

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026

Bidding *adieu* to Fanning



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman ✕ [BergmanJay](#)

When Moira Fanning, the co-CEO of the Hambletonian Society, told me early last year that she was retiring following the 2025 Breeders Crown I should have known better. Contacted earlier this week, Fanning still had some unfinished business and now suggested that by the end of this month her work will officially conclude.

Sort of.

"I'm going to the Prix d'Amerique," Fanning said on Monday. "I want to introduce Gunjan (Patel) to the officials in France."

Patel is taking over Fanning's role at the Hambletonian Society and it is only fitting that Fanning is going the extra mile, actually a few thousand, to complete the transition and assure that the structure within the Society remains strong and fluid.

The Prix d'Amerique is Sunday, January 25 and perhaps a week later Fanning will be relieved, but whatever retirement is supposed to look like it's hard to be totally convinced those in the sport won't be seeing Moira Fanning.

"There are still a couple of projects that I'm working on," said Fanning, "So I could be going into the office maybe once a week to finish them up."

It's that kind of attention to detail that has exemplified Fanning's near 40-year association with the Hambletonian Society, working diligently behind the scenes to assure all the details were covered while presenting the Breeders Crown and Hambletonian races on an annual basis.

There are those that get to watch these great

races annually without ever knowing some of inner workings of the Hambletonian Society. As someone fortunate enough to watch Fanning in action behind the scenes, first in the Breeders Crown series and then later with the Hambletonian, it was amazing how many hats she wore and how incredibly she put complicated scenar-



FILE PHOTO

Moira Fanning hung out with harness racing royalty like Moni Maker during her long career.

ios together. In the early years of the Breeders Crown, races were contested at different tracks on different weekends with what would have to be considered a skeleton staff. No worries, Fanning

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Darin Zoccali: Handle being washed away and the industry has no umbrella

Redén pair seeks success in 2026 Prix d'Amerique

Tritton sends out new Big M arrival and awaits new purchase

On The Backstretch: Profile of Southwind Farms' GM Laura Young

Mr Popularity: Take All Comers a favorite of all who know him

Best Bets & Analysis

USHWA media awards announced; Living Horse Hall of Fame results released; McNair reaches 5,000 wins

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

**Advertise
with**

 **DRF**
HARNESS DIGEST



**MULTIPLE
PLACEMENT
DISCOUNTS**

For more information or to place an ad, contact:



THE ULTIMATE HARNESS RACING SHOWDOWN



**PRIX D'AMÉRIQUE
LEGEND RACE**



PRIX D'AMÉRIQUE LEGEND RACE

25th Sunday
January

Paris-Vincennes Racecourse

See more on horseraces.pmu.fr



**TROTTEUR
FRANÇAIS**



was ever-present coordinating with some tracks that lacked the manpower to handle a major event and others that needed extra support.

It's somewhat ironic that Fanning started out in this sport as a caretaker and she will leave it full time in a similar capacity. Not lost on her or anyone that loves the sport of harness racing is keeping the lifeblood of the sport's history moving forward and seeing races like the Hambletonian and Breeders Crown continue to be showcases of the best we can offer. It is that commitment that helped guide Fanning through the years.

"If you ask me what I'm most proud of," said Fanning, "It's the longevity of races like the Hambletonian that's been going on for 100 years and the Breeders Crown that's going on for 40 years."

Keeping races alive is not an easy task and the Hambletonian Society has had to juggle many races in the last few decades for obvious reasons. "When you see the number of racetracks that have closed over the years you see how special it is that we've kept these great races and their rich history alive," said Fanning.

Ultimately preserving the breed has been the mission of the Hambletonian Society and perhaps now-retired CEO Tom Charters knew better than anyone that he had a gem when he offered employment to Moira Fanning in 1986.

"I was very lucky to be hired by two great men," Fanning said. "First Marv Bachrad at Brandywine hired me for the publicity department. I didn't even know how to type."

That minor hiccup didn't stop the late-Bachrad from recognizing talent and more meaningfully offering an enthusiastic young girl a chance.

"Then I got hired by Bill Fidati at Garden State," said Fanning. "I actually had two jobs at Garden State, one in the accounting department and the other operating the Matrix system that was brand new at the time."

Despite her lack of experience, Fanning had the interest and desire to learn along the way and that's likely what Charters saw when his secretary decided to leave her job.

"It wasn't any easy decision," Fanning said. "I loved working at a racetrack and I still do. I just loved everything about that."

Fortunately, Moira was able to discuss the opportunity with her husband Tom. "He was always great with sound advice," said Fanning. "He told me that racetracks aren't always around forever but that the Hambletonian Society would be."

So, despite taking a cut in pay and having to leave working at a racetrack, Fanning became more than a secretary to Tom Charters. Over time, much of the nuts and bolts that included staking other major races found Fanning at the lead. While Charters was the front man, Fanning incorporated her publicity skills in the backdrop and did her best to promote the sport in every way possible.

That's where the two of us crossed paths for the first time.

"There were a lot of good writers out there like Pohla Smith and Anne Doolin that deserved an opportunity to write and be rewarded," said Fanning, in essence paving the way for others to get recognition, much as both Bachrad and Fidati had done for her. Yet it was more than that. Offering different voices on the sport was a means of broadening coverage to the benefit of the industry.

For me, much of the work centered on chart calling and race coverage, including doing the morning line for many Breeders Crown races. There was always a sense when Fanning gathered a large group of writers to accompany her to Breeders Crown events that everything had to be perfect and those working along needed to elevate their games to at least approach Fanning's level of near perfection.

The importance of the Hambletonian Society's signature races has not been taken lightly and the message will live on.

"It's the owners that take care of all of the expenses," said Fanning. "That's why it's the most important part of our job to create the best experience we can for the owners through these major racing events."

While it may not be easy to ever replace a person with Fanning's talent, she is more than confident that great people are already in place to continue the Hambletonian Society's efforts for the next generations.

"Gunjan's background at Hanover Shoe Farms made her a great fit," said Fanning of the current co-CEO. "Nadia Tarnawa has taken over the staking responsibilities and really picked it up quickly."



JESSICA HALLETT PHOTO

While getting a lifetime achievement award from the Monticello-Goshen chapter of USHWA, Moira Fanning was flanked by her husband Tom (left) and daughters Veronica and Caroline.

Tarnawa is the wife of young driver Patrick Ryder. Those two will help support CEO and President John Campbell, who has left a glowing impression on Fanning.

"He's really been outstanding," said Fanning of the Hall of Famer Campbell, who transitioned perfectly from the sport's leading driver to the helm of the Hambletonian Society.

So, what's next for Fanning?

"I guess I'd like to get more sleep and do more reading," Fanning said, also hoping to perhaps spend a little extra time closer to her year-and-a-half old grandson Casey.

Here's wishing the best to one of the true champions of this sport.

WINBAK Farm

THE RIGHT 'CHOICE' FOR NEW YORK!




COURTLY CHOICE

p, 2, 1:53.1h; 3, 1:47.1 (\$1,345,754)

Art Major-Lady Ashlee Ann-Camtastic

- Sire of 2025 NY Sire Stakes Winners,
Courts On Fire, p, 3, 1:49.1s -'25 (\$460,265)
Fast Choice, p, 2, 1:50.3s -'24 (\$362,200)
Miss Genie Mae, p, 2, 1:55.3h -'25 (\$81,225)
Party Pumps, p, 2, 1:56.2h -'25 (\$77,102)
- Sire of 2025 NY Excelsior Final Winner,
Ima Perfect Choice, p, 3, 1:51.2s -'25 (\$221,154)
- Sire of 2025 NY Excelsior Winners,
Chanceoflightning, p, 3, 1:54.1f -'25 (\$212,955)
Silky Choice, p, 3, 1:51.1s -'25 (\$157,152)

Standing at Winbak Farm of New York for \$6,000

Click here for more information on Courtly Choice!

845.778.5421 / www.winbakfarm.com / stallions@winbakfarm.com

TACTICAL APPROACH

FIRST YEARLINGS THIS YEAR!



Winner of:
\$1 Million Hambletonian
Kentucky Futurity
Breeders Crown 3YO Trot
Carl Erskine Trot

**ONLY COLT (SINCE MUSCLE HILL) TO WIN HAMBO,
KY FUTURITY AND BREEDERS CROWN**

EARNINGS OF \$1,544,489

office@diamondcreekfarm.com
DiamondCreekFarm.com
717-638-7100



Stands at **Diamond Creek Pennsylvania**
by **Tactical Landing** out of Sarcy
2026 Stud Fee: **\$10,000**

Handle being washed away and the industry has no umbrella



AT THE TRACK

By Darin Zoccali ✕ [AtTheTrack7](https://www.drf.com/news/zoccali-at-the-track-7)

On the heels of a troublesome year for harness racing as it pertains to wagering handle, 2026 has not exactly gotten off to a great start.

Granted, there has been less racing these first couple of weeks compared to last year at this time. In fact, between the United States and Canada, there have been 78 fewer races run and 11 fewer racing programs contested than at this same point last year (as of January 20). Six of those racing programs can be attributed to the issue presently impacting Hawthorne's harness meet. Through the first three weeks of the year, handle in North America is down \$4.2 million, or six percent.

While that can certainly be attributed to less racing, it is important to note that January 2025 was down over 15 percent, or \$21.8 million. So these declines we are seeing this January are comparisons against steep declines last year, which to put it mildly, is not good.

My question is, why is there less racing? Not just compared to last year, which can be caused by cancellations and other issues, but why are tracks not running more this time of year?

Last Friday (January 16) there were two standardbred tracks in the United States that put forth a racing program. The Meadows raced at 12:45 PM and The Meadowlands raced at 6:20 PM. Woodbine-Mohawk and Western Fair conducted a racing program in Canada. Four years ago there were eight standardbred programs contested on this continent on the third Friday of the month.

Even more bizarre was last Thursday (January 15) where five racetracks had a racing program and the latest post time was 4:30 P.M. At one point, all five racetracks had races overlapping one another with no tracks other than the back-ends of the Dover Downs and Miami Valley programs being contested at night.

This is my concern. Did anyone look at the performance of standardbred racing last January and start a conversation of what went wrong and what should be done differently to reverse that trend? If you are looking for an excuse to point to – like fewer racing days – to justify no action being taken, I can tell you that through the first 30 days of January last year, there were four less programs held, and handle was still down over \$18 million. So, less content causing the decline was not an excuse.

This is a drum that I have been beating for quite some time. Perhaps I keep picking up my drumsticks because I don't see anyone else doing it. Standardbred racing is coming off a year that handle was down \$180 million between the United States and Canada. It was a trend that

lasted throughout the year. January was a huge culprit, down over \$21 million that month alone. Yet, somehow the calendar turned to 2026 and nothing has changed.

The Hoosier Park meet kicks off in a couple of weeks and after my conversation with Gabe Prewitt a couple months back, I am excited to see what they have in store for the industry. Prewitt and Hoosier seem to be leading the industry in their willingness to experiment and try to improve their racetrack's wagering performance.

This should come as no surprise to the industry as Prewitt's initiatives and efforts at Pompano Park yielded tremendous results. But Pompano's fate should be a cautionary tale for many of these racetracks. Despite the success Prewitt had at Pompano, it unfortunately was not enough to save the racetrack. A decoupling push based on the notion that the land is too valuable to conduct harness racing eventually succeeded and Pompano Park became a part of racing history but won't be a part of its future.

My question is, if that was the fate of Pompano Park, a track that had a resurgence in popularity and wagering dollars thanks to many of Prewitt's initiatives, how easy will it be for tracks who are headed in the opposite direction to suffer the same fate?

In thoroughbred racing there is a push to decouple Gulfstream Park and Tampa Bay Downs right now from their gaming revenue stream. How significant is that? The \$1.35 billion wagered on Gulfstream Park was equal to what was wagered on all standardbred tracks in the United States combined last year. That number was 75% of the total handle on standardbred racing in all of North America; one racetrack and that racetrack's future is in jeopardy.

I have heard plenty from those in leadership positions in the harness racing industry that there are state laws in place which dictates what can be done with gaming revenue from casinos at the racetracks. The industry is protected by those same laws, etc. Yet, 10 years ago I wrote an article on this very same topic (<https://www.drf.com/news/zoccali-harness-racing-needs-act-now-or-go-home>) and sadly little to nothing has changed over these past 10 years.

In that column I asked, where is racing's plan for the future? Where is its 401k, Roth-IRA or its savings account? Amazingly, harness racing still has nothing put aside for a rainy day.

I also mentioned in that column that at the time, the good news was harness racing, despite its poor form, was still seeing relatively flat handle performance. There was not a noticeable decline. Well, that has changed. The poor form has contributed to that change. The advent of legalized sports betting has contributed to that change.

It is 10 years later and harness racing somehow still doesn't seem to understand the urgency of this issue and if they do understand it, they are not acting upon it. Ten years ago I wrote that harness racing needed a plan for rainy day. Well, it's starting to pour in 2026.

Are You a Member?

Help support the effort to preserve and celebrate harness racing's history by joining the Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame



Membership levels start at just \$35!

Make your check payable to the: Harness Racing Museum and mail to: 240 Main St., Goshen, NY 10924 or [CLICK HERE](https://www.harnessmuseum.com) to join online at: [harnessmuseum.com](https://www.harnessmuseum.com)

28TH ANNUAL STALLION AUCTION TO BENEFIT NEW VOCATIONS

ONLINE AT ONGAIT.COM • FEBRUARY 3-5 | ENDS AT 2:00 PM ET

OPEN-ENDED FORMAT • ALL BIDS IN U.S. DOLLARS

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS TO EACH OF OUR DONORS

BREEDINGS CONTINUE TO BE SOUGHT AND ADDED DAILY

TO DONATE A BREEDING: DOT@HORSEADOPTION.COM

DELAWARE

He's Watching	Eric Cherry	6,000
Highalator	Highalator Partners	3,500

INDIANA

Best In Show	Richard Young	3,500
Helpisontheway	Wiesman Farms	4,500
JK Endofanera	Bluestone Farms	7,500
Jujubee	John Erdner	4,000
Loubet	Cornerstone Stock Farm	4,000
Odds On Equuleus	Odds On Racing	2,000
Ponda Warrior	Jay Hochstetler	3,000
Rebuff	Bluestone Farms	7,500
You Know You Do	Premier Acres	4,000

KENTUCKY

Boston Red Rocks	Rick Berks	4,000
Cuatro De Julio	Cuatro's Faith Farm	4,000

MARYLAND

Dapper Dude	David Cohen	1,500
Wearinmysixshooter	Michael Hall	4,000

MINNESOTA

Capozzo	Mike Ribant	2,000
Gulf Shores	Cornerstone Stock Farm	2,000
Kings Country	Cornerstone Stock Farm	2,000
Pilot Discretion	Premier Acres	2,000

NEW JERSEY

Ecurie D	Al Libfeld	5,000
Muscle Hill **	Tom Pontone	private

NEW YORK

Courtly Choice	Blake Macintosh	6,000
Crazy Wow	Crawford Farms	4,000
Met's Hall	Natalia Strom	5,000
Six Pack	Knutsson/JGural/DeoVolente	5,000
So Surreal	Jon Kurnit	2,000

OHIO

Branquinho	CT Stables	2,000
Bring On The Beach	OSU ATI Equine	1,500
Captain Kirk	Greg Luther	4,000
Dancin Yankee	Burke Racing Stable	2,500
Fear The Dragon	Powerplay Farms	3,000
Heart of Chewbacca	Dennis Owen	2,500
Mission Accepted	Knox Services	2,500
Racing Hill	Kevin Greenfield	3,500
Rodeo Romeo	Hagemeyer Farms	1,500
Southwind Ozzie	Vince Ali & Alma Lafelice	3,000
Summa Cum Laude *	Summa Cum Laude owners	6,000
Stockade Seelster	Cornerstone Stock Farm	4,000

Uncle Peter	Kevin Greenfield	4,000
Well Said	J.Snyder & SugarValley Farm	4,000
What The Hill	OSU ATI Equine	4,000
Western Fame	Cool Winds & Harold Bauder	2,500
Western Terror **	Hagemeyer Farms	2,500
Western Vintage	Powerplay Farms	1,500

PENNSYLVANIA

Bettor's Wish	C.Ryder & Bettors Wish Syn	6,000
Greenshoe	Hanover Shoe Farms	10,000
International Moni	Winbak Farm	4,000
Swift As A Shadow	Delaware Valley University	1,500
Stay Hungry	Bradley Grant	6,000
Tall Dark Stranger	Hanover Shoe Farms	5,000
Volume Eight	Joe Sbrocco	6,000

ONTARIO

Big Jim	Darlene Carr	5,500 CDN
Bulldog Hanover *	Seelster Fms & Bulldog Syn	15,000 US
Cattlewash *	Tara Hills & Cattlewash Syn	10,000 US
Lawless Shadow	Dr. Ian Moore	4,500 CDN
My MVP	Deo Volente Farms LLC	4,000 CDN
Trixtion	Deo Volente Farms LLC	5,000 CDN

INTERNATIONAL

Fabulous Wood ***	Cauto's Faith Farm
-------------------	--------------------

* Book Full & Closed

** Farm breeding only

*** Frozen Semen available at Rood and Riddle

How to Bid: Bid at OnGait.com 12:00 pm Tues. Feb. 3, through 2:00 pm Thurs. Feb. 5, in an Open Ended Format. **All bids are in US dollars.** Minimum raise is \$100. Winning bidders owe a refundable 10%, min. \$100, deposit. Balance is due to New Vocations with a live foal. Winning bidders will be charged \$50 by OnGait for each breeding purchased. **(Please do not bid for mares over 20 years old, ones that have been barren two consecutive years, ones due to foal after May 1, or those that are already booked.)** FMI: (937) 205-4667 or email dot@horseadoption.com NewVocations.org



REDÉN PAIR SEEK SUCCESS IN 2026 PRIX D'AMERIQUE

By Greg Reinhart

One of the most anticipated days on the harness racing calendar comes up on Sunday (January 25) when the Prix d'Amerique takes place at Vincennes Racecourse in Paris. Eighteen of Europe's top trotters are set to compete over 2,700 meters (about a mile and two-thirds) and from a standing start.

The lead-up to this year's Prix d'Amerique saw two of the main contenders taken out of consideration for the race. First, back-to-back champion Idao de Tillard saw his dream of a PDA triple ended due to colic surgery in November, and then Jushua Tree, the victor in two of the local preps - the Prix de Bretagne and the Prix de Bourgogne - suffered a hairline fracture in one of his legs and was withdrawn on Monday (January 19). Jushua Tree's scratch was part of a double whammy for the father/son duo of Jean-Michel and Nicolas Bazire, as Jean-Michel was hurt in a training accident just prior to that, which meant Nicolas was slated to drive Jushua Tree.

As for the horses that are scheduled to line up on Sunday, trainer Daniel Redén and owner Stall Zet have a 1-2 punch of Epic Kronos and Francesco Zet entered. Epic Kronos, a 6-year-old stallion by Muscle Hill, broke stride in the Prix de Bretagne at Vincennes on November 16 but came back to win the Prix Tenor de Baune in a stakes-record clocking of 1'11"2 (mile rate of 1:54 3/5) on December 21.

"In his last start he was absolutely fantastic," said Anders Malmrot, Team Manager for Stall Zet. "Epic Kronos really likes racing at Vincennes and is a tough horse that can do it by himself. As a 4-year-old he won the UET Derby at Vincennes and Daniel has been aiming for Prix d'Amerique for a long time with this horse."

"For us, Epic is more of a sure thing on Vincennes, but on a good day both our horses are possible winners with some racing luck."

Meanwhile, Francesco Zet prepped for the Prix d'Amerique in Sweden, with his last appearance a winning one in the Group 2 Gert Lindberg's race at Solvalla on December 26. An 8-year-old stallion by Father Patrick, Francesco Zet will be making his Prix d'Amerique debut.

"Francesco Zet did a nice job in his last start at Solvalla, even though the competitors were not at top level. He was calm and did exactly what Daniel wanted the whole day," Malmrot commented. "After that he's been super in training and everything is just the way we want before Sunday."

"Last time he raced at Vincennes he was a little bit nervous, but now he feels different in behavior and hopefully everything will work out fine."

Francesco Zet will be adding a new driver on Sunday as Benjamin Rochard takes over from Orjan Kihlström. The connections did the same thing with Epic Kronos in his preps as Paul-Philippe Ploquin steered him both times and will be at the controls again in the Prix d'Amerique.

"This year when our horses have raced in France we used French drivers because the competition at Vincennes is so tough and you need to know when and where to be aggressive or not," noted Malmrot. "When we got the possibility to use two of the best drivers in France, we took a shot at them."

The main competition for the Redén/Stall Zet pair looks like Go On Boy, who was third in this race, won the final of the Elitopp last year and prepped with a second behind Jushua Tree in the Prix de Bourgogne on December 28. Josh Power, fourth in the 2025 Prix d'Amerique and the victor in the Prix de Bretagne on November 16, could also be in the mix, as could mare Inmarosa, who captured the Prix du Bourbonnais on December 7 and was third in the Prix de Bourgogne.

"The Prix d'Amerique is always a tough race to win and the French horses have been training and racing for this the whole winter," Malmrot said. "This year the race had some setbacks with two time Prix



DANIEL REDÉN PHOTO

Francesco Zet has earned over \$2.5 million (USD) during his career.

d'Amerique winner Idao de Tillard injured and this week the same happened with Jushua Tree, so it's an open race with lots of potential winners. In my opinion the toughest to beat are Go On Boy, Josh Power and Inmarosa."

Ten races are scheduled to take place at Vincennes in total on Sunday, with the Prix d'Amerique on tap in Race 5. Post time for the opener is 11:55 a.m. Paris time or 5:55 a.m. (EST). The Prix d'Amerique is scheduled for 4:20 p.m. local time.

FIELD FOR THE 2026 PRIX D'AMERIQUE - 10:20 AM (ET) SUNDAY

1		HARMONY DU RABUTIN		D. BEKAERT	
2		IROISE DE LA NOE		E. RAFFIN	
3		KING OPERA		W. BIGEON	
4		J'AIME LE FOOT		A. LHERETE	
5		IMMORTAL DOC		B. GOOP	
6		EPIC KRONOS		P.P.H. PLOQUIN	
7		KEEP GOING		M. MOTTIER	
8		BULLET THE BLUESKY		D. WAJERSTEN	
9		LOVINO BELLO		CL. DUVALDESTIN	
10		FRANK GIO		M. ABRIVARD	
11		JOSH POWER		S. ERNAULT	
12		JUST LOVE YOU		A. ABRIVARD	
13		HOKKAIDO JIEL		F. NIVARD	
14		INMAROSA		LEO ABRIVARD	
15		KOCTEL DU DAIN		D. THOMAIN	
16		HOOKEER BERRY		D. BONNE	
17		FRANCESCO ZET		B. ROCHARD	
18		GO ON BOY		R. DERIEUX	

Tritton sends out new Big M arrival and awaits his next purchase

By Jay Bergman

If there was any question about whether harness racing is a global sport or not, trainer Shane Tritton has answered that in a positive manner. Tritton unveils another import, this one with roots in Ireland and Great Britain, on Saturday night at The Meadowlands. Rhyds Dude GB is not your typical pacer coming from the British Isles, but Tritton believes he'll fit quite nicely first in East Rutherford and perhaps beyond in North America this year.

"Most of the top horses that come over are ones that were top 2- and 3-year-olds," said Tritton when asked about the 6-year-old son of See And Ski that makes his North American debut in Saturday's fourth race, a non-winners of \$7,500 class over the mile track. "When we went over there last year Lauren drove him in an Open race that she won."

The Tritton's liked the horse and ownership agreed to have him come to North America once the racing season had concluded.

"In his qualifiers he really never got out of first gear just chasing one horse," said Tritton of the January 10 and January 16 qualifying miles at The Meadowlands where the horse would get acclimated to the mile track for the first two times in a career that has spanned 21 starts with 8 victories. On January 16, Rhyds Dude GB flashed 27-second speed pacing to a career-best 1:53 3/5 mile in the process.

"I think he's a horse that has the potential to get better and become a solid horse at The Meadowlands," said Tritton. "He's in with a good group of horses for his first try."

Rhyds Dude GB drew post three in a nine-horse field that offers some very classy horses and may be the best field this import has faced in his career.

"He's a horse that can take a lot of air," said Tritton. "He's a bit lazy but can finish strongly."

It will be interesting to see just how Rhyds Dude GB handles the big track and competition with Shane's wife Lauren down for the drive, hoping to replicate the victory last August overseas.

Tritton, who currently oversees a stable of roughly 30 horses, is looking forward to the arrival of a top-class pacer from Down Under. "Aroda N is supposed to arrive today (January 21)," said Tritton. "He's a quality horse that should be able to compete in the top classes at Yonkers," Tritton said of the son of Art Major that will be considered a 7-year-old when his racing career starts in North America.

Having raced just over a month ago in Australia against the top horses, Aroda N could prove to be a Borgata-type horse if he can acclimate quickly to his new environment.

Speaking of the Borgata, Tritton is not ruling out the prospects of It's A Me Mario making a comeback in this year's edition. The now 6-year-old



DERICK GIWNER

Lauren (left) and Shane Tritton brought over Irish-bred Always B Colour last year and on Saturday they have Great Britain-bred Rhydes Dude making his debut at The Meadowlands.

son of American Ideal has not raced since capturing a leg of the Borgata at Yonkers on April 7 of 2025.

"He broke a coffin bone," said Tritton. "We've given him a long time to recover."

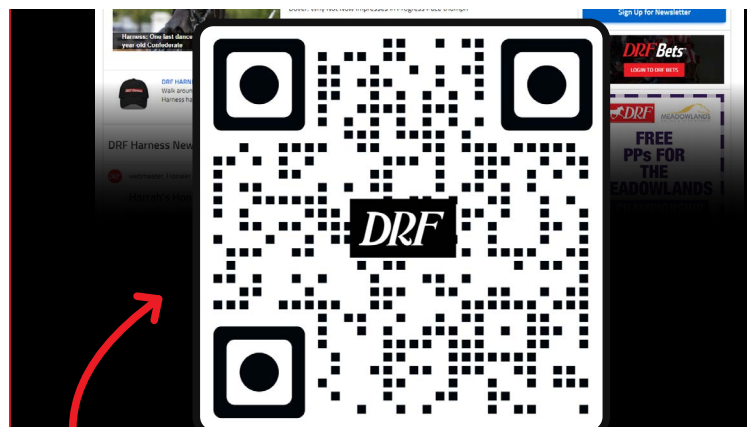
It's A Me Mario appeared at the time ready to battle the best over the half-mile track, having finished a solid second behind Mossdale Ben N in the first round of the series. Mossdale Ben N would inevitably go on to capture the rich Borgata final while rival It's A Me Mario would spend much of the year on the mend.

Tritton still marvels at the incredible accomplishments of Nandolo N, the now 12-year-old son of Betterthancheddar that has gone over \$1 million in career earnings and still manages to race hard with regularity. The import made more than 100 starts from 2023-2025 and that's a rare number for a horse racing at the level he has.

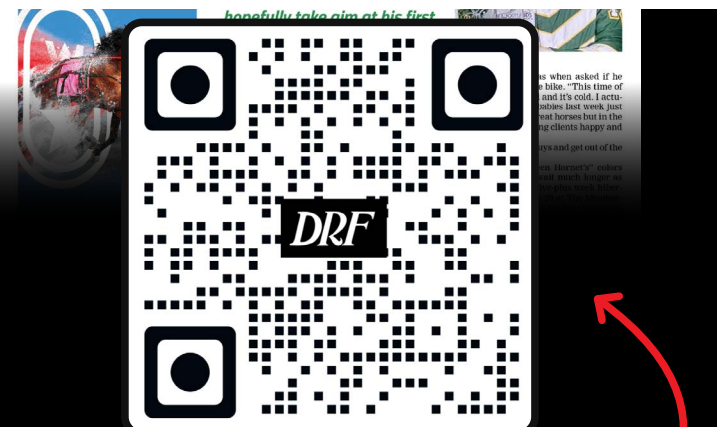
"We raced him on opening night at Yonkers and he drew outside," said Tritton. "He's a tricky horse and we had to learn how to deal with him. He's a bit of a mental case and you just must let him do things his way at times."

Tritton marveled at the competitiveness of Nandolo N. "He got a third and a fourth racing in the MGM Grand Prix at the end of the year. "In the past he could beat non-winners of \$30,000. I think this year he'll be tough to beat at non-winners of \$15,000," said Tritton, obviously believing that the old guy may have lost a step along the way.

"Either way he's got a home with us for life."



Visit us online for PPs,
news, entries, results
DRF.com/Harness



Sign up for our
FREE weekly newsletter

- Industry News
- Opinions

Mr Personality: Take All Comers a favorite of all who know him

By Ken Weingartner

Take All Comers might not always be a favorite on the tote board, but around trainer Jim Campbell's stable and on the racetrack with his drivers, he certainly enjoys that status.

An 8-year-old male trotter bred and owned by Scott Farber's Runthetable Stables, Take All Comers has competed at the sport's upper levels throughout a career that's seen him win 24 races and earn more than \$1.22 million.

On Friday at the Meadowlands, Take All Comers will make his 2026 debut against seven rivals in the night's featured \$25,000 trot. He will leave from post five with Colin Kelly in the sulky and is the 5-2 morning-line favorite.

Take All Comers prepped for the start with a 1:54 4/5 victory in a qualifier on Jan. 17 at the Big M, also with Kelly at the lines. The gelding closed his 2025 campaign by posting two wins and a second in preliminary rounds of the MGM Grand Prix Trotting Series at Yonkers before a fourth-place finish from the second tier in the event's \$250,000 final on Dec. 19.

"I was very pleased with the way he finished the year," Campbell said. "He was really strong in those three legs and the final at Yonkers; he raced very good. It was a tough race in the final, but I was very happy with the way he raced."

"He got off to a little bit of a slow start for us last year (with one win in five summertime starts). He had some allergies that were bothering him in the beginning, and once we got that cleared up he came back to his old self."

Take All Comers didn't have the best of luck with the draws in his three biggest starts of last year – leaving from post 10 in the \$350,000 FanDuel Open Trot Championship and second tier in the \$300,000 John Cashman Memorial, both at the Meadowlands, along with the aforementioned second-tier spot at Yonkers. Still, he ended 2025 with eight top-three finishes, including four victories, and \$143,435 in purses in 14 starts. He has never made less in any of his other five seasons on the racetrack, as he's totaled 50 on-the-board finishes and earned 65 paychecks in 80 lifetime appearances.

He won the 2024 final of the MGM Grand Prix Trotting Series and scored on the Grand Circuit in a division of the Bluegrass Stakes in 2020. He finished second in the 2022 Graduate Series final and the 2023 Caesars Trotting Classic and was third in the 2021 Earl Beal Jr. Memorial and two editions of the Bob Miecuna Invitational Trot (2023 and 2024).

Other earned paydays over the years have included two Breeders Crown finals (2020 and 2023), the 2021 Hambletonian, 2022 Hambletonian Maturity, and 2023 FanDuel Open Trot Championship.

"He's just a really cool horse to be around," Campbell said. "He's just got a distinct personality about him. He's one of those horses that when you walk in the barn he's got his head out and is waiting for you. Anybody that's been around him loves him. Whether it's a groom, vet, drivers – the drivers all love him because he's a really nice horse to drive."

"Scott Farber always says that he's his favorite horse of all time. He loves the way the horse has performed for him and really has a special attraction to the horse. He's raced in stakes races every year of his life, which is kind of an amazing feat. When you send him out there he gives you everything he's got no matter what the race is. That's the way he's been ever since he started racing. And he's the type of horse that knows when he's going to race, too. He loves to race."

Take All Comers has averaged 13 races per year during his career and never started more than 16 times in a single season. It's a schedule that has helped the gelding succeed.

"A lot of that has been by design," Campbell said. "In an ideal world, he races the best if you can race him every other week. He really thrives on that."

And what is in store for Take All Comers this year as he looks for a



MARK HALL/USTA

Jim Campbell has trained Take All Comers since his 2-year-old season in 2020.

seventh consecutive \$100,000-plus season?

"We'll play it by ear with him," Campbell said. "As long as everything is good, he'll probably race maybe up until May, or something like that, and then we'll give him a break. If Yonkers has that series again in the fall, we would get him ready again for that. He really seems to like the cooler weather better."

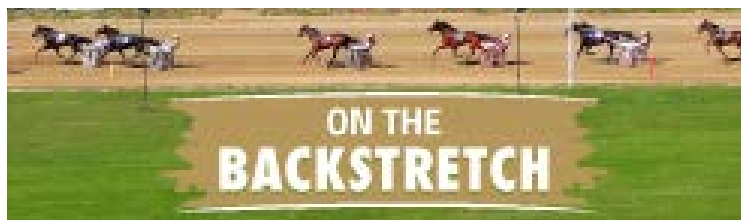
Racing begins at 6:20 p.m. (ET) at the Meadowlands.

After They
Race,
We Find Them
A Place.




NEW VOCATIONS
*Rehab. Retrain. Rehome.**

newvocations.org
734-320-7918 | STA Accredited



BY DERICK GIWNER

Southwind Farms in New Jersey stands some of the best stallions in the sport and at the head of the operation is Laura Young. An actual resident of the farm who lives and works there with her husband Christopher Pazdan, she handles just about anything that needs done and has done that for decades.

While on vacation before breeding season kicks into high gear, Laura took the time to discuss her path in the sport, life on the farm and even the future of harness racing. Enjoy!

SOUTHWIND FARMS' GM LAURA YOUNG

How did you get involved in the harness racing/breeding industry?

I started working for Per Henriksen when I was 12 years old. I was helping my parents pay the mortgage as my father hurt his back bad and was barely able to work. I told my mom I could get a job and help pay bills. So I opened the phone book, [laughing] most wouldn't even know what that is nowadays. I just turned to horse farms and started calling farms. I got to H and Per answered the phone! He said stop in this weekend. My mom drove me over and I walked in his barn. I had a job grooming three horses through the summer and continued with them on the weekends once I started back to school.

You've been at Southwind Farms for about 30 years and are currently General Manager. Can you talk about your progression at the New Jersey farm?

I was hired in 1992 at 14 years old after my job at Per's. So this is my 34th year. I started out on weekends and evenings while I was going to school. Per needed a full-time groom and he wasn't able to keep me on once school started in September. I found the job at Southwind in the newspaper a few weeks later. I was a laborer for about four years and then stepped up to living on the farm and being an assistant manager. I was assistant Manager up to 2005 when I took over as Manager.

What are your daily tasks at Southwind Farms?

Everything! I do ALOT of administrative work, health care of the herd and the stallions. I assist in the syndications and help complete the bookings, handle billing and client communications. I can still clean stalls faster than my staff [laughing]. I sometimes collect the studs but I do all the laboratory work, semen splitting and shipping, and assist in emergency deliveries of foals. I oversee all the care, collections and freezing of the stallions' semen. Starting in May you will find me baling hay and straw. I even mow the lawn and weed whack!

How vital is being a Certified Veterinary Technician in running a breeding operation?

It's not vital but it gives you a lot more education to help with critical decision making. It helps me work with our team of veterinarians better, and overall specializing in reproduction, it gives me a deeper understanding and education beyond that of just management. I highly recommend to future students going into an Equine Program, not to, unless they are becoming a licensed veterinarian technician at the same time. Most equine programs are very basic and a waste of money in my opinion. To be a licensed Vet Tech the schooling is much more intense and in-depth education; you are basically a RN for horses.



COURTESY LAURA YOUNG

Laura Young has worked at Southwind Farms since she was 14 years old.

You also live on the property. Does that make your work and personal life too intertwined?

My work is my life and my life is my work. It's not a job it's a lifestyle. No 9 to 5. I work 24/7/365. I try to take as much time as I can on my off season. Once February hits I don't leave the farm for six months.

What is your favorite big event in racing? Why?

Honestly, I don't follow racing very much. When you do what I do, some things are not a priority and for me it's racing. I couldn't even tell you how to bet on a horse race!

I do have a 2-year-old in training with Noel Daley, so that will change once he starts racing. I will try to attend in order to support my horse, his groom and the racing industry.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of working at the farm?

Hunting – I am an avid hunter. I snowmobile as well and have a house in the Adirondack Park in upstate NY, which is my getaway! I can shoot my rifle off the deck and no one cares.

What is one thing about you most people don't know?

I'm a very caring, honest person. Most people think I'm this hard-ass bitch that is not approachable, which I am when need be, but I am very compassionate and caring, and I always try to do the right thing.

What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

Challenging.

What was your best moment in the sport?

Hasn't happened yet. I'll will let you know.

Do you also own any other Standardbreds outside of the 2-year-old?

I own and lease several broodmares, stallions shares, and yearlings.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Southwind Farms has been known as a leader in trotting stallions for years with horses like Walner and Muscle Hill. Recently you've brought in pacers Bettor's Wish and Legendary Hanover. Why?

The pacers came to us. But New Jersey really needed a few good pacers to help keep the racing competitive.

Karl is your newest trotting stallion and it was recently announced his book is full. Can we assume you have high expectations for him?

We do the best we can for our clients and horses. Fate will determine the path for Karl. It has been over a year since he was supposed to stand stud at another farm and that fell through, then a second deal fell through. Southwind was always here, and Karl, as with all our studs, found us. It was meant to be this way and we will find out why in a few years. He drank the water at Southwind now – let the magic happen!

We are chatting in late January just ahead of foaling and breeding season. Is this time of year more exciting or overwhelming?

I'm trying to get my last few weeks of freedom out of my system! But I would say more of a preparation and anxiety. I'm trying to get all the contracts completed and supplies ordered. Mares are shipping in so schedules are starting. Personally all doctor appointments, dentist appointments, hair appointments are crammed into January. Once it starts I will barely have time to eat, let alone got to get my teeth cleaned [laughing].

Physically I start prepping in December; lifting weights, stretching, building muscle and calming my mind. I always eat well and do self-care; it helps me get through the next six months – mentally and physically.

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

I would dethrone the Kings and let the people run the sport. Let the people of harness racing run the race tracks; not the politicians; not the elite; not the track owners or leases; not the casinos. We need one sport, one Grand Circuit (not state by state), one group of people that run one sport! But that will never happen; pipe dream for the little fellows.



COURTESY LAURA YOUNG

Laura Young lives on the grounds at Southwind Farms.

How do you view the future of harness racing?

Smaller and even more dominated by the circle of elite. The shift to the Midwest and southern states has already happened. In the next 10 years, I see the eastern states dwindling in the sport, even the eastern states that appear strong now – New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey. It will become harder and harder to maintain the funding and support for the sport.

The politicians, casinos and those that are in their pockets will destroy what's left of the sport on the East Coast in the next 10 years. The Midwest and southern states love the sport, love horses and horse racing; they will thrive and be strong for many years! East coast people, not so much.

Which is the best horse you've ever foaled?

Southwind Frank.

**Advertise
with**

**DRF
HARNESS DIGEST**



**ADVERTISE
YOUR
STALLION
TODAY**

For more information or to place an ad, contact:
Derick Giwner at dgiwner@drf.com

Boni returns to Northwood Bloodstock roots; no longer with Alliance Bloodstock

Bob Boni's Northwood Bloodstock is expanding its service as we enter 2026. In addition, after a change of direction in 2025, Boni will no longer be affiliated with Alliance Bloodstock.

"As I have experienced the constant changes in our industry, and particularly in the landscape of public auction, I am looking forward to concentrating my energies on yearling and breeding evaluation and placement and appraisals, private sales and general consulting," remarked the 2025 Hall of Fame inductee, who will no longer consign horses.

"From my earliest days starting at Pine Hollow Stud, I have particularly enjoyed looking at yearlings, and I will now have more freedom to visit the various farms and venues without any conflicts. Placement and recommendations on specific sales can also be vital."

As he noted in his Hall of Fame induction speech, the horses are what brought him to harness racing and the people he has met along the way have made the journey so special.

"I have been fortunate to know and have friendships with the very best people our industry has offered and hopefully I will be able to continue to use what I have learned in a variety of ways. Change is constant and I look forward to any challenges and continuing to serve the Standardbred industry."

For further information please visit northwoodbloodstock.com or call our office at 201 863-2082 or cell 201 709-1907.

-edited release (Northwood Bloodstock)

CLAIMING CO-FEATURES STAND ATOP SATURDAY BIG M CARD

It's not often that claiming races are the featured events at the No. 1 harness venue in the world, but that will be the case this Saturday (Jan. 24) night at The Meadowlands, when a pair of extremely competitive dashes will comprise half of the Early 50-cent Pick-4.

The seventh race – which is leg two of the Pick-4 – sports a \$17,000 purse and is for pacers who are in for a tag of no less than \$25,000 and no more than \$30,000. The horses in for a higher price draw outside in this handicap event.

There are three horses who are all in search of a second consecutive trip to the winner's circle, starting with Mayhem Hanover, who is off an upset score at odds of 12-1 with this kind last Saturday (Jan. 17) for trainer Rico Robinson. He'll depart from post 4 with driver Austin Siegelman and start out at 5-1 on the morning-line.

Caviart Camden (post 5, 3-1) swung four-wide at three-quarters before closing like a shot to upset in a softer spot last week as a 14-1 outsider. Colin Kelly, who won 10 races last weekend to end Brett Beckwith's six-week reign as the track's "Driver of the Week", will guide the Maria Alvarez student.

Betting On Caesar (post 10, 8-1) is another bumping up in class, as the Joe Bongiorno trainee crushed weaker on the front end when last seen on Dec. 27. Beckwith will be in the bike.

In the eighth race, \$19,000 will be on the line in a \$40,000-\$60,000 claiming handicap pace, where all eyes will be on Boston Bound (post 10, 3-1). The Chris Height student went a brutal trip a week ago on the way to seventh-place finish as the 1-5 public choice as the speedball never got near the front end. Beckwith will be the pilot.

Sun Of A Show and Mamba are both looking for a second straight score.

The Tee Wine-trained Sun Of A Show (post 6, 7-2), who will be driven by Braxten Boyd, emerged from the pocket to win at odds of 10-1 last week, while Mamba (post 7, 4-1), who is trained by Bongiorno, went a gigantic parked-out effort to score as the 4-5 public choice back on Dec. 13. Can he overcome the layoff is the question. Kelly is listed to drive.

-release (Meadowlands)

Follow
DRF Harness



DRF 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, JANUARY 22

RACE 2

(3) WELL THAT'S MARKY closed out 2025 in by far the best form of this group and gets a driver change to Jason Bartlett.

-Greg Reinhart

EMPIRE CITY.
CASINO
YONKERS RACEWAY

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

RACE 7

(4) HONOLULU VACATION hinted that he was sitting on a win, and came through with a big effort. Another good draw makes a repeat a reality.

-Kevin Plowcha

WOODBINE
MOHAWK PARK

RACE 3

(6) TWIN B SUNKISSED drops a notch for new connections tonight following a \$37,000 auction purchase. Note that she's moving out of a barn that has started slowly with just one win in 30 starts into one with five victories in 17 tries.

-Derick Gwerner

MEADOWLANDS
RACING & ENTERTAINMENT

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24

RACE 5

(3) BUILD THE WALL went a big mile to be second last week and that was even having missed four weeks of action. He moves on the inside of the gate tonight and should have a big shot.

-Gwerner

MEADOWLANDS
RACING & ENTERTAINMENT

FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis

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

Meadowlands Analysis

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

Yonkers Analysis

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

DHP PPS

HARNESS EYE PPS

TRACKMASTER PPS

FREE PPS

INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA X: @DRFHARNESS

NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

USHWA ANNOUNCES 2025 MEDIA AWARD WINNERS

Derick Giwner and Wes Mayberry were named the winners of the 2025 John Hervey Awards for excellence in harness racing journalism while Clive Cohen swept the George Smallsreed Awards for photography and Horse Racing Alberta and Shine Light Entertainment was selected the winner of the Sam McKee Award for broadcasting, the U.S. Harness Writers Association announced Saturday.

The winners will be recognized at the Dan Patch Awards banquet, presented by Caesars Entertainment, on Feb. 22 at Rosen Shingle Creek resort in Orlando, Fla. Meadowlands Racetrack Chairman Jeffrey Gural is continuing his longstanding sponsorship of the awards by providing banquet tickets for the winners.

[READ MORE](#)

2026 LIVING HORSE HALL OF FAME RESULTS

The Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame's Living Horse Hall of Fame nominating committee has announced the results of the 2026 elections. Museum members voted for the four horses they believed exemplified greatness: Bettor's Wish, Buck I St Pat, Manchego and Nuncio, all celebrated for their racing achievements. These remarkable horses will be inducted on Hall of Fame Day, Sunday, July 5, 2026, at the Museum's annual dinner.

[READ MORE](#)

HAMBO, OAKS ELIMS TO BE CONDUCTED THE WEEK PRIOR TO THE FINAL

The Hambletonian Society has announced that both the Hambletonian and the Hambletonian Oaks will be conducted with elimination races the week prior, pending the number of entries, as part of the upcoming 2026 Hambletonian Day card.

In addition, Lasix (furosemide) will not be permitted in the Hambletonian Maturity.

If you have any questions, please contact The Hambletonian Society office at 609-371-2211.

-release (Hambletonian Society)

MCNAIR JOINS LIST OF DRIVERS WITH 5,000 WINS

Doug McNair made a blustery winter evening a night to remember by reaching the 5,000 lifetime win mark on Monday at Woodbine Mohawk Park. The 36-year-old driver entered the evening just two wins shy of the career milestone.

McNair cashed in with his first drive of the night (Race 3) by guiding 4-year-old pacer Volcanic (\$7.10) to victory for his father Gregg McNair. His next drive (Race 6) didn't go according to plan thanks to a broken equipment break in the first turn by pacer Carsons buckngo.

[READ MORE](#)

THE 2026 HARNESS RACING MUSEUM STALLION AUCTION IS OPEN!

The gate is open and the bidding has begun! The Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame is thrilled to announce our premier roster for the 2026 Stallion Auction. This is your chance to secure a top-tier breeding while supporting the preservation of the sport we love.

The 2026 All-Star Roster

We are proud to offer an elite selection of stallions across North America. The list continues to grow, so check www.harnessmuseum.com (under the Fundraising tab) for the most up-to-date additions.

As of this press release the pacing stallions are So Surreal (New York), Courtly Choice (New York), Tall Dark Stranger (Pennsylvania), Loubet (Indiana), Best in Show (Indiana), Racing Hill (Ohio), Well Said (Ohio), Stockade Seelster (Ohio), Control the Moment (Ontario), Getitofyourchest (Maryland), and Neptune (Virginia).

Trotting stallions are Six Pack (New York), Met's Hall (New York), Greenshoe (Pennsylvania), Volume Eight (Pennsylvania), Don't Let'em

(Indiana), Uncle Peter (Ohio), and Trixton (Ontario).

How to Enter the Winner's Circle

Don't wait until the final turn! All bids must be received or postmarked by Saturday, February 14th—the perfect day to find a match for your mare.

- Phone: Call Ali Krikorian at 845-294-6330
- Email: development@harnessmuseum.com
- Mail: 240 Main St., Goshen, NY 10924

Have a breeding to donate? We are still accepting donations! If you'd like to support this vital fundraiser, please contact Ali Krikorian today.
-release (Harness Museum & Hall of Fame)

CATTLEWASH BREEDING TO BENEFIT HHYF

Thanks to the generosity of the Cattlewash Syndicate and William Donovan, the Harness Horse Youth Foundation has been given a scarce commodity - a 2026 breeding to Cattlewash whose book is full and closed! Cattlewash stands at Tara Hills Stud in Port Perry, Ontario.

The breeding will sell on preferredequineonline.com site; bidding will take place on Monday, January 26.

For terms and conditions, please contact online@preferredequine.com or call Preferred Equine sales office at 914-773-7777.

For information about HHYF, please contact ellen@hhyf.org or call the office 317-908-0029.

-release (HHYF)

LOUBET \$10,000 BOOKING BONUS RETURNS; JAN. 31 OPEN HOUSE

A popular booking bonus program will once again be available to all those booking and breeding to Indiana stallion Loubet.

All owners that book their mare to Loubet by midnight on Feb. 6, 2026 will be eligible for a \$10,000 bonus award drawing. One entry will be awarded per mare booked and bred, and one winner will be drawn. All mares already booked for 2026 and those booked by Feb. 6 will be included in the entries.

The winner, which shall be the owner of the mare at time of mating, will be drawn and paid on July 6, 2026 at the conclusion of the breeding season. The program is sponsored by Cornerstone Stock Farm.

Loubet p,2,1:49 3/5, the only son of pacing super sire Sweet Lou standing in Indiana, is in his third season at Premier Acres in Indiana for a fee of \$4,000. In his second season, he bred 135 mares, making Loubet the most popular pacing sire in the state in 2025.

Loubet and all the Premier Acres stallions will be available for viewing at the upcoming Premier Acres Open Barn, to be held on Saturday, Jan. 31 at 12559 CR 30 in Middlebury, IN from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

For more information, contact Jeff with Cornerstone Stock Farm at 260-463-1649 or via email at jeff.fought@cornerstonestockfarm.com.

-release (Premier Acres)

YONKERS ADDS SPECIAL QUALIFYING DATE FOR TUESDAY, JAN. 27

MGM Yonkers Raceway will add an extra night of qualifying races on Tuesday, January 27. The box will close at 3 PM (ET) on Friday (January 23).

Qualifiers will also take place during the regular Friday dates on January 23 (draw Thursday afternoon) and 30.

Live racing at Yonkers continues on a Monday to Friday schedule with nightly post time at 6:45 PM (ET).

-release (Yonkers Raceway Media)

DRF Harness

Entries & Results

DRF Harness has entries and results for all U.S. tracks and live odds for all North American tracks

DRF.COM/HARNESS

