

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025

# DECISIONS



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PHOTOS COURTESY NEW IMAGE MEDIA, CHRIS GOODEN,  
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**Beau Jangles, Lexus Kody, Louprint, Miki And Minnie and Yo Tillie  
are all in the conversation for HORSE OF THE YEAR**

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**\*\*NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE ON NOV. 26\*\***

Comments? Questions?  
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## EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner  
[@harnesseveguy](https://twitter.com/harnesseveguy)

Harness Racing tends to follow a seasonal calendar. As flowers bloom and trees blossom, we begin our stakes season with excitement in the air for the return of our past stars and the potential newcomers ready to take over the spotlight. Some six to seven months later, the grass isn't quite as green and there are more leaves on the ground that cling to branches. This finality to the season coincides with year-end voting for the best Standardbreds in North America.

Yes, North America! When it comes to the Dan Patch Awards, despite being given out by the United States Harness Writers Association, they are most definitely all-inclusive of the continent and not just the country because our circuit includes both Canada and the United States. But I digress, as we are not here to tackle that issue today but rather what could be three of the most interesting year-end battles we have seen in some time.

There are five awards which I've identified as close enough that every voter should spend a few extra minutes digging into every stat and reviewing the major races before making a firm decision. They include Older Trotting Mare, Older Male Pacer, and then the three big ones: Trotter of the Year, Pacer of the Year and Horse of the Year.

Let me make one thing clear, I will not be revealing my selections for any of the categories in this column. I've written some words about it already a few weeks ago and now I simply present the facts so that anyone who is looking for more information can have it at their fingertips before voting. I will say that the events of November 15 at The Meadowlands do have me strongly considering all of the options in each of these five races.

## OLDER TROTTING MARE

It's a three-mare race on paper and the margin is razor thin in every way possible. There is no right or wrong selection here, just two unfortunate losers in a race that could be a dead-heat. Each person will have to consider what is most

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# Miki And Minnie

p,2,1:49.2, p,3,1:48.2 (\$1,957,910)



*Thanks for another year of excellence*  
– *Chris Ryder Stable*

- Trounced older mares in the G2 FanDuel Championship, joining Dan Patch Horse of the Year Twin B Joe Fresh as the only 3-year-old pacer to accomplish this feat
- Dominated her division with a stellar 15-13-2-0 record
- Won three of the four 2025 G1 stakes – Breeders Crown, James Lynch, Fan Hanover – in her division and earned \$1,123,824, making her the richest 3-year-old pacer of the year
- Undefeated in six Graded Stakes in 2025
- Only Breeders Crown winner to return with a win in her next stakes races



important to them and make the difficult choice. Below are the contenders, listed in alphabetical order to avoid any favoritism.

HORSE	ELISTA HANOVER	M-M'S DREAM*	WARRAWEE MICHELLE
EARNINGS	\$532,951	\$467,522	\$569,991
RECORD	14-3-4-2	15-5-4-2	11-3-4-2
BEST WIN TIME	1:51 3/5	1:49 4/5	1:50
GRADED STAKES WINS**	2	4	2

**ELISTA HANOVER:** Girl Power (new stake qualifies as G3), Hambletonian Maturity

**M-M'S DREAM:** FanDuel, Dayton Distaff Derby, Miss Versatility, Steele Memorial

**WARRAWEE MICHELLE:** Breeders Crown, Graduate

GRADED STAKES RECORD**	8-2-2-1	8-4-2-0	7-2-3-2
HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS***	2	4	2

\*M-M's Dream expected to race at Hoosier on November 21

\*\*Only stakes finals included; no Sire Stakes or state-bred races

\*\*\*Only stakes finals included

As you can see above, the earnings difference between the three horses is marginal, as is the difference in record. M-M's Dream has an edge in stakes wins while Warrawee Michelle was the most consistent in these Grand Circuit races. Which way will you lean?

### OLDER MALE PACER

A quick look at the numbers may have you thinking Ervin Hanover is a runaway winner for Older Male Pacer, but when you dig a bit deeper the stats show that Maximus Miki deserves to be in the conversation. Let's dig in:

HORSE	ERVIN HANOVER	MAXIMUS MIKI
EARNINGS	\$848,218	\$771,858
RECORD	17-10-1-1	16-7-2-2
BEST WIN TIME	1:46 2/5	1:47 3/5
GRADED STAKES WINS*	4	5

**ERVIN HANOVER:** Breeders Crown, Dayton Derby, Ewart Memorial, Camluck Classic

**MAXIMUS MIKI:** FanDuel, Potomac, Hoosier Pacing Derby, Canadian Pacing Derby, William Haughton Memorial

GRADED STAKES RECORD**	9-4-1-0	10-5-0-1
HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS	2	3

\*Ervin Hanover was placed first via dq in Camluck Classic

\*\*Only stakes finals included; no Sire Stakes or state-bred races

Ervin Hanover jumps off the page in some respects because he won five straight races and eight of nine, but three of those wins were in stakes finals. Notice that Maximus Miki won more stakes and beat him more times head-to-head. Both horses won races on multiple track sizes and neither is a bad pick.

### TROTTER OF THE YEAR

With all due respect to Super Chapter and the amazing 21-for-22 year put up by On To Norway, Trotter of the Year looks to be a decision between 3-year-old filly Yo Tillie and the 7-year-old gelding Lexus Kody. While both horses put forth 11 wins, their bodies of work are very different.

HORSE	LEXUS KODY	YO TILLIE
EARNINGS	\$1,317,651	\$979,195
RECORD	21-11-3-4	12-11-1-0
BEST WIN TIME	1:49 1/5	1:50
GRADED STAKES WINS*	5	3

**LEXUS KODY:** FanDuel, Dayton Derby, Canadian Trotting Classic, MGM Yonkers International Trot, Maple Leaf Trot

**YO TILLIE:** Breeders Crown, Delmonica Hanover, Del Miller

GRADED STAKES RECORD*	10-5-1-2	4-3-1-0
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\*Only stakes finals included; no Sire Stakes or state-bred races

Yo Tillie clearly holds an edge in terms of record and you have to give her credit for earning almost a million dollars despite not being eligible to the Hambletonian Oaks or Kentucky Filly Futurity, but that she made her money in state-bred races is a negative. Lexus Kody was eligible to race for much more money so it is no surprise that he is quite a bit ahead of Yo Tillie and will actually finish the year as the leading money-winner

in the sport. His graded wins give him the edge over his rival in that category but 10 losses is a lot. From the "eye" perspective, both horses posted some very impressive victories and faced at least one legitimate rival during the year.

### PACER OF THE YEAR

I'm not sure I see this as a three-horse race but many people do and I'll present it that way. In one corner we have the undefeated 2-year-old pacing colt and on the other ends of the ring a pair of 3-year-olds – Louprint and Miki And Minnie. They all have great records and some have at least one negative factor in the eyes of a portion of the voters that could play a role in who wins.

HORSE	BEAU JANGLES	LOUPRINT	MIKI AND MINNIE
EARNINGS	\$1,227,326	\$1,025,971	\$1,123,824
RECORD	12-12-0-0	12-10-1-0	15-13-2-0
BEST WIN TIME	1:48 3/5	1:46 3/5	1:48 2/5
GRADED STAKES WINS*	3	3	6

**BEAU JANGLES:** Breeders Crown, Metro, Nassagaweya

**LOUPRINT:** Tattersalls, Little Brown Jug, North America Cup

**MIKI AND MINNIE:** FanDuel, Breeders Crown, James Lynch, Shady Daisy, Jerry Silverman, Fan Hanover

GRADED STAKES RECORD*	3-3-0-0	4-3-0-0	6-6-0-0
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\*Only stakes finals included; no Sire Stakes or state-bred races

We mentioned negatives above so it makes sense to start there. For Beau Jangles, there are people who feel a horse should have to race in the United States to qualify despite the rules making no mention of that being an issue. He's also a 2-year-old and historically they don't win the award, though I don't agree with the logic behind that either. For Louprint, he missed a number of key races in his division while injured during the summer and failed to fire due to another injury in the Breeders Crown. Will people whip away the Breeders Crown loss and focus on all the great he accomplished? With Miki And Minnie it is very difficult to find a kink in her armor. Perhaps people could focus on her loss in the Kentucky Sire Stakes final when she was forced to race without Lasix. That said, if you are willing to wipe away Louprint's Crown loss than why not Miki's KYSS one? Certainly her recent victory over older foes in the FanDuel bolsters her standing, even if the division is somewhat watered down as her stablemate and divisional leader Twin B Joe Fresh had to miss the race.

### HORSE OF THE YEAR

We'll forego the visual comparison for Horse of the Year since the only contenders are all listed above. Pardon the pun but it is quite the horse race. Do we go with the undefeated 2-year-old Beau Jangles or the highest money-earner Lexus Kody or the winningest stakes horse Miki And Minnie or the nearly unbeaten filly Yo Tillie or the gutsy and fast 3-year-old Louprint? Each horse has viable credentials, so there is no wrong answer here.

My decision has been made and it was solidified by going through the process of writing this column. Seeing the stats side by side to complement the visual on-track moments made it clear to me which horse should get the top honor.

Ballots should go out for the Dan Patch Awards during the first week of December and voting will end about 10 days after that time. We should know the divisional winners the week after that from what I've been told, but the biggest awards will have plenty of build-up and drama.

If there is one year where it makes sense to show up in Florida at the Rosen Shingle Creek hotel for the Dan Patch banquet, this is it. There will be anxiety and excitement in the air as we all learn together the Trotter, Pacer and Horse of the Year. Will it be the ones you were rooting for? Will it be the ones I voted for? May the best horses win!





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# Sparkling performances topped final major racing night of 2025



## JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [X BergmanJay](#)

The long racing season came to an end for many of the sport's leading horses this past Saturday (November 15) when the Meadowlands conducted the last major stakes races for 2-year-olds in its Fall Final Four. Co-starring on the program were the swan songs for some of the sport's most enduring horses featured in the FanDuel Championship events where the trotting mare M-M's Dream proved her mettle for the final time over The Meadowlands miler before moving on to matronhood in 2026. While the star-studded evening was mixed with inclement weather, the performers put on quite the show with a few surprises in the mix.

Longevity has long been associated with Standardbreds when compared with the Thoroughbred set and for the most part our horses endure and in fact sometimes improve with age. Perhaps the poster boy for that claim would be Lexus Kody, a horse I suggested a few months back should be a legitimate Horse of the Year candidate. His final mile of the year was the last in a series of epic performances only marred by an out-of-character Breeders Crown finale. Ron Burke suggested the effort was akin to a 1:48 mile and while the trainer is generally spot on with his observations, I'd be hard-pressed to put a three-second variant on the East Rutherford mile surface regardless of the moisture it took on. With that out of the way, Lexus Kody left no doubt with another signature performance. He served notice as the horse to beat in 2026 no matter which of this year's sophomore class returns next year.

While Lexus Kody was dominant this year, the same couldn't be said of the older pacing division where Breeders Crown winner Ervin Hanover could not continue his winning ways despite preferring the colder weather of the season. That's not a knock on Ervin Hanover but the reality in a division where being in front or near the top is generally the advantage needed to succeed. Such was the case for Maximus Miki, who used the FanDuel Championship as an occasion to leave the gate and find perfect drafting position behind Ken Hanover. The veteran son of Always B Miki has clearly emerged as a 6-year-old with some epic performances, including his come-from-behind masterpiece in the Canadian Pacing Derby where he outkicked pacesetter Ervin Hanover on the wire.

Breeding is always a factor in producing champions and Maximus Miki's bloodwork suggests a pedigree that defined aged racing for multiple generations. The third foal from the \$482K winner Beach Gal (by Somebeachsomewhere), Maximus Miki's full brother Always A Miki shined as a freshman winning the 2020 Governor's Cup. Yet going further back down the maternal line, you find the names Dragon Again, Artsplace, Cam Fella and Jennas Beach Boy, horses that were brilliant early and

late in their racing careers. While just clearing his first \$1 million in career earnings this year, Maximus Miki has all the attributes of a horse that could easily double that in short order in the not-too-distant future.

In the same FanDuel Championship, Abuckabett Hanover made his final racetrack appearance and managed to get a fifth-place check. A career earner of \$2.18 million, Abuckabett Hanover retires as the richest son/daughter of Betting Line by a wide margin. Known for his closing kick from an early age, Abuckabett Hanover enjoyed his best year in 2024, winning seven times in 15 starts and banking \$833K for trainer Andrew Harris and his ownership partners. As a bona fide closer, Abuckabett Hanover was a horse you couldn't help root for no matter what post he drew or how difficult the competition appeared to be.

The late Hall of Famer Herve Filion once reminded me that "horses are not machines". It's a quote that has more than come in handy when trying to make sense of horses like Ervin Hanover dominating on Breeders Crown night and then struggling to match that performance a few weeks later. The same likely could be said for the sophomore filly Miki And Minnie, who needed an all-out drive to keep from losing a Breeders Crown race at Woodbine Mohawk Park (won in a dead heat with The Last Martini).

That the sophomore filly returned from that mile and raced against older mares, including this year's Breeders Crown champion Always B Naughty in the FanDuel Championship, was indication enough that she was ready to shake off a sub-par yet winning effort and do more.

Trainer Chris Ryder clearly knew what he was doing putting her in against older horses. Miki And Minnie was simply awesome despite needing some encouragement to clear the lead half-



LISA PHOTO

Lexus Kody won in 1:51 over a Meadowlands surface rated good on November 15.

way into the mile. It was obvious that she was toying with Always B Naughty before leaving that one in the dust at the head of the stretch in an epic effort. With defending Horse of the Year Twin B Joe Fresh sidelined, Ryder knew the division would be without its most recognizable face. At the same time there is never certainty when pitting a sophomore against older foes. The victory gave sire Always B Miki a sweep of the pacing FanDuel championships.

It's hard to extract the significance of victories in the 2-year-old Final Four events at The Meadowlands when juxtaposed to the full freshman season. The obvious reason is that many of the sport's best horses don't hang around to mid-November due to the difficult paths needed to reach Sire Stakes finals, at times in multiple states as well as Grand Circuit stops. With that it's hard to quantify whether a victory at The Meadowlands in the last major freshman stake is a stepping stone to the future or just a win versus mid-level competition.

The win by All Time Trot S in the \$462K Goldsmith Maid may have been both, a victory over a tired group of 2-year-old trotting fillies as well as the coming-out party for a horse with a pedigree that has more than a few elements of greatness sprinkled in. All Time Trot S is by International favorite Googoo Gaagaa (sire of the impressive first-year stallion Captain Corey), but it's her dam's side that is more than worth noting when looking

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 6](#)

for clues to an exceptional trotting filly. All Time Trot S' dam – Gorgeous Am – is a Muscle Hill-sired daughter of Lovelinotte. While that name doesn't strike a chord in North America, Lovelinotte is a half-sister to the Steele Memorial winner Pasithea Face S, the dam of the 2021 Goldsmith Maid champion Joviality S, who went on to win the 2022 Yonkers Trot as well during her \$1.9 million winning career. All Time Trot S didn't have the freshman season Joviality S did, with her starts limited to overnights and the Kindergarten Series.

Trainer Aaron Lambert thought he had something special when he spoke this January and though I followed the efforts of Gentleman's Club – his freshman son of Downbytheseaside – closely on the Ohio Sire Stakes circuit, it was hard to discern if there was more than meets the eye. Gentleman's Club had his defining moment this past Saturday for Lambert and company with what could only be described as an imposing effort in capturing the \$334K Governor's Cup. Good enough to reach the Ohio Sire Stakes final, Gentleman's Club didn't have much luck in that \$300,000 event at Dayton on September 27 but was able to regroup and find his form in a major way over the last few weeks, prepping and inevitably capturing the Governor's Cup. By now it is no surprise when a son or daughter of Downbytheseaside wins a major Grand Circuit contest. This one is supported by a solid maternal line, with his dam See You At Peelers a daughter of Bettor's Delight that went 13 for 13 as a 2-year-old in 2010 and beat male rivals in the Art Rooney at Yonkers a year later. See You At Peelers' broodmare career didn't click early when bred to Somebeachsomewhere but has more than made up for it with her last two foals of racing age by sons of that sire, both capturing Grand Circuit stakes. In addition to Gentleman's Club is



LISA PHOTO

**Gentleman's Club (3) kept his neck in front to win the Governor's Cup over Melillo (9) and Ubrute (10).**

his half-sister Champagne Room (Papi Rob Hanover), a Bluegrass winner this year as a sophomore.

Trainer Ron Burke is so good that even when he loses he wins, and that was the case when She's A Bulldog upset likely division winner Loua Dipa in the Three Diamonds. This race could have been more about the number of hard miles Loua Dipa had during the long campaign that her stablemate She's A Bulldog didn't have to endure. A maiden entering the Three Diamonds, She's A Bulldog may prove to be the star of Burke's sophomore filly pacing class in 2026 if she builds on that performance.

## Miki And Minnie, Lexus Kody, Super Chapter improve positions in Top 10

By Ken Weingartner

Miki And Minnie, Lexus Kody and Super Chapter all posted wins in last week's stakes action, and all three improved their positions in the Top 10 of the Week 23 edition of the Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll released Wednesday.

Three-year-old filly Miki And Minnie defeated older rivals in the FanDuel Mare Pace Championship (Grade 2) this past Saturday at the Meadowlands and jumped from fourth to second in the rankings behind idle Beau Jangles, who remained No. 1 for the fourth consecutive week.

Lexus Kody captured the FanDuel Open Trot Championship (G1) at the Big M and went from eighth to fifth in the poll behind the idle duo of Yo Tillie and Louprint, in third and fourth, respectively.

Super Chapter won the Matron Stakes (G3), for 3-year-old male trotters, at Bally's Dover on Nov. 13 and landed at No. 8 in this week's rankings, up from 10th.

There were no newcomers to 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.

The final 2025 Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll will be released Dec. 3.

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

Rank	Name (First-Place Votes)	Age/Sex/Gait	Record	Earnings	Points	Pvs
1	Beau Jangles (22)	2cp	12-12-0-0	\$1,227,326	330	1
2	Miki And Minnie (4)	3fp	15-13-2-0	\$1,123,824	278	4
3	Yo Tillie (2)	3ft	12-11-1-0	\$979,195	262	2
4	Louprint (6)	3cp	12-10-1-0	\$1,025,971	238	3
5	Lexus Kody	7gt	21-11-3-4	\$1,317,651	221	8
6	Loua Dipa	2fp	13-9-2-1	\$827,028	144	5
7	Twin B Joe Fresh (1)	5mp	9-6-2-1	\$526,714	139	6
8	Super Chapter	3ct	14-9-3-1	\$1,236,099	98	10
9	Ervin Hanover	5hp	17-10-1-1	\$848,218	78	7
10	Emoticon Legacy	3ct	10-7-1-0	\$954,875	56	9

ALSO: On To Norway 26; Maximus Miki 20; Dandy Ideal 13; Diabolic Hill 8; Apex, Warrawee Michelle 4; French Wine 3; Sippinonsearoc 2, She's A Bulldog 1.



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# Hennessey weighs the potential end to a legendary career



## HARNESS FOCUS

By Jessica Hallett X @JHallettPhoto

After 56,000 miles around the track and half a century feeling the rush of the race, Wally Hennessey now finds himself staring down the one finish line he never wanted to see.

The Pride of PEI. The King. The Mayor. The Hall of Famer. The Legend. Each title marks a chapter in the storied career of Hennessey; a career defined as much by resilience and success as by the horses who carried him.

Fifty-one years ago, Hennessey climbed into the bike for the first time. The son of prominent Maritimes horseman Joe Hennessey held more than just a set of lines, but the full weight of his family's legacy in the sport of racing. He was raised with the old school values of life and racing. Early mornings were spent learning from the ground up. Before he ever sat between the shafts, he was mucking stalls, sweeping aisles, and learning the small details that define the best horsemen.

"I come from a harness racing family," Hennessey said. "My grandfather raced and owned horses, my father, my brothers, and then myself. My earliest memories are going to the barn with my dad. I was really young, maybe 6 or 7 years old, grooming the horses and cleaning the leather harnesses. My dad was such a professional and wanted everything done in a first-class manner."

Joe Hennessey was a well-regarded horseman. Hennessey describes him as a man of few words, someone you wouldn't learn from by communication, but rather watching him in action. Whether it was the way his father acted and interacted with horses, grooms, owners, competitors or people off the street, Hennessey aimed to pattern his character off of his father's – one that was professional and held in high-esteem.

Eventually, Wally Hennessey emerged from the shadows of the shed-row and found himself behind his first horse. Even then he knew that it is where he belonged.

"My father was a tough teacher. He wasn't quick to allow you to do things right away; even to put a bandage on a horse or to jog a horse. My initial jogs were sitting on the seat with someone else, only about 6 or 7 years old. From the time I can remember, I was sitting in a jog cart or grooming horses. I started jogging at a very young age," said Hennessey.

The smell of the horses, the aroma of the stable and watching his father compete on the track were all factors that contributed to Hennessey's early passion for the game. He knew that competing as a driver was where he wanted to be, but he wasn't sure if was going to be able to do it. All he knew was that he was going to make it his mission to succeed.

The beginning of his career was anything but smooth, with his early drives punctuated by the jarring feel of impacting the ground. Several times Hennessey was involved in accidents, ending up staring at the sky and covered in dirt.

"I had been doing this my whole life. You couldn't get licensed in Atlantic Canada at that time until you turned 18 years old. By the time I turned 18 years old, I had all the experience. Rubbing horses, jogging, training in sets, all of the above. I believed from watching it that it couldn't be that hard. I had tons of experience before I ever even went behind the gate," Hennessey said. "When I first started to try and get drives it's not like today's generation. With the older generations, my father's generation and the ones above and below him, it was very hard to get any type of an opportunity to drive. Even though my father had a big stable and my older brothers were driving, I really didn't get the opportunity right away."

"When I did get the opportunity, I would say in my first 10 drives I was in an accident maybe three or four times; on the ground. Each and every time, it was more my fault than anyone else's. Having started like that, you would wonder to yourself why would you keep going? To get all busted up that early. Fortunately, I didn't get hurt bad any time that I happened to get in them accidents. I think what made me keep digging in and keep going was number one, that I thought I couldn't be this bad and number two, that I believed I was embarrassing my family because our family had such a great name in the industry."

While Hennessey didn't believe he was the center of attention on the



JESSICA HALLETT

**Wally Hennessey won the opener on November 19 at Saratoga Raceway with National Love As, perhaps his last race at that oval.**

Island, he said he wouldn't be surprised if there was some talk about 'that kid being down again'.

"I had to dust myself off again and I thought, who would ever put me down to drive? People were probably afraid that if they put me down, I would get their horse in an accident. I didn't get many opportunities," said Hennessey.

That was a turning point in his career as he packed up and left his home in Prince Edward Island to go to New Brunswick for a new chance to see if he could become a driver.

"Looking back, it was the greatest thing that could happen, because it taught me so much in my early years, and to this day when I go out on the track I am so focused. I don't think I was focused that much when I first started and I believe that's why I was getting in so much trouble," admitted the 69-year-old.

Though he had a rough start to his illustrious career, Hennessey turned the tide to become the Pride of PEI. His first win came in 1975. The feeling of that victory is one that Hennessey has been chasing his entire career.

"The first for anything is great, but as bad as I was, as horrible as I was doing, I never, ever thought I was going to win a race," Hennessey said. "I thought it was the end of the world. The feeling that I got that particular race, winning that race, is why I am still doing it today and why I was doing it then. I've never had that feeling again, as many races as I had won, nice races and good horses that I had driven. It was surreal. It was like you were in somebody else's body. Just that feeling that night, I'm still looking for that."

After that first win, there was a shift in Hennessey's career that led to the coinage of the Pride of PEI. He set the standard for most wins and most money earned in a season by a Maritimer before going on to rewrite the record books across North America. Returning to Prince Edward Island to drive during Old Home Week throughout his career, Hennessey secured a pair of Gold Cup and Saucer victories to solidify his stature as a fixture on the Island and honor his family's namesake.

Along with being the Pride of PEI came being the King. First, it was the King of the New York Sire Stakes. In 1992 he won seven New York Sire Stakes events at Buffalo Raceway. His domination in the stakes gave him his second title and a new chapter in his book, but it was his name as King of the Pomp that proved his most career-defining chapter.

During the late 1980s, Hennessey relocated to the United States and to this day he has a permanent home in Coconut Creek, Florida with his wife Barb and daughter Kristy. For 40 years, Hennessey was a staple in the South Florida harness racing community at the Winter Capital of Harness Racing, Pompano Park.

For 40 years he remained at the top of the driving standings at Pompano, earning several driving titles and awards for his success. He was the King of Pompano Park, later shortened to The Pomp, in credit to announcer Gabe Prewitt.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 9](#)



During the final year of racing ever at Pompano Park, Hennessey was coined the Mayor of the track for his decades of commitment and success on that 5/8ths mile oval. On the final night of racing, his first notable win came with Panocchio, a track record-holder at Pompano. To celebrate the win and to pay tribute to the track, Hennessey pulled up in the far turn and climbed on top of the seat. Balancing atop the bike with the lines in his hands, Hennessey paraded to the winner's circle in homage to the Herve Filion celebration with one foot in the seat and one foot on the crossbar. Later that night, Hennessey won the final race ever contested over the white sand and stonedust with Beach Forecast.

Reflecting on his accomplishments, those wins at Pompano Park on that final night and even achieving his 12,000th win earlier this summer at the Saratoga Harness Track, Hennessey said that all of the emotions come rushing back.

"I get emotional a lot more than I show. The reason I keep it inside; I don't believe you should show your hand. I don't want anyone to see a weakness in me," Hennessey said. "The 12,000 wins, I knew was going to be my last milestone; winning the last race at Pompano Park, I knew it was going to be the last win at Pompano Park; and winning with Panocchio that night, I knew it was Panocchio's finest moment being a track record-holder at a racetrack that so many great horses have gone over and he being the fastest and one of the best that ever went over Pompano Park; just for me to have that opportunity to drive him and win. There's been hundreds of emotional moments, wins or not wins."

Hennessey has had tens of thousands of trips to the track with thousands of different horses for different trainers in every race from the bottom class to the highest Grand Circuit event. His success has earned him his Hall of Famer title as he has entered six different Hall of Fames including the United States Harness Racing Hall of Fame, the Canadian Harness Racing Hall of Fame, the PEI Sports Hall of Fame, the Florida Harness Racing Hall of Fame, the Florida Sports Hall of Fame, and the Saratoga Harness Racing Hall of Fame.

All of that together – the Pride of PEI, the King, the Mayor, and the Hall of Famer – linked with his most notable achievements on the racetrack have led Hennessey to his status as a Legend. He has won so many different races, from the Hambletonian Oaks to the Breeders Crown to the Elitlopp and more. His wins span across North America and all the way overseas to places such as Sweden. Most notably in terms of horses he has steered are Cambest and Moni Maker.

"Nothing else I have ever done in my career or will do in my career will compare to my years being associated with not only Moni Maker but the people associated with her as well. Nothing will ever compare to that because not too many people ever get that opportunity to be associated with a horse of that caliber. People that weren't even born when she raced know who she is. She is an icon of the sport," Hennessey said.

Altogether, his résumé extends far beyond many that have ever held a set of lines and he continues to win at a high level at the Saratoga Harness Track. But now as his time at the Saratoga Springs half-mile closes for another year, Hennessey faces the decision of whether or not to hang up the lines for good. The legend feels that he has been very fortunate throughout his career and though he has no interest in ending his driving career, he wants to end his career on his own terms rather than be forced out due to other circumstances, such as an injury on the track.

In 2023 Hennessey was involved in a near career-ending accident at Tioga Downs when he hit the track just right and injured his back. Fortunately, there were no long-term consequences and as a typical horseman would do, Hennessey was quickly back in the bike.

"That's one thing about racing. Accidents do happen. It's not if they'll happen, it's when. That one at Tioga wasn't one of the nicer ones that I've been in and like I said, I've been in accidents starting in 1974. That one could have been career ending, but fortunately somebody was looking down on me and I was able to recoup from that. Having said that, I never think about that when I'm racing or going out to race. If I had that mindset going out, I definitely wouldn't be able to compete," said Hennessey.

"It's a big part of why I'm thinking of going out now because I think I've pushed the envelope far enough that, what am I waiting for? Am I waiting

for something to end my career before I can end it myself? It's okay to walk away without having to walk away because of an injury or because people are looking out at you saying why is that old man out there? I believe I've pushed it far enough."

With all of the milestones and triumphs and everything in between, Hennessey believes the thrill of the race is the thing that keeps him going. The wins and the rush that come with them are going to be hard to let go of, he said.

"I'll miss the actual adrenaline, the competing and the adrenaline that comes with it," Hennessey said. "I work hard to keep at the level that I'm at. I don't take it for granted. I like to study the program, I like to know the horses that I'm against, I like to know the people that I'm racing against, and I like to know the starter. I'm a student of the game and always have been. To know whether the track is playing speed-favoring or if you're able to come from off the pace. Before I go out on the track, I know exactly who I'm in against, what they can do and can't do and what they've done."

"To sit in the seat and have the same talent as somebody else, if you're more prepared than that

guy and you've studied more and you're more zoned in, you have an edge. It might not be a big edge, but it's an edge," Hennessey added.

Regardless of whether or not Hennessey hangs up the lines, and though he is not sure if he will continue as a trainer or what his next chapter will entail, he is sure that the horses will always be in his life.

"I know the time is now. I'm struggling with life without the competition, the adrenaline, the horses, the camaraderie, my identity. It's who I am. When you give this up, it will all go away. The thought of not competing and not winning a race. The feeling I get today is the same feeling I got when I first started. It's irreplaceable. It's like hitting a grand slam, scoring a touchdown, getting a slam dunk. No matter what, though, even if I stop driving, the horses will always be a part of my life," said Hennessey.

Flashing back to that kid that was just starting out, carrying the weight of a legacy on his shoulders and fearing being a disappointment to that legacy as he hit the track far too many times, to now being on top of the world 51 years later with his own legacy at his heels, Hennessey has carved his name into the fabric of the sport.

"Who would ever think a kid from Charlottetown like me would end up on the biggest stage all over the world," said Hennessey. "I know how fortunate I've been in that way and how fortunate I've been to last this long. I've been fortunate my whole life that I've been able to stay at a competitive level and make a good living at it. I just believe that I don't want my career to end because of some other reason other than that I'm ending it, as far as driving."

"It's not an easy decision. It's hard to walk away from something you've done your whole life," Hennessey concluded.



JESSICA HALLETT

**Wally Hennessey paid tribute to Herve Filion by standing in the bike after winning on the final night of racing at Pompano Park.**

# Engblom quintet set for opening round of Grand Prix at Yonkers

By Jay Bergman

It's fitting that the stakes season at Yonkers Raceway will come to an end this year with leading trainer Per Engblom sending out five from his stable in the opening round of the MGM Grand Prix series for trotters and pacers. The Grand Prix's offer three preliminary legs with \$250,000 finals slated for closing night on December 19.

Last year Engblom had the favorite in the initial Grand Prix for pacers in Coaches Corner, but the then 4-year-old was upset in the final. Coaches Corner leads three candidates for Engblom in Monday's (November 24) first leg.

"Last year he did most of his racing at Yonkers because we really didn't have him staked," said Engblom.

This year Coaches Corner enters the MGM Grand Prix following a second-place finish in the Breeders Crown at Woodbine Mohawk Park, a third in the Potomac at Rosecroft and then a third-place finish in the FanDuel Championship at The Meadowlands on November 15.

Coaches Corner drew post two in the third \$50,000 division of the MGM Grand Prix (race 7) on Monday and looks to get back on the winning track over a Yonkers half-mile surface he has more than become comfortable racing over. One would have thought it would be difficult for Coaches Corner to top his 2024 campaign that saw him earn \$645K, but with this lucrative series at year-end it's possible he will equal that or exceed it this year.

"I had no idea he would be this kind of horse when we first got him," said Engblom. "He's was a non-winners-of-four horse that raced on the Indiana Fair circuit."

Coaches Corner will once again be pitted against Desperate Man in the opening leg of this year's series. The Travis Alexander-trained gelding has done some of his best racing as an older horse over the Yonkers half-miler but has not raced since capturing an Invitational on October 27.

Huntinthelastdolar (post 3) hasn't had as much racing luck as his stablemate but enters the MGM Grand Prix in great form. He'll face a solid field in the third race on Monday night and first division of the series.

"He hasn't been that lucky with the draws," said Engblom. "He drew the 10 hole in the Breeders Crown and then had the nine hole in the FanDuel. Even with the outside draw I think he had the fastest last quarter in that race."

Indeed, Huntinthelastdolar flashed a 26 second final panel but only netted a sixth-place finish in the FanDuel. In between those two outings Huntinthelastdolar went wire-to-wire in an overnight at Yonkers.

While the draw was solid for Huntinthelastdolar, the competition figures to be fierce with Captain Albano (post 4) making his series debut and returning to Yonkers for the first time since capturing the \$200,000 Aria Invitational (Grade 2) here in September.

Jamaican Rock A, third in the Aria, has won 10 of 16 starts this year and figures to be a solid player in this series. The son of A Rocknroll Dance owns multiple Invitational victories over this surface and returns for trainer Scott Blackler following a solid qualifier at The Meadowlands on November 15. Jamaican Rock A landed post two.

Engblom hopes the length of the series will help Redwood Hanover find a spot in the final. "He's been racing great since we bought him off OnGait," said Engblom of the 5-year-old Stay Hungry-sired stallion. "The post is a problem and I'm not sure how he'll handle four straight weeks."

Redwood Hanover is coming off a wire-to-wire Invitational triumph at Yonkers on November 3 but landed post eight in Monday's fifth race and second MGM Grand Prix division. Borgata Series winner Mossdale Ben N drew post seven making his first start back after nearly two months on the shelf.



MIKE LIZZI

**Coaches Corner gives trainer Per Engblom a serious chance at winning the Grand Prix Pace at Yonkers Raceway.**

The fourth \$50,000 MGM Grand Prix division on Monday (race 9) could be the most competitive of the night with some mid-level horses hoping to make the step up. Perhaps the most intriguing horse in this division is the lone sophomore in the field Courts On Fire, a son of Courtly Choice that finished second in this year's New York Sire Stakes final at Batavia and will be making his first start for new trainer Ron Burke following a purchase at the Harrisburg sale. Courts On Fire drew post six in the eight-horse field.

Engblom will send out a pair of seasoned trotters in two of the three \$50,000 divisions of the opening leg of the MGM Grand Prix Trotting Series on Friday night, with Ultion Face S (post 3) going in race five and Cecil Hanover (post 7) slated for race seven.

"I like both of them and I think they can trot in 1:53 over this track," said Engblom. "I'm not sure if that's going to be good enough but I think they'll be competitive."

Ultion Face S has been very consistent for Engblom's stable as a 9-year-old after a solid career overseas. He was most recently second in an Invitational at Yonkers on November 6, but Friday's field appears much deeper. Antognoni S, a winner of the John Brennan series at Yonkers earlier this season, landed the pole position in the field of eight. He's won 13 of 20 starts thus far for trainer Ron Burke. Sir Pinocchio (post 4) and Amigo Volo (post 8) add depth to this division.

Engblom's Cecil Hanover (post 7) enters the series in great form but finds himself in what appears the most difficult division, with the \$2.1 million winner Periculum (post 3) and the near \$1.2 million winner Ari Ferrari J (post 5) to his inside. Periculum is coming off a solid second-place finish in the FanDuel championship and returns to Yonkers where he was last seen getting boxed in against some of the best trotters in the world in the \$1 million MGM Yonkers International Trot on September 13.

Ari Ferrari J prepped for the series with a 1:52 2/5 qualifier at The Meadowlands on November 8 for trainer Tony Alagna.

Security Protected (post 5) makes just his second start in trainer Cory Stratton's stable after a purchase, perhaps made with this series in mind. A 4-year-old by Father Patrick, Security Protected finished a solid second behind Up Your Deo in the \$200,000 Robert Miecuna Trot on International Trot Day. He'll face six others in the eighth race and third MGM Grand Prix division, with last year's champion Take All Comers (post 4) to his inside and the classy Southwind Coors (post 7) to his outside.

Post time at Yonkers Raceway for both cards is 6:45 PM (ET).



# Pollack newcomers set for Progress elims on Thursday at Dover

By Ken Weingartner

When it comes to buying racehorses, Tom Pollack doesn't often swing for the fences, generally opting to purchase established performers rather than yearlings, but that approach can still result in knocking one out of the park.

A prime example would be recent Breeders Crown Open Pace champion Ervin Hanover, a 5-year-old who was purchased by Pollack following the horse's 3-year-old season. Ervin Hanover has won 18 races and more than \$950,000 since then.

On Thursday, two newer additions to Pollack's stable that follow a similar approach will be in action in \$35,000 Progress Pace eliminations, for 3-year-old male pacers, at Bally's Dover. Sugar Man is the 9-2 third choice in the first elim, behind 5-2 favorite Dandy Ideal and 7-2 Fallout, while Waffle Blue Chip is 10-1 in the second division. The top four finishers from each elim advance to the \$250,000 Progress Pace final on Wednesday, Nov. 26.



LISA PHOTO

**Sugar Man will make his debut for owner Tom Pollack on Thursday evening.**

Pollack bought both 3-year-olds privately, acquiring Waffle Blue Chip in October and Sugar Man earlier this month. Both were trained previously by Brett Pelling and now are conditioned by Jeff Cullipher.

"They're two pretty nice horses," Pollack said. "They might be a notch below the top group, but I think both are sharp right

now, so they should be competitive.

"With both of them, since I don't really have partners, I've kind of adapted the model of buying some higher-end horses from owners who really only want to have 2- and 3-year-old stakes horses. We've bought horses at the end of their 3-year-old seasons, and if they can go on and be stakes horses, that's a home run. More often than not, they go on and are just solid overnight racehorses.

"But that's been our business model just because the yearling game is risky and I'm not really able to spread the risk without a big partnership group. This versus buying a yearling, you have a little bit of an advantage because you've seen what they can do already."

Waffle Blue Chip, a son of Sweet Lou-Vicinity, has finished first or second in 11 of 17 races this season and earned \$114,578, with his most recent four starts coming for Pollack and trainer David Menary in Canada. The colt was eighth in his debut for Pollack, which came in a Breeders Crown elimination at Woodbine Mohawk Park. He rebounded with a second in a 3-year-old Open followed by back-to-back wins in conditioned races, also at Mohawk.

His seven-horse Progress elimination features Prince Hal Hanover, the 5-2 morning-line favorite, as well as Captain Optimistic (7-2), Fusion (9-2) and Madden Oaks (6-1). Jason Bartlett will drive Waffle Blue Chip, leaving from post five.

"We got him right before the Breeders Crown," Pollack said. "He drew (post) eight in the elimination with Louprint and Dandy's Ideal, horses that were just better than him, so that was tough. He's raced against horses he could be more competitive with in his next three starts, and he's been lights out.

"I like the fact that he's versatile and he likes to be involved. Hopefully, we can get him in play, get a trip, and make the final. It's a tough bunch, so it's a step up for him. But I think he can handle it because he is sharp right now."

Sugar Man, a son of Papi Rob Hanover-Sweet As Sugar, will be making his first start for Pollack. The colt has hit the board in 10 of 16 races this season, winning five and earning \$112,299. He won his two most recent starts, the consolation division of the Monument Circle and a division of the Circle City Stakes, both at Harrah's Hoosier Park.

Sugar Man will leave from post three with driver Todd McCarthy in

his seven-horse Progress elim.

"We've liked him training here for the past week or so," Pollack said. "We're excited to see him race. We don't really know much about him yet, but I know Hoosier is not the easiest place to win and he's raced well out there. So, I think that's a positive sign."

Pollack ranks fifth in purse earnings among all owners in harness racing this year, his fifth consecutive year in the top five. The past three years, only Burke Racing Stable and Weaver Brussemi LLC have finished ahead of Pollack.

"It's a testament to a great team and buying quality horses," Pollack said. "I have a good team around me – trainers, drivers, (agent) Marc Reynolds. It's a really good group, which makes it fun. We're kind of all in it together, trying to win as many races as we can.

"I'm excited about these two new ones. I love the action, so it's great to be able to buy horses and drop them in box shortly thereafter and have them race. We'll see what happens."

Racing begins at 4:30 p.m. (EST) at Bally's Dover. The Progress Pace eliminations are races 12 and 14 on the 15-race card.

## California harness racing to return at The Big Fresno Fair in 2026

On Wednesday (Nov. 19) Watch & Wager LLC officially received unanimous approval from the California Horse Racing Board to conduct a live harness racing meet at The Big Fresno Fair located in Fresno, California.

While the approved dates are November 4, 2026 through May 11, 2027, the proposed calendar has racing commencing on Saturday, December 12 and continuing on the 19th and 26th before adding Sundays in 2027 until May 1. There will be no racing on February 14 and instead February 12 will be carded.

At the meeting, Watch & Wager GM Chris Schick read statements from Big Fresno Fair Board of Directors President Gary Chahil and Vice President Frank Flores about the new joint venture. Both men were unable to attend but expressed their happiness that harness racing could return to the fairgrounds, with Flores stating:

"As vice chairman of the Big Fresno Fair Board of Directors I want to personally express my strong support for bringing live harness racing back to the Big Fresno Fair after nearly 100 years. Horse racing has been a big part and the heart and soul of the Big Fresno Fair for over 140 years. It is woven into the fabric of our central valley agricultural heritage, supports hundreds of local jobs, keeps family farms in business and brings generations of Fresno County residents together. I grew up going to these races with my family and I know how much it means to so many of you."

Prior to the approval, Schick pointed out that there would be growing pains with the new meet since they would be racing at a facility unfamiliar to the betting public.

"We know we are going to face some big challenges here. This is not Cal Expo. The public has never wagered on Standardbred racing on this track. We have to figure out how the betting public will react to this," said Schick.

One of the challenges will be racing in the daytime as the track at The Big Fresno Fair doesn't have a lighting system. When Watch & Wager operated the meet at Cal Expo that ended permanently in May 2025 due to the termination of their lease, the track always raced in the evening.

"It's a gamble for sure but our management team has signed on to this project," said Schick, who added that the horseperson community was on board with the plan to race in Fresno. "We didn't want to go down this path without knowing the horses were fully committed to coming back.

"Fresno is really a good facility. It is a gem. We sold them on that idea and they seemed to be all-in. After spending this winter in the cold weather environment they will probably be happy to come to Fresno."

**-DRF Harness**

# RACE OF THE WEEK

## 7 YONKERS FRI

1 Mile Trot MGM GRAND PRIX TROTTING SERIES LEG #1. Purse \$50,000

\$1 PICK 3 (7-8-9) | \$2 EXACTA | \$2 TRIPLE | \$.10 SUPERFECTA

### 1 ASTEROID (L) 61:51.4 (5/8) \$5,745

br g 7, by Creatine, Ultimate Cameron by Yankee Glide  
Pollack Racing LLC, Venetia, PA

Last 5 Sts -\$40,430

1:52.1 Phl 5/8  
1:51.4 Phl 5/8

25 6 2 2 2 \$52,930 25 Tot 14 5 3 2 \$80,430  
24 YR 0 0 0 0 24 Tot 16 3 2 3 \$110,123  
23 YR 0 0 0 0 -Life 61 21 8 12 \$439,863

### 6-1 Co. Kelly 743-91-114-112 (122)

J. Cullipher 210-43-27-35 (205)

Br - Diamond Creek Farm LLC, PA

6 Nov/25	3YR	fst4 <sup>30</sup>	271	:57	1:261	1:551	Inv	35000	2	4 <sup>3</sup>	4 <sup>4</sup>	4 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>2</sup>	3dh1	CoKelly	JeCullphr	274	30	29	28 <sup>3</sup>	1:552	85	+1.2w	L3078	StiCornsUltinFace	Asteroid	Sat,trafic In ang,trot-5	
30 Oct/25	8YR	gd6 <sup>10</sup>	28	:572	1:253	1:541	Inv	39000	3	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	CoKelly	JeCullphr	281	29	28	29	1:544	89	+0.5w	L725	DribingBi Asteroid	DireStrs	Ld,yld,ptk,ctr 2nd-6	
23 Oct/25	8YR	fst5 <sup>30</sup>	274	:572	1:254	1:534	Inv	39000	2	5 <sup>6</sup>	5 <sup>6</sup>	5 <sup>3</sup>	4 <sup>4</sup>	3 <sup>5</sup>	CoKelly	JeCullphr	29	29	28	28	1:544	88	-1.5w	L1707	AntogoniDribingBi	Astrod	Took bk,ang In no bid-8	
9 Oct/25	3YR	fst5 <sup>10</sup>	274	:571	1:252	1:543	nm30000L5	30000	3	1 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>2</sup>	1 <sup>2</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	JaBartitt	JeCullphr	274	29	28	28	1:544	91	+2.5w	L1.79	Asteroid MsspiStrm	Eteralit	Ld,won handily-6	
2 Oct/25	3YR	fst5 <sup>10</sup>	273	:57	1:252	1:533	nm30000L5	30000	4	3 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	JaBartitt	JeCullphr	281	29	28	28	1:544	94	+7.4w	L.70	DribingBi Asteroid	AqursFace	2nd ov,ptk,ctr 2nd-6	
26 Sep/25	10Phl	fst7 <sup>50</sup>	27	:563	1:232	1:521	NW15000	13000	4	2 <sup>2</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>2</sup>	2 <sup>2</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	CoCallahn	JeCullphr	272	29	28	28	1:521	95	+8.7w	L6.10	Asteroid ShiYnion	TkeACrms	-7	
16 Sep/25	11Phl	fst6 <sup>80</sup>	281	:564	1:253	1:54	Qua	25000	2	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	CoCallahn	JeCullphr	282	28	28	28	1:54			Lrb	Asteroid OnceHnAlI	Finite	-7	
7 July/25	7PRC	fst8 <sup>40</sup>	27	:56	1:233	1:523	Opm	25000	3	5 <sup>8</sup>	5 <sup>3</sup>	5 <sup>4</sup>	7 <sup>6</sup>	7 <sup>3</sup>	BrRanger	JeCullphr	283	28	27	29	1:532	94		L5.10	BigBoxHnV	ByTheBook	MnngEdtn	-7

### 2 BLACKHAWK ZETTE (L) 51:53.3 (5/8) \$4,495

b h 4, by Cantab Hall, Zette Starlet by Credit Winner  
J L Sadowsky LLC, Bonita Springs, FL

Last 5 Sts -\$20,530

1:55.1 YR  
1:53.3 PeD 5/8

25 YR 14 4 3 4 \$81,120 25 Tot 21 4 5 2 \$94,400  
24 YR 0 0 0 0 -Life 24 17 10 5 2 \$264,879  
23 YR 0 0 0 0 -Life 42 15 9 7 \$369,479

### 20-1 G. Brennan 1618-226-247-216 (140)

R. Baggett Jr. 40-6-9-7 (150)

Br - Cozette M Mc Avoy, PA

13 Nov/25	8YR	fst4 <sup>30</sup>	28	:573	1:27	1:562	NW20291L5	23000	1	1hd	1hd	1hd	1no	32	JoStrattn	RoBggttJr	28	29	29	29	1:564	80	-1.3w	L.38	GoldnRain MnAmr	BlckhwkZ	Ld,batid,foes,trot In-8	
6 Nov/25	8YR	fst4 <sup>30</sup>	28	:574	1:264	1:551	nm20101L5	23000	8	8 <sup>9</sup>	8 <sup>11</sup>	7 <sup>6</sup>	7 <sup>7</sup>	6 <sup>7</sup>	JoStrattn	RoBggttJr	294	30	28	28	1:563	80	+1.2w	L10.90	MsspiStrmShiAnuMnAmr		Trail,dul,cvr no bid-8	
24 Oct/25	6YR	fst5 <sup>20</sup>	273	:57	1:253	1:552	NW1576L5	21000	2	1 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>2</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	JoStrattn	RoBggttJr	273	29	28	28	1:552	87	+2.5w	L.60	BlackhwkZ NoDrmPls	BlackTBsh	Ld,won safely-8	
17 Oct/25	5YR	fst5 <sup>50</sup>	284	:584	1:273	1:563	NW11051L5	19000	2	1 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>2</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	2no	JoStrattn	RoBggttJr	284	29	29	29	1:556	81	+0.6w	L.43	MyMarPetBlckhwkZ	MzmsRd	Ld,dug In,tul beat-8	
10 Oct/25	4YR	fst5 <sup>70</sup>	282	:58	1:262	1:544	NW15721L5	21000	3	3 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>3</sup>	JoStrattn	RoBggttJr	29	29	28	28	1:552	85	+7.8w	L4.79	AustrHnV	StrtGosp	BlackhwkZ	Sat,ang In,even-7
3 Oct/25	2YR	fst6 <sup>60</sup>	273	:57	1:254	1:544	NW15000	21000	1	1 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>3</sup>	1no	3 <sup>3</sup>	JoStrattn	RoBggttJr	273	29	28	28	1:551	88	+7.6w	L2.21	LtsRghtsNymeria	BlckhwkZ	Ld,dug In,ovrtln In-6	
26 Sep/25	7YR	fst7 <sup>30</sup>	28	:573	1:262	1:55	NW20471L5	25000	3	4 <sup>5</sup>	4 <sup>4</sup>	4 <sup>4</sup>	4 <sup>4</sup>	3 <sup>2</sup>	JoStrattn	RoBggttJr	29	29	28	28	1:552	86	+0.5w	L2.77	YockGkemp	GldnRn	BlckhwkZ	Out,ang In,stay-8
18 Sep/25	10Phl	fst7 <sup>80</sup>	272	:571	1:25	1:531	NW15000	13000	5	5 <sup>8</sup>	5 <sup>3</sup>	5 <sup>4</sup>	5 <sup>4</sup>	5 <sup>2</sup>	JoAhle	RoBggttJr	29	29	27	27	1:543	83	+0.8w	L2.80	ChBambino	SprDnCor	Howlinghtm	-6

### 3 PERICULUM 51:49.3 (1) \* \$76,264

b h 6, by Muscle Hill, Amour Heiress by Cantab Hall  
Bnxtion Medical Inc, Matawan, NJ; Holly Lane Stud East LTD, Vero Beach, FL

Last 5 Sts -\$392,500

\*1:49.3 M1  
\*1:50.4 Wbs 7/8

25 YR 1 0 0 0 \$0 25 Tot 11 5 5 0 \*\$88,902  
24 YR 1 0 0 0 \*\$250,000 24 Tot 17 6 4 3 \*\$821,084  
23 YR 0 0 0 0 -Life 61 16 13 8 \*\$119,298

### 7-5 S. Zeron 510-70-72-79 (137)

M. Melander 16-2-5-3 (125)

Br - Order By Stable, SD

15 Nov/25	10M1	gd <sup>490</sup>	271	:552	1:233	1:51	D-FanD																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																								
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### 4 QUEEN OF ALL (L) 51:52.3 (5/8) \$6,056

b m 7, by Swan For All, Ecstatic by Self Possessed  
William A Hartt, Carmel, ME

Last 5 Sts -\$28,860

1:55 YR  
1:54.4 YR

25 YR 27 6 4 5 \$163,520 25 Tot 27 6 4 5 \*\$163,520  
24 YR 26 4 3 8 \$157,310 24 Tot 28 4 3 8 \*\$157,310  
23 YR 8 1 0 0 \$266,600 Life 142 29 24 33 \$834,025

### 20-1 A. Siegelman 1347-97-151-177 (072)

L. Hudson 288-28-37-45 (097)

Br - Marlin E Eash, IN

14 Nov/25	1YR	fst4 <sup>40</sup>	284	:581	1:271	1:561	Qua	39000	4	4 <sup>9</sup>	4 <sup>5</sup>	4 <sup>5</sup>	4 <sup>7</sup>	4 <sup>3</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	303	28	29	29	1:573			Lrb	StPincho	BlsmoFace	FadewyHnV	-5
2 Oct/25	4YR	fst7 <sup>30</sup>	28	:574	1:26	1:544	Inv	39000	4	1 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>2</sup>	2hd	3 <sup>3</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	28	29	28	29	1:55	89	+7.4w	L1.75	EteralitHnV	FlshKrn	QnOAI	2wd,bf 1/4,ovrtln-5
26 Sep/25	3YR	fst7 <sup>30</sup>	28	:574	1:26	1:544	FM INV	39000	4	1 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>2</sup>	2hd	3 <sup>3</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	283	29	29	29	1:55	89	+0.5w	L68.71	UpYD	SonyPrt	GhstlyCs	11,Took bk,rail no bid-10
13 Sep/25	7YR	fst7 <sup>60</sup>	271	:561	1:251	1:541	D-RM TROT G2	200000	4	6 <sup>7</sup>	7 <sup>8</sup>	7 <sup>7</sup>	8 <sup>6</sup>	6 <sup>6</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	284	29	28	29	1:56	83	+2.5w	L16.70	StPincho	DribingBi	QnOAI	2nd ov,ang In,stay-7
4 Sep/25	8YR	fst7 <sup>20</sup>	28	:573	1:263	1:553	Inv	39000	3	4 <sup>3</sup>	4 <sup>4</sup>	4 <sup>2</sup>	4 <sup>2</sup>	3 <sup>2</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	284	29	28	29	1:56	83	-2.3w	L9.50	Antogoni	QueenOAI	DireStrs	Rode rail,clear 2nd-6
28 Aug/25	4YR	fst7 <sup>10</sup>	274	:572	1:253	1:541	Inv	39000	2	3 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>3</sup>	4 <sup>2</sup>	4 <sup>2</sup>	3 <sup>2</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	282	29	28	29	1:561	86	-2.3w	L5.00	TipsyMoni	QueenOAI	HfFlshKrn	3rd ov,dull,cvtrot-6
21 Aug/25	3YR	fst6 <sup>90</sup>	28	:573	1:262	1:554	FM INV	39000	6	6 <sup>7</sup>	6 <sup>7</sup>	5 <sup>3</sup>	6 <sup>3</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	292	29	28	29	1:56	83	+1.4w	L1.45	StPincho	BlckhwkZ	KhsnRd	2nd ov,ang In,handy-6
14 Aug/25	4YR	fst6 <sup>50</sup>	281	:582	1:27	1:563	FM INV	39000	5	5 <sup>6</sup>	5 <sup>6</sup>	5 <sup>3</sup>	4 <sup>3</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	AuSieglmn	LaHudson	292	30	28	29	1:563	81	+0.3w	L3.00	QnOAI	DmrTkt	HfFlshKrn	2nd ov,ang In,handy-6

### 5 ARI FERRARI (L) 51:50.1 (1) \$7,648

b h 5, by Walner, Dream Child by Muscle Hill  
Kenneth E Jacobs, Baldwinville, NY

Last 5 Sts -\$21,450

1:50.1 M1  
1:52.2 OaG 5/8

25 YR 5 3 0 0 \$21,450 25 Tot 11 2 1 1 \$84,131  
24 YR 7 4 2 0 \$231,500 24 Tot 15 7 2 1 \*\$325,250  
23 YR 2 0 2 0 \$400,000 Life 56 15 14 5 \*\$1,199,562

### 9-2 J. Bartlett 1494-508-259-207 (340)

T. Alagna 9-1-1-0 (111)

Br - M Biasuzzi Stable Inc, FL

8 Nov/25	2M1	fst <sup>640</sup>	274	:554	1:244	1:522	Qua
30 Oct/25	8YR	gd <sup>610</sup>	28	:572	1:253	1:541	Inv
9 Oct/25	2M1	fst <sup>550</sup>	29	:572	1:254	1:54	Qua
13 Sep/25	7YR	fst <sup>760</sup>	271	:561	1:251	2:232	D-RM TP
28 Aug/25	4YR	fst <sup>710</sup>	274	:572	1:253	1:541	Inv
14 Aug/25	7YR	fst <sup>780</sup>	28	:57	1:252	1:542	Inv
7 Aug/25	8YR	fst <sup>760</sup>	273	:563	1:251	1:561	Inv



# Boyd eyes NJSDF success at Big M

By Ken Weingartner

Braxten Boyd, who has already set a career high for purses this season and is approaching his best for wins, will look to remain on a roll when he drives in three of the four New Jersey Standardbred Development Fund finals for 2-year-old trotters and pacers Saturday at the Meadowlands.

Boyd will sit behind trotting colt American Power (5-2 on the morning line) for trainer Marcus Melander and pacing filly Wave Dancer (9-2) for Linda Toscano in two of the night's three \$60,000 NJSDF finals. He also will drive Everlast Sting Deo for Travis Alexander in the \$48,000 final for male pacers that will go as a non-wagering event prior to the 14-race pari-mutuel card.

American Power, a son of Walner-Ariana G, has been paired with Boyd on one previous occasion, which resulted in a 1:55 victory in the first leg of the NJSDF on Nov. 7. For the year, American Power has hit the board in seven of 11 races, with three wins and \$64,060 in earnings. His three victories have come in his past five starts and include a 1:53 1/5 triumph in a division of the Grade 3 International Stallion Stakes on Oct. 3 at the Red Mile.

The colt, who finished seventh in the Valley Victory Stakes (G1) last week, has a mark of 1:53 – just outside the season's Top 10 for a 2-year-old male trotter – he set in winning a conditioned race at the Red Mile on Sept. 25. He will leave from post three Saturday.

"He's an extremely powerful horse," Boyd said. "He should have a big shot in there. He stepped up in class against some better ones last week, but I think he's back in where he fits very well. He raced super against this group last time, so hopefully we can get another performance like that."

"The first time I drove him, I learned some of his quirks. He needs to stay a little calmer early in the post parade, so I'll be more prepared. Hopefully, we can have some success again."

Lindy Living, who won last week's second leg of the NJSDF in 1:54 4/5 for driver Dexter Dunn and trainer Domenico Cecere, is the 2-1 morning-line favorite in the male trot final.

In the final for filly pacers, Wave Dancer is the third choice behind two-time NJSDF leg winner Whoa Black Betty (5-2, Yannick Gingras, Ron Burke) and Car Keys (3-1, Dexter Dunn, Chris Ryder).

Boyd has driven Wave Dancer in her past four races, picking up her maiden-breaking win in a Kindergarten division on Oct. 24 before finishing a strong-closing fourth from post nine in the Kindergarten final (G3) a week later. The daughter of Perfect Sting-Making Waves was sixth in the first leg of the NJSDF and second, beaten by a neck, in the second.

"We had some success the first time I drove her," Boyd said. "Linda said she had been working on her and that she thought she would be better, and she was much better. She's kind of continuously been getting better every week. She raced super last week. Hopefully, I can give her a good trip and pounce at the right time."

In the pre-card final for male pacers, Boyd will aim for his third win with Everlast Sting Deo. The two captured the Home Grown Pace and Renaissance final in August at the Meadowlands. After making Grand Circuit starts at Tioga Downs and Pocono Downs at Mohegan Pennsylvania, the son of Perfect Sting-Little Miss K was reunited with Boyd for the NJSDF and posted a third and a second in the preliminary rounds.

"He's had a lot of success in those races at the Meadowlands during the summer, and I've been lucky enough to drive him at the Meadowlands for many of his races," Boyd said. "He raced super the other day. Hopefully, he can give us an even better performance."

So far this season, the 25-year-old Boyd has driven horses to \$4.76 million in purses and won 316 races – only 21 shy of his career high. During the summer, he notched graded stakes victories in the Meadowlands Pace and Joe Gerrity Jr. Memorial.

"It's definitely the best year of my career so far," said Boyd, who ranks 19th in wins and 23rd in purses among drivers in North America. "I've been very blessed to drive some good horses, and good horses make your job a lot easier. You don't know really when (these opportunities) are going to come around again, so when they come up, you've got to try to make the most of them. I'm very thankful."

The non-betting NJSDF race is scheduled for 6 p.m. (EST) at the Meadowlands, followed at 6:20 p.m. by the main card. Custom, a daughter of Walner-Goldy Mary FR, is the 2-1 morning-line favorite for driver Johnathan Ahle and trainer Per Engblom in the NJSDF final for trotting fillies, which is race three. The male trotters will go in race five and the pacing fillies in race nine.



## HANDICAPPER'S CORNER

At DRF Harness we strive to provide the best handicapping information in the sport. Each week we'll use this space to bring you some of our handicappers' best bets and value plays. Use this information as one of your tools when wagering or head to your nearest ADW and simply make a win bet.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20**

### RACE 1

(3) ITHACA HANOVER was competitive on the big track in Kentucky and won here last year three classes higher. New connections may've picked up a bargain at just \$5,400 via online auction.

-Derick Gwerner



**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21**

### RACE 1

(6) D A BLACK BEAUTY was airborne in the late stages of the mile to just miss out by a nose. It was her second start of her career, and her first since June and she should be even sharper in this spot; top call.

-John Rallis



**WOODBINE**  
MOHAWK PARK

### RACE 7

(3) PERICULUM returns to Yonkers for the first time since being stuck in traffic in the International Trot. Melander trainee is a legit Aged Trotter of the Year candidate and is hard to look past from this spot as the deserving favorite.

-Matt Rose



**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22**

### RACE 7

(6) ODDS ON WILDFIRE makes his second career start on a mile track and the last time he lost by a neck in 1:49 1/5. Three-year-old likes to win; potential value.

-Giwner



### FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis

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

Meadowlands Analysis

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

Yonkers Analysis

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

**DHP PPS**

**HARNESS EYE PPS**

**TRACKMASTER PPS**

**FREE PPS**



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



# NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

## OAK GROVE TROTTING DERBY & OAKS SLOT WINNERS ANNOUNCED

22 automatic slot winners have now been finalized with impressive weekend performances by Grade 1 Stakes winners Diabolic Hill (Valley Victory) and All Time Trot S (Goldsmith Maid). The Road to the Oak Grove Trotting Derby and Road to the Oak Grove Trotting Oaks have been established to reward exceptional two-year-old trotting performances and to enrich the recently announced \$500,000 Oak Grove Trotting Derby and \$300,000 Oak Grove Trotting Oaks.

From the 24 “win and you’re in” races, 22 unique winners have now been determined, and each will earn a fully paid, automatic spot in the corresponding elimination race for the 2026 Oak Grove Trotting Derby and Oak Grove Trotting Oaks (with all pre-entry and starting fees covered by the race sponsors). The automatic qualifying races and the 2025 respective race winners are identified below. These impressive two-year-old champions have collective earnings of over \$8.5 Million this racing season.

### Road to the Oak Grove Trotting Derby

#### Trotting Derby Automatic Qualifiers

Breeders Crown 2YO Trot  
Mohawk Million  
Peter Haughton  
William Wellwood  
Valley Victory  
Kentucky Sire Stakes Championship Series  
Indiana Sire Stakes Championship  
Ohio Sire Stakes Championship (Scarlet)  
New Jersey Sire Stakes Championship  
New York Sire Stakes Championship  
Pennsylvania Sire Stakes Championship  
Ontario Sire Stakes Championship (Gold)

#### 2025 Race Winner

Spencer Hanover  
Apex  
Apex  
Arbonne  
Diabolic Hill  
Endurance  
Premier Bluebird  
Big Ranger  
Apex  
AI  
Dublin Hanover  
Strobe Lite

### Road to the Oak Grove Trotting Oaks

#### Trotting Derby Automatic Qualifiers

Breeders Crown 2YO Filly Trot  
Jim Doherty  
Peaceful Way  
Kentuckiana Stallion Management  
Goldsmith Maid  
Kentucky Sire Stakes Championship Series  
Indiana Sire Stakes Championship  
Ohio Sire Stakes Championship (Scarlet)  
New Jersey Sire Stakes Championship  
New York Sire Stakes Championship  
Pennsylvania Sire Stakes Championship  
Ontario Sire Stakes Championship (Gold)

#### 2025 Race Winner

Storybook Love  
Atlantic Summer  
Sugar Packet  
Nezuko Kamado S  
All Time Trot S  
Country Glide  
For Dayze  
Setyoursightshigh  
Emmas Mystery CCL  
Sharp Seven  
Ginger Tree Lex  
Bingo Night

\*Any automatic slot winner that has won more than one qualifying race is limited to only one spot for the eliminations.

The elimination races, scheduled for Monday, May 4, 2026, will have a purse of \$50,000 for the Oak Grove Trotting Derby and \$30,000 for the Oak Grove Trotting Oaks. Both the elimination races and the championship finals will be limited to a maximum of nine, with all competitors starting on the gate.

The Oak Grove Trotting Derby and Oak Grove Trotting Oaks are open events for all eligible three-year-olds that have met all stakes conditions, including payment of all fees. For the inaugural 2026 event, the pre-entry and starting fees for each race will be as follows:

Race	3/15/26	4/15/26	Elim Fee
Oak Grove Trotting Derby	\$500	\$500	\$1,500 US
Oak Grove Trotting Oaks \$500	\$500	\$500	\$1,500 US

\*no starting fee for Finals

Additional details, including final race conditions, staking details, wagering menus, hospitality offerings and charitable beneficiaries, will be announced in the coming months.

-edited release (Oak Grove Media)

## HESTON BLUE CHIP TO STAND AT SUGAR VALLEY IN 2026

Winbak Farm is proud to announce that Heston Blue Chip will stand at Sugar Valley Farm in Delaware, Ohio starting in 2026.

“Heston Blue Chip will be a solid addition to the Ohio program,” said

Joe McLead, Sugar Valley Farm co-owner. “I am excited to work with Winbak Farm and all of his connections.”

[READ MORE](#)

## NIJINSKY WILL STAND AT WINBAK FARM OF NEW YORK

Winbak Farm of New York is proud to introduce North America Cup winner Nijinsky, p, 2, 1:53 4/5s; 3, 1:47 3/5 -'24 (\$1,486,907) to the 2026 lineup.

“Nijinsky has taken us on an incredible ride with everything he accomplished on the racetrack,” said trainer Anthony Beaton. “He’s an exceptionally gifted athlete who showed determination, toughness and heart every time he stepped foot on the track.”

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## DIAMOND CREEK UNVEILS 2026 STALLION ROSTER AND STUD FEES

Building on the momentum of an exceptional 2025 season, Diamond Creek Farm today (11/18) unveiled its 2026 stallion roster and stud fees. Featured are two notable new stallions and several fresh partnerships that further strengthen an already exceptional lineup, underscoring the farm’s commitment to breeding excellence.

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## HANOVER ANNOUNCES 2026 STALLION FEES; SUPER CHAPTER JOINS ROSTER

On Tuesday (Nov. 18) Hanover Shoe Farms announced its stud fees for 2026 and the addition of Super Chapter to its stallion roster.

Captaintreacherous - \$30,000 / Captain Corey - \$15,000 / Greenshoe - \$10,000 / Papi Rob Hanover - \$10,000 / Sig Sauer \$8,000 – (under Dr. J Stallion Management) / Stay Hungry - \$6,000 / Volume Eight - \$6,000 / International Moni - \$4,000 / Tall Dark Stranger - TBA.

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## NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR FAIR ISLAND FARM CARETAKER OF THE YEAR

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2025 Caretaker of the Year. The award, sponsored by Art Zubrod and Leah Cheverie’s Fair Island Farm in conjunction with the United States Harness Writers Association (USHWA), recognizes the unsung heroes of the sport: The caretakers who maintain the health and welfare of the horses on a daily basis.

Any caretaker working for any stable or farm in North America is eligible to be honored as the Fair Island Farm Caretaker of the Year. All that is needed to nominate is an email that consists of 200 WORDS MINIMUM from an individual or group detailing the skills and special qualities of the caretaker.

The Fair Island Farm Caretaker of the Year will receive a cash prize of \$2,500 as well as transportation costs to the USHWA Dan Patch Awards banquet in Orlando, Fla., on Sunday night, Feb. 22, 2026, where he or she will be recognized and presented with a trophy. The winner will also enjoy a two-night stay at Rosen Shingle Creek.

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## HEATHER WILDER VOTED AS USHWA’S MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Heather Wilder, a longtime horsewoman and communicator who serves as the president of the Keystone Chapter of the United States Harness Writers Association, has been selected as the Member of the Year by USHWA in a poll of past winners of this award.

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## MEADOWLANDS NOVEMBER HANDICAPPING CONTEST THIS FRIDAY

The last chance to qualify for the \$10K Meadowlands Racetrack Handicapping Contest is this Friday, November 21. The top two finishers in Friday’s contest take the final two spots in the invite only \$10,000 tournament on December 13 (20 total players).

There is no entry fee (a \$100 live money bankroll is required) for players, and the prize pool, guaranteed at \$1,000 and funded by the Meadowlands Racetrack, will be paid out to the top four finishers.

Click [here](#) for more details.