

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2025



**HIP 70 DEJEUNER, ONE OF THREE HORSES TO SELL FOR
AT LEAST \$800,000, TOPS THE OPENING SESSION
AT THE LEXINGTON SELECTED SALE**

Dejeuner enters rarified air by selling for \$1 million

Story by Greg Reinhart; Quotes & Photos by Derick Giwner

Harness racing got its newest “million dollar baby” during Monday night’s opening session of the 2025 Lexington Selected Yearling Sale, as HIP 70 Dejeuner, a Walner filly consigned by Kentuckiana Farms as agent, was purchased by Winning Key Inc. for \$1 million.

Bred by Marvin Katz and Al Libfeld, Dejeuner is the third foal out of the Father Patrick mare French Cafe, who earned \$228,331 and took a mark of 1:52 3/5 during her career. French Cafe’s initial offspring was the Muscle Hill daughter French Champagne [\$589,356, 1:51 4/5], and French Cafe is out of 2008 Hambletonian Oaks champion Creamy Mimi.

“My investment is to go on to make her a broodmare eventually. I’m in this for the fun of it,” said Patty Key, whose late husband was prominent owner and breeder Robert J. Key. “This gives me a chance to actually enjoy the racing part because previously my husband had so many horses that it just wasn’t fun anymore. It became just constant stress and making decisions, and he started to lose interest and focus. After he passed, I had to reinvent the stable and the whole entire breeding program. His horses were starting to die out and the pedigrees just weren’t there. It’s not going to be a big operation, but it’s going to be a quality operation where I can breed the best to the best and enjoy selling.”



Owner/breeder Patty Key.

Noel Daley, who trains New Jersey Sire Stakes champion Emmas Mystery CCL for Key, will also train this one, and while he signed the ticket, he wasn’t expecting it would be for the price it would up being.

“We picked out five for them, but you wanted the residual value for them as a broodmare. I wanted something that can do it on the track as well, so we were looking for something that could hopefully do both,” Daley offered. “That wasn’t the number we were talking. We talked this afternoon and she said ‘what do you think?’ I said ‘I’m hoping \$275,000-\$300,000, but I’m thinking probably more \$400,000.’ She said ‘I’ll sit behind you and I’ll just tap you and tell you.’ I didn’t expect for one minute that I was going to keep tapping at that number. That was pretty crazy.”

Three of the four \$1 million yearlings have been sold at the Lexington Selected Yearling Sale, and co-manager David Reid was delighted with the result.

“You can’t do it without the breeders and the consignors. It’s very rewarding to do that tonight, but there’s a lot of hard work, a lot of luck and everything has to line up,” Reid remarked. “As they say, you have to tick all the boxes. When it happens, it’s fascinating and it’s fantastic for all sides. Mrs. Key, she’s retooled her program. It started three or four years ago and God bless her.”

Coming in behind Dejeuner at \$900,000 was HIP 94 Turtle Dove. Another Walner filly, Turtle Dove was bred by Sunset Stables LLC. and Steve Stewart, and she is the first foal out of When Dovescry (1:50, \$2,097,822). She was consigned by Hunterton Sales Agency as agent.

“I’m tired after that. It was too stressful,” said Jeff Snyder, who purchased Turtle Dove with S R F Stable and Marcus Melander will train. “It was higher than I was thinking. We thought \$800,000 but then it went up to \$900,000. It’s the same partnership as Apex. When



Marvin Katz (left) bred Dejeuner and Winbak’s Joe Thomson will sell the majority of his consignment in the coming days.

Dovescry was great, one of the best ever, so we decided to take a shot. It’s tough to spend that kind of money, but hopefully with her pedigree we’ll have some residual value as well.

“She looked very powerful, good-looking. We had her checked out every which way. We looked at her four or five times, looked her in the eye and we said ‘okay, let’s go for it.’”

HIP 4 Tyndall, a Gimpanzee filly, got things off to a quick start during the session after she was purchased by Martinez Equine as agent for \$800,000. Also bred by Stewart and partners and consigned by

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 4](#)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

\$225K-plus sellers on opening night

Off a big year, Winbak yearlings are worth a serious look

Derick Giwner: Too much Dayton praise for Lexus Kody?

Breeders Crown coming to The Red Mile in 2027

Bob Marks: A baker’s dozen to consider on day two at Lexington

Dayton: Ohio Triple Crown completed; Burke wins three of four Sire Stakes; Dayton Derbies recap

When a teen driver and a legendary pacer made history in Maine

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



IN THE MAKING:
FIND YOUR NEXT CHAMPION IN
DIAMOND CREEK'S
ANNIVERSARY CONSIGNMENT

NY and KY eligible.

HIP 195

City Of Life
Chapter Seven x Altar Filly.

First foal from a multiple stakes-winning mare
with a time of 1:50.3 and an earner of **\$225,873**.

Family of **SWAN HOT MAMA**, dam of
stakes-winning **REPENTANCE (\$257,459)**,
from the **SWAN FOR ALL** bloodline.



PA and KY eligible.

HIP 252

Fight Club
Captaintreacherous x Fine Art Colt.

Family of **ARTSPEAK**. Full brother to stakes winner
CULTURED (\$204,650).



SELLING WITH



ALLIANCE
BLOODSTOCK



DIAMOND
CREEK
A CUT ABOVE

859-797-3430
shaun@diamondcreekfarm.com

BOTH ARE SELLING
DAY 2 ON SEPT. 30

BARN 7
FASIG-TIPTON

Hunterton Sales Agency as agent, she is a half-sister to Mission Brief and Tactical Landing.

"All the speed that we as harness people are enjoying right now is coming from this page. Tactical Landing showed not only speed on the track, he showed a lot of courage. Mission Brief is now the dam of Apex, and the other sister is the dam of Go Dog Go, so if there's anything happening in the game, it's happening on this page," noted Ernie Martinez, while adding that Per Engblom will train Tyndall. "This is the last foal of the mare. Individual-wise, I think she's as good as any of them. Yes, she could be bigger, but we don't get the pleasure of having a beauty contest, we get the pleasure of having a performance contest. I like her chances.

"I thought \$650,000 was going to catch her, but I wasn't going to let her go. The page is too hot and worth too much. She's worth this much every day of her life. We've already pieced out probably 75 percent of her."

Buoyed by having the night's second- and third-highest priced sellers, Stewart's Hunterton Sales Agency had the top gross and the second-highest average among consignors.

"It's pretty nice. We knew we had a lot of nice horses," Stewart offered. "A lot of times we judge our horses by the opinions of the people that look at them. Instead of telling everybody, we let them tell us. Everybody said, 'oh you're going to have a great sale,' and so you kind of keep your expectations in check, at least I do, because there's nothing worse than getting too fired up and then it goes the other way on you, which it does sometimes. We did have a lot of nice horses, a lot of trotters like a lot of people. The mares have produced and we've bought a lot of new mares - Fire Start Hanover and some of them. It's a lot of work but it's very, very rewarding. We've got a lot of great help and I'm very fortunate.

"Steve Hines has done very good and Crawford. If you take a nice horse in there, there's money for it, that's for sure. That's very encouraging for breeders and the business. It wasn't always like this. We've done it for 45 years. You have to constantly improve. Hopefully you raise good horses, get a good reputation, be honest and fair with people and try to steer them in the right direction buying horses so you get people to come back. Jeff Snyder buys Apex for \$525,000 and he's the best colt in the country, God knows what he's worth and comes back and buys another one from us for \$900,000. You build confidence in the buyers by selling them good horses basically."

Stewart and his farm have also gotten a further boost by what his horses like Maryland, Apex and Endurance have shown on the track over the last couple of years.

"To be honest, what happened last Saturday night was more impressive to us than what these horses sold for. Finishing first and second in the Mohawk Million, you can't do any better than that," he said. "Because you're doing that, then it feeds off itself. It's no different than a trainer that wins a lot of races, he's going to get a lot of horses to train; a stallion that produces a lot of really good horses, he's going to have a lot of mares to breed. It works that way, which is the way it should be. It wasn't always like this for Cindy and I. There were plenty of times we'd have one horse on the first day and maybe it didn't sell so well. You get discouraged for one night, but you have to play the game. You have to step up and spend money. What we've done is partnered up with a lot of people to be able to buy more mares, higher-priced mares, and it's worked very well."

Leading the colt side of the ledger was HIP 50 Valorous at \$575,000. Purchased by agent David McDuffee, by Alrajah One, and consigned by breeder Cameo Hills Farm, he is the first foal out of Dan Patch and O'Brien Award winner Venerable (\$1,187,798).

"Venerable is one of the best horses I ever had. This is an outcross stallion potentially, and he's a beautiful colt," McDuffee stated. "I'll bring a couple of guys in with me, I probably won't keep the whole thing, but I'll have a good chunk of it. You can't win without getting in. I don't buy that many colts at that level, but I thought he was kind of special. He's a beautiful horse, there's no question about that. I've been watching him since he was born.

"We weren't walking away. We were a long ways from done with him. The price was what I hoped it would be. I thought it would be a little more."



Turtle Dove, the first-ever foal from When Dovescry, sold to Jeff Snyder and will include the same ownership as Apex.

McDuffee also said that the horse will likely be trained by Nifty Norman.

Overall, the session finished down off last year's record average (\$181,675 this year versus \$190,547 in 2024), and the gross also dipped to \$21,801,000 for 120 horses sold from \$22,294,000 for 117 horses sold a year ago. Despite that, Reid was still very pleased with how things went.

"We talk about it all the time, and you really can't make light of it, the breeders who are having successful sales now are reinvesting into the game. The residual value right now has been holding up very well over the last number of years," he said about the strength that trotting fillies showed. "The crowd was great and I thought the energy was great. I think the auctioneers did a great job keeping a good pace. I'm happy to have it in the books and walking around and talking to the consignors, everyone seemed generally happy. It's a great marketplace. The place was packed, everyone was here and you have internet bidding. The marketplace will tell you what your horse is worth and I'm satisfied with tonight's results."

Reid also added that there should be something for everybody throughout the rest of the week to look at and bid on.

"If you work the grounds and you go through the consignments and do your homework, I think you'll be rewarded. It's always good to sell horses on the top but there's going to be a lot of them sold in the middle, and you've just got to be prepared to pull the trigger," he said. "It's going to be very interesting to see how the market does hold up, what the depth of it is, jurisdictionally, pacing versus trotting. Just being on the sales grounds, I sense the market is going to be good. Do I think we're going to repeat last year? Doesn't have to happen.

"Saturday we started showing, Sunday we showed, and all the buyers are here, the number of lookers are here, the traffic is here. I think it's consistent year-over-year. You have a little bit of a change of sires. You don't have a lot of first crop sires on the pacing side, so it's just going to be how things even out. People are going to find the level of what they want to buy and participate in and we'll go from there. I'm looking forward to a good day tomorrow. We start off with the charity breedings, which is a great cause. Hopefully that'll get us off to a good start and we'll have a good day tomorrow and the rest of the week."

The sale now switches to afternoon "post time" Tuesday through Thursday at 1 p.m. (EDT). As Reid mentioned, Tuesday's session will start with the Breeders Crown Charity Challenge auction for stallion shares and then HIPs 131-358 will go through the ring.

A Smart Bet

Look for your **NEXT STAR** (all PA eligible)
at the upcoming **YEARLING SALES** to join this list!

Better Is Nice, 3, 1:48.0, (BT)1:47.1, \$1,113,433

Wish You Well, 3, 1:49.1F, \$495,170

Twisted Destiny, 3, 1:48.0F, \$447,059

Arbitrage Hanover, 3, 1:49.1, \$356,563

Odds On Steno (M), 3, 1:50.4 \$294,950

Pulp Fiction (M), 2, 1:52.2, \$261,770

Wedlock Blue Chip, 3, 1:50.3F, \$219,328

Time Of The Season (M), 3, 1:49.2F, \$183,814

Odds On Wildfire, 3, 1:49.4F, \$95,260

Bettor Be A Star (M), 2, 1:51.1, \$44,100

Bettor's Wish

**SIRING WINNERS
IN EXCESS OF
\$6.6 MILLION**



Twisted Destiny, 3, 1:48.0 F, \$447,059
Bettor's Wish-Tug River Princess

Winner of the **2025 Messenger Final** and
the **Adios Elimination**

Consistently finishing in top 3 in this year's elite
3YO colt pacing division

SOUTHWIND
farms

Stud Fee: \$7500
southwindfarms.net/bettors-wish
609-737-9067

Lexington Opening Night \$225,000-plus Yearlings

HIP-Horse	Sire	Price	Sex	Consignor	Buyer
70-DEJEUNER	Walner	\$1,000,000	F	Kentuckiana Farms, Agent	Noel Daley, Agent for Winning Key
94-TURTLE DOVE	Walner	\$900,000	F	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	Jeff Snyder & SRF Stable
4-TYNDALL	Gimpanzee	\$800,000	F	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	Martinez Equine, Agent
50-VALOROUS	Alrajah One It	\$575,000	C	Cameo Hills Farm	David McDuffee, Agent
44-SEASIDE UBEAUT	Downbytheseaside	\$500,000	F	Crawford Farms, LLC.	Andrew Harris, Agent William Pollock
93-SOCIAL HOUR	Walner	\$500,000	F	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	Al Libfeld
59-TEMPLE OF TROT	Walner	\$485,000	F	Cameo Hills Farm	M & L of Delaware / Armitage Farm
19-UMBRIA	Tactical Landing	\$475,000	C	Crawford Farms, LLC.	Andrew Harris, Agent William Pollock
96-TEMPERAMENTAL	Muscle Hill	\$475,000	F	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	M & L of Delaware / Armitage Farm
27-TONY PRO	Chapter Seven	\$425,000	C	Cameo Hills Farm	Jeffrey Snyder
77-MOUNTAIN MAMA	Muscle Hill	\$410,000	F	Preferred Equine Marketing	Sabine Kagebrant, Agent Courant Inc.
66-VAINQUEUR	Bulldog Hanover	\$375,000	C	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	Andrew Harris, Agent William Pollock
60-DAY ONE DANDY	Walner	\$350,000	F	Cameo Hills Farm	David McDuffee
72-SWEETIE	Chapter Seven	\$330,000	F	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	M & L of Delaware / Armitage Farm
38-ISCHIA	Father Patrick	\$320,000	F	Crawford Farms, LLC.	Lynn Curry
41-GAGOSIAN	Walner	\$300,000	C	Concord Stud Farm, Agent	Marcus Melander
57-DYNAMIC YANKEE	Muscle Hill	\$300,000	C	Preferred Equine Marketing	Marcus Melander, Agent
71-CREAMY ARMITAGE	Walner	\$300,000	F	Armitage Farm LLC.	Linda Toscano, Agent
34-EMI	Chapter Seven	\$275,000	F	Crawford Farms, LLC.	Lynn Curry
63-OLIVER BLU	Ecurie D Dk	\$275,000	C	Crawford Farms, LLC.	Lucas Wallin
113-DOWN BY THE SEA	Downbytheseaside	\$275,000	C	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	Burke Racing Stable LLC.
46-MIDWIND BRIDGETTE	Tactical Landing	\$260,000	F	Peninsula Farm, Agent	M & L of Delaware / Armitage Farm
23-WYOMING	Walner	\$250,000	C	Preferred Equine Marketing	Ake Svanstedt Inc.
21-ROCKIN JADE DEO	Captaintreacherous	\$240,000	F	Preferred Equine Marketing	Determination
111-CAPTAIN CAVALIER	Captaintreacherous	\$240,000	C	All American Harnessbreds	Casie Coleman, Agent
30-NALANI STORM	Chapter Seven	\$225,000	C	Crawford Farms, LLC.	Kenneth Jacobs
85-JOT IT DOWN	Gimpanzee	\$225,000	F	Hunterton Sales Agency, Agent	Marcus Melander, Agent

The Red Mile to host 2027 Breeders Crown

The Red Mile, America's oldest harness track and a cornerstone of the sport in Kentucky, proudly announces it will serve as host track for the 2027 Breeders Crown, harness racing's premier championship series.

This landmark role underscores The Red Mile's unwavering commitment not only to the future of harness racing, but also to the strength of the breeding industry in Kentucky and across the nation.

"For over a century, The Red Mile has been home to world-class racing and has played an integral role in the growth of the Standardbred industry," said Joe Costa, Red Mile CEO. "Hosting the Breeders Crown represents more than a celebration of competition—it is an affirmation of our dedication to the breeders, horsemen, and fans who ensure the vitality of this sport for generations to come."

Kentucky's long-standing reputation as the global epicenter of horse breeding is at the heart of The Red Mile's mission. By hosting the Breeders Crown, The Red Mile seeks to highlight the vital contribu-

tions of breeders nationwide, while reinforcing the Bluegrass State's role as the industry's foundation.

The Breeders Crown brings together the best Standardbreds from around the world, competing for championship glory and millions in purses. With The Red Mile as host track, the 2027 edition promises to be both a historic racing event and a showcase of the partnerships that drive the sport forward.

"Our industry thrives when we honor our traditions while investing in the future" added Joe Costa. "The Red Mile is proud to stand alongside breeders, owners, trainers, and fans in making the 2027 Breeders Crown a defining moment in the ongoing story of harness racing."

The Breeders Crown series was created in 1984 and has been the deciding factor in Horse of the Year honors since its inception. More than \$239 million in purse money has been dispersed over 478 events.

-release (Red Mile/Breeders Crown)



#175, BUSINMOTION

9/29-10/3 LEXINGTON HIGHLIGHTS

Lineup for Day 2 & Highlights for Day 3

Sale starts at 1 pm on 9/30 & 10/1

[Click Here to Register for Online Bidding](#)

Day 2 NJ Pacer

PERFECT STING

#294, WHISKEY STINGER, C
Perfect Sting-Dreamlands Latte-Artsplace
1/2-brother to O'Brien Horse of the Year,
Desperate Man, p, 1:48.2f -'25 (\$1,789,024),
& 2025 NJ Sire Stakes Final Winner,
Smooth Dream, p, 3, 1:49.2 -'25 (\$275,012)

Day 2 NJ Trotter

MUSCLE HILL

#243, HILL TOP DANCER, C
Muscle Hill-Donna's Dance-Donato Hanover
Dam is a 1/2-sister to **Wild Honey**,
3, 1:50.4 (\$1,585,741)

Day 2 NY Pacers

AMERICAN IDEAL

#189, POP THE CORK, C
American Ideal-Zoe Ellasen-Santanna Blue Chip
First Foal. Dam is **Zoe Ellasen**,
p, 1:52f (\$484,870). Family of
Bettor's Edge, p, 1:48.1s (\$2,200,611)

#217, ITS A BEACH DAY, F
American Ideal-Bolten Beach-Bolt The Duer
Dam is a 1/2-sister to **Geez Joe**,
p, 1:47.4s (\$387,832), & to the dam of
Southwind Gendry,
p, 1:47.2f -'23 (\$1,341,637)

#259, FREE AGENT, C
American Ideal-Free Ticket-Quik Pulse Mindale
1/2-brother to **Free Flyin Ticket**,
p, 3, 1:52s (\$266,339)

Day 2 NY Trotter

CHAPTER SEVEN

#219, JUST CHARGE IT, C
Chapter Seven-Boujee Girl-Uncle Peter
Second dam is **Action Broadway**,
1:52.3 (\$1,099,099). Dam is a full-sister to
Action Uncle, 1:52.2f (\$595,175)

Day 2 ON Pacers

BETTOR'S DELIGHT

#255, FIT N FIERCE, F
Bettor's Delight-Fit N Bad-Badlands Hanover
1/2-sister to **Brave World**,
p, 1:51s (\$388,793), O'Brien Award Winner,
Laura's Love, p, 3, 1:50.3s (\$370,617),
& 2025 ON Gold Sires Stakes Winner,
Perfectly Chic, p, 3, 1:50.4s -'25 (\$310,163)

Day 2 ON Pacers (cont.)

CATTLEWASH

#175, BUSINMOTION, C
Cattlewash-Under The Bus-Art Major
First Foal. Dam is **Underthebus**,
p, 1:51.4s (\$160,494). Family of
Desperate Man, p, 1:48.2f -'25 (\$1,789,024)

#307, PISTOLPACKINGPATTY, F
Cattlewash-Maid West-Western Hanover
1/2-sister to **Wes Delight**,
p, 1:48.3 (\$441,980)

Day 2 PA Pacers

STAY HUNGRY

#280, GOLD IMPACT, F
Stay Hungry-Impact Zone-American Ideal
1/2-sister to **Contact Zone**,
p, 1:51.4f -'24 (\$191,159). Dam is a
1/2-sister to **Southwind Tempo**,
p, 1:48.2 (\$2,396,362)

#345, HONEY ROLL, F
Stay Hungry-Pleasant Roll-Roll With Joe
1/2-sister to **MomentsThatMatter**,
p, 1:51.1f -'23 (\$192,786)

SWEET LOU

#347, POSTMATE, F, PA/KY
Sweet Lou-Ponder Dat-Ponder
Dam is a 1/2-sister to **Badlands Nitro**,
p, 3, 1:50f (\$1,597,638)

Day 2 PA Trotter

GREENSHOE

#318, YANKEE JT, C, Agent, PA/KY
Greenshoe-Met Gala-Chapter Seven
First Foal. Dam is a 1/2-sister **Met's Inn**,
1:56.4s (\$184,034), the dam of **Met's Hall**,
3, 1:51.2 (\$1,295,306)

Day 3 NJ Pacer

PERFECT STING

#500, STING AWAY, F
Perfect Sting-Free Show-Badlands Hanover
Dam is **Free Show**, p, 3, 1:51.3s (\$228,034).
1/2-sister to **Freestarflight**,
p, 3, 1:52s -'23 (\$190,522)

Day 3 NJ Trotter

MUSCLE HILL

#429, CHARGE THE HILL, C
Muscle Hill-Andie Sophia-Like A Prayer
Dam, **Andie Sophia**, 3, 1:54.4f (\$449,322),
is a 1/2-sister to the dam of **T C I**,
3, 1:50.4 -'24 (\$1,831,072)

Day 3 NY Pacers

AMERICAN IDEAL

#382, SMART AMERICAN, F
American Ideal-Smart Girl-Roll With Joe
Dam is a 1/2-sister to **Wisdom Tree**,
p, 1:49.1s (\$687,376)

#388, AMERICAN BARBIE, F
American Ideal-Sports Chic-Sportswriter
Full-sister to **Vivians Dream**,
p, 2, 1:50.4s (\$633,782). Dam is a 1/2-sister
to **Rainbow Blue**, p, 3, 1:49.2s (\$1,428,594)

HUNTSVILLE

#435, STAMP OF APPROVAL, C
Huntsville-Authorize-Western Ideal
Dam is **Authorize**, p, 3, 1:50.3 (\$385,425).
1/2-brother to **Legal Power**,
p, 1:51.3f (\$241,062)

Day 3 ON Pacers

BETTOR'S DELIGHT

#450, TWO PIECE, F
Bettor's Delight-Bikini Genie-Sunshine Beach
First Foal. Dam is a 1/2-sister to **Weeper**,
p, 3, 1:49f (\$569,511). Family of
Badlands Nitro, p, 3, 1:50f (\$1,597,638)

#454, DEALERS DELIGHT, F
Bettor's Delight-Break The Deal-American Ideal
First Foal. Dam, **Break The Deal**,
p, 1:51.2 (\$74,607), is a 1/2-sister to
Bettor Than Spring, p, 1:49.2h (\$843,046)

Day 3 PA Pacer

PAPI ROB HANOVER

#493, PAPI EXPRESS, C
Papi Rob Hanover-Feeling You-Cambest
Dam is **Feeling You**, p, 1:48.4 (\$1,028,496).
1/2-brother to **American Fling**,
p, 1:50f -'24 (\$496,715)

Day 3 PA Trotters

CAPTAIN COREY

#476, CAPTAIN'S RULES, C
Captain Corey-Debra Hall-Cash Hall
1/2-brother to 2025 Reynolds Memorial
Winner, **Read The Room**,
2, 1:57.1f -'25; BT1:55.3 -'25 (\$74,099)

INTERNATIONAL MONI

#436, CRISP MONI, C, PA/KY
International Moni-Autumn Treasure-Kadabra
Dam is a 1/2-sister to **Watkins**,
1:53f (\$1,042,573)

All information as of 9/29/25



Visit Winbak Farm's Consignment at Fasig-Tipton's Barn 8!

Joe & JoAnn Thomson, Winbak Farm Owners / Jack Burke, General Manager / James Ladwig, Yearling Manager
155 Yearling Row, Chesapeake City, MD 21915 / 410.885.3059 / james.ladwig@winbakfarm.com
Visit www.winbakfarm.com for yearling videos. / f / x / @

Off a big year, Winbak yearlings are worth a serious look

Story and Photos by Derick Gwerner

Winbak Farm is marching towards a milestone. Founded by Joe and JoAnn Thomson, the farm is likely to reach and eclipse the 50,000 career win mark in 2026 and a yearling purchased at the Lexington Selected Sale this week could be the one that pushes them over the top.

Success can be measured in many ways. Some use a comparison to others and Winbak has consistently finished some \$14 to \$16 million behind Hanover Shoe Farms in second for breeder earnings. There is nothing wrong with being the second best in a large field and this year Winbak has upped its game as it sits only about \$8 million behind Hanover in the all-important earnings category. Still, for Joe Thomson, the only battle for supremacy is within.

"We don't want to be compared to anybody. We are in competition with ourselves to do better every year," said Thomson. "If you know where we came from in 1998, we are between 49,000 and 50,000 wins since then and we are almost at \$500 million [career earnings from Winbak-breds]. That is something we are really proud of, along with our ranking in the Sire Stakes. We are number one or have been close in New York for a long time. Obviously Delaware is big for us and Ontario."

The action for Winbak kicks into high gear with the second day of the sale as the Maryland-based farm will sell 75 of its 78 yearlings. That a number of the farm's offerings come with the extra eligibility in Maryland is a nice plus that provides an additional option for buyers to make money.

In 2025, Snack Attack made a quick stop to Ocean Downs in early August to pick up half of the \$29,850 purse for trainer Joe Bongiorno and his owners. It may not be a Grand Circuit payday but it helps to pay the bills.

"The value there is that you have two more races that go for decent money which the horses are eligible for, especially if they aren't able to compete on the Grand Circuit or in whichever other state they are eligible to," said Winbak's yearling manager James Ladwig.

Both Thomson and Ladwig were on hand showing yearlings in the days and hours leading up to the Lexington sale in what was a frenzy of activity. Multiple yearlings were on display and all of them will change hands over the next five days.

"We have a great crew. When we go to a sale I'd put them up against anybody as far as showing horses or preparing them. We are proud of that too," said Thomson.

With such a large consignment there are many options for buyers and Ladwig was kind enough to point out a trio of his favorites in the group. They aren't all from top stallions or mares, but that doesn't mean they won't be the next Fast Choice, a Winbak-bred son of Courtly Choice who has competed in the New York Sire Stakes and on the Grand Circuit and accumulated over \$360K in earnings into his 3-year-old season, or A Clean Deal, a 2-year-old Cattlewash filly from Winbak with just over \$170K made ahead of the Ontario Sire Stakes final.

Ladwig kicked it off with **HIP 345 HONEY ROLL** (Stay Hungry - Pleasant Roll). From a family with a number of six-figure earners, the Pennsylvania and Maryland eligible could turn out to be something worthwhile. "I really like her. She just looks like a race horse," said Ladwig.

HIP 440 SAN FRANCISCO BAY (Huntsville - Bay Girl) is from a mare with five winners from five foals and the first pairing of the mare with Huntsville, which can be considered an upgrade over many of her previous partners. Ladwig called her "a really nice filly."

HIP 786 GLOBAL CHOICE (Courtly Choice - Peak Of Chic) may have fallen through the cracks as a day four yearling when you consider that he's a half-

brother to World Of Wishes, who has made some Grand Circuit appearances as a 3-year-old and owns a 1:50 4/5 mark. Global Choice is just the second foal from Peak Of Chic and eligible in New York and Maryland. "He could get overlooked a bit," said Ladwig. "He looks and acts the part of a nice horse. He might not be from a marquee-type sire but he gets good horses."

Not to leave everything in the hands of Ladwig, we picked out a few horses from the consignment and asked for a brief comment.

HIP 243 HILL TOP DANCER (Muscle Hill - Donna's Dance) is a rare Muscle Hill yearling from Winbak and certainly that alone could bump up the mare's value after trying Bar Hopping in her only other pairing. Her second dam produced millionaire Wild Honey and the third dam shows lots of black type. "[Hill Top Dancer] is really correct and looks like you want a trotter to look," said Ladwig, who also has another Muscle Hill in **HIP 429 CHARGE THE HILL** (Muscle Hill - Andie Sophia). "We are selling two really good-looking ones. Sometimes we get a Muscle Hill and we think 'that one looks a little different' but these act the part and should do well."

There is much to love about **HIP 294 WHISKEY STINGER** (Perfect Sting - Dreamlands Latte). The New Jersey and Maryland eligible colt



HIP 345 Honey Roll is a favorite of Winbak Farm Yearling Manager James Ladwig.



[CONTINUED ON PAGE 9](#)

is a half-brother to both Desperate Man (\$1.78 million, 1:48 2/5) and Smooth Dream, a nine-time winner from 10 starts in 2025 who earned \$248K as a 3-year-old this year. On top of that, the son of Perfect Sting also paced in his video. “That was a pleasant surprise that he did that so naturally,” said Ladwig about the pacing. “I think some people do [like to see a yearling pacing] and others may not [care]. It depends on the buyer but it can’t hurt, that’s for sure.”

HIP 307 PISTOLPACKINGPATTY (Cattlewash - Maid West) might turn some people off being from an older mare but she does get new blood in the form of hot Ontario sire Cattlewash to perhaps bring out the best in her. Maid West was able to produce a trio of \$200K earners. “That’s a great family and she’s a really nice individual. I like her a lot. She is really racy-looking,” said Ladwig.

Warrawee Quick has been bred to some top-notch stallions without success but perhaps **HIP 587 FAST GETAWAY** (Papi Rob Hanover - Warrawee Quick) will be the breakout candidate with Papi Rob Hanover in his corner. There is no denying that this family has produced champions with names like Warrawee Ubeaut (\$1.8 million) and Warrawee Needy (\$1.2 million) both coming from the second dam. “He’s a big, stout, rugged Papi Rob colt that is built well,” said Ladwig.

Those looking for a potential bargain could try **HIP 916 ONE PHONE CALL** (Captain Corey - Murderers Row). While mom Murderers Row has yet to produce anything of significance from five prior foals, this Pennsylvania-eligible colt posted a decent video and might be an upgrade of his siblings. “He’s a good-looking colt and his video was good. He stands better than any of the previous ones from Murderers Row,” said Ladwig.

While there are no guarantees that a champion will develop from the listings above, there is also no way of knowing that one won’t surface. With that in mind, if you are the least bit intrigued, a quick trip over to barn eight to inspect some yearlings may be in order.



HIP 587 Fast Getaway is a good-looking son of Papi Rob Hanover selling on the third day in Lexington for Winbak Farm.



EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner

X @harnesseveguy

Too much Dayton praise for 'Kody'?

Mouths were figuratively on the ground as those in attendance at Dayton Raceway watched Lexus Kody rally from last to win the \$250,000 Dayton Trotting Derby. It was without a doubt an impressive showing, but was it really as great an effort as hyperbole will have you believe?

Recapping briefly, driver Yannick Gingras and Lexus Kody were in an impossible spot leaving from post one as five horses to his outside came away from the gate strong and others joined the outer flow parade, basically keeping the pair bottled up along the pylons until just past the three-quarter call. At that point – following speedy fractions of 26 4/5, 54 3/5 and 1:23 1/5 – Gingras found a seam and angled widest to charge by the entire field for the 1:51 4/5 victory.

Again, let me preface my comments to follow by saying that it was a very good performance to win his fifth straight race and fourth Stake race in a row. That said, whether in the moment or in hindsight, it was far from a jaw-dropping performance. The moment Gingras found daylight the thought popped into my head that he was a winner. Why? First, the horse on the lead was a big longshot who had just been parked the mile and was clearly going to tire. Second, every other horse who was in the outer tier had been there since at least the quarter with the exception of the longest shot on the board who couldn't have expected to produce a huge late kick. Finally, from a trip perception everything actually worked out pretty good for the winner. He saved all the ground while other horses battled and fired home as the only fresh horse in the race.

For what it's worth, I asked Gingras after the race when he thought he had it won and he also commented that it was the moment he found room on the final turn.

In general I think we overreact to everything. In the case of Lexus Kody's win, the awe was in place because we simply never see horses close from last to win Standardbred races. That just isn't a winning trip in the sport because most races aren't contested enough in the early stages to make it a path to victory.

There was an effort that really impressed me during the Dayton card and that was from Ervin Hanover in the \$250,000 Dayton Pacing Derby. The 5-year-old left well to come away third, quickly brushed to the front past a 26 3/5 quarter, continued with a 26 4/5 second quarter and a 26 3/5 third quarter before somehow finding the resolve to stave off pocket-sitter Captain Albano with a 27 2/5 kicker on the end of the 1:47 2/5 mile.

“Right now 1:47 2/5 seems to be his number. He just likes to go fast and has so much confidence right now and [driver] Louis [Roy] has so much confidence in him,” said trainer Dave Menary before talking about his training regimen. “He doesn't do a lot of training but we usually come a big quarter with him per week. The heat in the summer and travel was getting to him a bit. It's cooled down and he seems to be clicking right now.”

Ervin Hanover's résumé has really bulked up since the start of August versus his rivals in the older pacing division. The son of Captaintreacherous has won five of six starts since and now sits atop the pack in earnings versus his peers with a lead of just \$38,320 over Maximus Miki and Captain Albano just over \$100,000 behind. “Ervin” and “Albano” could meet up again on Sunday as both are tentatively expected to compete in the Allergate at The Red Mile. Then it is on to the Breeders Crown at Woodbine Mohawk Park (Oct. 25) where “Maximus” will join them and perhaps battle it out for Dan Patch honors.

After the Crown comes the Fanduel at The Meadowlands (Nov. 15) for “Ervin”. What about 2026? “A lot of horses go to stud each year. It is a bit of a flooded market. With his pedigree and speed he might end up there but I think he has a little more work to do first,” said Menary.

CRAWFORD FARMS

SELLING TUESDAY (9/30) IN LEXINGTON



Hip # 224

Cowboysncaviar
HUNTSVILLE (NY/KY)

half-sister to

← NASH p,2,1:50.1-'25,
from a daughter of
ANNDROVETTE
p,1:48 (\$3,544,930).

Hip # 192 • Cisco Bluebird
BULLDOG HANOVER (ONT/KY)

Third foal from O'Brien winner
SANDBETWEENURTOES
p,3,1:49.1 (\$1,065,848).

Hip # 222 • Tortunato
CAPTAIN COREY (PA/KY)

First living foal from
CELEBRITY EVENTS
4,1:52.2f (\$600,835).

Hip # 132

Oslo Blu

CAPTAIN COREY (PA/KY)

half-brother to →

ELOISE 3,1:53.2 (\$153,727).



Marks' baker's dozen of choices for day two at Lexington



ON THE MARK

By Bob Marks

Day two of the Lexington Selected Sale at what should be an exceptional auction contains a good number of what could arguably be termed "day one" pedigrees, and given the positioning, the individuals probably match as well.

There are many superb prospects to choose from and given a bit of guidance from a couple of the consignors, who first and foremost see these horses every day, the following are some that might get more than just a handful of inspection looks.

HIP 144 SAILIN BULLDOG (BULLDOG HANOVER-SHEBESAILIN)

It's a filly and one can readily see three consecutive producing dams including Shebesailin whose first two foals have made it, and now she switches to the exciting "World's Fastest Harness Horse" Bulldog Hanover, already a made sire with his first offerings sired while still in training. She's an Ontario and Kentucky eligible and has a broodmare future when racing is done.

HIP 147 BLUEBIRDS FLY (PERFECT STING-SKIES ARE BLUE)

Modest daughters of truly great mares, of which Rainbow Blue certainly is, have been very noticeable in sometimes out-producing their more celebrated mothers in the broodmare ranks. The sire Perfect Sting has had a noticeable first crop and this New Jersey eligible filly also has a broodmare future when through racing.



HIP166 BIG BODY BRUNSON (BULLDOG HANOVER-THIRTY X)

Thirty X, following the noticeable tendency of modest mares outperforming their more celebrated mothers in the broodmare ranks, gets Bulldog Hanover after producing The Greek Freak and Rifleman from Captaintreacherous and Betting Line. Brunson is Ontario eligible and he'll have his lookers.

HIP 198 CRIMSON BRUIN (HUNTSVILLE-AMHERST)

Huntsville dominates the New York pacing scene which alone guarantees any of his colts will get looked at, and often! The next two dams get plenty of winners and the first dam already has the fast Boomerang to her credit. He's by a Somebeach-somewhere stallion and owns eligibility in both New York and Kentucky.



HIP 214 BET THE FARM (CAPTAINTEACHEROUS-BET ON BECKY)

Got some consignor input here and they like this daughter of the great Captaintreacherous. One look at the pedigree page indicates why, especially with foundation mare Rodine Hanover listed on the bottom of the page. The dam herself – Bet On Becky – showed plenty and the second dam takes up most of the catalog page. Here's another filly with a broodmare future once done racing.

HIP 221 INGOT (PEBBLE BEACH-ROCKNIFICENT)



We already know what Rocknificent is capable of as we do her Dan Patch champion dam Rocklamation. Here's what could easily be a first-night pedigree lurking on the second day and the breeders will have this filly on the showing floor all day long.

HIP 224 COWBOYSNCAVIAR (HUNTSVILLE-NASHVILLE ELGENNA)

Nashville Elgenna, daughter of the very accomplished Anndrovette and already the dam of Nash (Tall Dark Stranger), now switches to New York's leader Huntsville. That alone will guarantee lookers.

HIP 260 OH GOODI (CHAPTER SEVEN-GOLDEN GIRL FR)

Another "mention" by the consignor as one who looks very promising when on the trot and here you get the current siring sensation Chapter Seven, who rules the New York Sire Stakes. There's plenty of foreign blood here, indicative that Oh Goodi might be much more than just a 2-year-old.

HIP 266 GOLD COAST (GREENSHOE-GRANDE')

It's a Greenshoe, who's doing fine these days, and significantly the first foal of the Chapter Seven daughter of the outstanding Ariana G. There's production all over the catalog page and Gold Coast here might well enhance that production.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 13](#)



Join us for a Cocktail Reception

CELEBRATING THE BENEFIT AUCTION

Tuesday, September 30

12 Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Fasig-Tipton | Kentucky Room

Benefit Auction begins 1:00 p.m.

prior to Session 2 of the
Lexington Selected Yearling Sale

Selling individual 2026 breedings
to seven (7) exciting stallions

See Hip numbers 125 - 130

SWEET LOU WALNER
TACTICAL LANDING DOWNBYTHESEASIDE
BULLDOG HANOVER GREEN MANALISHI
***CAPTAIN COREY**

*The Captain Corey breeding will sell immediately following Hip #130

**THANK YOU to our
generous breeding donors
and to US Trotting for
providing the stallion pedigrees.**

HIP 268 PACE MERCHANT (PAPI ROB HANOVER-HAILEY'S SISTER)

It's a Papi Rob Hanover from a fast sister to New York leader Huntsville. And, as great as Huntsville has been, he's far from the only credit from his productive dam Wild West Show. On paper, this is a pacing colt who not only should get to the races but could prove a substantial colt as well.

HIP 295 LAURAS (DOWNBYTHESEASIDE-LAURA HILL)

No matter where you look, there's Art Sale, dam of Rocklamation and a host of others. And, here's her Rocknroll Hanover daughter Laura Hill, already the dam of the major winner Admiral Hill (\$656K). This time you get Downbytheseaside, who tends to dominate the "heart of it all" Ohio and his best can compete on the national level.

HIP 305 SPEEDRACER DEO (BULLDOG HANOVER- RUN DEO RUN)



DERICK GIMNER

HIP 305 Speedracer Deo is a filly from Bulldog Hanover from the Preferred Equine consignment.

A Bulldog Hanover from Run Deo Run, one of the more accomplished daughters of the great Worldly Beauty. Her first foal has made it and now you get an Ontario eligible in addition to New Jersey Standard-bred Development Fund. Here's another filly with ample broodmare potential when finished racing.

HIP 342 LONE STAR ANGEL (CAPTAINREACHEROUS-PISTOL PACKIN MAMA)

Another "consignor mention" as being good in the paddock and one can readily see why. The full brother Hip Shot is having a good year and the great sirer Captaintreacherous just keeps rolling along.

Actually listed above are just a smattering of what figures to be a very strong Lexington Selected session. In addition, many of these have dual or even multiple eligibility, which in this day and age can prove very beneficial given the purse structures in Kentucky, the Midwest and north of the border in Canada.

Big Ranger completes 2025 Ohio Triple Crown campaign

Big Ranger became 2025's lone Ohio Triple Crown winner (victories in the State Fair, Breeders Championship and Sires Stakes final) when he captured his \$300,000 Scarlet Championship for 2-year-old male trotters on Saturday at Hollywood Dayton Raceway in a track record 1:53 4/5.

With trainer Ronnie Gillespie in the bike, Big Ranger led through fractions of 27, 56 2/5 and 1:24 2/5 on his way to the victory by 8 1/2 lengths over Rose Run Banker (Chris Page). Max The Mighty (Andy McCarthy) held third after a pocket trip.

"To have a horse that good at the beginning of the season and can maintain it until the end of the season, it takes a lot of work," said Gillespie. "I have to give thanks to the owners. They told me whatever decisions I make, they wanted me to manage him the best way I could. If they had pushed him, like when I scratched him at Northfield, he wouldn't be undefeated because he came up with an abscess. It worked out.

"The owners told me to stake one of them to the Breeders Crown and Big Ranger was so lazy, I staked the wrong one."

Owned by Madison Global and bred by Spring Haven Farm, the colt from the first crop of In Range has pocketed \$370,610 to go with a seven-for-seven record and returned \$3.60 to win.

In the final for 2-year-old fillies, Aunt Laura (Dexter Dunn) was on top at the 26 4/5 quarter, 55 second half and 1:23 1/5 three-quarters, but Jailhouse Pearl (A. Hanners) went three-wide from second-over and took the lead on the final bend. Once she was on top, Jailhouse Pearl couldn't be caught as she defeated Pelican Hanover (Brett Miller) by two lengths in a track record 1:52 2/5. Mega Money finished third.

"That's a great way to start the night. That filly, she's been awesome for me all year," Hanners said. "The tempo was so quick and when they came back to me, I'm like I'm just going to go now, and she did the rest. She's always been game and she's put out efforts like that all year, so I expected it when she cleared."

A homebred by Long Tom, Jailhouse Pearl is trained by Eric Nesselroad for Casey Clemens. She has a summary of 15-10-2 from 29 starts, has earned \$372,694 and paid \$10.40 to win.

The 3-year-old colt and gelding final saw Long Highway (McCarthy) and Battle Hill (Ronnie Wrenn Jr.) chop out opening-half panels of 26 2/5 and 55 3/5, but Lt Loverboy (Brett Miller), who had gotten away in sixth from post eight, took the lead from first-up past the 1:24 three-quarters. After Battle Hill made a break, Lt Loverboy cruised to a three length victory in a track record-equaling 1:53 2/5. Vekna (Kayne Kauffman) was next, followed by Jet Wings (Dunn).

"He's just a class horse. We were fighting him through the year, trying to keep him together for tonight. We got here and he didn't disappoint," stated winning trainer Daren Harvey. "Brett's the best, if there's anybody to make magic, it's him. The draw sucked, but someone's got to be there. The horse overcame it."

Also the sires stakes champion for this group as a 2-year-old, Lt Loverboy is a Long Tom gelding bred by Midland Acres and owned by Wayne Mast Jr. and Callam Racing LLC. Lt Loverboy has won 11 times from 21 efforts, has banked \$619,734 and returned \$11 to win.

Setyoursightshigh (Dunn) floated away from post seven at 1-5 and landed on the engine past the 28 3/5 quarter in the final for 2-year-old fillies. Setyoursightshigh would go on to carve out a 57 1/5 half and a 1:25 2/5 three-quarters, got separation on the other horses and tallied by 6 1/2 lengths in a track record 1:54 1/5. Rose Run Brooke (Wrenn Jr.) was next, followed by Demonic Niko (Gingras).

"She's a great filly. She's been doing everything right the entire year. It's been a long season for her but she's still going strong," relayed trainer Marcus Melander. "If she comes out of this race good she'll probably go to the Breeders Crown. She's eligible for that, so I think that's the plan right now."

Melander trains Setyoursightshigh (\$2.60), a daughter of In Range bred by Kentuckiana Farms, for owners Heights Stable, Mantorp LLC., Amg Stable Inc. and K Kjellgren Livs Ab Inc. She has seven victories from nine trips behind the gate and has put away \$515,000.

-By Greg Reinhart

BREED · BUY · RACE NEW JERSEY



New Jersey Sire Stakes

**PURCHASE A NEW JERSEY SIRED YEARLING
AT THE MAJOR YEARLING SALES THIS FALL!**



CALL 609.913.6514 OR VISIT
www.nj.gov/agriculture/njequine/sirestakes

Burke Brigade bats three-for-four in OHSS finals for pacers

By Greg Reinhart

Trainer Ron Burke won three times and driver Todd McCarthy had a double in the four Ohio Sires Stakes Scarlet Championships for pacers on Saturday night at Hollywood Gaming Dayton Raceway.

Burke and McCarthy teamed up to take the 3-year-old colt and gelding final, worth \$400,000, with Harrisburg Heist. Part of a Burke five-pack in the event, Harrisburg Heist tucked in fifth from post eight while stablemates Swingtown (Ronnie Wrenn Jr.) and Sippinonsearoc, the 1-5 favorite driven by Yannick Gingras, put up opening-half fractions of 25 3/5 and 53 4/5.

McCarthy had Harrisburg Heist out and moving first-up prior to the half, advanced into second before the 1:21 2/5 three-quarters and kept plugging away on the rim on the final bend. Sippinonsearoc was game on the lead and Swingtown had the passing lane in the stretch, but Harrisburg Heist had more to give to the outside and wound up with the win by half a length in a track record 1:48 3/5. Swingtown was second, followed by Sippinonsearoc.

"I was really happy with him in Kentucky and Ronnie was really confident with the horse going in tonight," McCarthy relayed. "He said to me 'if you can kind of figure out a trip where he can be close, I think he's got a shot.' Full credit to him, he had him spot-on there tonight and it was a fun race.

"He felt really good down the backstretch and I was just kind of trying to time it where I was going to ask him. When I did coming off the turn he really dug in for me. At that point I figured that we were going to be pretty close there by the wire. He raced huge and just full credit to the horse."

Bred by Brittany Farms and Marvin Katz, Harrisburg Heist is a gelded son of Downbytheseaside. Owned by Burke Racing Stable LLC., Knox Services Inc., Phil Collura and Weaver Brussemi LLC., Harrisburg Heist made his ninth trip to the winner's circle, has earned \$483,777 and paid \$47.80 to win.

After Burke-trained 1-2 favorite Shacarri (Chris Page) broke on the first turn in the \$300,000 2-year-old filly pace, it was left to She'safirewoman (Luke Hanners) to set the tempo of 27 1/5, 56 and 1:24. She'safirewoman was able to fend off a first-over attack from Laude Da (Gingras) and turned for home first, but Burke-trained Seaside Shuffle (Wrenn Jr.) rallied in the passing lane from the pocket to nail She'safirewoman by a nose on the wire in a track record 1:51 3/5. Laude Da, who also hails from the Burke stable, was a game third.

A daughter of Downbytheseaside bred by Billy Walters and Joe McLead, Seaside Shuffle competes for owners Burke Racing Stable LLC., Weaver Brussemi LLC., Knox Services Inc. and R A S Racing LLC. She has four wins, a second and three thirds from nine starts, has banked \$313,062 and returned \$10.40 to win.

"This is fantastic. This is why we do it, kind of culminates the year and then we've got to get ready for next year," said Kris Brechler of Knox Services Inc. "I thought she'd be good. She's been racing really good competition in Lexington and holding her own. I just thought she'd come up here and be really good."

In the \$300,000 final for rookie colts and geldings, Burke trainee Lindy Dragonwater (Page) pressed forward on the outside to hit the front after the 26 3/5 quarter. Lindy Dragonwater remained the boss through middle-half fractions of 55 and 1:22 4/5 and prevailed by two lengths in a track record in 1:51. Burke trainees When Is Parade (Dunn) and Backninebar (Tim Tetrick) checked in second and third, respectively.

"[He's] a big, growthy colt. I think he was one of Dr. J's [Dr. Bridgette Jablonsky] favorites when she picked him out," Page stated. "I've just been real patient with him, just did things his way and let him progress at his own pace. Tonight it paid off with a track record."



CONRAD PHOTO

A happy group was in the winner's circle after Lindy Dragonwater's victory.

"Once I got the lead, I kept things rolling right along. He just felt real good tonight."

Lindy Dragonwater is owned by Burke Racing Stable LLC., Knox Services Inc., Beasty LLC. and Brad Grant. The Downbytheseaside gelding, bred by Lindy Farms, has a summary of 5-0-1 from eight appearances, has put away \$290,680 and paid \$3.40 to win.

McCarthy's other winner was 3-year-old filly Prolific Fire in 1:50. After an early battle in the \$300,000 test with 1-9 favorite Odds On Chesapeake (Dunn), McCarthy yielded to sit in the two-hole and stalked the chalk to the 55 second half and the 1:22 3/5 three-quarters. McCarthy wheeled Prolific Fire to the outside in the drive to the wire, and she was able to out-finish Odds On Chesapeake for the victory by three-parts of a length. Skywalker Sea (A. Hanners) collected third.

"She's a very nice filly. She behaved herself well, she's got a great attitude, and she's great-gaited. My first time driving there but she's a pleasure," McCarthy offered. "She just felt really good coming off the turn there. I'd watched a couple of her replays and I knew she'd give a pretty good kick late. We were just in the right spot. It worked out."

A daughter of Catch The Fire bred by Spring Haven Farm, Prolific Fire was sent out by Todd Luther for owner Greg Luther Racing LLC. She's a five-time victor from 23 trips behind the gate, has pocketed \$417,445 and returned \$10.20 to win.

"Her last two starts have been really good. The way she trained this week, when we drew the rail, I knew we were going to be in a great spot," Todd Luther stated. "When I saw Todd had a big lap-full and the way she's been, I knew we were going to make it a race."

"She grew up and she's been really good. Earlier in the year we had a bunch of tie-up issues with her. We got that figured out, and it's kind of a family horse. We bought her from Brian and Jenny Brown after she qualified, so it's fun all around."





Hollywood Dayton Raceway
Saturday, September 27

The OHHA extends its congratulations to all competitors on an outstanding season. The dedication and passion of caretakers, owners, drivers, and trainers alike continue to fuel the growth of harness racing in Ohio, ensuring a vibrant future for our sport.

**BREED
BUY
RACE
WIN
IN
OHIO**



2237 Sonora Drive
Grove City, OH 43123
614-221-3650 | OHHA.com

CONGRATULATIONS

2025 Ohio Sires Stakes Champions



LINDY DRAGONWATER
2-Year-Old Colt Pace



SEASIDE SHUFFLE
2-Year-Old Filly Pace



HARRISBURG HEIST
3-Year-Old Colt Pace



PROLIFIC FIRE
3-Year-Old Filly Pace



BIG RANGER
2-Year-Old Colt Trot



SETYOURSIGHTSHIGH
2-Year-Old Filly Trot



LT LOVERBOY
3-Year-Old Colt Trot



JAILHOUSE PEARL
3-Year-Old Filly Trot

Photos: Conrad Photo

Lexus Kody overcomes nightmarish trip to tally in Trotting Derby

By Greg Reinhart

Lexus Kody, the 3-5 favorite, wound up getting shuffled to last early on the final turn but weathered about the worst journey you could draw up with a wide and powerful kick that carried him to a 1:51 4/5 victory in the Grade 2 Dayton Trotting Derby for free-for-allers on Saturday night at Hollywood Gaming Dayton Raceway.

The problems for Lexus Kody and driver Yannick Gingras started right from the get-go as he was trapped on the pylons from the pole position as a two-wide tier developed to his outside that included Up Your Deo (Ake Svanstedt), Southwind Coors (Ronnie Wrenn Jr.), Aetos Kronos S (Dexter Dunn) and Security Protected (Andy McCarthy). That put Lexus Kody back in sixth at the 26 4/5 quarter as Up Your Deo made his way around Hillexotic (Austin Hanners) for command.

Up Your Deo was still on top at the 54 3/5 half but was under siege from the parked-out Southwind Coors, and Southwind Coors would forge his way by Up Your Deo heading to the 1:23 1/5 three-quarters. When Southwind Coors cleared and slid down to the pylons, that left Logan Park first-over and Aetos Kronos S second-over as Lexus Kody was at the back of the bus as they motored into the last turn.

Dunn angled Aetos Kronos S into a three-wide position on the final bend and began to charge towards Southwind Coors. As that was going on up front, Gingras had been able to angle Lexus Kody into the widest position, and he was absolutely raging with trot. Aetos Kronos S struck the front in the lane but was no match for the powerful strides of Lexus Kody late, as Lexus Kody surged past Aetos Kronos S to score by three-quarters of a length. Chapercraz (Chris Page) was third, followed by Security Protected and Southwind Coors.

"I was screwed from the word go. I knew I was in a bad spot, just got lucky I was able to squeeze out in the last turn. He's just a tremendous horse and he's so sharp," said Gingras. "Obviously it wasn't a good drive, so all the credit goes to him. Now, he's nice to drive; he would never have been able to do all this maneuvering we did tonight. The job they've done with him and then you've got to give credit to the horse, too. He matured, the Burke Brigade did a great job, but I'm so proud of him. He's a top horse."

Ron Burke trains Lexus Kody, a 7-year-old gelding by Archangel, for owners Burke Racing Stable LLC., Weaver Brussemi LLC. and Phil Collura. Lexus Kody has 35 wins, 20 seconds and 11 thirds from 87 career starts, has earned \$1,671,010 and returned \$3.40 to win.

M-M'S DREAM DELIVERS IN GRADE 1 OAKS DERBY

M-M's Dream backed up her victory on Little Brown Jug Day in the Miss Versatility Series final with a 1:51 3/5 triumph in the Grade 1 \$250,000 Dayton Oaks Derby for older trotting mares on Saturday night at Hollywood Gaming Dayton Raceway.

Racing without shoes, as has become customary, M-M's Dream and driver Yannick Gingras landed in the pocket while Jurassic Hattie (Brett Miller) went on a speed mission through an opening quarter of 26 2/5. Call Me Goo (Tim Tetrack) then attacked first-over out of third going to the 54 4/5 half. Behind Call Me Goo, Elista Hanover (David Miller) had been on the rim throughout from post nine but couldn't keep up with the cover, which allowed Refined (Chris Page) to get off the cones in front of her.

Jurassic Hattie managed to keep Call Me Goo at bay to three-quarters in 1:22 and around the last turn as M-M's Dream struggled to keep up. However, in the stretch M-M's Dream found the passing lane and was able to grind past a dead-game Jurassic Hattie late to win by a length. Elista Hanover was full of trot late and got up for third despite the difficult journey and a boxed-in Triathlon As (Jeremy Smith) finished fourth. Call Me Goo faded to fifth.

"I'm actually really happy for her tonight. She really had to dig in. I'm not sure she was at the top of her game. She was tired, but she's just a classy mare, and she got the job done," Gingras said after the race. "Since Hambletonian Day she really took the next step. That's when Ronnie [trainer Ron Burke] decided it's make it or break it, we're going to race her without shoes from here on out."

Burke trains M-M's Dream (\$5.40), a 6-year-old daughter of Swan For All bred by Mervin Miller, for Frank Baldachino and Hillside Stables.

She has a summary of 36-10-8 from 65 starts and has put away \$2,174,167.

Whiskey Lou (Ronnie Wrenn Jr.) won a \$75,000 consolation in 1:53 2/5 for trainer Curt Grummel and owner Randy Wilt. A 4-year-old by Lou's Legacy, she paid \$29.20 to win in her 23rd career victory.

-Reinhart

ERVIN HANOVER HOLDS OFF CAPTAIN ALBANO IN PACING DERBY

By Jay Bergman

Ervin Hanover and driver Louis Roy returned to Ohio on Saturday night and authored a new track record in capturing the Grade 2 \$250,000 Dayton Pacing Derby in 1:47 2/5. A son of Captaintreachorous, Ervin Hanover gamely held off another son of the top stallion with Captain Albano just a head back in second.

Captain Albano and Todd McCarthy left fastest in the field of nine to take quick control as Ervin Hanover settled in third through the opening turn. Roy moved Ervin Hanover shortly before the 26 3/5 opening quarter, clearing the front three-eighths of a mile into the race.

Once in charge, Ervin Hanover hit the half in 53 2/5 with Maximus Miki and Scott Zeron moving to the outside to challenge at that point. Ervin Hanover kicked into high gear, keeping rivals at bay with a wicked 1:20 three-quarters as Maximus Miki struggled to stay in contention.

In the stretch Captain Albano had the necessary room to angle from the pocket and slowly gained on the winner, but Ervin Hanover had something left, and Roy urged him on as the Dave Menary-trained stallion paced a strong 27 2/5 final quarter to post the fastest mile in the track's history. Captain Albano was second, with Maximus Miki holding third over Captain Luke.

Owned by Pollack Racing LLC., Ervin Hanover was a winner for the eighth time in 14 starts and will likely head to The Red Mile for the Allerga Pace scheduled for October 5.

"I'm so confident in him," said Roy. "He did respond pretty well."

A \$75,000 consolation went to Muskateer Hanover (Jeremy Smith) from off cover in 1:48 2/5 for trainer Wayne Oke and owners Mulligan Stables and Calcutta Stable LLC. A 5-year-old by Sweet Lou, Muskateer Hanover prevailed for the 18th time in his career and returned \$46.20 to win.

TWIN B JOE FRESH STEAMROLLS RIVALS IN DISTAFF DERBY

A swift move right before the quarter pole by Dexter Dunn proved to be the difference as Twin B Joe Fresh left rival Sylvia Hanover parked the mile and romped in the Grade 2 \$250,000 Dayton Distaff Derby at Hollywood Gaming Dayton Raceway on Saturday night. The defending Horse of the Year paced to a 1:48 4/5 mile while capturing her fifth victory in eight starts this season.

Soft Shot and David Miller blasted to the front into the first turn with Twin B Joe Fresh settling in the pocket for Dunn. Tim Tetrack fired Sylvia Hanover from the outside to take a shot at the lead, but as the mare was approaching the front, Dunn squeezed out Twin B Joe Fresh and secured the lead before the 26 1/5 opening quarter. Tetrack recognized there would be no way to get past the 1-20 favorite and let Sylvia Hanover raced parked off the winner.

After middle-half fractions of 54 2/5 and 1:21 1/5, Twin B Joe Fresh, a 5-year-old by Roll With Joe, was pulling away from the field, with the battle for second all that was left in the last quarter. Twin B Joe Fresh sprinted off with a 27 3/5 final panel as Sylvia Hanover fought gamely for the place spot ahead of Seaside Diva.

"She still had the plugs in," said Dunn, commenting on what was likely left in the tank for the mare that heads next to The Red Mile for the Allerga.

Owned by Dunn, trainer Chris Ryder, Pete Trebotica and Barry Spak, Twin B Joe Fresh (\$2.10) pushed her seasonal bankroll to a shade under \$500,000 with her 35th career victory and second straight dominating performance against the best in the open mare class.

"I might be biased but you don't see horses like this too often," said Ryder of the champion pacing mare.

-Bergman

When a teen driver and a legendary pacer made history at Maine's Fryeburg Fair

By Jay Burns

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The Fryeburg Fair kicks off on Tuesday at 1:30 PM (EDT). The historic fair began in 1851.]

Here's the inside story of a mad dash against the clock 51 years ago at the Fryeburg Fair in Maine — and how a great pacer saved the day for his young driver.

The date was Oct. 4, 1974. Around the country, Frank Robinson had just been named the first black manager of a Major League Baseball team, the Indians. The top song was "Then Came You," with Dionne Warwick and the Spinners. "The Gambler," starring James Caan, was in the theaters.

And at Fryeburg, the gamble was whether a hometown hero, Mountain Skipper — the GOAT of New England harness racing — could pace a magic mile under 2 minutes, a feat never before accomplished over the state's half-mile tracks.

Just six days earlier at Yonkers Raceway in New York, Mountain Skipper won the Saturday night feature before 19,000 roaring fans.

For perspective, the mile at Yonkers, then one of the top tracks in the nation, was timed in 1:59 2/5. Could a similar time be paced over Fryeburg's oval, where the surface could be axle deep to a Ferris wheel, to use a saying of the era? Not likely.

It also seemed unlikely considering the choice to drive Mountain Skipper. John Nason, a red-haired 18-year-old with a big, wide smile, was in just his fourth year of driving. But to race fans and horsemen there that day, the choice went right to the heart.

Mountain Skipper was about to be retired by John's father, Arthur Nason, who had bred and raised the bay horse on the family farm in Effingham, N.H., just down the road and across the state border from Fryeburg.

In the Cumberland Fair paddock the other day, we asked 92-year-old Don Richards, revered as the dean of Maine harness racing, if Mountain Skipper was the real deal. "Goddamn right he was," said Richards, with a bit of a glare.

From humble beginnings, Nason turned his homebred pacer into one of the era's greatest. In May 1970, Mountain Skipper gained immediate attention by winning his first start at Scarborough Downs.

The Lewiston Daily Sun boldly predicted "an outstanding career" for the 2-year-old, based on the maiden win in 2:07 3/5. After his second race and second win, in 2:06 1/5 at the Downs, the pacer was deemed "a colt every horseman dreams of owning" by the Portland Press Herald.

The horse was the Cooper Flagg of harness racing; five-figure offers were made to buy Mountain Skipper, but Nason wouldn't budge. Sired by Dale Frost, who had sired the great Meadow Skipper, Mountain Skipper's dam was Sadie Tass, a slow but game bottom-claiming mare that Nason owned. "I raised the colt, and I am going to race him," Nason told the newspapers.

After those two Scarborough wins, Mountain Skipper hit the road. A few weeks later, he got a standing ovation from a crowd of 10,000 at Foxboro when he set the track record for rookie pacers.

From 1970 to 1974, week after week, Arthur Nason and Mountain Skipper trucked to the era's best tracks up and down the East Coast — Yonkers, Roosevelt, Liberty Bell, Laurel Park — and as far west as



PHOTO PROVIDED BY AUTHOR

Arthur Nason and Mountain Skipper in 1971.

The Red Mile in Kentucky and Scioto Downs in Ohio, capturing weekly features, free-for-alls, and invitational races.

By my count, the duo raced at 20 different tracks, winning at 13 of them. A racing writer said it was like a sports team never having a home game.

Up to the Fryeburg race, Arthur had driven his pacer to all but one of his lifetime starts, the exception being earlier in 1974 when son John, by then old enough to drive, piloted the pacer to a win at Foxboro. So by racing his prized horse at Fryeburg on the eve of retiring, Arthur Nason gave both the local fair and his teenage son a gift, passing the torch to John through the family's famed horse.

Over his career, Mountain Skipper won 45 races in 115 lifetime starts, with earnings of \$304,376. The pacer's many honors included being named the nation's older Pacer of the Year in 1973 by the United States Trotting Association. "He wasn't a Maine champion. He was a national champion," said Richards.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 19](#)

Advertise with



For more information or to place an ad, contact:

Derick Gwerner at
dgwerner@drf.com

**MULTIPLE
PLACEMENT
DISCOUNTS**

"He was a freak," said John Nason, now 69 years old, as he prepared Maplewood Slugger for a race at Cumberland Fair the other day, having trucked the trotter from the historic family farm in Effingham.

With Mountain Skipper having long outgrown competition in Maine, the race at Fryeburg was a time trial: one horse against the clock, where it falls to the driver to judge and set the right fractions. Too fast early, and the horse runs out of gas. Too slow early, and he needs to sprout wings.

The win at Yonkers the week before Fryeburg was classic Mountain Skipper, quickly seizing the lead before Arthur slowed his pacer, loping to the first half in 1:01 2/5. Then came the afterburners, and the duo blazed the second half in 58 seconds. As Arthur Nason once told a Philadelphia racing writer, "He's a fast booger."

The Yonkers win reflected a race-winning strategy — but not a time-trial strategy, where the only goal is a fast mile, and at Fryeburg, the goal was sub-2-minutes. To hit the mark, Arthur wanted John to ask Mountain Skipper for more early speed before dolling out the pacer's high speed in the second half.

The day of the time trial had typical Fryeburg weather, breezy and in the 50s. Midway through the race program, John Nason and Mountain Skipper took to the track and went behind the starting gate. As the gate sped away, Nason and Mountain Skipper accelerated into the first turn and swept up the backside to the quarter pole, where the teletimer flashed the first quarter time.

The goal was to hit the quarter in around 30 seconds and the half in 1 minute. "But I missed," said John. The opening quarter was slow, at 31 1/5 seconds. John picked up the pace in the second panel, but the teletimer didn't play along, flashing 1:01 2/5 as John and Mountain Skipper sped by.

John Nason's charm is that he doesn't bullshit. When asked about the fractions, he smiled and shrugged. "I hadn't driven a lot, and then to try to hit fractions like that — it's tough. It takes a few years to get it where you want them."

The duo picked up the pace a bit during the next quarter (30 seconds even), but even so, the three-quarters time was a slow 1:31 2/5. To achieve a sub-2-minute mile off those soft fractions, Mountain Skipper would have to reel off an unimaginable 28 2/5 final quarter.

Donnie Richards was there that day, standing along the Fryeburg paddock fence. As track announcer Ernie Cobb called out the fractions, Richards turned to a fellow horseman and said, "He ain't gonna get 2 minutes today." From the announcer's booth, Cobb set the crowd up for disappointment. "It's a windy day and I guess we're not going to get a record today."

But then came the Mountain Skipper magic.

As the duo hit three-quarters, John let out one of his famous yells, a primal combination of a whoop and shriek, and Mountain Skipper knew it was time to go to work. Richards saw it: "John tapped him, hollered at him, and the bastard took off." And John felt it: "A good horse like that, you just feel them shift gears. Bad ones, they come back into your lap."

Heading for home, Nason knew his horse was all-out, so he didn't go to the whip. "I was mostly hand-driving him, 'cause he was just



PHOTO PROVIDED BY AUTHOR

John Nason and Mountain Skipper in the Rockingham Park winner's circle back in 1974.

digging." With Mountain Skipper digging and the crowd roaring — "It was LOUD," said Nason — they crossed the finish line, and John saw four blessed numbers on the teletimer: 1:59 4/5.

"He kicked home in 28 2/5 — and saved my life. I was off the hot seat."

The 28 2/5 final quarter, capping off the magic mile, was like Bob Beamon jumping 29 feet at Mexico City in 1968. On the day of Mountain Skipper's time trial, the average winning time at Fryeburg was 2:13.

After the Fryeburg time trial, Mountain Skipper raced one more time, at Rockingham Park, winning in 2:00 2/5 on Oct. 12, with John aboard for the final race.

Mountain Skipper went on to a productive career as a stallion; he died in 1995 and is buried on the farm. A lifetime horseman, John drove many horses with Mountain Skipper bloodlines over the years. Arthur died in September 1990 at age 65. His widow, Nettie, John's mother, lives on the family farm in Effingham, where trophies galore still grace Arthur's old study.

As for John, he's grateful for all he's been given by his family. "When I turned 18, you either went off to college or went to work in a mill. Me, I got to become a professional harness driver. Because of my dad."

It would be another seven years after the Fryeburg time trial that Maine racing achieved the first magic mile in competition. In July 1981, The Andover Story, trained and driven by Richards, paced Scarborough Downs in 1:59 4/5 (Five years after that, it was Richards aboard the first pacer to go a sub-2-minute mile at Fryeburg in competition when he teamed Bret's Caliber to a 1:59 4/5 mile in 1986).

We asked Richards how The Andover Story would've fared against Mountain Skipper. If both could go in 2 minutes, might it be a fair fight? "No," said Richards. "Mountain Skipper would have beaten the shit out of The Andover Story."

The GOAT indeed.

DRF Has Everything For The Harness Player

Get PPs, analysis, news, features, entries, results, and live odds!

DRF DIGEST



DRF Harness
drf.com/harness



Get Harness Digest Newsletter
promos.drf.com/harness