done by age or some other plan?

Gural was very optimistic on the prospect of getting a casino at The Meadowlands. The hurdles include first getting 60% of the legislature to agree so the measure can get on the ballot in 2026 and of course overcoming likely strong advertising opposition from outside states (and perhaps Atlantic City), but there appears to be at least a better possibility of success than back in 2016. Meadowlands would have to share the profits with Monmouth Park.



Nordic Catcher S breeder Jan Petter Hansen was presented his trophy by Michelle Crawford.

Catcher S (who is co-owned by Gural – more on that on the next page) was simply much the best on that day. That obviously doesn't mean that Super Chapter, Maryland or another horse won't be better in the many races still to come for the division.



(ABOVE) DERICK GIWNER/
(RIGHT) NIKKI SHERMAN

(above) Stefan Melander and Sarah Svanstedt showing off the number of Hambletonian winners they each have. (right) Nordic Catcher S adorned with the Hambletonian blanket of flowers.



One of the other conversations I had was with Nordic Catcher S's breeder Jan Petter Hansen, who is responsible for the rare combination of That Woman Hanover (a Somebeachsomewhere pacing mare) with trotting stallion Six Pack. "I don't know if it is a trend but it is worth trying," said Hansen, who only breeds five or six horses a year and says he has a Walner foal from That Woman Hanover for this year.

Nordic Catcher S is the fifth foal from That Woman Hanover and the first via a trotting stallion. Trainer Ake Svanstedt also has his full brother Nordic Dancer S but that one has yet to win as a 2-year-old.

While mixing of pacing and trotting blood isn't commonplace, there is certainly precedent to produce an elite performer, with Googoo Gaagaa (1:50 4/5) the top example here in the U.S. He took the country by storm winning the Earl Beal Memorial at Pocono back in 2012.

Anders Strom (Courant), who co-owns Hambletonian third-place finisher Maryland, showed us one of his named Jobspost, a son of Readly Express out of a Rocknroll Hanover mare named Flash. The 6-year-old has won 15 of 25 starts (1.87 million SEK) in Sweden and has his sights set on a winter campaign in France.

Of course there is also Don Fanucci Zet, who is the product of a male trotting line and pacing broodmare breeding. The 2021 Elitlopp winner has won 31 of 63 races and over 21.6 million SEK in his career.

One more trotter certainly worth mentioning is Apex. He won the \$225,000 New Jersey Sire Stakes final for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



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2-year-old colts and geldings, but more importantly he's a son of two greats in Walner and Mission Brief. Could he be the first Mission Brief foal to take the next step and mark her not just as a champion filly on the track but a breeder of champions?

"This means an awful lot," said co-owner and breeder Steve Stewart. "The other ones prior to him all sold, five yearlings for \$3 million, and everyone said 'why would they spend all that money on this colt, she hasn't done anything'. All of them have been trained by Marcus and all of them have shown tremendous talent but different things have upset them. Marcus has said all along that this was the best one she's had because he's more easygoing and smarter."

Jeff Snyder actually signed the ticket on Apex at Harrisburg and was all smiles along with fellow co-owner Lennart Agren (SRF Stable). Stewart was of course happiest of all and only has a piece of Apex because of an interaction with Snyder at the sale.

"I told him it is not something we normally do because we are sellers but if you buy him we'll stay in. Jeff came back after he bought him for \$525,000 and said 'you're in' and I said 'that's fantastic,'" said Stewart, who has a Gimpantzee colt out of Mission Brief to sell at Harrisburg this fall.

Pivoting to the pacers exclusively, Sylvia Hanover and Twin B Joe



DERICK GIWNER

Winning group behind NJSS winner Apex.

good betting him because he puts just about every horse in play at some point in the mile. You're rarely complaining that he was too passive.

Finally, I want to wish Jessica Otten all the best as she leaves behind New Jersey to head west to Ohio. Hambletonian Day was her last working at The Meadowlands and she certainly made her mark over her seven years on the scene. Many of us watched as Jessica grew her profile on the air by leaps and bounds, from paddock interviews to hosting shows on FOX. Unfortunately for those that enjoyed watching her on the set, you can take the woman out of the Midwest but you can't take the Midwest out of the woman. It was time to go home.

GURAL AND SVANSTEDT: A PERFECT BUSINESS MARRIAGE

Your next connection could be your best connection. That's the Cliff Notes version of how Jeff Gural the owner went from a fringe stakes player to handing the Hambletonian trophy to himself in the winner's circle at The Meadowlands, the track he operates as CEO, after Nordic Catcher S's record-setting victory.

"It was a fluke," recalled Gural about how he met trainer Ake Svanstedt. "He bought a horse from me in the sale at Lexington. I walked over to him, I didn't know who he was, and I told him I bred the horse. Ake said 'I don't speak English, talk to my son' and I said 'tell your father that if he wants I'll take 25 percent'. That started the relationship. He's the best trotting trainer in this country and maybe the world."

The seemingly inconsequential encounter at the 2013 Lexington Selected Yearling Sale involving a \$20,000 purchase named Blue Muse began a relationship between Gural and Svanstedt that has seen them together in the winner's circle after the Hambletonian Oaks, the Breeders Crown, and now in 2025 following the Hambletonian.

Gural operates under the moniker Little E LLC and that entity not only has increased its stakes appearances and success rate but also earnings since Svanstedt joined the picture. Of course some of the increase is due to Gural's expanding his ownership portfolio since taking over The Meadowlands, but the impact of the Svanstedt stable is huge. In 2013 Little E LLC had total earnings of \$716,276 on the track. That figure eclipsed \$2 million in each of the last two years and is trending that way again with \$1.3 million earned so far in 2025.

"I'd be nowhere in the business," said Gural about his standing as an owner without Svanstedt. "I'd own the Meadowlands but I wouldn't be winning any races. I have other trainers and they are decent but Ake is in a class by himself, and I'm good luck for [the Svanstedts]."

According to Gural, his spending has steadily increased as he has seen continued success with Ake Svanstedt, who heads the operation along with Sarah Svanstedt. What started with horses in the five-digit range has ballooned to numbers with five zeroes in the trailing position.

"Let's face it, I buy good horses with them. I don't spend \$300,000 to \$400,000 but I'll spend \$150,000 to \$200,000. When we started we were buying horses for \$30,000 to \$40,000. Six Pack cost \$30,000," said Gural, pointing out that his lone stallion and the sire of his Hambletonian winner was a bargain purchase.

The Svanstedt's buy a lot of horses and Gural doesn't go in on all of them. Typically they provide him a list of horses he can buy into and then Gural goes some research. He has Ashleigh Bennett from Allager

Farm [Gural's breeding operation] examine the yearling videos and he checks out the pedigrees.

"I don't claim to know anything about the physical part but I'll look at the families, the price, the cross, and make a decision based on that," said Gural. "It is tricky because he buys a lot of horses and I try to guess which ones will be good. I've been very lucky with him."

Most people would agree that Gural is not known for being an optimist. While he was on cloud nine in the winner's circle, he reflected on how things turned around for him in the course of one week.

"Not long because the horses business is very fickle," said Gural about how long he would remain on a high from the Hambletonian win. "Last week I was as depressed as I've ever been when Lady Landia was terrible. She was 2-5 in that [Hambletonian Oaks] elim and she was no good at all. It only lasts until the next race. Anyone will tell you, enjoy the highs because there are many more lows than highs."

While Gural was predicting a shorter run for his Hambletonian high, the run extended through the weekend and right into Monday when Mr Mouton, a horse that had traffic trouble and failed to reach the Hambletonian final, overcame the second-tier to win the \$80,000 first leg of the Kentucky Sire Stakes for his division. Also trained by Svanstedt, Mr Mouton stopped the clock in 1:50 1/5, meaning Gural now co-owns the two fastest 3-year-old trotters of 2025. A race later, another horse he co-owns – My Degenerate – took a \$30,000 KY Sire Stakes split.

It seems the horse racing Gods are smiling on Jeff Gural at the moment. He's won races he never thought were possible and you have to wonder what is left for the 83-year-old to accomplish in the sport.

"I have to breed a Hambletonian winner," said Gural, who added, "Anything is possible."

That sounds like an optimistic view to this writer!

-Derick Giwner



NICKI SHERMAN/DRF HARNESS



SIX PACK

(Muscle Mass - Pleasing Lady) 2, 1:55.4f; 3, 1:49.1 (\$1,939,604)

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NORDIC CATCHER S

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Hambletonian is just the first step towards divisional honors



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman ✕ [Bergmanjay](#)

The 100th Hambletonian has been completed, and one horse rose above the rest in dominant fashion. Nordic Catcher S and driver-trainer Ake Svanstedt put on a dramatic two-week display, first with a stellar wire-to-wire performance in the Hambletonian elimination heat, then taking the \$1 million classic's top prize last Saturday (August 2) employing a different style.

The preliminary effort had some people on the fence, since the son of Six Pack won by a diminishing nose. That only inflated Nordic Catcher's value in the final as the colt proved to be more than a one-trick pony, disposing pacesetter Go Dog Go with a blistering first-over assault and easily holding off the top Melander-trained horses, with Super Chapter a well-beaten second.

Those that expected horses to peak entering the final forgot that one had already reached the apex in Nordic Catcher S. Maryland, Maximus Mearas S and Super Chapter were no better the following week than they were in the elimination rounds and failed to threaten as Nordic Catcher S set an all-time Hambletonian standard with the 1:50 flat victory.

Timing is critical whether within races or in the real world, and what has become extremely apparent since Ake Svanstedt and his family arrived in this country is that he has an innate ability to get the most out of his horses on key days during the stakes season. While not all his horses win when the big money is on the line, a large number do rise to the occasion and their performances leave the competition in the dust.

Veteran driver-trainer John Kopas was on hand at The Meadowlands on Saturday, a trip he and other horsemen from Ontario have made for the last 10 years, and he marveled at the accomplishment. "There's just no one better at prepping a horse for a big race than Ake," Kopas said. "The other Swedes (Melander and Wallin) can't come close."

The reality of the Hambletonian is that predominantly only one horse can win and while trainers may choose different paths to arrive at The Meadowlands on the first Saturday in August, only the winner will have made the perfect choices while those left in his wake will be left to wonder if they could have done anything different to have met with better results.

Still, there is plenty of racing to come and perhaps the second half of the season for sophomore male trotters will prove more compelling and more competitive than we have seen during the first half. Essentially the gloves came off in the Hambletonian and now the significant races will come with trainers ill-concerned about the long game and more focused on the week-to-week action, with enough money to go around and enough talented sophomores to see the outcomes look quite different.

Team Svanstedt did an impeccable job with the two horses that reached the Hambletonian final, with Gap Kronos S his fourth-place finisher closing ground as fast as or faster than any in the final quarter with Tim Tetrack at the controls.

The Hambletonian is now in the rear-view mirror and what's ahead are significant races that will test the longevity of a horse's form over other racetracks under different conditions. While horses managed to avoid each other for a significant part of the early season stakes events, it's unlikely there will be as much side-stepping through the rest of the summer and fall seasons unless others opt for the lucrative Kentucky Sire Stakes program and abandon the Grand Circuit entirely. There's hope some form of renewal could take place in just a week's time with the Earl Beal Jr. Memorial's \$300,000 main event on the August 16 Sun Stakes Day at Pocono. The five-eighths mile track will pose a different obstacle to those that qualify for the top event with all the Hambletonian finalists eligible.

The Beal, with no eliminations and an open draw, could shake up the strategy and change the dynamics in style and substance, with horses' quickness more essential and the ability to handle tighter turns put into play. It's hard to say which of the horses that raced in the Hambletonian will benefit. One horse that was un-placed in the Hambletonian could be a key player down the line, with Go Dog Go deserving of a mulligan.

"I'm not worried," said Carter Pinske (Go Dog Go's trainer) when we spoke just an hour before the Hambletonian. "He's got post 10."

Driver Todd McCarthy had no interest in attempting the impossible of passing nine horses in the stretch and jetted out with the son of Green-shoe to an instant lead. Go Dog Go cut a scorching 26 1/5 first quarter and marched to fractions of 54 2/5 and 1:22 4/5, paving the way while others methodically waited to attack. In the stretch, Go Dog Go would get passed but he hardly gave up the fight, suggesting that Pinske had him prepped as well as could be expected, but he lost the war at the post draw.

Go Dog Go's sophomore season began in June with a brilliant Pennsylvania Sire Stakes victory at Pocono and there's plenty of reason to believe he'll appreciate a return to the five-eighths track if he's not burdened with another impossible draw.

Super Chapter was a solid if not distant second in the Hambletonian and it's fair to say that the stinging first quarter may have had a bit to do with his lack of sharper closing speed when the money was on the line. Super Chapter had been unbeaten going into the Hambletonian and there's no reason to believe he can't bounce back.

Maryland had a solid trip behind Nordic Catcher S and struggled to stay with him in the final eighth sprint. Last year's champion remains winless this year but will have plenty of time to rectify that if he's to regain the top spot.

I was concerned heading into the Hambletonian that Maximus Mearas S would have enough of a foundation to contend. In just his third start of the year the son of Chapter Seven couldn't gain any traction in the final quarter. If he's to be a player in this division Maximus Mearas S will need to show more early speed than he has to date.

Early-season star Emoticon Legacy has a shot at redemption should his connections chose Pocono as their next stop. The Goodtimes champion may be ideally suited for the smaller track.

Looking past the Beal, the Canadian Trotting Classic on September 20 could be another pivotal race for this class and by then we should know whether Nordic Catcher S, the Hambletonian winner that hails from a Somebeachsomewhere-sired dam, is still the leader of the pack.

It's a long season and I expect the plot to change numerous times before a divisional champion is declared.

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Market Share and Grieco: Reunited and it feels so good



HARNESS FOCUS

By Jessica Hallett X @JHallettPhoto

He hadn't heard the roar of a crowd in eight years, but on Saturday, August 2 at The Meadowlands, Market Share found himself back on the greatest stage in harness racing, leading out the field for the 100th edition of the Hambletonian.

A triple millionaire in his career, the gelded son of Revenue S – Classical Flirt made his last ever start, his 100th career start, at The Big M in November of 2017 at the age of 8 under the guidance of trainer Linda Toscano, driver Tim Tetrick, and caretaker Shelly Grieco. Five years before that, in August 2012, Market Share trotted a winning mile in the \$1.5 million Hambletonian.

Fast forward to the centennial event and the champion stepped back onto the stone dust with Grieco leading him out, Tetrick in tow and Toscano flanking their trio.

"Have you ever met someone and instantly felt a connection with them?" caretaker Shelly Grieco asked. "That basically sums up Markie and I."

A \$16,000 purchase out of the 2010 Lexington Select Sale, Market Share found his home in the Toscano Stable from the start, with Grieco handling the behind-the-scenes work in the barn as his caretaker.

"I had broken my collar bone in July of 2010," said Grieco. "Due to complications with my recovery, I wasn't cleared to start back at work until Thanksgiving weekend. I was still weak and had limited mobility in that arm. Linda knew I had a fondness for trotters and Markie, at the time, was on stall rest due to sickness so she told me start with him."

"Here was a colt that had just recently arrived from the yearling sales cooped up in a stall and if he wasn't down sleeping, he was over his stall gate watching everything going on in the barn. He was the most chill colt. Thankfully for me, he remained that way his whole career. And 15 years later he still loves to nap!"

The gelding was foaled in Kentucky but found a career all over, with stakes races on the Grand Circuit ranging from the East Coast to the Midwest and Canada. Each race he had his team behind him.

"We basically traveled all over and the majority of his races were detention barn," said Grieco. "All this horse ever worried about was napping and eating. He would lay down and sleep anywhere. Detention barn at Balmoral was the race paddock and here I was both his 3- and 4-year-

old years literally putting a halter on him and dragging his butt up five minutes before having to warm up.

"When he set the world record in the Maxie Lee at Chester, so many walked by and commented that they 'counted him out' that day because he was laying down sleeping the whole time. He truly made my job easy."

Market Share has been spending his time at Southwind Farms as a babysitter for the yearlings. He has also competed at the National Standardbred Horse Show as a winner well-decorated in show ribbons. Tim Tetrick's wife, Ashley, broke Market Share to ride and brought him to his first National Show.

"The owners sent him to me in April to break and prep for the national show which was in October," said Ashley Tetrick. "He is extremely smart and took to riding very easily. When we started to work on collection under saddle, he didn't understand what I was asking at first and would flip to

the pace every time we asked him to soften to the bit and break at the poll. I really racked my brain for a few weeks and then asked Timmy what he thought.

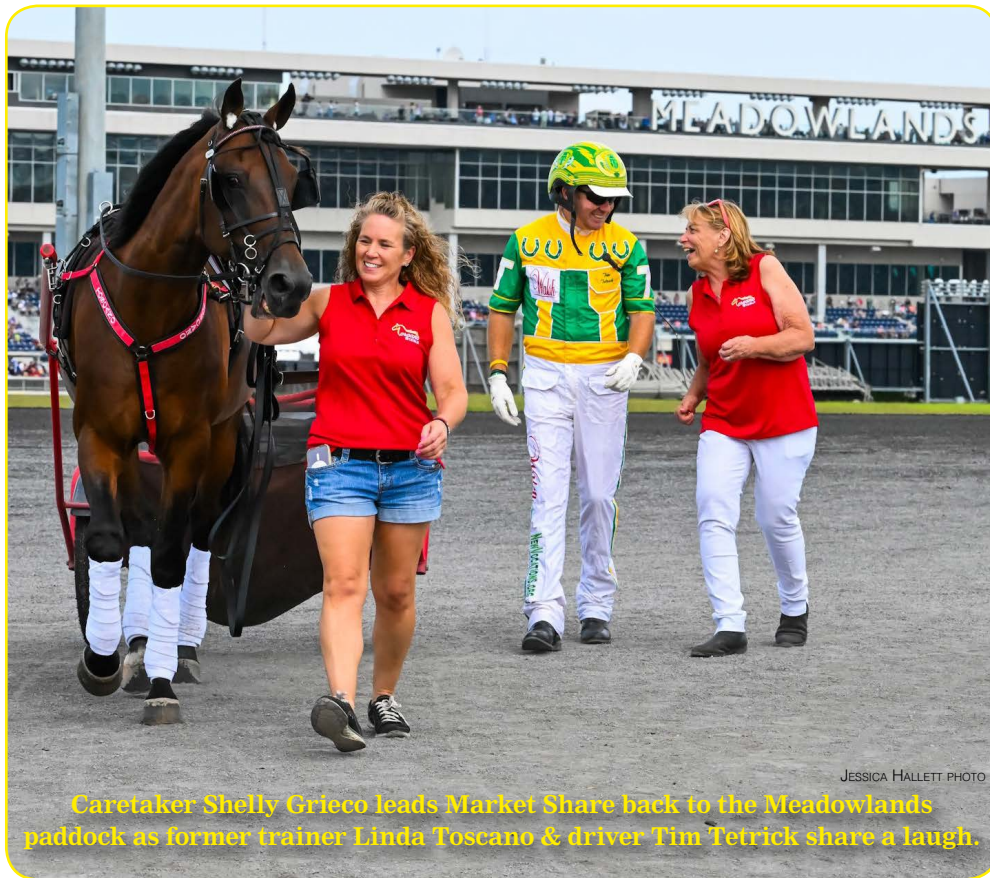
"He told me, 'just say Markie trot.' I rolled my eyes and thought that was the most ridiculous thing I had ever heard. After another week of struggling, I finally called Linda and she said the same thing. The next day he broke into a pace and I said, 'Markie trot' and he flipped right back to the trot! From then on out, he was flawless. He was absolutely elegant the day we showed him at the National Standardbred Show and it just proved how classy he is. It was an honor to have the opportunity to ride him as he means so much to our family."

Toscano brought Market Share back to the barn in advance of

his return to the big stage, surprising Grieco with his homecoming.

"Having him here with me the last few weeks is like having my best friend back with me daily," said Grieco. "I always said I couldn't have a bad day with him in the barn and that is still true this time around. He's the first face to greet me when I walk in the barn. He's more talkative now than when he left. I'll walk in and he gives me this gentle little nicker. And boy he makes sure you don't forget him at feed time now."

"The first afternoon back with us he seemed a little out of sorts. I'm sure he was more confused than anything, but it was amazing how quickly he fell back into his ole routines. He'd get his stall cleaned early and then lay down for a few hours and nap before jogging, and still did that this time around. He used to get excited when I unzipped his harness bag to get him ready to jog or train and three days into being back, he started with the little bounces he used to do."



JESSICA HALLETT PHOTO

Caretaker Shelly Grieco leads Market Share back to the Meadowlands paddock as former trainer Linda Toscano & driver Tim Tetrick share a laugh.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Grieco led the now 16-year-old gelding through the paddock to his designated stall with his custom leather halter prominently flashing his name in gold on his cheek.

"I put his leather halter that he used to go race in on Saturday morning to get him cleaned up and ready to ship and he got all excited like he knew what that meant," said the caretaker.

"He always was such a chill boy in the paddock. And Saturday was no different. I thought he'd be a little excitable after all of these years but like the classy boy that he is he truly was a gentleman. He was so used to being center of attention that I swear he thought everyone was there for him yesterday. Everyone that stopped to see him and take pictures with him thought it was hysterical how he basically 'poses' when the camera is on him.

"I wish I had a photo of him Saturday as we were walking out of the paddock to load up to go home. He walked towards the track and stopped and stood proud as a peacock looking at the track one last time. I'm not sure who enjoyed the day more... him? Or me?"

Market Share is one of many in Grieco's long history as a caretaker, but he has permanently etched his name not only in history books, but in Grieco's heart. In addition to the horses she cares for and the trainer she works for, Grieco herself is a veteran horsewoman in the industry, working for Toscano since January 2004.

"I grew up in the business. My dad had a decent-sized stable back home in Buffalo and Batavia, so it was weekends and summers at the barn for me for as long as I can remember," said Grieco. "I actually went to college for elementary education, but couldn't stay away from the horses. Sorry mom!"

Following the Hambletonian, Market Share returned to his duty as a babysitter at Southwind Farms, leaving another bittersweet goodbye between himself and Grieco.

The 100th anniversary of the Hambletonian not only drew in Market Share and his magnificent team in addition to many other horses and horsemen at the top of their game right now, but also veteran horsemen who share in a lengthy history in the sport. From past Hambletonian winning drivers to lifelong horsemen to champion Muscle Hill, the event was certainly one to remember. Grieco certainly will!



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Dunn takes aim at stakes victories at Hoosier, Northfield

By Jay Bergman

Top driver Dexter Dunn will be on the move this weekend and in the sulky behind a pair of contenders in Friday's \$300,000 Dan Patch at Hoosier Park and then on Saturday in the \$300,000 Carl Milstein Memorial at Northfield Park. Dunn, who hardly takes a back seat to any driver in North America, finds himself in the second tier in both races, with Sabonis in Friday's Dan Patch and Twisted Destiny in the Milstein.

For Dunn, who has spent the early part of the week racing at The Red Mile in Kentucky stakes action and then traveled to Harrah's Philadelphia for Thursday (August 7) afternoon Pennsylvania Sire Stakes, the frequent trips will be a regular habit through the fall.

"I'll be in Kentucky for four days," Dunn said as he's committed to The Red Mile's program on Sunday through Wednesday. "I hope to get a day off in here and there."

Dunn is in demand and he doesn't shy away from a chance at sitting behind a quality horse. "I can't complain. I get to drive a lot of very nice horses," Dunn said.

On Friday one of those nice horses will be Sabonis, who was invited to return to what must be considered his home track for the Dan Patch. Sabonis, an Indiana-bred son of Tellitlikeitis, won 16 times in 18 starts as a sophomore last year, with 15 of those wins coming over the Hoosier Park surface. Sabonis' lone win outside Hoosier Park came in the Milstein a year ago at Northfield Park.

Dunn has driven Sabonis to his biggest win of the season, a 1:47 3/5 effort in the Graduate Series final at The Meadowlands on July 5. Since then, there have been three third-place finishes following over-land journeys.

"He raced well last week," said Dunn of the finish in the Sam McKee Memorial at The Meadowlands on Hambletonian Day. Dunn hopes that reuniting the horse with Hoosier Park will aid in his chances.

The Dan Patch goes as race 13 on Friday's Hoosier Park card and has a field of 11 with two racing from the second tier. Little Rocket Man (post 2) loves this surface, perhaps even more than Sabonis, as his four consecutive Open victories would suggest. A career winner of 76 of his 129 races, Little Rocket Man races in his fourth Dan Patch and is looking for his first win.

Desperate Man (post 3) is one of two Travis Alexander trainees in the Dan Patch. The \$1.7 million career earner was just nipped in the Joe Gerrity Memorial on July 19 at Saratoga, his last start prior to Friday night's contest. I Did It Myway (post 4) takes a big step up for Alexander coming off consecutive wins.

The deep field for the Dan Patch has some key players on the outside of the starting gate, with Breeders Crown champion Coach Stefanos (post 6), McKee Memorial winner Captain Luke (post 7) and the \$2.4 million winner Bythemissal starting from post eight.

Dunn will drive Twisted Destiny, the 5-2 second choice in Saturday's Milstein at Northfield Park. The Chris Ryder-trained son of Bettor's Wish has won six of his eight starts this year including a pair over the Yonkers half-mile track in June. Twisted Destiny captured the \$200,000 MGM Messenger in a 1:51 2/5 mile. When last seen on July 26 Twisted Destiny was on the lead in the Adios and was outkicked near the wire by Prince Hal Hanover and Swingtown, losing the \$385,000 contest by just

a neck. Both Prince Hal Hanover and Swingtown will be in Saturday's lineup for the Milstein and unlike Twisted Destiny will have a spot on the starting gate.

"He's been racing great," said Dunn of Twisted Destiny. "It's going to be tough because Toddy (McCarthy, behind Prince Hal Hanover) drew well."

Prince Hal Hanover enters the Milstein in career form having taken The Adios from post eight for McCarthy with blistering speed at both ends of the mile. The Dr. Ian Moore-trained son of Captaintreacherous also crossed the wire first in The Meadowlands Pace only to be set back to second following an infraction. Prince Hal Hanover landed post two in the field of nine.

Swingtown (post 6) has regained top form for trainer Ron Burke and the Ohio-bred son of Downbytheseaside enters the Milstein following a



LISA PHOTO

Sabonis won the Graduate final at The Meadowlands and now goes after a Dan Patch win at his former home track Hoosier Park.

big win in the \$145,000 Ohio State Fair Pace last Saturday (August 2) at Scioto Downs.

Trainer Noel Daley will send the unbeaten sophomore Smooth Dream to take on Grand Circuit types for the first time in 2025 in the Milstein. The New Jersey-bred son of Cattlewash has dominated at The Meadowlands this year but did venture to Yonkers on one occasion to test his ability over a half-mile track. On July 8 Smooth Dream was an easy winner at Yonkers in 1:52 3/5, opening the door for his Milstein invite. Smooth Dream starts from post four.

Trainer Ron Burke has a second horse in the Milstein, but Rick Wink must overcome post eight. A son of Bit Of A Legend N, Rick Wink has shown his prowess over the Northfield surface during his two years of racing predominantly in Ohio. A four-time winner over the Northfield half-miler during that period, Rick Wink was a winner last year over the half-mile oval at the Delaware Fairgrounds in a sizzling 1:50 2/5 clocking.

The Milstein goes as race 12 on Saturday's 16-race program with a first post slated at 6:00 p.m. while Hoosier's 15-race card kicks off at 5:30 p.m.

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BE PERFECT BG

p,2, 1:50.1-'25 (\$121,950)
Perfect Sting - JK Mardi Says by Somebeachsomewhere
\$180,000 NJSS Final winner for
2-year-old pacing fillies
Owned by: Ecurie Csl
Trained by: Anthony Beaton
Driven by: Dexter Dunn
Bred by: 3 Brothers Stable



Lisa Photo

SONOFANUTCRACKER

p,2, 1:51.2-'25 (\$130,250)
Nutcracker Sweet - Rob Them Blind by Somebeachsomewhere
\$225,000 NJSS Final winner for
2-year-old pacing colts
Owned by: John Cancelliere
Trained by: Thomas Cancelliere
Driven by: Andrew McCarthy
Bred by: John Cancelliere



Lisa Photo

EMMAS MYSTERY CCL

2, 1:53.2-'25 (\$128,000)
Muscle Hill - Mistery Woman by Donato Hanover
\$225,000 NJSS Final winner for
2-year-old trotting fillies
Owned by: Winning Key Inc
Trained by: Noel Daley
Driven by: Andrew McCarthy
Bred by: Laura Young



Lisa Photo

APEX

2, 1:53.2-'25 (\$131,250)
Walner - Mission Brief by Muscle Hill
\$225,000 NJSS Final winner for
2-year-old trotting colts
Owned by: Jeffrey Snyder, S R F Stable, Steve Stewart
Trained by: Marcus Melander
Driven by: Dexter Dunn
Bred by: Mission Brief Stable

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Quick Trick seeks to put one over on President's Pace field

By Michael Carter for Northfield Park

Sometimes it takes time for horses to mature into champions. Quick Trick may have taken time to grow up but he has given his connections a lot to cheer for heading into Saturday's (August 9) \$100,000 Myron Charna President's Pace at MGM Northfield Park.

As a 2-year-old, trainer Jeff Conger, who co-owns with Knox Services Inc, started the son of Racing Hill on the fair circuit, something he thought the gelding needed before transitioning to some of the bigger stakes.

"He was really immature at 2 and didn't really have his mind on racing," said Conger. "I was hoping that if I raced him easier, he would get racier as time went on and we were right."

Following a game fourth-place finish in the \$40,000 Ohio Fair Championship at Northfield Park, the gelding was shut down in preparation for his 3-year-old campaign.

As he continued to mature, the gelding continued to get better with every start. He began his sophomore season with two straight wins before stepping up in class to the Buckeye Stallion Series where he finished second in the first leg.

He returned "home" to MGM Northfield Park in the second leg of the Buckeye Stallion Series and drew off in the stretch to win by 7-1/2 lengths in 1:51 4/5. He would not see the Buckeye Stallion Series again after that start.

"Quick (Trick) came along well as a 3-year-old. He loves to race from



CONRAD PHOTO

Quick Trick is a 15-1 outsider on Saturday looking to pull off an upset in the \$100,000 President's Pace at MGM Northfield Park.

behind, the quick pace up front in these events played to his favor," said Conger.

Quick Trick faced a tall task in his first start against Sires Stakes company, where he finished second by a head in 1:49 2/5. He fired right back in the next leg and made short work of his foes winning by 1-1/2 lengths in 1:50.

In the \$300,000 Ohio Sires Stakes Championship at Scioto Downs, Quick Trick rallied gamely from off the pace to finish third.

"The Sires Stakes Final was very exciting but somewhat frustrating. I thought for sure he finished second, but when the numbers popped up he was third," said Conger.

Quick Trick has since become one of the top-tiered Open class horses at MGM Northfield Park. In the 2024 Myron Charna President's Pace, he closed late to finish a strong third.

While he hasn't won since mid-June, his connections are confident about his chances in Saturday's event.

"He gives his all every race and while the post position isn't great, the fast early fractions should help us," Conger said.

No matter what happens on Saturday, nothing can take the positive attitude away from this star-studded gelding.

"He whinnies to the other horses in the morning, loves his treats, and he is a very fun horse to have in the barn," said Conger.

The Myron Charna President's Pace is slated as race 11 on the Saturday card which begins at 6:00 PM (EDT).



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\$10,000(est. pool) Late Pick 4 - Starts in Race 12

\$10,000(est. pool) Super High 5 - Race 13

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It could be Marcus Miller time in \$300,000 Dan Patch FFA

By Ken Weingartner

Marcus Miller is feeling at home in Indiana, sitting second in the driver standings at Harrah's Hoosier Park this season, and looking forward to his first time competing in the track's Grade 2 Dan Patch Stakes.

Hoosier Park hosts the \$300,000 Dan Patch for older male pacers on Friday, when a field of 11 will go behind the starting gate in the 32nd edition of the event. Miller will drive Coach Stefanos for his father, trainer Erv Miller, leaving from post six.

Coach Stefanos, the 2024 Breeders Crown Open Pace champ, has one graded-stakes victory to his credit this season, capturing a division of the G3 Dave Brower Memorial in June, and missed by just a neck in the G2 William R. Haughton Memorial in July. Both races were at The Meadowlands, where James MacDonald was in the sulky.

Miller has driven Coach Stefanos five times this year, most recently to a fourth-place finish in the Open at Hoosier on July 25. The two teamed up for a win in the Open in May and were second despite a :25.3 last quarter in June.

"Hoosier has become like a home to me pretty quickly and I'm excited to be a part of it," Miller said about the Dan Patch. "I think we drew good. It looks like a good spot. It's a group he could handle if things work out. I'm excited."

The 36-year-old Miller, a native of Illinois, won multiple driving titles on the Chicago circuit before moving east in 2013. Last year, he began driving more frequently in the Midwest again and decided near the end of December to return there.

"I spent most of the second half of last year in the Midwest," Miller said. "I was talking to my wife, and we'd always wanted to come back at some point. I had my foot in the door already, so it seemed like the right time to go. We're real happy we have."

Last year, Miller finished second in the driver standings at Illinois' Hawthorne Race Course. He began driving at Hoosier in the fall and so far this season has posted 142 victories at the oval. He is second in wins behind perennial champion Trace Tetrick, who has 180 triumphs this year, and tied for second among track regulars in win percentage at 16.6.

He also drove at Oak Grove Racing & Gaming this year, where he tied for fourth in wins and was fifth in purses. Overall this season, Miller has



CURTIS SALONICK

Marcus Miller has made Hoosier Park his new home and he'll drive Coach Stefanos in Friday's Dan Patch.

190 victories (ranked 22nd in North America) and \$2.58 million in purses (26th).

"It's been going great," said Miller, who has 4,919 career wins. "I'm enjoying coming to work. I've gotten support from a lot of barns real quickly, and I've been lucky to get a strong lineup of horses to drive. I couldn't be happier with how this summer has gone."

In Friday's Dan Patch, Miller and Coach Stefanos will face a field that includes 3-1 morning-line favorite Little Rocket Man, 7-2 second-choice Desperate Man, McKee Memorial division-winner Captain Luke, and multimillionaires Bythemissal and Charlie May.

Coach Stefanos finished a dead-heat second in last year's Dan Patch. The 5-year-old gelding is best known for his Breeders Crown victory in October at The Meadowlands, where he came from 10th with a quarter of a mile to go to win by a half-length in 1:48 3/5. He was more than nine lengths back at three-quarters but paced home in 25 3/5 (fastest in the race by a full second) to score the upset at 13-1 with MacDonald.

Coach Stefanos has gone 25 4/5 or faster in his last quarter 18 times in 56 lifetime races, including a 24 2/5 scorcher in 2023 at Hoosier in a Breeders Crown elimination triumph.

For his career, Coach Stefanos has hit the board 38 times, winning 20, and earned nearly \$1.37 million for owners Ken Duffy, D & M Trading II, and John (Coach) Stefanos. His 1:47 2/5 victory in his Brower division is only one-fifth of

a second off the fastest mark by any pacer this season.

"He's so wicked fast," Miller said. "There are quite a few horses that can pace that much early in the mile, but the way he does it on the end of the mile is pretty amazing. A lot of times, the Opens (at Hoosier) come up with a short field, and everybody knows the way he likes to race best, so it's tough to have that happen for him when there are only five or six in it. I think he will be better in a big field like (the Dan Patch)."

"He's never out of contention. He's always got a shot."

First-race post time is 5:30 p.m. (EDT) Friday at Harrah's Hoosier Park, with the Dan Patch Stakes as race 13. Beginning at 8 p.m., racing will air live on FOX Sports. Gabe Prewitt and Jessica Otten will be on track to provide commentary, going back and forth with Horseshoe Indianapolis from 8-9:30 p.m. on FS2 before shifting to FS1 from 9:30-11 p.m.

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BY NIKKI SHERMAN



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1 PRIMO MASCHIO

31:51.3 Q \$15,079

12-1 J. T. Porter 694-77-81-110 (111)

4 Aug25	30D	fst17 ⁹	274	:56.4	1:25.4	1:54.1	MSRF 3YOCG	385000	7	5 ⁵	5 ⁵	3 ⁰ 1 ³	2 ¹	2 ⁰	TrPorter	KeLare	284	292	28	28	1:54.1	102
17 July25	7Har	fst19 ⁰	274	:56	1:24.4	1:53.1	DSBF FINAL	110000	3	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ²	1 ²	TrPorter	WaCallahn	274	281	284	282	1:53.1	99
6 July25	90D	fst17 ⁹	271	:54.3	1:22.3	1:51.3	Opn Hcp I	11000	1	1 ^{hd}	1 ¹	1 ²	1 ³	1 ³	TrPorter	WaCallahn	271	272	28	29	1:51.3	115
23 Jun25	1Har	fst19 ⁴	29	:57.1	1:25.2	1:53	DSBF ELIM	20000	2	1 ²	1 ²	1 ²	1 ⁴	1 ⁴	TrPorter	WaCallahn	29	281	281	273	1:53	100
16 Jun25	1Har	fst16 ⁸	29	:58	1:27	1:55.1	DSBF ELIM	20000	1	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ³	1 ³	TrPorter	WaCallahn	292	283	29	281	1:55.1	89
4 Jun25	2Har	fst17 ⁹	293	:59	1:27.3	1:55.3	Qua		7	4 ⁵	4 ⁴	4 ⁷	4 ¹⁰	3 ¹	TrPorter	WaCallahn	303	291	291	284	1:57.4	
1 May25	6PRc	fst16 ⁶	262	:54.1	1:22.1	1:50.4	REVERSE	100000	3	1 ⁰	3 ²	5 ⁴	4 ⁵	3 ⁵	WaCaeJr	KeLare	262	281	282	284	1:51.4	102

b g 3, by Badlands Hanover, Primadonna by Somebeachsomewhere
Forrest L Bartlett, Shiloh, NC

Last 4 Sts-\$77,962

1:51.3 OD

25 Nfd 0 0 0 0

24 Nfd 0 0 0 0

23 Nfd 0 0 0 0

-25 9 7 1 1

\$135,712

-24 11 9 2 0

\$174,170

-Life 20 16 3 1

\$309,882

*90 SnackAtok PmoMscho ChrgelMup

*.05 PmoMscho ShonNbh WyatEarp

*.140 PmoMscho Sprocket ArmadaHnv

*.05 PmoMscho ShonNbh BighHkAmn

*.05 PmoMscho BighHkAmn WomLstCal

nb TysonHnv ZieDntCre PmoMscho

6.60 AveyCntrD DuneBurg PmoMscho

2 PRINCE HAL HANOVER

31:48.1 (5/8) * \$47,959

2-1 T. McCarthy 692-130-111-97 (188)

26 July25	15Mw	fst19 ⁰	26	:53.1	1:21.2	1:48.1	ADIOS	385000	8	1 ¹	2 ¹	3 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	TrPorter	KeLare	284	292	28	28	1:54.1	102
19 July25	9Mw	fst18 ⁴	264	:54	1:21.3	1:48	ADIOS ELIM	25000	2	2 ³	1 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	TrPorter	WaCallahn	264	271	274	261	1:48	120
12 July25	11M1	fst17 ⁹	26	:54.1	1:21.3	1:47.4	D-M Pace F	65000	4	1 ^{hd}	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	TrPorter	WaCallahn	26	281	272			
5 July25	2Vbs	fst17 ⁸	26	:55	1:21.4	1:48.2	NW18500L5C	17780	6	1 ²	1 ¹	1 ⁵	1 ⁷	2 ^{hd}	JJamieson	LaMoore	26	29	262	27	1:48.2	114
14 Jun25	11Wbs	fst16 ⁸	26	:53.1	1:19.1	1:47.1	NA CUP	740000	9	10 ¹³	10 ¹¹	10 ¹¹	10 ⁹	8 ⁴	DaMiller	LaMoore	283	284	26	263	1:48	115
7 Jun25	9Wbs	fst16 ⁸	27	:55.3	1:23.1	1:49.1	NA CUP	36500	1	1 ¹	2 ¹	3 ²	3 ³	2 ^{hd}	DaMiller	LaMoore	27	284	273	254	1:49.1	108
31 May25	2Vbs	fst18 ⁴	263	:54.4	1:22	1:49.4	SOMEBEACH	58765	7	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DoMcnaire	LaMoore	263	281	271	274	1:49.4	107

b c 3, by Captaintreachous, Percy Bluechip by Shadow Play
Prince Hal Hanover Stable, Cambridge, ON, CA

Last 4 Sts-\$367,190

1:48.1 Mw 5/8

25 Nfd 0 0 0 0

24 Nfd 0 0 0 0

23 Nfd 0 0 0 0

-25 Tot 9 3 4 1

\$431,633

-24 Tot 10 2 4 1

\$287,321

-Life 19 5 8 2

\$716,954

3.10 PrncHnv Swngtown TwistDst

3 ODDS ON WILDFIRE

31:50.2 (5/8) \$4,451

10-1 Ti. Tetrack 1319-274-221-157 (188)

2 Aug25	16M1	fst17 ⁹	261	:53.1	1:21.1	1:48.1	6u w-rnw7	20000	3	3 ²	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DeDunn	GeHernndz	263	27	273	27	1:48.1	109
26 July25	9PRcD	fst16 ⁸	261	:54.3	1:21.1	1:48.3	W5-8PM CG	17000	6	6 ⁷	6 ⁶	6 ⁶	6 ⁵	5 ⁶	DeDunn	GeHernndz	273	281	263	272	1:49.4	106
5 July25	5PRcD	fst18 ⁴	274	:56.3	1:24	1:50.3	nwsPM CG	15500	3	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DeDunn	GeHernndz	274	284	272	263	1:50.3	103
28 Jun25	5PRcD	fst17 ⁹	271	:56	1:22.4	1:50.2	nwsPM CG	15500	3	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DeDunn	GeHernndz	271	284	264	273	1:50.2	104
21 Jun25	13PRcD	fst18 ⁴	262	:54.4	1:22.3	1:51.1	nwsPM CG	15500	6	1 ^{hd}	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	DeDunn	GeHernndz	262	283	28	281	1:51.1	98
14 Jun25	11PRcD	fst16 ⁸	27	:55.3	1:23.1	1:50.3	nwsPM CG	15000	3	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DeDunn	GeHernndz	27	284	273	272	1:50.3	107
7 Jun25	4PRcD	fst17 ⁹	263	:55.3	1:23	1:50	nwsPM CG	15000	3	2 ³	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	DeDunn	GeHernndz	263	29	272	272	1:50.2	105

b g 3, by Bettor's Wish, Odds On Naples by Captaintreachous
Geovany Hernandez, Wrightstown, NJ

Last 4 Sts-\$21,350

1:50.2 PeD 5/8

25 Nfd 0 0 0 0

24 Nfd 0 0 0 0

23 Nfd 0 0 0 0

-25 Tot 15 8 3 0

\$66,760

-24 Tot 0 0 0 0

\$66,760

4.00 JmonRockOdsWldrRhydsSpr

4 SMOOTH DREAM

31:49.2 (1) Q \$25,257

9-2 A. McCarthy 703-118-86-90 (168)

26 July25	2M1	fst17 ⁹	274	:56.1	1:24.2	1:50.1	TOMPKINS	31825	5	1 ³	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JoStratt	NoDaley	273	283	281	254	1:50.1	101
8 July25	4YR	fst18 ⁴	271	:56.2	1:25	1:52.3	NW15000	21000	2	1 ⁰	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JoStratt	NoDaley	271	291	283	273	1:52.3	101
21 Jun25	3M1	fst18 ⁴	274	:55.1	1:23.1	1:49.3	NJ SDF	48000	1	3 ²	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JoStratt	NoDaley	274	272	28	262	1:49.3	107
6 Jun25	5M1	fst17 ⁹	273	:55.4	1:23.1	1:49.2	NJ SDF	10000	9	1 ^{hd}	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	JoStratt	NoDaley	273	282	272	26	1:49.2	105
24 May25	7M1	fst15 ⁸	274	:56.2	1:24	1:50.3	NJSS FINAL	225000	8	3 ³	3 ²	2 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JoStratt	NoDaley	274	283	271	262	1:50.3	100
10 May25	12M1	fst16 ⁸	28	:55.2	1:23.4	1:50.4	NJSS	25000	3	4 ³	3 ²	2 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	JoStratt	NoDaley	282	27	28	27	1:50.4	99
3 May25	10M1	fst17 ⁹	262	:55	1:23	1:49.3	NJSS	25000	7	4 ³	4 ⁴	3 ²	2 ¹	2 ¹	JoStratt	NoDaley	27	284	273	261	1:49.3	104

b g 3, by Cattlewash, Dreamlands Latte by Artsplace
Bay Pond Rac Stb, Malvern, PA; C/O Stb, Chestnut Ridge, NY; K/O Stb LLC, Westlake Vlg, CA

Last 4

Beckwith the youngest ever to win Big M driving crown

Things went about as well as they could have for driver Brett Beckwith during 2024.

And one could make a strong case that 2025 is going even better.

A year ago, the then 21-year-old was voted the Dan Patch Rising Star of the Year Award winner by the United States Harness Writers Association on the strength of a serious season.

The son of longtime horsepeople Mark and Melissa Beckwith won 608 races, which was good for third in the national standings behind Aaron Merriman and Jason Bartlett.

His money-earnings were a career-high \$6,271,414, which was good for 18th in North America.

You'd think Beckwith would have kept things pretty much the same after a monster year like that, but that's exactly what he did not do.

Every winter, with a small handful of exceptions, the "A-list" drivers take some time off from The Meadowlands after six months of Grand Circuit grind, which gives some young pilots a chance to be seen where the light is brightest, at the track located just off the New Jersey Turnpike's Exit 16W.

It was an opportunity that Beckwith, now 22, took full advantage of, as he not only became the leading driver at the mile oval at the Winter-Spring-Championship meeting that concluded Saturday (Aug. 2), Hambletonian Day, but became the youngest ever to lead the Big M colony, checking in two years younger than John Campbell, who was 24 when he wore the belt in 1979.

Beckwith's 92 wins were far more than runner-up Dave Miller's total of 68.

"To win the driver title at The Meadowlands is truly an honor," said Beckwith. "On a nightly basis, I get to race with guys, who, in my mind, are Hall of Fame drivers."

"I'm blessed to get the opportunities I have at my age, but I'm putting in the work during the winter months when most of the [top drivers] take some time off. To be the youngest ever, that means a lot to me. It means I'm on the right track."

Luckily for Big M fans, Beckwith will be doing plenty of racing at the mile oval moving forward.

"Yeah, for the most part, the plan is to stay at The Meadowlands, though, some days, maybe I'll chase after some stakes elsewhere, like the New York circuit," said Beckwith. "But I'm going to try and consistently stay at The Meadowlands."

Beckwith appreciates the fast track his career is on, but has no plans on easing off the gas pedal.

"If you asked me four or five years ago, I'd say my career is light years ahead of where I thought it would be right now," said Beckwith. "But I don't have much time to reflect on any of my achievements because I'm always chasing the next one. So, for now, it's going to be the six-to-seven-day-a-week grind racing."

AMERICAN MADE: Beckwith has been selected by the U.S. Trotting Association to wear the Stars and Stripes and represent America in November's World Driving Championship in New Zealand.

-edited release (Meadowlands)

MANDATORY PAYOUT HI-5 TO BE OFFERED SATURDAY AT MOHAWK PARK

Woodbine Entertainment has announced a mandatory payout for the Standardbred Jackpot Hi-5 will take place this Saturday (August 9) at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

Jackpot Hi-5 carryover currently sits at \$225,430.32.

Jackpot Hi-5 wagering will continue to be offered on each card leading up to Saturday's mandatory payout.

The mandatory payout is scheduled for Race 11 on Saturday and will feature a field of 12.

The Jackpot Hi-5 requires horseplayers to select the top-five finishers in order. A horseplayer can only win the entire jackpot if they hold the only winning ticket for that evening's wager. If there are multiple winning tickets, half the pool is paid out, while the other half is added to the carryover.

The entire carryover will be paid out, plus new money wagered, during the mandatory payout. The Jackpot Hi-5 has a \$0.20 minimum and a 15 per cent takeout.

Post time Saturday is 6:35 p.m.

-edited release (Woodbine)

DRF Bets

Handicapper's Corner

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 7

RACE 8

(4) ADINA HANOVER was up against it from a pace standpoint when trying a move into a slow middle half. I think she leaves it all on the table this week.

-Kevin Plowcha



WOODBINE
MOHAWK PARK

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8

RACE 13

(1) RCHARM exits the Hambletonian Oaks where she never got involved after a slow start. She lays over these and should win easily enough.

-Derick Gwerner



RACE 9

(4) FRONT PAGE STORY is back at Yonkers where she's done her best running - as a matter of fact she's 11 for 32 here lifetime. Her last local start she was a close second to Walkin On Sunshine. Lachance has options from this post but I think moving forward early suits her best.

-Matt Rose



SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

RACE 4

(4) CELEBRITY BAMBINO hasn't been able to find his form since returning from injury but this seems like it could be a "get well quickly" type spot. It isn't the softest NW7500 ever but I'd be shocked if he didn't take charge.

-Gwerner



FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Meadowlands Analysis

Friday

Saturday

Yonkers Analysis

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

DHP PPS

HARNESS EYE PPS

TRACKMASTER PPS

FREE PPS



INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNES



NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

HAMBLETONIAN DAY RESULTS BRING TOP 10 SHAKEUP IN WEEK 8

By Ken Weingartner

Following an exciting afternoon of racing on Hambletonian Day (Aug. 2) at The Meadowlands, nothing remained the same in the Top 10 of the Week 8 edition of the Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll released Wednesday.

Miki And Minnie, who won Saturday's Grade 3 Shady Daisy at The Big M for her third consecutive stakes victory, took over the No. 1 spot from season-long leader Louprint thanks to getting eight first-place votes and adding 69 points from a week ago for a poll-best total of 280. The 3-year-old pacing filly was fifth in the rankings last week but only 54 points from first.

Sylvia Hanover, who won the Grade 2 Lady Liberty over then No. 2-ranked Twin B Joe Fresh, vaulted from sixth to second in the poll. She received six first-place votes and 273 points, an increase of 123 points from last week.

Louprint, who was first in the rankings every week since the poll debuted on June 18 but has not raced since winning the North America Cup four days earlier, dropped to third. He pulled in a poll-high 16 first-place votes (a decrease of three from last week) but saw his point total dip by 27.

Nordic Catcher S was rewarded for his stakes-record triumph in the Grade 1 Hambletonian by receiving four first-place votes and 224 points to join the Top 10 at No. 4. Twin B Joe Fresh rounded out the top five.

Yo Tillie, who won the first leg of the Kentucky Sire Stakes Championship Series for 3-year-old trotting fillies to stay unbeaten in five races this year, moved from seventh to sixth in the poll, one spot ahead of Hambletonian runner-up Super Chapter.

The final three positions in the rankings were filled by newcomers: Grade 2 John Cashman Memorial winner Periculum, Grade 1 Hambletonian Oaks winner Conversano, and Grade 2 Sam McKee Memorial division winner Ken Hanover.

The Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll, which will continue weekly on Wednesdays through the Grand Circuit season, does not determine year-end awards. The members of the U.S. Harness Writers Association vote on all Dan Patch Award division winners plus Trotter of the Year, Pacer of the Year, and Horse of the Year.

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

Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown Standardbred Poll: Week 8 – 8/6/2025

Rank	Name (1st-Place Votes)	Age/Sex/Gait	Record	Earnings	Points	Pvs
1	Miki And Minnie (8)	3fp	7-6-1-0	\$340,371	280	5
2	Sylvia Hanover (6)	5mp	7-4-2-1	\$275,379	273	6
3	Louprint (16)	3cp	5-5-0-0	\$449,132	238	1
4	Nordic Catcher S (4)	3ct	5-3-1-1	\$573,322	224	--
5	Twin B Joe Fresh	5mp	6-3-2-1	\$299,114	188	2
6	Yo Tillie (1)	3ft	5-5-0-0	\$162,083	161	7
7	Super Chapter	3ct	6-5-1-0	\$548,505	119	4
8	Periculum	6ht	4-3-1-0	\$353,980	88	--
9	Conversano	3ft	9-7-1-1	\$483,511	86	--
10	Ken Hanover	5hp	8-6-0-1	\$239,671	65	--

ALSO: Emoticon Legacy 47; Beau Jangles 35; Prince Hal Hanover 31; Chantilly 23; Madden Oaks 16; Elista Hanover 13; Captain Optimistic 9; Daya, Control Rocks, Twisted Destiny 4; Binge On Yankee, Brue Hanover, Go Dog Go 3; Nijinsky, Smooth Dream 2; Allstar Maniac, Maryland, M-M's Dream, On To Norway 1.

OTTEN TO JOIN MGM NORTHFIELD PARK FOR CARL MILSTEIN MEMORIAL

Jessica Otten, known for providing commentary for Fox Sports broadcasts of harness racing on America's Day at the Races will join Michael Carter on the broadcast at MGM Northfield Park on Saturday (August 9).

Saturday's program, which gets underway at 6 p.m. will feature the Grade 2 \$300,000 Carl Milstein Memorial for 3-year-old colt and gelding pacers, the \$100,000 Myron Charna President's Pace for Ohio sired 4-year-old and up pacers, and the \$100,000 Tom Aldrich President's Trot

for Ohio sired 4-year-old and up trotters.

The pair will provide analysis and feature pre/post-race interviews throughout the entire 15-race program that features an all-stakes \$25,000 estimated \$1 Pick-4 beginning in race 8, an estimated \$10,000 \$1 Pick-4 beginning in Race 11, and an estimated \$10,000 20-cent Super Hi-5 in Race 13.

The evening will feature several promotions for guests on-site, a buffet in Lady Luck's Clubhouse for \$27.95 and the Summerfest Grille Tent on the apron.

-release (Northfield)

MIKE GRAFFAM REGISTERS 1,000TH TRAINING WIN AT PLAINRIDGE PARK

When Happy Hooligan won the 11th race at Plainridge Park on Tuesday (Aug. 5) afternoon, it was the 1,000th training win for Mike Graffam.

Mike Graffam's first year in harness racing was 1981 when he began driving and went 0-24 that first year. But things soon got better and as he continued to drive full-time for over 40 years, he has posted 510 wins, 592 seconds and 708 thirds with earnings of just under \$2.4 million.

Graffam's training career kicked off in 1991 and has come to fruition with this marquee victory. Graffam currently has 1,146 seconds and 1,209 thirds to go along with his grand total of wins and has earned just shy of \$8 million (\$7,968,333), which will be his next milestone.

Graffam's most prolific win years were in 2021 and 2023 when he sent 63 winners postward and his most fiscally solid season came in 2023 when his students earned \$837,110.

Racing has always been a family affair for Graffam, who has operated and trained out of the historic Norton Farm in Falmouth, Maine since the 1990s, a pre-Revolutionary War site that has been in Graffam's family since before Loring Norton, Mike's grandfather, began training horses there.

And the family has been running the stable as Mike Graffam's second trainer is his daughter Bethany and his driver is his son Nick. And the majority of the horses they race are home-breds who compete in the Maine and Massachusetts state series before earning their way in overnights as older horses.

Graffam's best stake horse was the home-bred 25 time winner Wolve-rina, who was the Maine champion pacing filly at both 2 and 3, registered a win percentage of 30%, was in the money 50% of the time and deposited \$367,328 into Graffam's coffers.

Mike Graffam's 1,000th career training win was also a major family affair as his son Nick drove and the winner, Happy Hooligan, who is owned by his daughter-in-law Natalie and was paddocked by his daughter Beth.

-release (Tim Bojarski for Standardbred Owners of Massachusetts)

MONTICELLO TRACK RECORD FALLS IN NY SIRE STAKES FOR 3YO FILLIES

Shes A Streaker chopped a fifth of a second off the Monticello Raceway track record for a 3-year-old filly pacer when she won Monday's \$121,800 New York Sire Stakes event in 1:52 2/5 for driver Tyler Buter and trainer Ron Burke.

READ MORE

ONTARIO-SIRED STARS STRUT THEIR STUFF ON INDUSTRY DAY

It was a record-setting Industry Day on Monday at Grand River Raceway as the Canadian standards for a 2-year-old pacing colt, a rookie pacing filly and a 3-year-old gelding pacer on a five-eighths-mile track were all broken.

READ MORE

PRIMO MASCHIO CAN BECOME FIRST DELAWARE-SIRED MILSTEIN WINNER

Saturday's (August 9) Grade 2 \$300,000 Carl Milstein Memorial at MGM Northfield Park will feature competitors from all over North America. But for one of the horses racing, they'd love to make it a 'first' for their state.

READ MORE