

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026



Everyone loves a happy ending

JESSICA HALLETT PHOTO

Melissa and Brett Beckwith in the winner's circle at Saratoga Raceway with Bronze Over N.

1/ST BET PRO



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



HARNESS FOCUS

By Jessica Hallett

[@JHallettPhoto](https://twitter.com/JHallettPhoto)

Not every victory in harness racing happens under the lights or at the wire. Not every achievement or moment that matters is charted on paper. The moments that count the most happen behind the scenes and out of the spotlight – most often when no one is watching.

Bronze Over N is a veteran pacing mare, the daughter of Changeover and the Lislea mare Bronze Lady. Now 14, Bronze Over N made \$580,761 on the track with a record of 49-44-35 in 260 starts. She earned her mark of 1:52 1/5 at Yonkers Raceway at the age of 6 and continued to be a powerhouse at Saratoga Harness Track

under the guidance of the Beckwith Stable.

Melissa Beckwith is a multi-year leading trainer and multiple award-winning trainer at Saratoga. Her son Brett Beckwith is an award-winner himself and has also been leading driver on more than one occasion at tracks like Saratoga, Plainridge Park, and The Meadowlands. Stacy Hahn is a well-respected caretaker at Saratoga Harness Track with years of experience and dedication.

On paper, this is a group of established and accomplished horse and horsemen, but those stats on paper in no way tell the full story of any of them, nor does it reveal the details of the moment that counted most in each of their recent lives.

If you scroll through Facebook and have connections to any kind of horse industry, you're sure to come across the posts about horses in situations that need rehoming and/or rescuing. A

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)



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BY **CHAPTER SEVEN** OUT OF **STEAMY WINDOWS**



couple weeks ago, I came across another one of those posts. It was lengthy and didn't name the horse right off the bat. Out of curiosity, I scrolled the comments to see if there were any identifiers when the name jumped out at me as one I was very familiar with – Bronze Over N.

Racing at Saratoga every year since I've moved here and also stabling in the same barn as her connections, she was one I knew instantly, and so I forwarded the post to Melissa Beckwith, who shared it with Brett.

The post explicitly stated that Bronze Over N was not in a kill pen at this time, but that she was in need of bail money and a new home or she would be sent to auction where her fate from that point would be unknown.

Immediately, Brett reached out to the original poster and asked for more information, stating his interest in getting the mare. A \$2,500 bond was split between both Brett and Melissa to bail Bronze Over N out of that situation. And then, Stacy Hahn was informed as well.

During her tenure at Saratoga, in addition to racing for the Beckwith Stable, Bronze Over N competed in two dozen starts for Chris Dubois, under the watchful eyes of caretaker Stacy Hahn. And now, three years later, Bronze Over N's name came up again and this time, in the worst way that Stacy had feared.

"I was actually in the Saratoga paddock getting a horse ready to race when I overheard Allie Skowrya mentioning Bronze was in a bad spot, so I involved myself in the conversation and immediately asked how to get in touch with whoever has Bronze," Hahn said. "She added me to the group chat and I reached out to Melissa Beckwith for some help in getting Bronze out of the situation."

Now that the mare was bailed out, she needed to find her way from Middletown, Virginia, where she had ended up, back to Saratoga Springs, New York. Hahn reached out to Bronze Over N's previous owners when she was in the care of Dubois, Brian Gordon and Morrison Racing, and they helped cover the shipping costs.

Without hesitation, Hahn jumped in the truck and trailer headed for Virginia on a 15-1/2 hour round trip.

"It was well worth the trip when Bronze heard my voice! She basically loaded herself on the trailer to go home," Hahn said.

Bronze Over N will now spend out her retirement at Hahn's farm, where she has five other horses including three Quarter Horses and two other retired Standardbreds – War Story, a retired trotter and Roll With Dom, a retired pacer.

After nursing her back to health with some more weight, she will become a riding horse, mainly trail riding.

So why Bronze Over N? What was the lure for Hahn and others to make sure the mare lived out her life in good health and happiness?

"I was her groom for trainer Chris Dubois and she was the most outgoing mare in the barn; easiest mare to handle and jog. Everyone loved her and she had a great personality. [She was] very quiet, but a barn favorite for sure! She never hesitated to do anything you asked of her and she gave her all every time she hit the track with the biggest heart," Hahn said.

Hahn's daughter, Alexis, even learned how to jog with Bronze Over N, as it was the one horse they knew they could trust. It was her first experience sitting behind a horse instead of on top.

For Brett and Melissa, the story also resonates with the mare's personality shining through above all else.

"Bronze was a great mare," Melissa said. "She didn't do anything wrong in the barn or on the track. She was a sweetheart."

The Beckwith family is known for finding homes for their horses if their racing careers end or don't pan out. Despite having a dozen starts and a year and a half in between having Bronze Over N in their barn, they stepped up for her in a big way to get her to a forever home, with Brett learning from his parents (Mark and Melissa) in the best way.

"Bronze has always been a sweetheart of a mare who tries hard and races hard," Brett said. "She was one of those who never put in a bad race; you knew she tried hard. It's tough to give them all the home they deserve, but sometimes you have to do the right thing when they did the right thing for you."

On paper, we have a half-million-dollar earning veteran pacing mare, award-winning leading trainer, award-winning leading driver, and arguably the most dedicated and hardest working caretaker on the track. In reality, we have a well-loved mare with a special personality and a group of horsemen who care deeply about their horses coming together to ensure that mare gets the special retirement that she deserves.



Bronze Over N upon arrival at Stacy Hahn's farm.

PHOTO PROVIDED

RICHEST PACING SIRE EVER!

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p, 2, 1:52f; 3, 1:47.3f; 1:46.2 (\$5,103,271)
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- Canadian Racing Hall of Fame Inductee & Harness Racing Hall of Fame Inductee
- Proven Sire of Stakes Winners including:
Wickedpace, p, 2, 1:52.3s -'24 (\$505,697)
Wikipedia, p, 3, 1:50.3s -'24 (\$305,074)
Wicked N Single, p, 3, 1:51.2s -'25 (\$273,507)
- Sire of 2025 Blizzard Winner, **Absolution**, p, 1:49.3s -'25, BT1:48.3s-'25 (\$264,960)

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Monday, October 5 – Friday, October 9, 2026

Entry Deadline: Wednesday, April 1, 2026

Harrisburg Standardbred Sale

Monday, November 2 – Friday, November 6, 2026

Yearling Portion: Monday–Wednesday

Entry Deadline: Friday, May 1, 2026

Mixed Portion: Thursday–Friday

Entry Deadline: Friday, October 2, 2026

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**ALLIANCE
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Brown's 2026 prospects could vault him back into spotlight



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [X BergmanJay](#)

The winter of 2025-26 was different for veteran trainer Brian Brown, but as the season is about to change the Ohio-based conditioner still has the same kind of optimism about his stable's future.

"We decided to stay in Ohio this year," Brown said. "The conditions were different, but we made a few adjustments like heated gloves and things have worked out."

For Brown, with roughly 34-head in his care, change has been a regular part of his operation through the years, and despite a ton of them he's managed to bring out the best in some of the sport's most notable pacers in the last decade. Whether he was the front man or the one that developed a star that would go on to greatness elsewhere, Brown has kept a level head about the horse business and persevered.

Brown's stable made a huge splash in 2017 when it had a pair of leading sophomore pacers in Fear The Dragon and Downbytheseaside dominate the action. Both have gone on to become stallions, with the latter a force in Ohio and on the Grand Circuit as well. Brown did a masterful job with both seeing them race complete seasons, with Downbytheseaside concluding his racing career with a lifetime best 1:48 3/5 mark in his last race, the Progress Pace at Dover.

"He was just a bully on the race-track," Brown said, reflecting on Downbytheseaside's racing career. "You never know how that's going to translate to a horse as a stallion, but he's been phenomenal."

Downbytheseaside's durability and determination are clearly evident in his offspring as they have consistently dominated the Ohio Sire Stakes since his very first crop hit the track in 2021. That year Pebble Beach instantly stamped him as a Grand Circuit-worthy player and then Bythemissal joined him in 2022 as sophomore stars.

Brown broke and trained superstar Confederate through his 2022 racing season that was spectacular in its own right with a string of dominating performances in Kentucky. Though Confederate moved on to trainer Brett Pelling's stable as a sophomore in 2023 to race predominantly on the East Coast, it shouldn't diminish the value Brown added to the overall career of the Sweet Lou-sired colt.

Training horses and having them move on to other horsemen is an occupational hazard and one where Brown almost always appears to be on the wrong side. However, in 2026 the tide may have shifted for him just slightly as in January owner Ken Jacobs sent a sophomore pacing filly his way with a pedigree that works quite nicely for Brown.

"Mr. Ken Jacobs sent me a very nice Downbytheseaside filly," Brown said. "I've only had Prtynproud Hanover since January 15. She's a big, long-legged filly with a lot of power. She's staked here in Ohio and we put her in some other stakes like the Fan Hanover and Nadia Lobell."

Prtynproud Hanover last year won the Kindergarten Series final at The Meadowlands in 1:51 1/5, her last freshman start following a mid-season purchase by Jacobs.

Brown has been impressed thus far with Prtynproud Hanover, though the training trips haven't got her close to the level she'll need to be. "Going slow she doesn't show that much but when she picks up speed her gait smooths out," said Brown with conviction that he could have another dynamic horse in his stable by a sire he's more than familiar with.

Prtynproud Hanover will be more than an adequate replacement for a quality 2-year-old filly that Brown broke and trained to success last year named Gala. Gala, also by Downbytheseaside, showed progress in each of her starts for Brown last year and was so impressive that she was eventually sold to Andrew Harris' connections for a significant sum. Gala took a 1:50 1/5 mark for Brown at The Red Mile and then went on to equal that speed in a Kentucky Sire Stakes final at Cumberland Run for Harris. In 2023 Harris purchased Seven Colors in the middle of his sophomore season from Brown's stable just as he was coming into form. It's hard to believe three years later few will remember that Seven Colors and Confederate were developed by Brown.

With 18 babies in training Brown still has a long way to go before it's time to race, but said he had a pair of Sweet Lou's that he likes very much at this juncture. He thinks he's got a nice Papi Rob Hanover and of course there's a very nice Downbytheside filly in the mix.

If there was one horse Brown was willing to single out for future success it was Pants On Fire, a 4-year-old that has had a limited number of starts but has shown enormous talent.

"We only raced him four times last year," said Brown about Pants On Fire, who is by Catch The Fire, an accomplished son of Captaintreachero that also stands in Ohio. "He had an issue with his cannon bone.

"He was in the North America Cup last year and got interfered at the half in the elimination but still closed to finish fourth. I think if that hadn't happened, he would have reached the final."

Pants On Fire had won an overnight event in 1:50 at Scioto before his North America Cup excursion.



CONRAD PHOTO

Pants On Fire is perfect in two starts this year and Brian Brown is excited about his prospects.

Pants On Fire made his 4-year-old return at Miami Valley on March 10 and breezed to a 1:53 4/5 victory with Hall of Famer David Miller in the bike.

"I'm very excited about him going forward," said Brown of Pants On Fire. "We've made him eligible to the Graduate and a few other stakes races, but I don't plan on racing him that much. We'd like to have him race for a few more years."

Pants On Fire was just a \$20,000 yearling purchase at the Ohio Select sale in 2023 from the American Ideal-sired American Myth. Pants On Fire is the dam's third foal, with her first two by Downbytheseaside. American Myth is a half-sister a pair of high-class fillies in Alicorn and Medusa as well as the dam of Huntinthelastdollar, a \$1.1 million winner.

With a history of developing superstar horses it would be of no surprise if Brown was spot on again about Pants On Fire and the 4-year-old lights the way for returning Brown and his stable to prominence in 2026.

CAPTAIN OPTIMISTIC

(Captaintreacherous - Cinamony - Art Official) p,2,1:49; 3,1:48 -'25 (\$1,573,723)



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- U A **\$160,000 yearling**, his dam is a 1/2 sister to N.A. Cup winner **Fear The Dragon** p,3,1:48.4s (\$1,720,297).
- U Winner of the **Governor's Cup** at age two, as well as eliminations for the Metro Pace and Breeders Crown.
- U Winner of the **Cane Pace** and **Bluegrass Stakes** at age three, as well as his elimination for the North America Cup.

PERFECT STING

(Always B Miki - Shebestingin - Bettors Delight) p,2,1:49.2; 3,1:48.1 (\$1,861,447)



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- U The sire of Kindergarten Series winner **BOOKIE J** p,2,1:51.1 -'25 (\$288,905).
- U The sire of NJ Classic Champion **PERFECT THOUGHT** p,2,1:51.1 -'25 (\$272,961).
- U The sire of NJSS Champion **BE PERFECT BG** p,2,1:50.1 -'25 (\$166,803).

SIX PACK

(Muscle Mass - Pleasing Lady - Cantab Hall) 3,1:49.1 (\$1,973,661)



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- U His 2YOs earned over \$1.2 million in 2025 ...an **average/starter of \$46,350**.
- U The sire of 2025 Hambletonian Champion **NORDIC CATHER S** 3,1:50 -'25 (\$1,124,113).
- U The sire of 2025 Peaceful Way Champion **SUGAR PACKET** 2,1:53.3s -'25 (\$327,147).



EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner ✉ @harnessveguy

Give the handicappers more information

A couple of weeks ago in this space we touched on the need to include shoeing information in the past performance program to provide handicappers with more information so they can make better decisions. It was comforting to see the USTA Board of Directors take some action on the matter and we can look forward to hopefully seeing this information come 2027.

As there is no rest for the weary, today we are back with another suggestion that can be added to the handicapper's tool bag. Isn't it time to add pool totals for each horse for all multi-leg and multi-horse wagers?

Starting with intra-race, certainly we have the technology to inform people how much is bet on each horse in the top position for trifectas, superfectas and Hi-5's. Monticello has been showing the triple runner pools as long as I can remember so it can't be too complicated.

With multi-race bets, we do have some tracks that inform us how much money is left in the pools for each horse as the races in the sequence move along (why all tracks don't provide this information is mindboggling). This is important information, especially for those that heavily invested in a bet that may want to double up on solo races if certain combinations are overbet in the Pick X wager. Yet, despite AI and all of the technological advances in the sport, why don't we have pool totals for wagers like the Pick 3/4/5/6?

Some people could say that pool totals for multi-race wagers are unnecessary because "of course the favorite will have the most money on them." But what about the other horses? Couldn't there be scenarios where the 4-1 has less money in the Pick 4 pool than the 8-1? Wouldn't this information be vital when making any wagers? Couldn't it sway you from a Pick 4 play to a win play if the odds were better?

Additionally, what about when there are multiple favorites in a race – let's say 2-1-, 2-1 and 5-2. If you liked one of the 2-1 horses but they were way underbet in the Pick 4, wouldn't they be a better wager in that pool rather than win?

We are offered pool information when it comes to exactas and doubles, and we use this information to make informed wagers, looking for the best value for our wagering dollars.

Horse racing is at a disadvantage versus sports wagering for many reasons ranging from the learning curve required for new people to become successful at picking winners to factors like takeout and value for the money. Certainly we should do everything possible to provide people with all of the information available and allow them to decide what is important and what should be discarded.

Pivoting slightly while keeping with the same topic of providing players with the most information possible, where horse racing falls well short versus sports is when it comes to information on the athletes. I never bet a game regardless of the sport without first checking the injury report. Especially in basketball where one injury can change the entire outcome of the game, knowing the health of the athletes is one of the most important pieces of information a bettor can seek.

Over in horse racing, health information is nonexistent. Did a horse see the veterinarian that week? Are they feeling 100%? Did the trainer switch up a routine or try something new? As bettors we are often left in the dark on these matters.

There have been attempts by tracks and other services to supply bettors with trainer or driver comments to provide inside details on the fitness and behind the scenes thoughts about a horse. Those have failed because it is very difficult to relay accurate information days before a race.

In other major sports, preliminary player information must be submitted by a predetermined time and final information is typically supplied no less than 10 minutes before a game starts. I wonder if the tracks in the industry could make a concerted effort to gather information, perhaps when horses are checked into the paddock, and then get final information (how the horse warmed up) just before they line up to go on the track. The preliminary information could be displayed on the in-house feed crawl on the bottom of the screen and if you want the final information you have to pay attention to the live feed as the races are happening. What a great way to make sure your audience is engaged to your simulcast signal in between the races.

The above suggestions may be pipe dreams in terms of actually getting executed at a track but they really aren't too much to ask. If you want people to bet you need to do more than run a race.

No decision on 2027 Hambletonian; 2YO supplemental payment added

At the March 15, 2026 winter meeting of the Directors of the Hambletonian Society, the board approved the conditions of Hambletonian No. 103, the stake for foals of 2025 to be raced in 2028, which will take yearling payments on May 15, 2026.

For the first time, the Hambletonian conditions include a supplemental 2-year-old payment, beginning with Hambletonian No. 103. Horses not kept eligible by either the May 15, 2026 Yearling Nomination or the August 15, 2026 Yearling Supplement may make a February 15, 2027 supplemental nomination fee of \$1,500 to either the Open or the Oaks. This payment will allow those horses to remain eligible to make the additional 2-year-old and 3-year-old schedule of payments for the year of the respective races.

Also added was language regarding information on the reporting of shoeing changes, an issue currently under committee review by the U.S. Trotting Association.

The following language was added to Hambletonian No. 103, which was approved with May yearling payments.

Trainers may be subject to notifying the racetrack and/or judges of their intention to race without shoes. The protocols and time frames will be posted on the condition sheet before entry time.

In addition, the board approved the conditions of Breeders Crown No. 41, which takes yearling payments on May 15, 2026 for the races of 2027 and future years. Added to the conditions was the aforementioned shoeing change language included in Hambletonian No. 103.

In other business, the board reviewed proposals submitted for future host sites of the Hambletonian, beginning in 2027. Proposals received from Harrah's Hoosier Park, Meadowlands Racing & Gaming, and Woodbine Entertainment Group were presented to the board. The board voted to allow additional time to issue a Request for Information (RFI) to the tracks and to permit further review and clarification of each proposal.

No new directors were elected at this time. The annual meeting of the Hambletonian Society Board is scheduled for Lexington, Kentucky on Friday, October 9, 2026.

-edited release (Hambletonian Society)

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DOWNBYTHESEASIDE - SANTA ROSA
(1:48.1, \$1,720,875)



Menary has two chances in New Holland opening leg at Mohawk



NEW IMAGE MEDIA

Bruno No No No was an impressive winner in his first start for new trainer Dave Menary and he looks for more on Saturday at Mohawk.

By Jay Bergman

Trainer Dave Menary has done an impressive job handling the stock on the Woodbine Mohawk Park circuit for owner Tom Pollack's racing stable. Menary has a pair entered in the first leg of the New Holland Pacing Series on Saturday night in a single C\$30,000 dash carded as race eight on the Mohawk program that kicks off at 6:30 PM (EDT).

Though Its Saturday Night (post 3) has captured three of his last four races against Open company over the surface, Menary seemed even more excited about the prospects for Bruno No No No, a recent acquisition that landed post two in the eight-horse field.

"I'm really high on Bruno No No No. I've been talking to Tom (Pollack) for a while about purchasing the horse and he stepped up," said Menary.

Bruno No No No, a 4-year-old by All Bets Off, showed high class potential during his sophomore campaign and the New Holland will give Menary and ownership a chance to see just what that looks like in the coming weeks. Bruno No No No qualified superbly for his maiden voyage for Menary and then went on to dominate Open 2 company on March 7 with a solid 1:51 2/5 performance.

"He's a great-looking horse," Menary said of Bruno No No No, who he compared to another big horse in stablemate Its Saturday Night. "They're both big. I'd say Its Saturday Night is more like Tom Brady and Bruno No No No is more like Rob Gronkowski."

That Menary picked a pair of NFL winners for the comparison was probably not by accident.

Its Saturday Night arrived in Menary's barn towards the end of 2025 and has emerged this winter with four victories in eight starts this season and a bankroll already exceeding six figures.

"He's a big-track horse," said Menary, mindful that the 5-year-old by Always B Miki finished second in the 2023 Governor's Cup over The Meadows surface. "I really thought he was a better horse racing from off the pace but in his last few starts he's been able to control the pace and still gotten home."

Menary credits catch driver Louis Philippe Roy for much of the success that Its Saturday Night has enjoyed this year.

While Its Saturday Night held on to win by a nose in the March 14 Open at Woodbine Mohawk Park, the trainer is expecting a better effort this Saturday.

"I trained him this morning (Wednesday) and he was very sharp. Last

week he was coming back after missing three weeks and I think he's better on a seven-day rotation," Menary said.

Menary will send out Whatchulookin At (post 1) in Saturday's co-feature, a \$30,000 Open 2 event and race nine on the program.

"He got a little lucky last week," said Menary. "He was in the right place at the right time when Taurasi made a break."

Driver James MacDonald managed to steer Whatchulookin At away from the incident and scored at 40-1.

"I looked at the tote board before the race and was surprised he was 20-1," said Menary, who saw the price double at the finish of the 1:53 3/5 mile. "He's got a big burst of speed for a short distance. The rail may not be the best place for him."

Missing in action this week but likely to be back next week is Brue Hanover. "I wanted to race him this week, but they didn't card an Open," said Menary. "He trained very well today."

Stable star Ervin Hanover, last year's Breeders Crown champion in the Open division, is still a few months away from the racetrack. "He's just getting back right now and looks great," said Menary. "He's got a long year ahead of him and we're in no rush. I'm probably going to point him towards the Mohawk Gold Cup."

That \$100,000 Invitational coincides with North America Cup Night slated for June 13.

Speaking of the rich North America Cup, Menary has a pair of horses nominated for the event. "Scorpion Seelster came on well towards the end of the year winning the Ontario Harvest," said Menary. "I'm very happy with the way he's training."

Scorpion Seelster is from the first crop of Bulldog Hanover and emerged on the scene late, winning in 1:51 4/5 in October.

Borderline Mobby, a son of Cattlewash, is Menary's other North America Cup nominee. "He was the opposite," Menary said, "He was good early in the year and then tailed off. He finished second to Beau Jangles once."

The late-season disappointment was a problem Menary believes he has addressed heading into the 3-year-old campaign. "There were two things we needed to fix with him," Menary said. "We needed to geld him and put him on Lasix."

The first objective has been taken care of and Menary is hopeful that Borderline Mobby will be an improved horse this year.



BY DERICK GIWNER

As Enrico Robinson closes in on his 60th birthday later this year he'll also be approaching a full year as the listed trainer for owner Tom Pollock on the East Coast. It was a role he never anticipated would happen after more than four decades of working as a caretaker or second trainer for others. Now he operates a large barn that competes at some of the top tracks in the country.

Robinson won more races over the last month of 2025 (20) than he did in the previous 10 years and he'll certainly pass the 100-win mark for his career in the month of March. So how does a journeyman from Mississippi emerge from obscurity to the Meadowlands spotlight? Clearly some of it boils down to the kindness of others, and Robinson was gracious enough to share his journey with us this week. Enjoy!

TRAINER ENRICO ROBINSON

How did you get started in harness racing?

My grandmother's cousin [Walter Thomas] got me involved when I was about 12 or 13 years old in Mississippi. I was walking by one day, saw some horses going around the track and thought that I liked it. I didn't know that the guy was related to my grandmother until later.

Was Mississippi a hotbed for harness racing back then in the 1970s?

They do it there but not like here. I knew that if I wanted to pursue it I would have to leave Mississippi.

Did you know immediately that harness racing was what you would do with your life?

Pretty much once I started I knew I wanted to train horses.

Right now you are working for Jeff Cullipher. How long have you been with him and who did you work for previously?

Technically I work for owner Tom Pollack now. I'm here [East Coast] and Jeff is in Indiana. Jeff hired me about five to six years ago but I've known him, his father and his mother for years back in Kentucky. They wanted to open a stable in New Jersey and someone told them I was here. We got to talking and that is how it started. Before that I worked for Bob Stewart in Kentucky, A. Scott Harris who passed away, with Greg Peck when he had Muscle Hill, Jeff Bamond and Chris Height to name a few.

Since Jeff/Tom started putting you down as trainer in late 2025 has there been any change for you?

It has been unbelievable. I can't say enough good words about Tom, Jeff and Marc Reynolds. Those guys changed my life. To be down as trainer and for this caliber of horses, it has been a dream of mine and it came true.

Do you like seeing your name in the program?

My wife is my biggest fan and she just loves it to death. She is my rock. I've been with her six years and we just got married a year ago.

You've done some driving and some training over the last 40 years. Did you ever consider going out on your own?

Not driving so much. I kind of knew that was more for fun. Scott Harris



PHOTO PROVIDED
Enrico Robinson has won 36 races as trainer since taking over the East Coast stable of owner Tom Pollack.

influenced me to get my license but I knew training was what I wanted to do. I usually had a horse of my own on the side to train but an opportunity like this one never came along.

What is your favorite track to race at and why?

Meadowlands. It is a tough track to win at but it is the highlight of the industry; everybody watches it.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of harness racing?

Harness racing is my life. My wife will tell you, I just love this. It is a hobby and it is my job.

What is one thing about you most fans/bettors don't know?

How dedicated I am to harness racing.

What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

Excitement – I love the action.

What was your best moment in harness racing?

Becoming a trainer for Tom Pollack and also having the opportunity to take Muscle Hill to Canada.

Who is your favorite horse in the barn?

Captain Crusader.

Have you ever won a stakes race and are you excited to potentially win some this year?

I've never won one as a listed trainer. We have a new foreign acquisition named Lusaka that I think is top caliber. I'm looking forward to racing him. He's getting close.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 11](#)



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Is Lukasa the horse you think gives you the best shot to win a stakes race?

We also have a trotter named Hey Porter that probably has the best shot. He's my second favorite horse in the barn.

How many horses do you have in your barn?

Around 54 or 55.

As someone who has been involved in the sport since the early 1980s, did you ever think you'd get to where you are now?

I never thought in a million years it would happen and it did. I was in

tears when they told me. That is how much it meant to me. Tom is an unbelievable owner. He loves the sport and puts everything into it. He's the best owner I've ever seen, and I've been around for years.

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

Do more stuff for the grooms. Most of them work all of their lives with no retirement options. They are a big part of the business and I know our operation couldn't run without them. I have the best help. I have one guy named Freddy Herrera who is the best guy. He's my righthand man. He's a super guy.

How do you view the future of harness racing?

I think it will always be around even if some feel differently.

Time for the stretch drive...

Best Horse you ever saw: Muscle Hill, by far.

Lasix – Yes or No: Yes. It really helps some horses.

Favorite TV Show: I don't watch much TV; maybe football.

Trotters or Pacers: I love trotters.

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Free handicapping contest series continues Saturday at Meadowlands

Leg 3 of The Meadowlands' popular \$1,000 Monthly Handicapping Contest takes place Saturday (March 21) with a pair of seats for the competition's \$10,000 year-end, invitation-only final up for grabs.

While the top four players at the end of the night will cash (on a \$500-\$250-\$150-\$100 basis), only the top two finishers will be invited to the big-money final, which takes place on Saturday, Dec. 12.

The first leg of the 2026 contest took place on Saturday, Jan. 10, with Del Kern and Stefan Ferrara finishing 1-2 to earn spots in the year-end tussle. On Friday, Feb. 20, the Leg 2 "exacta" was Robert Glaser over Emile Issa. 2026 contest schedule:

- Leg 3 – Saturday, March 21
- Leg 4 – Friday, April 17
- Leg 5 – Saturday, May 23
- Leg 6 – Friday, June 12
- Leg 7 – Friday, July 24
- Leg 8 – Saturday, Aug. 22
- Leg 9 – Saturday, Sept. 5
- Leg 10 – Friday, Oct. 23
- Leg 11 – Saturday, Nov. 14
- Invitation-only \$10,000 contest final: Saturday, Dec. 12

Each monthly contest will follow the same format:

- Contestants must bet a minimum of five Meadowlands races.
- No minimum or maximum bet per race.
- All wagers offered on The Meadowlands are eligible for the contest.
- Contestants keep all pari-mutuel winnings.
- Unlimited entries per person.

There is no entry fee (a \$100 live-money bankroll is required) for players, and the prize pool is guaranteed at \$1,000, funded by The Meadowlands.

On the night of the contest, players must register/check-in at the Clubhouse Lobby by 6 p.m. A \$100 betting card must be purchased to participate, as this is a live money/wagering contest.

The top two finishers from each contest earn spots in the \$10,000 tournament "final" on December 12 (22 total players).

To register for the contest, go [here](#).

PK 8 CARRIES ON: The \$1 PK 8 went unhit for a ninth consecutive offering last Saturday (March 14), upping the carryover to \$94,833 for Friday night.

Winner's odds for the Saturday sequence were 18-1, 4-1, 8-1, 4-1, 4-1, 7-2, 2-5 and 1-1. Those with six correct collected \$1,497.30.

The \$1 PK 8 is offered nightly on races three through 10.

BECKWITH IS BEST: Brett Beckwith, in search of a second straight Big M driving title, has put himself in good position to repeat. The 23-year-old pilot has 57 wins thus far in 2026 through the first 20 race cards on the calendar, putting him on a pace where he will make far more winner's circle visits this year than last, when he walked down victory lane 146 times.

Newcomer Colin Kelly, who has had a big impact on the driver colony, is second with 34 wins. Mark Herschberger, whose 99 wins were second to Beckwith a year ago, is currently third with 26 victories. Joe Bongiorno won six races last weekend, putting him fourth in the standings with 20 victory lane jaunts, while the 2025 Dan Patch Rising Star Award winner Braxten Boyd rounds out the top five with 14 winners.

NO CAKEWALK FOR THE CHALK: The Meadowlands has long been popular with bettors because of how often favorites take it on the chin.

Currently, the post-time public choice at The Big M wins just 37.5 percent of the time, and that number stacks up well against some of the other popular harness racing signals offered across the country.

The second most prolific track is Woodbine Mohawk Park, where favorites click at a rate of 42.5 percent. At Indiana's Harrah's Hoosier Park, the chalk also comes in 42.5 percent of the time, while at Ohio's Northfield Park, the favorites score 45.7 percent of the time. Finally, at Yonkers Raceway, the public choice hits at 46.1 percent.

The facts are clear. If you want to play a track with big pools where the favorite is vulnerable, The Big M is the place for you.

THE SCHEDULE: Live racing at The Meadowlands will take place on a Friday-Saturday basis through March and April with a 6 p.m. post time.

-edited release (Meadowlands)

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, MARCH 19

RACE 9

(2) SHINE A LIGHT delivered the goods again in this class last week and debuts for new high-percentage connections off a claim. Bartlett drove him in his most recent victory and is back at the controls here.

-Greg Reinhart



FRIDAY, MARCH 20

RACE 4

(3) THE FIXER has been holding his own against tougher horses in his last few efforts. This drop into the Pop-Up Series is one thing, but to pick up James Macdonald tonight is even bigger. I would expect the veteran to try and go all the way.

-Kevin Plowcha



RACE 6

(3) MISS JUM JABBER sprinted home in 25 seconds with the wind at her back and was every bit as good as her stablemate Sunny Station, who will likely be the favorite here; ready to pop now.

-Derick Gwerner



SATURDAY, MARCH 21

RACE 5

(4) ARTIST BEST was making a strong wide rally from the back when he got spooked by #9 in this field when that one made a break on the final turn; sharp right now but with hidden form.

-Gwerner



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 TWITTER: @DRFHARNES

NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

BORGATA ELIGIBLES EXPECTED TO QUALIFY SATURDAY AT THE BIG M

Captain Albano, Redwood Hanover, Twisted Destiny and Coaches Corner will all qualify on Saturday in the late afternoon to prepare for the MGM Borgata Pacing series which gets underway at MGM Yonkers Raceway on March 30.

Captain Albano, the only double millionaire in the group, returns for his 5-year-old campaign after earning just under \$600,000 in 2025. When last seen on December 19 at Yonkers he finished second in the \$250,000 MGM Grand Prix at the added distance of 1 1/4 miles. Noel Daley trains and Todd McCarthy is expected to be in the bike in the eighth race qualifier.

The horse that defeated Captain Albano back in late December was Coaches Corner, himself a career winner of \$1.48 million. He was fourth in a qualifier last weekend at The Big M and will get one final prep for trainer Per Engblom and driver Jason Bartlett.

One race earlier finds Redwood Hanover also making his second preliminary starts for the Engblom/Bartlett duo. The 6-year-old has made just over \$500K during his career and has done well on half-mile tracks.

Twisted Destiny also qualifies for the second time as he gets set for his 4-year-old debut. The Chris Ryder trainee was third timed in 1:55 2/5 last week and will have Dexter Dunn in the bike again from post three in race six.

The newly renamed Ursula McIntyre series (formerly Blue Chip Matchmaker) has a number of eligibles racing Saturday as well. Bath Bomb and Huntress, both earners of just under \$500K career, hook up in the third qualifier. They will be in action when the series starts on March 27.

Other notables on the qualifying card that starts at 3:30 PM (EDT) are Rattle My Cage, who makes his first start since December 2023, and Funtime Bayama, a 10-time winner in 33 career starts.

SUGG REACHES 6,000 CAREER DRIVING WINS

Veteran harness driver Kurt Sugg reached a milestone Sunday night when he picked up the 6,000th win of his career behind Get In And Go – a horse he also trains – in race four on the card. The pair delivered the victory with a three-wide sweeping move around the far turn, grinding their way to the front late and edging past the favorite Mohatu AS (Dan Noble).

[READ MORE](#)

BARTLETT BRAVES CHILL, WINS FOUR Q'S AT POCONO

In 2025 you are named Driver of the Year after recording over 800 victories and \$16.7 million in earnings. You drive Tuesday night at Yonkers, win twice and hit the board on five other occasions.

So when you wake up Wednesday morning, and it's barely 20 degrees outside, what do you do? If you're Jason Bartlett, you motor to Pocono Downs at Mohegan Pennsylvania and win four qualifying races!

Many of the horses in the Pocono morning session were prepping for the annual Weiss Series for 3-year-olds starting in early April. Among these sophomores, the quickest mile of the chilly session came from the pacer American Cheese, a Weiss-eligible American Ideal colt who blitzed home in 55 4/5 - 27 to win in 1:54 1/5 for Bartlett and trainer Jared Bako.

Fastest overall clocking was a remarkable 1:52 turned in by the Sweet Lou 5-year-old gelding Sweet Beach Life, whose last race was also clocked in 1:52, with him winning an Open event at Yonkers back in October. Here Matt Kakaley sent Sweet Beach Life to the lead in 28, yielded to his Travis Alexander stablemate Howlenthedhills but was back for the retake before the 56 1/5 half. Jackson Cooper pressed the winner uncovered to a 1:24 three-quarters, but Sweet Beach Life had enough in reserve to hold off an inside charge from Holwenthehills by 1 1/2 lengths, with the same margin back to third-place Jackson Cooper.

On the trot, Bartlett combined with older performer Blackhawk Zette to overcome the outside post eight and win in 1:55 3/5, swiftest of the day for that gait, for trainer Bob Baggitt Jr., who shared conditioning honors on the day with two winners from his barn. The other trainer to win twice was Anette Lorentzon, both driven by Bartlett – 3-year-olds Jewels Shadow AS and Captainforlife AS (unfortunately not Weiss-eligible).

Bartlett was given his Driver of the Year trophy at the USHWA Dan Patch Banquet in Florida in February; also going to the podium that night

was driver Braxten Boyd as the Rising Star Award winner (an honor Bartlett, by the way, captured in 2008). Boyd was right behind Bartlett Wednesday with three victories, including victory with two Weiss eligibles, trotting colt Dilly Hanover and trotting filly Shelooksgoodngreen.

The other Weiss eligible who won on Wednesday was the Always B Miki pacing colt Twin B Thriller, who came from last at the half in going on to win in 1:55 1/5 for driver George Napolitano Jr. and trainer Dennis A. Laterza. Twin B Thriller (and American Cheese) may be among the entrants when the Weiss Series competition kicks off with pacing colt action on Saturday, April 4.

Next Pocono program is Saturday at 1 p.m..

-edited release (Pocono/PHHA)

WINBAK MOURNS THE PASSING OF SPRING BREAK, FLIBBERTIGIBBET

Winbak Farm is saddened to report the passing of Spring Break, p, 2, 1:57 4/5h; 3, 1:50 3/5z (\$787,057). Spring Break was euthanized due to unresolvable lameness issues.

"Spring Break was a special mare to me because she raced phenomenally for us before we retired to be a broodmare," said Joe Thomson, Winbak Farm Owner. "She was a great producer, her babies always had an athletic look to them and they sold well."

Spring Break was bred and raised by Winbak Farm. She was a 39-time Winner.

At 2, Spring Break won the Lou Babic Memorial Final and New Jersey Sire Stakes division. She was third in the Molly Pitcher Stakes, Reynolds Stakes and Tompkins-Geers Stakes.

At 3, Spring Break won the Andray Farm Series leg and Final. She was second in two Andray Farm Series legs and a New Jersey Sire Stakes division. She was third in Maryland Stakes, two New Jersey Sire Stakes divisions and Tompkins Geers Stakes. In addition, she won many Preferred races.

As a broodmare, Spring Break was a 100% producer. She is the dam of 66x Winner, Bettor Than Spring, p, 3, 1:52 1/5f; 1:49 2/5h (\$885,952), 30x Winner, Tuxedo Bay, p, 2, 1:54 4/5s; 3, 1:53 1/5s; 1:50 (\$373,184), 20x Winner, Spring Blake, p, 3, 1:52 2/5f; 1:49 1/5f -25 (\$225,096), and 2025 Prospect Winner, Cabo San Lucas, p, 2, 1:55 1/5f -25 (\$13,810).

"Spring Break's daughters, Break The Deal and Grip N Win, are members of the Winbak Farm broodmare band," said Jack Burke, Winbak Farm General Manager. "They are both young, their oldest foals are 3 and a yearling, we look forward to them carrying the Spring Break bloodline for many years to come."

Flibbertigibbet leaves us too soon

Winbak Farm is saddened to report the loss of broodmare, Flibbertigibbet, p, 3, 1:54 4/5f; 1:49 (\$188,383).

Flibbertigibbet was an 18-time Winner, and her wins included multiple Preferred races.

"Flibbertigibbet was a fast race mare and a wonderful producer," said Joe Thomson, Winbak Farm owner. "I loved that she had a record of 1:49 and her speed carried to her offspring, she produced fast and rich performers including eight Winners of over \$100,000."

Flibbertigibbet was the dam of 11 Winners including: New York Sire Stakes Winner, Town Gossip, p, 2, 1:56 1/5h; 3, 1:49 2/5f (\$685,254), New York Sire Stakes Winner, Swift As A Shadow, p, 2, 1:56h; 3, Q1:52 4/5; 1:50 1/5f (\$617,530), 39x Winner, Rock N Row, p, 1:51f (\$244,687), Maryland Race Fund Winner, Valentina De Vie, p, 2, 1:54 3/5f; 3, 1:53 2/5f; 1:51 4/5f (\$202,882), John Simpson Memorial Winner, Chillin It De Vie, p, 2, 1:56 4/5f; 3, 1:51 3/5 (\$141,897), Pennsylvania Stallion Series Final Winner, Flash Move, p, 3, 1:50f; 1:49 4/5f (\$140,842), and Victory Joe, p, 2, Q1:57 2/5; 3, 1:52 2/5f -25 (\$115,420).

"Flibbertigibbet was able to be bred to pretty much any stallion because she was an Albert Albert daughter and it made her a fantastic outcross," said Jack Burke, Winbak Farm General Manager. "She consistently produced stakes winners that were also tough racehorses as they aged, as a matter of fact, she had two sons, Flash Move and Victory Joe, win on Monday."

She is also the second dam of 2026 O'Brien Award Winner, A Clean Deal, p, 2, 1:50s -25 (\$329,394), and Bama Breeze, p, 2, 1:55 2/5f; 3, 1:53f; 1:50 2/5f -25 (\$143,303).

-edited releases (Winbak)