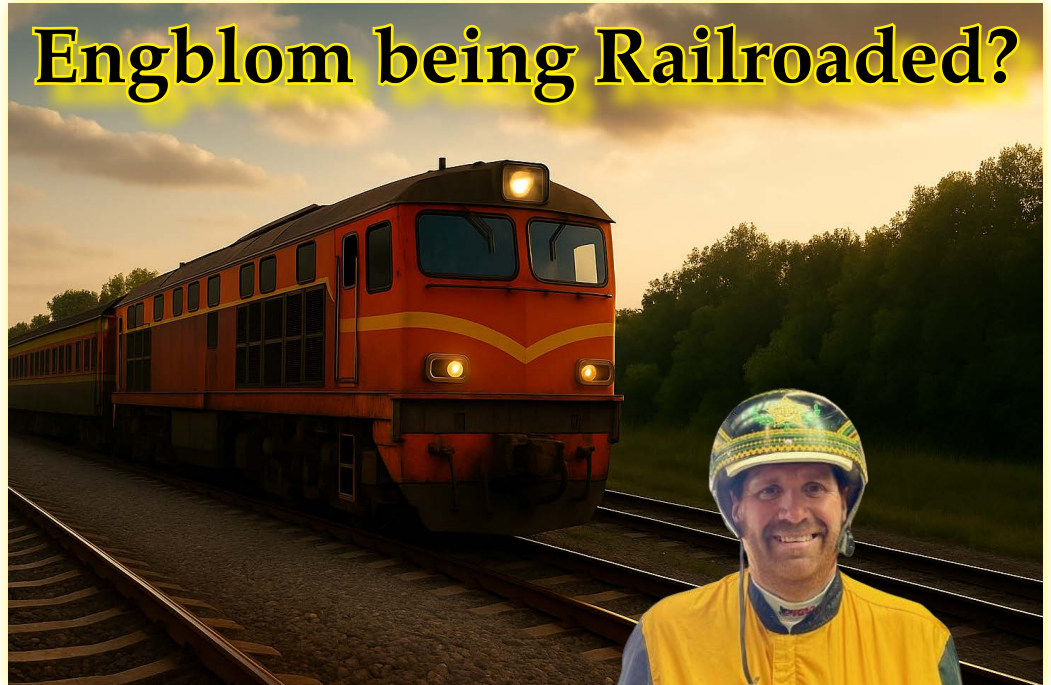


**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2025**

# Engblom being Railroaded?



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## STAKES BONANZA

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KENTUCKIANA STALLION MGT.



**Friday, September 19**  
**Post Time: 5:30 PM (EDT)**

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### EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner  
X @harnessveguy

There appears to be a train coming down the tracks with its sights set on running over trainer Per Engblom. That is the only logical stance one can take when looking at the current evidence provided to the general public.

More than two years ago, on April 29, 2023, Engblom sent out Mon Amour to victory in an \$18,000 race at The Meadowlands. This was certainly no surprise seeing as the trainer has won 1,361 races since going out on his own in 2019.

Following the victory, Mon Amour was selected to submit a post-race blood and urine sample which returned positive results for Meprobamate (Class 2), Oxycodone (Class 1) and Carisoprodol (Class 2). A split sample was also sent to a second lab which confirmed the results.

In December 2023 a hearing was held which

**Per Engblom has been fighting a medication positive for more than two years.**

determined that Engblom "is the absolute insurer of and responsible for the condition of a horse within his care and custody and shall not enter or start a horse that has in its body any drug or substance foreign to the natural horse." This is widely known as the "trainer responsibility rule" which loosely states that anything that happens or occurs with a horse falls under the liability of the listed trainer.

Continuing the timeline, on February 15, 2024 Engblom was handed a 380-day suspension and a fine of \$6,000. Eleven days later an appeal was

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)

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**80th Little Brown Jug goes to Louprint; Rodeo Drive Deo reigns in Jugette**

**Zeron with live drives for Hoosier Park Pacing Derby, Caesars Trotting Classic**

**Jessica Hallett: Tosies has special bond with International winner Lexus Kody**

**Hambletonian drama leaves race in limbo for 2027 and beyond**

**Best Bets and Analysis**

**Yo Tillie takes over top spot in top 10; Karl to stand at Southwind Farms**

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

**LOOK FOR OUR LEXINGTON SELECTED SALE PREVIEW ISSUE NEXT THURSDAY**

MOHAWK  
MILLION



WOODBINE  
MOHAWK PARK

## MOHAWK MILLION NIGHT AT WOODBINE MOHAWK PARK

**Saturday, September 20**  
**Post Time 6:35 PM (EDT)**

**Over \$3.8 million in purses!**

**Free PPs & Analysis**



# ANOTHER SALE GRADUATE, ANOTHER VICTORY!

One-Two  
**PUNCH!**

Congratulations to the connections of Crawford Farms  
and Burke Racing-bred Lexington Sale graduate

**UBRUTE**,

winner of the **\$400,000 Kentucky Championship Series Final** for 2YO pacers in 1:49 4/5 at Red  
Mile on Sunday, topping a Crawford Farms-bred exacta with **BRANDON BLVD** finishing second.

SELLING A HALF-SISTER (HIP 44) TO UBRUTE (DOWNBYTHESEASIDE-WARRAWEE UBEAUT),  
ALONG WITH A FULL SISTER (HIP 53) TO BRANDON BLVD (DOWNBYTHESEASIDE-ALEXIS FAITH)  
AT THIS YEAR'S LEXINGTON SELECT SALE.

*Owners: Burke Racing Stable LLC,  
Weaver Brusceci LLC, Hatfield Stables,  
& Phillip Collura*

*Breeders: Crawford Farms and Burke Racing*

*Driver: Yannick Gringas*



*"From our Farm... to the Winner's Circle"*



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filed with the Office of Administrative Law in New Jersey and a stay was granted. A hearing was conducted on October 1, 2024 before Judge Thomas R. Betancourt and a decision was handed down on January 2, 2025 calling the penalty against Engblom "extremely severe" and stating that the "mitigating factors far outweighed the only aggravating fact (the presence of the offending substances)." The initial ruling was affirmed but the suspension was reduced from 380 to 90 days. You can read the entire decision [here](#).

Despite the court's ruling, on March 19, 2025 the New Jersey Racing Commission concluded that the appropriate penalty was indeed 380 days and issued a final decision to that effect on April 23, 2025. A stay was then issued as the case awaits a decision by the New Jersey Superior Court Appellate division.

"I am the first person to say that we have to have a clean sport but I also believe that circumstances need to be looked at when things like this happen. The judge even ruled in our favor and still [the commission] changed it," said a frustrated Engblom. "It is very frustrating that we can prove in a court that I'm not at fault and they still don't listen."

"It is in the appeal courts right now and I'm not 100% sure when the deal will be done, but I have a good lawyer that works for me and I hope we can prove once again that I did nothing wrong."

Engblom's case is interesting when you consider his overall record. A former assistant trainer to Jimmy Takter, Engblom went out on his own in 2019 and has racked up well over 7,000 starts during those seven years, including over 2,000 races in 2024. During that period his total violations for any improper medication use is just one, the offense listed above.

Engblom is currently ranked in the top five in both earnings and wins this year. Just as a means of comparison, seven other trainers appear in the top five on one of the lists and they have a combined 38 medication infractions between them since 2019. Of course those vary in terms of severity, but it just goes to show that a perfect record is not exactly common at the top of the heap.

Winning at a high percentage comes with criticism and Engblom's career rate of 18.9% puts him firmly under the microscope.

"Of course," said Engblom on whether his success rate opens him up for judgement. "And social media has a big part of it; on X, Facebook groups, web pages. Honestly, I don't really care what people think or believe, but some people read and listen to things like that and they really shouldn't."

For what it's worth, Engblom is not denying his role as the person ultimately responsible for anything that happens with his horses. He does stop short at taking the blame for what occurred.

"I acknowledge that my horse tested positive but all the evidence we have points to it being a contamination that occurred after the race was contested. I can't say that I'm at fault in any way, shape or form," said Engblom, who remains unsure of his future. "I feel very confident in what I did and what I didn't do, but I don't feel super confident about what the future will bring. Obviously I'm going to fight as long as I possibly can."

"I am the first person to say that we have to have a clean sport but I also believe that circumstances need to be looked at when things like this happen. The judge even ruled in our favor and still [the commission] changed it."

-trainer Per Engblom

Interestingly Engblom has been allowed to compete at The Meadowlands where President and CEO Jeff Gural has held a tough line on medication offenders. Gural said that he met with Engblom and that his story sounded "plausible" but at some point the situation needs to be settled.

"I trust no one. I gave him benefit of doubt but at some point you need to move on," said Gural, who added that he gave the trainer a deadline. "I told him if he isn't able to get the suspension reversed by Dec. 31 he won't be able to race."

Just over 11% of Engblom's starts have come at The Meadowlands this year, and while that may not seem like a lot, the timing is key. The 45-year-old has recorded 76% of his races at Yonkers Raceway, Pocono Downs and Harrah's Philadelphia, all tracks which will be closed at the start of 2026. Engblom started 36 horses at The Meadowlands last January.

Engblom is certainly hoping his seemingly never-ending nightmare will soon come to an end. While he continues to win races at a high rate without a new infraction on his record and has been earning a good living (his stable is second in earnings at just over \$6 million), the uncertainty of his future continues to weigh on him.

"It has been two years now and I'm used to the situation," shrugged Engblom. "Of course I have bad days and good days but it really takes the fun out of it."

Often lost in these situations is the horse. Mon Amour raced another 26 times in the Engblom barn in the 10 months following the positive test and has competed 76 times since that fateful April 2023 date. Certainly he seems to have come away unharmed by the presence of 4.9 nanograms of Oxycodone.

For reference, 4.9 nanograms is the equivalent of .0000049 milligrams. Think about that when you take a prescribed 10mg tablet to deal with pain. That dose would be 10,000,000 nanograms. Then again, how these medications at any level would affect a horse is somewhat unknown according to the vet we contacted. They added that 4.9 nanograms was unlikely to do any harm, but that doesn't take into account the other medications found in the horse's system.

Regardless of your position on Engblom, we can all agree that he deserves clarity from the court in a timely fashion. This situation has gone on long enough and would be over already if the racing commission simply accepted the opinion of a fair and impartial outside entity.

**HARNESS EYE PAST PERFORMANCE PAGE FOR MOHAWK MILLION ON PAGE 18**  
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# TACTICAL LANDING

## Salutes his Kentucky Sire Stake Champions



### YO TILLIE

**3, 1:50.2 (\$923,633)**

**Tactical Landing – Consolidator – Triumphant Caviar**

**Owners:** William Pollock, Bruce Areman and Andrew Harris

**Trainer:** Andrew Harris – Driver Todd McCarthy

**Breeder:** Hickory Lane Farm & Black Creek Farm

**Perfect in 9 starts in 2025 & 17-for-21 lifetime**



### COUNTRY GLIDE

**2, 1:52.3 (\$246,000)**

**Tactical Landing – Sheer Glide – Yankee Glide**

**Owners:** Yacht Club 140 LLC

**Trainer:** Melvin Schmucker – Driver David Miller

**Breeder:** Buckstone Land Livestock

**Co-fastest trotting filly of 2025**

Amanda Stephens photos

## TACTICAL MONI

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# Ohio trainers head to Mohawk seeking their share of the 'Million'



## JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman X [BergmanJay](#)

There's a different feeling about Saturday's sixth edition of the Mohawk Million for freshman trotters at Woodbine Mohawk Park. While the rules of the game were modified last year, the 2025 edition finds a healthy cross-section of trainers, horses and owners.

The breadth of talent spans the prime areas of interest in the standard-bred sport, but this year's edition finds two horses with connections in Ohio taking center stage. Veteran conditioner Chris Beaver has been following a maternal line for a long time and may finally have found a "great" one in Endurance, a colt from the first crop of Captain Corey who enters Saturday's fray off a powerhouse open-lengths tally in the \$400,000 Kentucky Championships at The Red Mile just six days in advance of the \$1 million prize.

"We've been pointing towards this race," said Beaver on Tuesday the morning after finding out the post draw for the field of 10, with his colt landing post six. "I hear that's the winningest post at the track."

Beaver likes the post for certain but has more affection for the \$14,000 Harrisburg bargain purchase that may have gone unnoticed by many on the first night of the yearling sale.

"I had a horse called Triumphant Caviar that is currently a top sire in Ohio but when he raced for me, he finished second to Muscle Hill in the Breeders Crown," said Beaver about the pedigree that got his attention last fall at the yearling sale.

Love Session, the dam of Endurance, is a Muscle Massive-sired sister to Triumphant Caviar born 10 years after the near \$800,000 winner was foaled. Triumphant Caviar has played a major part in Beaver's incredible success story within Ohio as he often trains sons and daughters from the stallion.

"He only had one testicle," Beaver said of Triumphant Caviar. "The vets told me I should geld him, but we decided not to." That move has been a blessing not only for Beaver but many others in the Buckeye State where Triumphant Caviar has sired the winners of \$23,000,000 from his first 10 crops racing.

Beaver also influenced the move of Centurion ATM, a full brother to Triumphant Caviar, to Ohio following a few lean years trying stallion duty in Kentucky.

According to Beaver, Triumphant Caviar was not an easy horse to train but he did improve with racing. Conversely, Endurance has been a pleasure from day one.

"I felt that he acted like a great horse early on," said Beaver of Endurance. "He did everything easily and I was very high on him. He's been perfect other than touching a knee early on, but we remedied that."

Endurance finished fourth in his first start on June 23 at Oak Grove with Andrew McCarthy giving him a very conservative steer. Two weeks later McCarthy showed the confidence he's exuded since, with a powerful leaving move that led to a 1:54 3/5 blowout season's record for Endurance. The colt has not lost since, winning the early Kentucky Championship at Oak Grove in 1:53 2/5 on July 14 and moving to the mile track in Lexington to dominate horses in the late-summer series at The Red Mile.

Endurance and McCarthy closed out the Kentucky Championship on September 14, winning in 1:52 3/5 by open lengths in the \$400,000 event with McCarthy sitting chilly in the bike through the stretch. It was the third time Endurance had been clocked that fast in wins at The Red Mile.

"Andy (McCarthy) said he did it very easily," Beaver said of the Championship effort. "He finished with the earplugs in."

Beaver and ownership have been eying the Mohawk Million for some time and with a partnership deal in place to share the purse, have been mapping out plans for Endurance.

"That's why I raced him every three weeks," said Beaver of the schedule that he put in place after annexing the first two Kentucky Championship legs. "After the Million he'll have the Breeders Crown and that's it."

For Beaver, Endurance represents a chance to have a horse with a major stallion career and that is one of the reasons he felt racing and



AMANDA STEPHENS PHOTOS

Endurance (above) and Silverstein (below) are two of the starters in Saturday's Mohawk Million.



potentially winning the Mohawk Million would help advance the horse's future once his racing career was done.

While Endurance was dominating in Kentucky, another Ohio-based trainer had a solid juvenile campaign chasing him throughout the series and was making plans of his own to be at Woodbine Mohawk Park this coming Saturday. Trainer Matt Burkholder's Silverstein had captured a Kentucky Championship leg and finished second to Endurance on multiple occasions.

"We were chasing and competitive against a great horse like Endurance," said Burkholder. "When a place became available on Ongait.com we took the step."

Unlike Beaver's experience with Endurance, Burkholder wasn't a fan of Silverstein, a gelded son of Chapter Seven, training down.

"He was terrible. He would make breaks for no reason at all training down," said Burkholder.

Fortunately for Burkholder, he didn't give up on Silverstein, an \$80,000 Lexington Selected purchase by owner David McElrath (Dark Horse Farms).

"Once he got behind the starting gate, he figured it out and has just gotten better," Burkholder said.

The 28-year-old conditioner got started working for six years for top Ohio trainer Marty Wollam, who retired, leaving the door open for Burkholder to go on his own. The move has proven fortuitous, with his stable earnings improving each year and Silverstein's total of \$185,000 giving

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 6](#)

him a chance to reach seven figures for the very first time.

Silverstein drew post two with Hall of Famer David Miller in the bike. "I was really happy with the draw," said Burkholder, who will ship his horse on Friday (September 19). "It's just a four-hour ship."

The Ohio Sire Stakes program has gotten increasingly popular in the last few years. For Beaver, who has long been a force on the trotting side in Ohio, the change has been felt.

"It's definitely getting a lot more competitive here," Beaver said. "I used to be able to dominate but not anymore. It's getting a lot more difficult."

The growth within the state has led to many expanding their reach and horses like Endurance and Silverstein succeeding in Kentucky and beyond, with the richest race in North America on the radar.

On Saturday the stakes are higher, and the competition will be fierce as Endurance faces his biggest test of his young career.

"He hasn't faced many of those horses," said Beaver of Endurance, who will meet the Peter Haughton Memorial winner Apex (post 1) as well as the William Wellwood Memorial champion Ardonne (post 3), along with the New York Sire Stakes champion AI (post 10), a son of Chapter Seven from the red-hot Ron Burke stable.

The Mohawk Million has its bargain buys with Endurance the biggest and Wellwood champion Ardonne costing but \$37,000. Cambridge Hanover, a \$1 million buy by trainer Andrew Harris' ownership on the same night at Harrisburg that Beaver found his bargain, is the most expensive horse in the field and a brother to last year's champion Maryland. Apex was a \$525,000 purchase at the same Harrisburg auction and looks to be the best foal thus far from champion Mission Brief.

The Mohawk Million is slated as race 10 on the Woodbine Mohawk Park Saturday stakes extravaganza and may prove to be the most competitive in the race's young history. Post time is 6:35 PM (EDT).



### CS\$1,000,000 METRO PACE - RACE 8 AT MOHAWK PARK - SATURDAY

1-Superchamp Hanover	M.Kakaley	T.Alexander	15-1
2-Frantic Hanover	T.Tetrick	R.Burke	6-5
3-AI Papi	Y.Gingras	R.Burke	12-1
4-Tilthecowscomehome	J.Jamieson	C.Jamieson	15-1
5-Beau Jangles	B.McClure	I.Moore	1-1
6-No Waitlist	S.Zeron	B.Macintosh	25-1
7-Redland Rocket Man	L.Roy	J.Pentland	25-1
8-Sweet Lovin Lou	J.Macdonald	D.Lagace	20-1
9-Fragment	J.Bartlett	P.Engblom	20-1
10-Stingray Deo	Tr.Henry	G.Merner	25-1
11AE-Dax Seelster	T.Tetrick	R.Burke	25-1

### CS\$1,000,000 MOHAWK MILLION - RACE 10 AT MOHAWK PARK - SATURDAY

1-Apex	D.Dunn	M.Melander	7-2
2-Silverstein	D.Miller	M.Burkholder	8-1
3-Ardonne	S.Zeron	M.Scran	3-1
4-Shimmering Hanover	L.Roy	L.Blais	20-1
5-Cambridge Hanover	J.Bartlett	A.Harris	20-1
6-Endurance	A.McCarthy	C.Beaver	5-2
7-Dublin Hanover	A.Svanstedt	A.Svanstedt	10-1
8-Strobe Lite	J.Macdonald	B.Baillargeon	10-1
9-Diabolic Hill	T.McCarthy	A.Stoebe	15-1
10-AI	Y.Gingras	R.Burke	15-1



# CAESARS

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# Louprint coasts to Little Brown Jug victory; 9-for-9 in 2025

## Jug Day stories by Greg Reinhart

Trainer Ron Burke polished off a sweep of this year's Jugette and Little Brown Jug on Thursday at the Delaware (Ohio) County Fairgrounds as his Louprint improved to nine-for-nine this year by winning his elimination and the \$500,000 final of the Grade 1 event for 3-year-old male pacers.

Louprint, driven by Ronnie Wrenn Jr., won his \$50,000 elimination in 1:50 1/5, while Odds On Outlier and driver Dexter Dunn won the other elimination in 1:49 3/5. Also making the final were Papi's Rocket, No Trespassing, Extra Suds, Captain Optimistic, Lou's Starr and Snack Attack.

In the final Louprint drew the pole position and made the front easily as the others lined up in post-position order. That allowed Louprint to go opening-half fractions of just 27 3/5 and 56 2/5 as Captain Optimistic (Scott Zeron) pulled first-over out of fourth and advanced to lock in Odds On Outlier (Dexter Dunn).

Business picked up to three-quarters in 1:23 4/5 as Captain Optimistic continued to battle on the rim and Odds On Outlier awaited room in the lane. Odds On Outlier did get space to tip out in the stretch, but he was only able to get to Wrenn Jr.'s wheel, coming up a length and a half short in the 1:50 1/5 mile. Captain Optimistic was third, followed by No Trespassing (James MacDonald) and Papi's Rocket (Yannick Gingras).

"This horse is capable of anything. Everything I ask him to do he responds and does the job," said first-time Little Brown Jug winner Wrenn Jr. "He's great-gaited and got around this track nicely. He's a true professional.

"It's a great feeling. It's everything. It's a relief. I'm happy to get the job done for Ronnie Burke, his family and the other owners. My family and friends are here today. It's a special moment; I'm trying to soak it in."

A Sweet Lou homebred for Burke Racing Stable LLC., Weaver Bruscelli LLC., and Phil Collura, Louprint is also owned by Larry Karr. Louprint, who has an overall record of 16-2-1 from 19 starts, has earned \$1,641,712 and paid \$2.60 to win in the final as the favorite.

"He's moved into maybe the greatest horse I've ever trained. He has no holes in his game," stated Burke. "He can leave, he can duck, he can rate, and his gait is flawless. I can't wait to see him as a sire, but right now I'm just going to enjoy it and race him until the end of the year and try to get him into as many races as I can.

"With him it's easy, I have total belief in him, and I just know I have to make sure to give him enough work that he's fit. Other than that he's going to do it on his own. He seems to enjoy his work so I can give him a little bit extra. Usually the tighter they are the better they'll race."

For Collura it was his third Little Brown Jug champion, joining Filibuster Hanover and Lou's Pearlman.

"It never gets old but this one is extra-special because it's a son of Sweet Lou, who we owned, and the adversity that this colt went through a couple months ago with the surgery," he offered in the winner's circle. "We didn't think we were going to get him back this good, but he's come back better than ever. Great job to all our crew."



CONRAD PHOTOS

Louprint (above) won both heats of the Little Brown Jug on Thursday at the Delaware County Fair. (below left) Wrenn lifts the Jug trophy. (below right - left to right) Phil Collura, Ronnie Wrenn, Ron Burke, Mark Weaver, Mickey Burke and Mike Bruscelli.



even more dangerous than usual, as she went down the road to win the \$95,000 final of the Miss Versatility Series for older trotting mares on Thursday evening at the Delaware (Ohio) County Fairgrounds.

Driven by Yannick Gingras, M-M's Dream left from post two and got around 4-5 favorite Call Me Goo (Tim Tetrick) to take charge prior to the 28 1/5 quarter. From there, M-M's Dream continued to show the way to the half in 57 2/5 and the three-quarters in 1:25 as Bravo Angel S (Jason Bartlett) put pressure on her from first-over.

In the lane Call Me Goo found a seam up the inside and Bravo Angel S continued to battle on uncovered, but neither could get by M-M's Dream, as she held sway over Call Me Goo by half a length in a 1:53 performance. Bravo Angel S was third and Elista Hanover (David Miller) worked out a second-over trip from the outside post and wound up fourth.

"I knew Yannick was going to push off the gate. That was our best chance to win it," said winning co-owner Frank Baldachino. "She can leave with the car, which is rare for a trotter, and on a half-mile track you've got to be on the front.

"That's an advantage for her. It's not for all horses to pull shoes and actually get better at their craft, but for her it's a big advantage for us when the track condition is set up and we can pull her shoes. She's so game and she just wants to win, so she's pretty rare."

Baldachino also mentioned that M-M's Dream is in her final year of racing. Ron Burke trains M-M's Dream, a 6-year-old daughter of Swan For All bred

## M-M'S DREAM STARS IN MISS VERSATILITY SERIES FINAL

M-M's Dream showed again that when she races barefoot that she's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



by Mervin Miller, for Baldachino and Hillside Stables. She has a summary of 35-10-8 from 64 starts, has put away \$2,049,167 and paid \$7 to win.

## OLD OAKEN BUCKET WON BY CHEERS HANOVER

Cheers Hanover picked up his second straight stakes win by taking the \$103,500 Old Oaken Bucket for sophomore colt and gelding trotters on Thursday at the Delaware (Ohio) County Fairgrounds. Ronnie Wrenn Jr. drove Cheers Hanover to his 1:54 4/5 triumph for trainer Ron Burke.

3-5 favorite Whiskey Wow (David Miller) was on a loose lead through fractions of 29 1/5, 58 2/5 and 1:26 3/5 while Cheers Hanover gapped in the pocket, but Cheers Hanover made up the deficit past three-quarters and went on the attack on Whiskey Wow on the final bend. Cheers Hanover trotted by Whiskey Wow before they entered the lane and then was able to hold off Lefties Righties (Braxten Boyd), who had tracked him all the way from third, by half a length on the wire. Whiskey Wow faded to third, followed by Ponda Bugatti (Scott Zeron), Mazoyeres (Aaron Merriman), The Brodster (Jason Bartlett) and Baloo (Dexter Dunn).

"I really like this trotter. When he behaves he can really trot," Wrenn Jr. remarked in the winner's circle. "He's really quick. I got him out of the gate well, was able to secure the two-hole and popped out at like the five-eighths. He did the rest."

A gelded son of Bar Hopping, Cheers Hanover was bred by Hanover

Shoe Farms and is owned by Burke Racing Stable LLC., Weaver Brusceci LLC., James Simpson and J&T Silva- Purnel & Libby. He has nine wins, four seconds and three thirds from 27 starts, has banked \$254,848 and paid \$6.20 to win as the 2-1 second choice.

## DIVINE THING VICTORIOUS IN BUCKETTE

The \$81,400 Buckette for 3-year-old trotting fillies was the first Grand Circuit event on Thursday's Little Brown Jug undercard at the Delaware (Ohio) County Fairgrounds, and Divine Thing turned a pocket trip into a 1:53 2/5 win for driver Todd McCarthy and trainer Steve Carter.

Country Victory (David Miller) would cut fractions of 27 4/5, 56 1/5 and 1:24 4/5 while Divine Thing waited in the two-hole. On the final bend McCarthy guided Divine Thing off the pylons, and after a brief battle, Divine Thing went by Country Victory and on to the win by a length and a quarter. Santa Cristina (Scott Zeron) was third, followed Devious Babe (Andy Miller) and breakers Nikki Strikes (Andy McCarthy) and Murial (Dexter Dunn).

"It kind of worked out. She's right back to form right now," McCarthy said in the winner's circle. "Steve's done a great job with her and that was just a perfect trip for her today."

A daughter of Greenshoe bred by Crawford Farms, Divine Thing is owned by Jay Mossbarger, Brent Hopper and Kyle Gray. She has a summary of 8-6-3 from 24 starts, has put away \$405,587 and returned \$5.40 to win as the 8-5 second choice.

## RODEO DRIVE DEO REIGNS IN JUGETTE

By Greg Reinhart

Rodeo Drive Deo was crowned this year's Jugette champion for 3-year-old pacing fillies at the Delaware (Ohio) County Fairgrounds after winning the Grade 1 \$280,000 final on Wednesday in 1:50 1/5.

The two eliminations were won by Rodeo Drive Deo (David Miller) from third-over in 1:51 and Odds On Chesapeake (Dexter Dunn) with a brush-and-crush 1:49 3/5 mile. The remainder of the finalists were Odds On Hialeah, Vel Cinderella, Skywalker Sea, Rose, Time Of The Season and Papi Grad. Trainer Ron Burke sent Rodeo Drive Deo and Rose to the final while Virgil Morgan Jr. also had a pair in Odds On Chesapeake and Odds On Hialeah.



CONRAD PHOTO

**Mickey Burke leads Rodeo Drive Deo into the winner's circle as trainer Ron Burke and driver David Miller share a laugh.**

Odds On Chesapeake and Dunn fired out from post one in the final and got to the point from Rodeo Drive Deo with little dispute. The quarter was a moderate 28 1/5 and Miller swung Rodeo Drive Deo to the outside as Odds On Chesapeake approached the 56 4/5 half-mile marker. The top two would throw down around the third turn and to the 1:23 1/5 three-quarters, but Rodeo Drive Deo put Odds On Chesapeake away on the last bend, then pulled away to tally by 4 1/2 lengths. Odds On Chesapeake held second from Rose (Yannick Gingras) with Odds On Hialeah (Luke Hanners) and Time Of The Season (Andy McCarthy) fourth and fifth, respectively.

"I don't want to brag on her, but she gives me a lot of confidence," Miller said. "Ronnie said just get away in the two-hole and pull when you have to."

Burke trains Rodeo Drive Deo, a daughter of Captaintreacherous bred by Deo Volente Farms with Cool Cat Racing, for owners Bure Racing Stable LLC., Weaver Brusceci LLC., Beasty LLC. and J&T Silva- Purnel & Libby. FL Rodeo Drive Deo has a summary of 10-9-3 from 26 starts, has earned \$865,638 and paid \$3.60 to win in the final as the 4-5 favorite.

"She was good. I knew all along," Burke remarked. "I said David, just don't get boxed in, just come to the outside. I'd rather go down swinging. He had all the faith in her and stuff. I thought he was the best horse today."

"She broke her tibia as a 2-year-old and we had to give her a good bit of time off. As we were training her back, we were like 'this filly is really special we think.' Last year, by the end the year, of we knew with her, Rose and Looksgoodinloulou we had three top fillies. It didn't start off the year like we'd hope, but they're finishing strong now and we've just got to wrap it up the last couple of races."

## SETTLEMOIR CALLS JUGETTE AS HUSTON CUTS BACK SCHEDULE

Fans watching the 55th edition of the Jugette this afternoon at the Delaware County Fair may have noticed that the Hall of Fame announcer Roger Huston was not on the call for the 3-year-old filly pacing classic, and that was by design.

Huston, who had called all 54 previous Jugettes and 57 straight Little Brown Jugs, notified Jug officials that he wanted to step back and call fewer races during Jug week, electing to start with today's Jugette.

"We can not thank Roger enough for everything he does for Delaware," said Tom Wright, president of the Little Brown Jug Society. "I was saddened when Roger approached me with this request. For anybody who knows Roger would understand his desire to do it 'his way.'"

Huston was hired in August 1967 by Henry "Hank" Thomson to serve as the announcer during the Grand Circuit stop at Delaware.

Since 1967, more than 4,200 races have been conducted at the Delaware County Fair, almost all of them with Huston behind the mic.

"I just want to make it clear. I am not retiring," noted Huston, who celebrated his 83rd birthday yesterday (Tuesday). "I just felt it was the right thing to do, to give another young man the opportunity to live out their dream."

That 'young man' is Jason Settlemoir, who has served as Huston's assistant announcer since 2012.

Settlemoir is a native of Newark, Ohio, and has been coming to the Jug since 1988.

"Roger has been like a father to me. He has been a great mentor and friend," noted Settlemoir. "I am proud that he has the confidence in me to carry on this tradition."

-release (Little Brown Jug)



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# Zeron with live drives for Hoosier Pacing Derby, Caesars Trot

By Jay Bergman

Driver Scott Zeron is hoping for better racing luck with Perculum on Friday night than he received in last Saturday's (September 13) MGM Yonkers International Trot as the pair eye the \$200,000 Caesars Trotting Classic on a stakes-filled night of racing at Harrah's Hoosier Park. Perculum hopes to regain winning form following his first off-the-board finish in a race where he never had room to challenge in the homestretch.

"We're back in six days because he really didn't have to do much in the International," Zeron said, reflecting on the journey. "We were locked in from the start and there wasn't much that we could do."

On Friday, Perculum will get a chance to turn the tables on Lexus Kody, the International Trot champion and record-setting winner in the Maple Leaf Trot. Perculum finished second behind Lexus Kody in the Maple Leaf.

"He raced exceptional in the Maple Leaf but ran into a wicked mile," said Zeron of Perculum's performance in the August 30 event at Woodbine Mohawk Park. "He's been very consistent throughout the year."

Indeed, Perculum enters Friday's Caesars Trotting Classic with three wins and three seconds in his seven seasonal starts. Zeron hopes the improved draw (post 3) will give him more chances to work out a favorable trip for the son of Muscle Hill that generally has done some of his best racing coming from off the pace.

"I think the long stretch at Hoosier works well for him," said Zeron, who last year guided Perculum to a third-place finish in this event.

Trainer Marcus Melander returns both Perculum and last year's second-place finisher Oh Well for the 2025 edition, with the latter landing post nine on the outside of the starting gate in the 10-horse field with one trailer.

Lexus Kody has found another gear for trainer Ron Burke over the last month and his back-to-back victories in two of the sport's most prestigious races encouraged the trainer to enter the Caesars Trotting Classic in top form. Yannick Gingras will guide the 7-year-old by Archangel from post seven as he looks for his fourth consecutive victory.

Hillexotic could be another major player in the Caesars Trotting Classic. The recent Charlie Hill Memorial winner at Scioto Downs (September 6) finished third in the Maple Leaf Trot behind Lexus Kody and Perculum. Austin Hanners will drive Hillexotic for trainer Todd Luther from post four.

Post position could be a problem for the recent Canadian Pacing Derby champion Maximus Miki who Zeron will guide in the \$179,5000 Hoosier Park Pacing Derby. The Tom Cancelliere-trained 6-year-old landed post eight in the field of 10.

"A lot is going to depend on how well we get out of there," said Zeron of his chances with Maximus Miki, who rallied from eighth at the half to an upset in the Canadian Pacing Derby at Woodbine Mohawk Park on August 30. "He's capable of carrying his speed a long way."

Maximus Miki won the biggest race of his career in the Canadian Pacing Derby, sweeping past a solid field in the final stride while pacing in 1:48 1/5. Zeron is aware of what time means in these contests.

"All of these horses can go 1:47-1:48. It's just a matter of what position you're in," Zeron said with a clear understanding of the obstacle the draw puts on his charge.



NEW IMAGE MEDIA

**Maximus Miki pulled off the upset to take the Canadian Pacing Derby in his last start at Woodbine Mohawk Park.**

The Hoosier Park Pacing Derby drew a solid field, and the posts favor a pair from the inside, with Bythemissal (post 1) and Ken Hanover (post 2) having the inside track and the talent to tackle the field. Bythemissal, third to Little Rocket Man from post nine in last year's edition of the race, is likely to have more of a say in the early pace and the finish of the 2025 edition. Yannick Gingras guided Bythemissal to a 1:46 4/5 career-best performance in the Canadian Pacing Derby trials, but the Ron Burke-trained 6-year-old took too much air in the final and faded to seventh. With \$2.5 million in career earnings, Bythemissal is the richest horse in the field.

Ken Hanover has won six of his nine starts this year for trainer Roland Mallar and returns to action for the first time in a month following a brilliant 1:50 4/5 qualifying effort at Harrah's Philadelphia on September 9. A 5-year-old by Captaintreacherous, Ken Hanover owns victories in the Dave Brower Memorial and Sam McKee Memorial this year. Regular pilot Dave Miller handles Ken Hanover in the Hoosier Park Pacing Derby.

Little Rocket Man (post 4) will be looking for his 78th career victory if he's to capture his second straight Pacing Derby for trainer Ken Rucker. A 9-year-old by Rockin Image, Little Rocket Man is hoping to regain winning form following a pair of off-the-board finishes in stakes events at Scioto Downs. More accomplished on the big track, Little Rocket Man has Mike Oosting back in the sulky.

Last year's Breeders Crown champion Coach Stefanos (post 6) will be making his first start in four weeks for trainer Erv Miller. A 5-year-old by Indiana sire Tellitlikeitis, Coach Stefanos is hoping to regain the kind of form that saw him finish a solid second in the William Haughton Memorial at The Meadowlands on July 12.

The 14-race Hoosier Park program begins at 5:30 PM (EDT).

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# Tosies' special bond with International Trot winner Lexus Kody



## HARNESS FOCUS

By Jessica Hallett [X @JHallettPhoto](#)

From the outside looking in, harness racing is defined by numbers - odds and payouts, final times and records, and purses and earnings. On paper, the MGM Yonkers International Trot is a one-million-dollar race comprised of 10 trotters from seven countries contested at a distance of a mile and a quarter. On paper, Lexus Kody, the winner of the 2025 MGM Yonkers International Trot, is a winner of nearly \$1.5 million and 33 races.

The truth is that harness racing is made up of much more than numbers. Those on the inside who have experienced it understand the value is far more than odds and payouts, final times and records, and purses and earnings.

For Ron Burke, Yannick Gingras, and the entire 'Burke Brigade', the 2025 MGM Yonkers International Trot was a milestone achievement as they all secured their first win in the prestigious race. For Joseph 'Jo Jo' Tosies, the race was a career achievement, and for him Lexus Kody is more than his stats, more than a racehorse.

Tosies is a veteran caretaker in the harness racing industry, starting his career over 35 years ago.

"My brother was an owner with Kevin McDermott and I just went to the barn and started falling in love with the horses," explained Tosies. "I actually started working with Kevin with a horse named Mack Action, one of my first horses I fell in love with. Then, I worked for John McDermott for 15 years, then Anthony Regina, and my last job before Ronnie Burke was with Tom Cancelliere.

"I had knee replacement surgeries and was down for a while, and then I wound up going to work for Ronnie. That was over seven years ago and I've been here ever since," continued Tosies. "The difference is, I always worked with nice horses, but with the smaller barns, a lot of grooms go unnoticed because they never get an opportunity. The thing about the Burke barn is you get the opportunity to work with great horses. He's a great trainer, but his people and grooms, he appreciates them. He's as loyal as can be and it kind of makes it gratifying in that sense. You want to do well."

And 'doing well' is putting it lightly. Tosies is the caretaker for five horses including the newest millionaire trotter Lexus Kody, a 7-year-old gelded son of Archangel and the Ken Warkentin mare Lexus Helios. In addition to 'Kody's' resume of achievements, Tosies is no stranger to the winner's enclosure.

"Most of my big wins have come with Ronnie. My first big win would have been seven years ago. One was an elimination in the Adios with a horse named The Greek Freak, the first horse I fell in love with in the Burke barn. Then I had a little filly that won nine in a row. A lot of small stakes. Her name was Dune Hill. Her ninth win in a row was Ronnie's 11,000th win and he's gotten a lot more since then!

"I was lucky enough to take care of Hillexotic, who was also one of the better trotters. When he came in, he had about \$300,000 made. They bought him thinking he'd be a good horse but just an open trotter and he ended up making \$660,000 in two and a half years."

Hillexotic, a winner of over \$1.5 million to date, was under the care of Tosies from April 2022 to July 2024.

"The day they sold him, I was distraught. He was my heart horse. The only other horse I would have had a passion for more might have been when I worked for John McDermott, a horse named Hurricane Big George. But Hillexotic was just...Murph, our second trainer and a great guy, called me in the office and he said, 'it's the hardest thing I've ever had to do - tell the groom.' And then he told me they were selling him.

"The day he left, I cried like a baby. I lost it. I have no kids. My horses are literally my kids. And you fall in love with some more than others. The day he left, Murph called me and said, 'I just want to give you a heads up, if you want to go say goodbye'. I went in the barn, I threw my arms, I was literally shrieking, 'my baby, my baby!'"

While Hillexotic held the spotlight in Tosies' heart at that time, Tosies



JESSICA HALLETT

**Joseph Tosies is the caretaker for MGM Yonkers International Trot winner Lexus Kody.**

gave the same love and attention to the other horses in his care, including Lexus Kody, who was in the shadows standing by for when Tosies needed him most.

"I had Kody at the same time and I love all my horses, but Hilly was my boy. I always said he was the best horse I ever rubbed. He set a world record at Chester and he was just a good, trying, honest racehorse. I remarked to my brother that I would never have a horse like that again. He was that class of horse. And then, along came Kody. It just literally blossomed from that point on.

"The last Hambletonian Day, he went in 1:49 4/5 and became the first Ontario-sired trotter to ever trot sub-50; [ear] plugs in. That was maybe a week after Hillexotic left. At the time, I was still in the dumps. I was in the winner's circle and Mark Weaver was rubbing my head and he said he was sorry. I just yelled out because I was ecstatic, I said, 'I still got Kody!' It seems like since that day, he's just gotten better, almost like he's trying to please me. I always thought he was a good horse, but he's just been beyond what I ever thought he would be. He's just a good boy."

As a caretaker, Tosies believes it's all about the horse and that's the way it always should be. For him, each horse has a personality and he knows each of his horses very well, especially Kody and his quirks.

"Everybody thinks he's crazy, but he's not crazy. He's a big teddy bear. If you walk in the barn, he might pin his ears at you, but he's not mean. He really is a big-hearted horse on and off the track. Just a sweetheart. He's got a lot of funny quirks like he'll chop his gums and he'll kind of paw with his front legs. He's just a big, good-hearted horse. I love him with all my heart. Not because he's a good horse, but because he is who he is. When he won the Maple Leaf Trot, I said to somebody that I was not crying for me, but I was crying because he finally got his due."

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 14](#)



A week before winning the \$1 million feature at the Yonkers half-mile oval, Kody put in a career-best 1:49 1/5 mark in the \$459,900 Maple Leaf Trot at Woodbine Mohawk Park in line to Gingras. He kept up his success to go three-in-a-row with the Grade 1 MGM Yonkers International Trot.

"Like I said, I've been doing this over 35 years and nothing's ever come close to this. He won on the biggest stage in the world and it meant the world to me. It's unbelievable, like a fairytale," Tosies said. "I got a call from Ronnie and he just said 'I just want to let you know you're in' and I knew what that meant, that he got invited to the International Trot."

While majority of caretakers in harness racing don't find the spotlight as Tosies had said before, many have made it to the big stage with their horses and to the winner's circle, but one thing sets Tosies apart from the rest in his triumph with Lexus Kody.

"My foot had been bothering me. I said I wasn't going to go to a doctor until after the International because I didn't want to miss it. About eight or nine days later, on Tuesday, it was really bothering me. I was just going to get it checked out because I didn't want to be hobbling around on International Trot Day. I went to the doctor and she immediately sent me to the hospital. I had a severe foot infection.

"When I got in the hospital, the first thing I said to them was, 'listen I have a wedding to go to on Saturday for my godson and I have to get out of there.' Wednesday came and I didn't get out. Thursday came and I happened to get lucky and got this nurse who asked if I really had to get home. We had to wait for my last blood test and the cultures came back negative, but I still had to have surgery to take a small bone out of my foot. [The International Trot] was the biggest race of my life, so I got discharged. I just had to be there. Not so much for the race, just for him."

On the Tuesday following the International Trot, Tosies went in for his surgery after postponing it to make it to the big day. After winning the race, he ran up the hill to greet his horse in the winner's circle, leading to remarks from Ron Burke that he had forgot all about his pain in the excitement!

"I was feeling no pain. I can say at least for this week, I look after the best trotter in the world."

The day before his surgery, he ventured to the barn to see his horses, especially Kody.

"My horses are on one wall and I call it Murderers Row with Kobes Gigi, Lexus Kody, Nighthawk, and TH Colby. Four really, really nice horses and even better souls to boot. That makes my job easy. I honestly look forward to going to work every day. I enjoy my day, it's not a job, it's a passion. Those horses are just very, very special to my heart."

Tosies' regular day-to-day isn't focused on chores or assignments, but rather just one goal: keep the horses happy. And he's blessed to work with a great team to make sure his mission is accomplished.

"In our barn we have a great group of guys, and Murph, the second trainer, is just unbelievable. He goes unnoticed. I respect Ronnie so much. He likes when you like your horses. And he mentioned me in his interview. He almost broke up a little because I've been chirping to him. When Kody came in January, we were training and I said Ronnie just save me a ticket in Florida so I can accept Kody's Trotter of the Year Award and he looked at me and said, 'you are the optimist, that is a long way away.'"

Fast forward nine months and Tosies' predictions may actually become reality. Lexus Kody has a near two to one lead in earnings over the second horse in his division Periculum (\$879,472 to \$466,458).

And so, despite his own pain and injury, Jo Jo was at Yonkers, in the paddock for the 2025 International Trot when his horse Lexus Kody won, wearing the same outfit he wears for every race that Kody is in – a Burke Brigade shirt adorned with a Mickey Burke Sr. autograph. Not there for himself, for recognition, or for any bit of the numbers that define harness racing, but for the horse. For Kody.



Trainer Ron Burke (left) and driver Yannick Gingras raised the MGM Yonkers International Trot trophy to the sky after victory.

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# Hambletonian drama leaves race in limbo for 2027 and beyond

By Derick Gwerner

After a September 12 announcement by the Hambletonian Society that said it would open up the bidding process for the right to host the Hambletonian in 2027 and perhaps beyond, Meadowlands CEO and President Jeff Gural issued his own statement about the issue.

The Meadowlands has played host to the \$1.2 million Hambletonian final and eliminations since 1981 and recently celebrated its 100th anniversary with a grand event at The Meadowlands on August 2. While the track is contracted to have the event again on August 8, 2026, that may be the last year for “America’s Trotting Classic” in New Jersey.

According to the Hambletonian Society release, The Meadowlands did not exercise its exclusive right to renew its contract and thus other tracks, including The Meadowlands, will now be permitted to bid. According to Society officials, bids will be considered in March 2026.

In his statement (which can be read in full below), Gural cited a disagreement with the Society on whether trainers/owners that management feels should be disallowed due to “misconduct” would be permitted to compete in the Hambletonian, Oaks and Maturity races owned by the Society. The Meadowlands has taken a tough stance and banned a number of licensed owners and trainers since Gural took over in 2011. While Society officials received files from Gural on these people, they were not willing to agree to his stipulations.

The other issue revolves around the possibility of a casino at The Meadowlands. Gural is unwilling to make a long-term commitment to hosting the three races until he finds out more information on whether a casino will be coming to his property. That may not be known until November 2026, far too late for a new track to come on board and host the 2027 races.

“Mr. Gural does allude to the uncertainty of the future of the racetrack and it being dependent upon him getting a casino,” said Hambletonian Society President and CEO John Campbell in a late Monday release. “This was a major concern for the Board and had a huge impact on our ultimate decision as this is an unknown until November 2026.”

Whether The Meadowlands elects not to bid on the 2027 Hambletonian or not, the door is in theory open for any operator with a track of seven-eighths or larger. The most likely candidates include Harrah’s Hoosier Park, Woodbine Mohawk Park and The Red Mile.

Hambletonian Day is typically part of a stakes-filled card and it would require a massive shift in the current stakes schedule for that to occur. Both Woodbine Mohawk Park and Harrah’s Hoosier Park have stakes that could be moved to the early August date but a track like The Red Mile may have to create new races to make things work correctly.

Another issue is handle. Woodbine Mohawk Park has proven it can host a major event and post numbers similar to The Meadowlands. Could Harrah’s Hoosier Park or The Red Mile do the same? Hoosier has seen great increases in handle since the arrival of Gabe Prewitt to steer the ship, so perhaps they could come close. Red Mile has struggled on the handle front but maybe an event like the Hambletonian could bring out a huge crowd of horse-loving people from Kentucky to provide huge on-track wagering. There are many unknowns at play.

There is of course a possibility that Gural will change his mind and bid for the races in just 2027, just as the possibility exists that the Society will change its stance or at least bend. As of right now the future of the most prestigious race in North American Standardbred racing is most definitely in limbo.

## Gural’s statement

*While I was aware that the Hambletonian Society was not going to offer us an extension of our Hambletonian contract unless we agreed to allow owners and trainers on our exclusion list to enter in the Hambletonian, the Oaks and the Maturity, I made it clear that it was not our intention to allow trainers suspected of using illegal performance enhancing drugs to race against those trainers who to the best of our knowledge are racing under the rules.*

*That seemed to be a major problem, along with the fact that they wanted to be sure that we would be able to host the race if we were not able to secure a casino license in 2027.*

*I made it clear that I was highly confident that we would be able to receive a casino license, but it would be impossible for me to make a five-*



**Harrah’s Hoosier Park?  
Woodbine Mohawk Park?  
The Red Mile?**

*year commitment without having a license in hand. I also made it clear to Mr. Campbell that we had no intention of bidding for the Hambletonian after next year so the decision to put it out for bid essentially means that the Hambletonian will no longer be held at the Meadowlands after 2026.*

*For those people purchasing trotting yearlings this fall I want to make it perfectly clear that if they are lucky like I was this year to have a horse good enough to participate and actually win the race, in 2027 it most likely will be held in Anderson, IN or Campbellsville, ON. They seem to me to be the only logical racetracks that can host the event since I doubt if the Society is willing to race on a smaller track.*

*Our plan, if we do get a casino, would be to use the \$1,050,000 that we currently allot for added money to the Hambletonian races from our purse account, for other trotting races, but obviously there is no guarantee that we will have a casino.*

*While we all love the sport, the sad part is that most people don’t know we exist. When I tell someone that I own The Meadowlands the typical response would be that they used to come there with their grandfather. When I tell them that I race and breed trotters I get a variety of responses:*

- *Aren’t those races fixed?*
- *Aren’t those horses drugged?*
- *What are trotters?*

*In order for me to get a license the state has to pass a referendum that would allow a casino at the Meadowlands. Currently under state law the only place casinos are allowed is in Atlantic City. There will be a massive amount of money spent by casinos in NY, PA and Atlantic City opposing the referendum. It is critical that I show them that it was more important for me to make sure that drug trainers were not allowed to race in the Hambletonian and that is why it was moved out of the Meadowlands. I cannot afford the animal welfare people to attack me on the integrity issue, and I think this will put that issue to bed.*

*In my opinion, we have gone out of our way since I took over in 2011 to make sure the Hambletonian had a home here at the Meadowlands. Anyone who attended the race this year at the 100th Anniversary was hopefully impressed by all of the events that were conducted along with the large crowd in attendance, not to mention that I actually owned a piece of Nordic Catcher, the winner.*

*What hurts the most is the fact that had I not stepped up at the very last moment to keep the state from closing the Meadowlands and subsequently building a new \$120 Million grandstand dedicated entirely to horseracing, the breeding industry would not be booming the way it has over the last few years.*

*I doubt if anyone other than those on our exclusion list would like to see the race moved so hopefully, they can make their feelings known.*

*While I recognize that the Society determines where the race is located, I hope they will change their mind. I made it clear that anyone on our exclusion list would be afforded a hearing and that Mr. Campbell can join as well.*





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# Frantic Hanover, Beau Jangles put unbeaten streaks on the line

By Matthew Lomon for Woodbine Communications

A clash of the undefeated titans is coming to Woodbine Mohawk Park on Saturday, September 20.

When the heavyweight duo of Frantic Hanover and Beau Jangles – each perfect through seven starts thus far – line up behind the starting gate for the \$1 million Metro Pace, a lucrative payday is not all that hangs in the balance.

As one aims to hand the other his first defeat, determining which horse will fill each role makes a nearly impossible task.

The tale of the tape for both pacing powerhouses is undeniably outstanding.

Slotting into post two for trainer Ron Burke, Frantic Hanover stands poised for the opportunity ahead.

“He’s doing great,” said Burke, a winner of nearly 16,200 races lifetime. “He’s a pretty simple horse, and I seem to find most of the good ones are simple horses.”

The bay son of Stay Hungry–Francessa currently holds the title of fastest two-year-old in North America this year after stopping the clock in 1:49 1/5 to win the C\$410,959 Pennsylvania Sire Stakes final at Harrah’s Philadelphia on Sept. 5.

Frantic Hanover carried the momentum from his landmark score into last Saturday’s Metro elim (Sept. 13), completing a 3 1/4-length triumph in 1:49 4/5 with driver Tim Tetrick in tow.

“He did it very easily and Timmy’s done a great job,” said Burke. “He’s [Tetrick] racing him from every angle, every way, so the horse has multiple experiences. That’s great coming into a race like this when you’ve never been tired, and you know how to do it from any way.”

The latest in a long line of brilliant performances didn’t reveal anything new to Burke and Co. about their prized pacer; instead, it only validated what they already knew.

“It was probably three weeks ago when we said we have to quit talking about him being good – he may be great. He was starting to do things other horses can’t do.

“That’s when we said to ourselves, ‘That’s special.’”

In the leadup to Frantic Hanover’s tallest task to date, the rookie sensation can certainly find calm in his Hall of Fame reinsman.

“Timmy’s a great driver,” praised Burke. “I’ve always said he may go down as the greatest driver in the history of the sport when it’s all said and done. He has a great resume, and we have all the confidence in him doing the right things every time.”

What is the recipe for success on Saturday?

“I think he just has to race his race and we’re going to find out how good the other colts are,” said Burke. “I don’t worry about him coming up bad. The only worry really is that there might be somebody else better, but we’re going to find out and we’ll go from there.”

That thrill of competition at its highest level is second to none, noted Burke.

“It’s fun,” he added. “I hope for your best and my best, and my best is better than your best.”

And the best of Hall of Fame conditioner Dr. Ian Moore is exactly what awaits Burke, Tetrick, and Frantic Hanover in the form of early even-money favorite Beau Jangles.

The Cattlewash bay out of Art Major mare Mrs Major Hill has forged an equally impressive path to Saturday night’s Grade 1 battle following modest beginnings.

“Training down, he was a nice colt, but not spectacular,” said Dr. Moore.

That, however, didn’t dampen the versatile horseman’s outlook on a neophyte Beau Jangles.

“A lot of the decent colts I’ve had in recent years have been that way,” he added. “Take Prince Hal Hanover, one of the top 3-year-olds this year, for example. He was just an okay colt until it came time to qualify, and then things changed.”

Beau Jangles was no different.

“This guy graduated to the top-three set of colts that I had in April,” said Dr. Moore of the \$90,000 purchase at the 2024 Harrisburg Yearling Sale.

“I drove him [Beau Jangles] in the first qualifier, and he went a 26-second final quarter without any asking. I just took him to the back,



(ABOVE) GRACE ZIMMERS / (BELOW) NEW IMAGE MEDIA

(above) Frantic Hanover - (below) Beau Jangles.



sat with him, and he came 54 on the end, which is pretty impressive at any point in time, let alone the first qualifier.”

After one more qualifier, Beau Jangles immediately leapt into Ontario Sire Stakes competition. He currently leads the Gold 2-year-old Pacing Colt division with four wins.

The first-year phenom’s marked growth has been a sincere source of pride for his veteran trainer.

“He’s been a pleasure to be around,” said Dr. Moore. “We’ve been so fortunate to have a colt like him this year, and as each race has gone along, he has seemed to have gotten more mature and a lot more classy about how he handles things and what he does with everyday life.”

That rapid maturation has served Beau Jangles well throughout, most recently in his Metro elim – a front-leading 1 3/4-length victory in 1:49 3/5 – also on Sept. 13 at Mohawk.

“Last week and prior races, every time he stepped on the track, he’s been a very professional, business-like animal – he knows what he’s there for,” noted Dr. Moore.

“We were hoping he had a bit more speed than he’s already shown, and I learned last week that he does... I’m hoping he’s not done yet.”

Dr. Moore, like Burke, relishes the chance to match strides with the division’s finest.

“Frantic Hanover, boy, did he look pretty impressive the other day as well. I love that breed [Stay Hungry]. I think it’s going to be a heck of a horse race with those two.”

While all eyes are on the marquee duo, eight others will vie to steal the spotlight.

All will be decided under the lights at 9:47 p.m.



# Batavia Downs celebrating 85th anniversary on Saturday

By Tim Bojarski for Batavia Downs

When the horses go behind the gate at 8:20 p.m. for the eighth race at Batavia Downs on Saturday, September 20, it will mark 85-years to the minute that big-time pari-mutuel harness racing under the lights began at the facility and changed the fortunes of the City of Batavia, its residents, and the many people who have made a living racing Standardbred horses there ever since.

Harness racing was nothing new to the area at that time, as formal meets had been held as part of the Genesee County Fair going back to the 1800's. And that includes racing at the same site that eventually became Batavia Downs. But its evolution to this next-level form of entertainment that was sweeping North America in the 1940's and 50's, brought the track from a dusty back-roads "bull ring" to the forefront of the industry as a pioneer, innovator and multi-generational venue that has kept the sport thriving to this very day.

When pari-mutuel wagering was first legalized in New York State in 1939, a local sports promoter named William Goldberg petitioned for a license to open a race track and was granted the same before the end of the year. Batavia was chosen as the location because it was midway between the state's second and third largest cities (at the time), Buffalo and Rochester, and there was a viable racing strip already in place at the Genesee County fairgrounds.

After a lease to run a meet at the fair was signed, upgrades to the grounds were made including lighting and resurfacing the track and erecting betting booths to facilitate pari-mutuel betting.

There was a large and enthusiastic crowd on hand for that first program on September 20, 1940 and a pacer named Rip Harvester, "scorched" the oval in 2:14.1 for driver Bill Harvey. But after the hoopla of the grand opening waned, the growing pains for the track were just getting started.

The early years were far from successful as there were a lot of other things going on in society at the time including World War II, which forced the track to close in 1942 and 1943. But that trajectory would change dramatically over the next several years and would vault the track to success no one ever imagined.

First in 1944, a former state assemblyman named Pat Provenzano became a large stakeholder in the project. Then in 1945 the war ended and in 1947, Provenzano and his partners purchased the 100-acre fairgrounds from the agricultural society and that is when things started to change.

The post-war era saw large numbers of soldiers coming back home and having no trouble finding jobs. So there were a lot of people looking for entertainment after work and they had a lot of money to spend on it. That's when the night time harness racing boom began in America as many other tracks had opened across the country by this time including Roosevelt Raceway on Long Island, which also began operations in 1940 on Monday, September 2, just 18-days before Batavia.

Provenzano was the force that put Batavia Downs over the top. His political influence and ability to secure financial backing saw the track's operations grow exponentially year after year. That growth included major improvements to, and multiple expansions of, the grandstands, clubhouse, barn area, parking lots, grooms quarters and trailer park. It also included improvements to food and drink options and making the experience more upscale for those who wanted it, by adding a dress code to the fine dining areas.

The track introduced the Batavia Colt and Filly Stake for 2 and 3-year-olds in 1952 that became a very popular series to all horsemen. It pre-dated the New York Sire Stakes by a decade and may very well have been the model for that series when it started. These stakes were responsible for drawing many top rated horses from outside of the area and their connections realized what a great place this was to race, and came back regularly.

Batavia Downs was now a first-class venue and it drew horses and their owners, trainers and drivers from states all over the northeast as well as Ontario, Canada, making the racing product second to none. All-time great horses like Proximity, Good Time, Bye Bye Byrd, Bret Hanover, Cardigan Bay, Su Mac Lad, Albatross and Niatross, along with top drivers including Clint Hodgins, Frank Ervin, Vic Fleming, Levi Harner, Del Miller, Stanley Dancer, Billy Haughton, Herve Filion, Buddy Gilmour, John Chapman and Clint Galbraith, all competed regularly over the storied Genesee County Oval during the golden era. And all the horses and drivers just mentioned are now members of the Harness Racing Hall of Fame.



COURTESY TIM BOJARSKI

## Batavia Downs on opening night.

The track started to draw hundreds of thousands of people each year who pushed untold-millions of dollars through the windows annually. And the portion of those funds returned to the local economy via taxes was only a small part of the economic driver that Batavia Downs became.

Because the track operated at night, it provided the opportunity for a second career for local residents since it opened and helped the middle class grow quickly there as a result. Many worked there for 20, 30, even 40 years and that supplemental income helped to buy cars, homes and finance college for a large number of families who may have not been able to do so otherwise.

The track's financial impact helped the City of Batavia to grow year after year and made it one of the highest ranked Micropolitan areas in the United States, reaching #2 on the list in 2018 according to Site Selection Magazine. In the most recent survey, Batavia still ranks 17th among the top 100.

From 1940 to 1996, Batavia Downs was able to successfully navigate through the turbulent waters of World War II right after they opened, a devastating barn fire in 1962, the introduction of off-track wagering in the 1970's, a National recession and inflation in the 1980's and a growing number of alternative entertainment and sports options into the 1990's, and came through on top against all the odds.

The economic situation of the 1980's did spell the end for the pioneer track, Roosevelt Raceway, which closed its doors for good on June 15, 1988. As they commenced nocturnal operations just prior to Batavia in 1940, their closing left Batavia Downs as the oldest lighted harness track in North America, which is a moniker that everyone associated with The Downs speaks very proudly of.

Adversity finally did catch up with Batavia Downs in 1997, when the track closed due to financial troubles, and then was denied a New York State license to operate in 1998 for the same reason. But it wouldn't be long before new ownership would breathe fresh life into the aging plant, and turn it back into the centerpiece of the community it had been for six decades.

In 1998, Western Regional Off Track Betting purchased Batavia Downs for \$2.48 million and after four years of prep and renovations, the track reopened for live harness racing in 2002. Three years later, 600 video gaming machines were added to the new gaming facility on the second floor of the grandstand. That was expanded to 800 machines in 2013 in a new gaming area with restaurants on the main floor, where it is still located today. Then in 2016, an on-site hotel was built and became the final piece to making Batavia Downs Gaming the area's largest entertainment destination.

Since its renaissance under Western Regional Off Track Betting ownership, Batavia Downs has once again become the economic driver it had been for so many years prior. It is one of largest employers in Genesee County and annually returns multi-millions of dollars to the local communities as a public benefit corporation, and also supports numerous charitable organizations through generous contributions made to worthy causes across Western New York every year.

After a retrospective gaze at the 85-years since the first race went to post under the lights at a remote half-mile oval just off Main Street in a small town in Upstate New York, it becomes crystal clear that Batavia Downs has been an integral thread in the fabric of the lives and livelihoods of generations of residents of the City of Batavia and Genesee County and the countless number of horsemen and horse women who raced there, and remains so maybe more than ever today.





# Harrah's Hoosier Park

## Friday \$40,000 GTD Pick 4 Analysis

By Derick Giwner

Harrah's Hoosier Park will have over \$1.3 million in purse money up for grabs on Friday (Sept. 19) powered by nine rich stakes. The stellar card, which begins at 5:30 PM (EDT), also includes \$100,000 in guaranteed pools. Those include: \$10K Pick 5 (Races 1-5 & 8-11); \$10K Pick 4 (Races 2-5); \$15K Pick 4 (Races 6-9); \$40K Pick 4 (Races 11-14) and \$15K Hi-5 (Race 14). Below we take a look at the \$40,000 promised late Pick 4.

### RACE 11: \$179.5K HOOSIER PARK PACING DERBY

The Pick 4 kicks off with a very competitive event for older pacers where in theory the majority of the field could win given the right setup. (2) KEN HANOVER qualified back nicely after a "no shot" mile at Pocono where he finished in 26 3/5 to no avail. Things should line up for him nicely in here behind cover if driver David Miller is patient. (1) BYTHEMISSAL has been hit and miss all year. Sometimes he shows up and other times he disappoints. Two things have me thinking this will be a good night: 1) His last start here was a good second in the Dan Patch. 2) His last big mile in the CDN Pacing Derby elim came with a week off, which he gets here. (5) CAPTAIN LUKE showed in the McKee that he is capable of flying off the gate and putting in a big mile. Those tactics seem very possible here. (8) MAXIMUS MIKI is a bit pace dependent and there is certainly enough speed signed on for him to score.

### RACE 12: \$200K KENTUCKIANA STALLION MGT.

(5) WHOOMP doesn't have the flawless record of #10 Somemore Blue but that is more due to circumstance than anything else. She has found herself chasing behind fractions that were too slow on some occasions. She has a chance to shine here on the big stage. (9) SHACARRI was super last time at Scioto and there is clearly big talent here. (4) LADY VICTORIOUS is the stablemate of fellow fair track regular Westwinds Yahtzee, who was third in the Doherty last week while dropping six seconds. If this gal does similar, watch out!

### RACE 13: \$200K CAESARS TROTting CLASSIC

(3) PERICULUM wound up hopelessly trapped with no chance to stretch his legs in the International Trot at Yonkers, which wasn't a surprise at all for me. He's back on his preferred track size now and I wouldn't at all be surprised to see Zeron get aggressive from the start to ensure the right trip. (8) Highland Kismet remains an interesting player despite the recent break because you know how fast he is when right. The last time he missed a month between starts the result was a 1:50 1/5 win. (7) Lexus Kody has won back to back stakes and is clearly the one to beat. That said, if others had room last time I don't think he would've won. I'm against him as the chalk.

### RACE 14: \$75K MADISON COUNTY

(6) SPENCER HANOVER wasn't going anywhere from an outside post on a smaller track versus horses like winner AI, who is in Saturday's Mohawk Million. Melander trainee is better on the big track and I expect a strong mile. (4) SAN PATRICIO was rolling along before the recent break. Swan For All youngster has big speed in his arsenal.

.50 TICKET: 1,2,5,8 / 4,5,9 / 3 / 4,6 = \$12

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**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18**

### RACE 10

(9) BLINDED BY DELIGHT has been an easy winner in the first two legs of this series. Tyler Borth picks up a very live drive in tonight's finale.

-Kevin Plowcha



**WOODBINE**  
MOHAWK PARK

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19**

### RACE 9

(3) FLANAGAN SUNSHINE was aggressively handled when adding Lasix and knifed through horses to just miss behind Nickel And Dime who got the jump on the outside. I think he could take advantage of a vulnerable group this week.

-Plowcha



**WOODBINE**  
MOHAWK PARK

### RACE 3

(2) OVER AND BACK makes his fourth start since being claimed by the Alexander barn for \$60K and he gets significant class relief. He figures to be MUCH more involved here, especially as he departs from a good post and has a seasoning edge on a couple of 3YO's.

-Matt Rose



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20**

### RACE 9

(2) MARYLAND has had some bumps in the road but is still loaded with talent. You'll get him here at perhaps 2-1; that's enticing.

-Derick Giwner



**WOODBINE**  
MOHAWK PARK

### FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis

[Thursday](#) [Friday](#) [Saturday](#)

Yonkers Analysis

[Thursday](#) [Friday](#) [Saturday](#)

**DHP PPS**

**HARNESS EYE PPS**

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**INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNES**

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

## \$75,000 CAPTAIN COREY COLT TOPS GOSHEN YEARLING SALE

The 2025 Goshen Yearling Sale was held on Monday (Sept. 15) in the sales arena at the Mark Ford Training Center and a total of 110 yearlings changed hands, generating sales of \$1,653,960, with the overall individual average sale price of \$15,036 being achieved.

Cameo Hills Farm had a big afternoon as they sold the sale topper (Hip #60) Strapped (Captain Corey-Borrow And Spend). The trotting colt was purchased for \$75,000 by David Hamm of Dagsboro, Delaware.

Cameo Hills also sold the next two highest priced yearlings in pacing filly (Hip #91) Happy Papi (Papi Rob Hanover-Happy Hannah) for \$70,000 and pacing colt (Hip #105) Keystone Pillar (Huntsville-Keystone Krystal) for \$40,000, which were also purchased by David Hamm of Dagsboro, Delaware.

[READ MORE](#)

## YO TILLIE TAKES OVER AT NO. 1 IN HAMBO SOC./BREEDERS CROWN POLL

Kentucky Sire Stakes Championship Series winner Yo Tillie took over the No. 1 spot in the Week 14 edition of the Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll released Wednesday while MGM Yonkers International Trot winner Lexus Kody vaulted into the Top 10.

Yo Tillie, a 3-year-old female trotter who is undefeated in nine races this season, became the third horse to be ranked No. 1 in 2025, following Louprint (weeks one through seven) and Miki And Minnie (weeks eight through 13).

Louprint, unbeaten in seven races this year heading into Thursday's Grade 1 Little Brown Jug, remained No. 2 in the rankings. Yo Tillie and Louprint each received 15 of the 35 first-place votes, with Yo Tillie finishing 12 points ahead of Louprint overall.

Miki And Minnie, who had a seven-race win streak snapped by a second-place finish in her KYSS Championship Series final, dropped from first to third. Twin B Joe Fresh, who won the Milton Stakes in a Canadian-record-equaling 1:47.4, moved up to No. 4 while Milton runner-up Sylvia Hanover completed the top five.

Super Chapter, who won his KYSS Championship Series final, and Metro Pace elimination winner Beau Jangles were next in the Top 10, followed by Grade 1 MGM Yonkers International Trot winner Lexus Kody at No. 8.

Prince Hal Hanover (idle) and Emoticon Legacy (qualifier) rounded out the Top 10.

Periculum, who finished seventh in the International Trot, dropped out of the Top 10.

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 14 – 9/17/2025

Rank	Name (1st Votes)	Age/Sex/Gait	Record	Earnings	Points	Pvs
1	Yo Tillie (15)	3ft	9-9-0-0	\$618,333	309	3
2	Louprint (15)	3cp	7-7-0-0	\$628,773	297	2
3	Miki And Minnie (4)	3fp	12-10-2-0	\$810,091	274	1
4	Twin B Joe Fresh	5mp	7-4-2-1	\$374,714	201	6
5	Sylvia Hanover	5mp	9-5-3-1	\$329,917	186	4
6	Super Chapter	3ct	10-8-1-0	\$938,505	171	5
7	Beau Jangles (1)	2cp	7-7-0-0	\$342,730	136	7
8	Lexus Kody	7gt	16-7-3-3	\$879,472	119	--
9	Prince Hal Hanover	3cp	13-5-5-1	\$686,274	62	8
10	Emoticon Legacy	3ct	7-5-1-0	\$474,430	47	9

ALSO: Frantic Hanover 40; Captain Albano 26; Periculum 8; Elista Hanover 7; Apex, Nordic Catcher S 6; Endurance, Ervin Hanover 5; Aetos Kronos S, Dandy Ideal, Go Dog Go, Loua Dipa 3; On To Norway, R Dutchess, Sippinonsearoc 2; Ardonne, Ken Hanover 1.

-by Ken Weingartner

## DOUBLE CARRYOVERS AT MGM NORTHFIELD PARK FRIDAY NIGHT

When live racing resumes on Friday night (Sep. 19th) there will be a special bonus awaiting the faithful fans of Northfield Park.

The \$1 Pick-5 wager beginning in race 6 has a carryover of \$4,290 and features an estimated pool of \$30,000. As always it sports the player-friendly 14% takeout. The Pick-5 is offered in conjunction with the U.S. Trotting Association's Strategic Wagering Program.

There will also be a 50-cent pick-6 carryover of \$6,837 beginning in the 8th race.

Post time for the 15-race program on Friday is 6 pm. MGM Northfield Park currently races four evenings a week on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday.

-edited release (Northfield)

## KARL TO BE SYNDICATED & STAND AT SOUTHWIND FARMS IN NEW JERSEY

After careful consideration, the owners of Karl (Tactical Landing-Avalicious-RC Royalty), 2, 1:51; 3, 1:50; \$2,046,066—Christina and Nancy Takter, Black Horse Racing (Barry Guariglia), Crawford Farms Racing, LLC, and Bender Sweden, Inc.—are proud to announce that Karl will stand at Southwind Farms in New Jersey, joining the ranks of North America's elite trotting stallions.

Karl is the only trotter in history to earn over \$1 million in both his 2- and 3-year-old seasons. At 2, he won 9 of 10 starts, including the Kentucky Sire Stakes and \$400,000 final, the Bluegrass Stakes, the elimination and \$700,000 final of the Breeders Crown, the \$267,500 Kindergarten Final, and topping off his incredible 2-year-old Dan Patch Award winning season by winning the \$423,000.00 Valley Victory Stakes by open lengths.

At 3, he continued his dominance, sweeping the New Jersey Sire Stakes and \$240,000 final, the Reynolds Stakes, and capturing both the elimination and \$1,000,000 final of the Hambletonian in dramatic fashion. He also won three legs of the Kentucky Sire Stakes before sickness and an injury sidelined him.

Now, after a year of rehabilitation, Karl is ready to begin his stallion career. Frozen semen is available, and three of four test mares are confirmed in foal.

Shares in Karl are available at an attractive price, with a service fee of \$12,500.00 for the 2026 breeding season. Don't miss your opportunity before his book fills.

For syndicate or breeding inquiries, contact:

Kevin Greenfield, Syndicate Manager – [kgreen56@gkflaw.com](mailto:kgreen56@gkflaw.com) | 419-346-0609

Laura Young, Farm Manager, Southwind Farms – [southwindfarms@aol.com](mailto:southwindfarms@aol.com) | 609-737-9067

-edited release (from owners of Karl)

## HANOVER YEARLINGS SELLING SEPTEMBER 19 ON ONGAIT

Hanover Shoe Farms will be selling nine yearlings on OnGait starting September 19, 2025.

The auction opens at 8:00 AM. There are no reserves.

The yearlings are sired by:

Bettor's Delight, Cattlewash, Greenshoe, International Moni, Stay Hungry, Tactical Landing, Tall Dark Stranger.

-release (Hanover Shoe Farms)

## PLAINRIDGE PARK ADDS TWO MORE RACE DAYS IN 2025

The management of Plainridge Park has announced that the Massachusetts Gaming Commission has approved the request of the track to add two more racing dates to the 2025 schedule to make up for summer cancellations due to extreme weather conditions.

Those added dates are Friday, September 26 and Wednesday, November 26.

The addition of that Friday coincides with a four day a week racing schedule (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) that will be in place for the final 10 weeks of the meet. The Wednesday in November makes up for no racing on Thanksgiving Day on Thursday.

-edited release (Tim Bojarski for Plainridge Park)