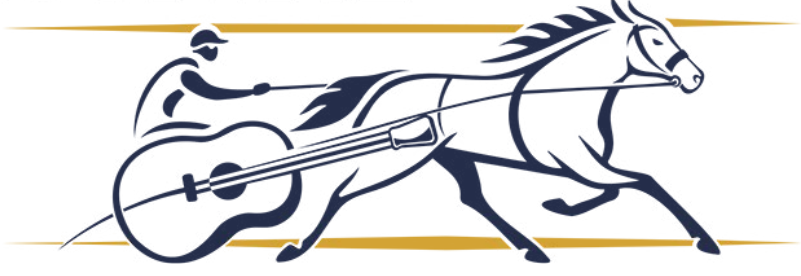


THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2026

Regional champs clash in inaugural Oak Grove Trotting Derby eliminations

2026 OAK GROVE FESTIVAL OF RACING



EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner
 @harnessevegyu

Racing provide an alternate path where the goal could be far from singular. Grand Circuit winners as well as Sire Stakes champions from multiple regions in 2025 are in the lineup for both Derby events and a true clash of the regional titans will take place in the third \$50,000 Oak Grove Trotting Derby elimination where Kentucky (Endurance), New York (AI) and Ohio (Big Ranger) titleholders will battle with four others for three spots in the \$500,000 final on May 16.

The ultimate proof will be in which horses survive the eliminations and make serious noise in the final, but at least going in Endurance is the top dog in the 14th race (third elim) and perhaps of the 19 entrants for the Oak Grove Trotting Derby. The Chris Beaver trainee posted an impressive six wins in eight starts while earning \$557,450 in 2025 and will make his seasonal debut

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 3](#)



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Brandon Blvd makes 2026 debut in Paul Revere at Plainridge**
- Coyne pair looks competitive in Dexter Cup, Lady Suffolk**
- Jessica Hallett: Amanda Bailey wears all the hats and does it well**
- Jay Bergman: Borgata final shapes up as must-see Harness Racing**
- Surreal Ideal on a roll heading into Mindlin Memorial at Miami Valley**
- Best Bets & Analysis**
- Loua Dipa in action Friday at Philly; New starter at The Meadowlands as championship meet starts**
- Comments? Questions? Email the Editor DGiwner@DRF.com**



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on Monday off a 1:53 4/5 qualifying victory at Spring Garden Ranch in Florida.

"I was really happy with him. I had to run up that day and race in the Hackett eliminations [at Miami Valley], but I got him warmed up and then I left, and I was able to watch it on video. I thought he looked like he did it really easy, and I got the same impression from [driver] Andrew [McCarthy]," said Beaver, who had already trained the son of Captain Corey in 1:55. "I knew he was ready for a mile around 1:54 and I told him to go somewhere in that range because I didn't want to have to worry about qualifying him again when I got to Ohio."

Endurance, who will start from post two with McCarthy again in the bike for owners Super Endurance Stable, Bill Manes, Leo Fleming and Mark Moger, won his Kentucky Sire Stakes championship at The Red Mile and finished second in the G1 Mohawk Million at Woodbine Mohawk Park last year. He was scheduled to be one of the favorites in the Breeders Crown when a coffin bone bruise sidelined him for the rest of the year.

"I didn't like how the season ended, but that seems to be 100% healed," said Beaver before noting the physical changes in Endurance. "He grew bigger. He was big last year, but he grew even more and that surprised me, and filled out proportionally. You're always worried when you put one away and they're injured. But, I said when I started back, if he had any problems along the way, we wouldn't be racing in this first race. We'd wait for later on. And, he really gave me no problems at all.

"I've had good trotters, I've had millionaires, but, this is the first horse I've had that could be the best in his category."

Although Beaver feels his horse is ready to win not only the elimination but also the final, he did express concern about the ability of 2025 Ohio Sire Stakes champion Big Ranger. Owned by Madison Global and trained and driven by Ronnie Gillespie, the colt from hot Buckeye State stallion In Range was an unstoppable seven-of-seven in his freshman year racing exclusively in his home state versus regional foes. Now he takes on Grand Circuit competition in a new location.

"We really don't know what [Big Ranger is] capable of when he behaves himself because he hasn't been tested, really. But, I feel pretty comfortable with everything else that I'm racing against and I'd be I'd be surprised if my horse isn't very competitive with a Big Ranger as well," said Beaver.

Beaver was referring to not only Big Ranger's unblemished record but the fact that the colt broke in his 2026 opener in the \$75,000 Hackett final at Miami Valley on April 23. Sent off as the 2-5 favorite, Big Ranger made the miscue heading to the gate and never recovered from the bad experience while finishing distanced from the field.

For his part, Gillespie said he was caught off guard by the poor behavior from Big Ranger. The colt hadn't made a break since July 12, 2025 and was perfect from post one in his April 3 return qualifier this year.

"He just got really aggressive and for the first time ever swelled up so much that I couldn't hold him. I was going to choke him down [shut off his airway] or I was going to hit the gate. He hit the gate and that was what made him break," said Gillespie, who added popout ear plugs – something he used on the colt only once in the Ohio Sire Stakes final last year – for a qualifying start two days later at Winner's Circle Training Center and watched from the bike as Big Ranger cruised to an easy 1:53 win. "He was perfect. I didn't even pull the plugs."

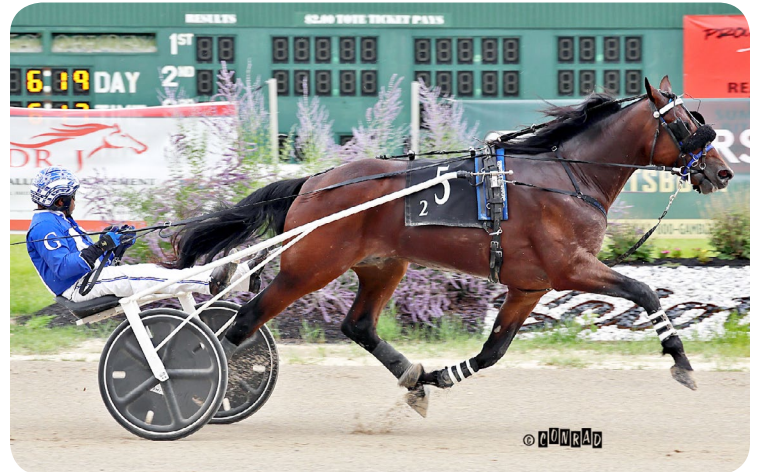
Gillespie has a challenge ahead of him on Monday since he drew the outside post seven and has to make sure he finishes in the top three to qualify for the final. While some drivers or trainers might play it conservatively looking to get into the final with a late move, the 54-year-old driver clearly has a plan.

"I have to [leave the gate hard]. I have to finish in the top three. I'm at least going to have to get away close up if possible," said Gillespie. "I'm just hoping they don't push him hard. If they do, a hole has to open up somewhere. If I get behind the right horse, like Endurance, I don't mind sitting on his back and trying it down the lane."



(ABOVE) TONY CENTONZE PHOTO / (BELOW) CONRAD PHOTO

(above) Endurance won multiple races over the Oak Grove surface in 2025. (below) Big Ranger went undefeated with a seven-for-seven record in Ohio last year.



Certainly the road to the front for Big Ranger will be complicated by New York Sire Stakes final winner AI. The son of Chapter Seven, who won five times and earned \$395,073 in 2025, drew post six just to the inside of the Ohio champ.

AI had a good run against New York competition but struggled to get more than minor rewards versus Open stakes competition last year. So far in 2026 he has qualified twice, the most recent of which was a very sharp 1:54 3/5 winning mile at The Meadowlands with Yannick Gingras in the bike for trainer Ron Burke and owners Burke Racing Stable, Hatfield Stable, Knox Services and Weaver Bruscelli.

"He qualified really good," said Gingras. "He's a bit of an overachiever. I think he surprised everybody from training down and then qualifying. He's just one of those that gradually got better and better."

"I think he's just a very nice horse that likes to do his work and sometimes it's half the battle. He's definitely not as talented as like Apex and those horses, but he tries really hard and he's got a great attitude."

AI did his best work on smaller tracks in 2025 and Gingras said that perhaps the Oak Grove five-eighths oval might suit his horse perfectly.

"He was racing good on a half and maybe the mile track didn't step him up quite as much. Like I said, he's maybe not as fast as some of the others but I think he'll like the five-eighths a lot," said Gingras. "In the qualifier he came home in 27 and change and he did it really easy. I thought last year maybe he didn't have those quick bursts of speed. That's the thing I think he's going to have to have this year if he's going to take the next step. And so far I think he showed that."

Whichever horses from the big three in race 14 make it through to the May 16 final, they will certainly have to meet stiff competition from the finalists in the other two eliminations. The first Oak Grove Trotting Derby event is race six and 2025 Breeders Crown 2-year-old colt trot winner Spencer Hanover is the horse to beat from post three with Jason Bartlett back in his usual sulky spot. The Marcus Melander trainee is off a second-place finish in his most recent qualifier at The Meadowlands as he makes his pari-mutuel debut on Monday.

Also in race six is Gingras with the best from Massachusetts in Sire Stakes champion Geologic (post five). The son of Captain Corey won that final by almost 20 lengths last year and has a string of three qualifiers for trainer Paul Kelley leading up to Monday's race.

"He is a nice horse but it is hard to tell how nice because of the competition he faced last year. He won the Sire Stakes by 20 lengths because everyone broke," said Gingras. "He's got the ability but you could tell he needed to mature a bit into his big body. From what I've heard from Paul, he's really happy with how he came back. Even some people that sat behind him in Florida or seen him training have said he looked like a different horse than he was last year. So, I'm hoping he matured well and hopefully he has a good season."

Indiana is also represented in the sixth race in the form of champion Premier Bluebird. Co-owned and trained by Zachary Miller, the son of Pilot Discretion leaves from post one with Kyle Wilfong driving.

The middle Oak Grove Trotting Derby elimination could be a showcase for Silverstein. Although he had to settle for third in both the Kentucky Sire Stakes final and Mohawk Million, the Matt Burkholder-trained charge was as consistent as they come in 2025 with 11 in-the-money finishes in 12 starts.

Silverstein will be the likely favorite from post two with David Miller listed to drive.

The 15-race Oak Grove Monday card also features three \$30,000 nine-horse eliminations for the inaugural \$300,000 Oak Grove Trotting Oaks. Sire Stakes winners are also highlighted in this series and cluttered in one field (Race 13). Pennsylvania champ Ginger Tree Lex (post eight), Kentucky's best Country Glide (post one) and Ohio leader Setyoursightshigh (post four) are set to do battle. The other elims are races seven and 10.



MIKE LIZZI PHOTO

AI posted multiple track records on the New York Sire Stakes circuit last year.

Two more added attractions on the Monday card, which gets underway at 1:10 PM (CDT), are seven \$50,000 legs of the Kentucky Sire Stakes for 4-year-olds and a pair of carryovers. The late Pick 5 (Races 6-10) has a \$2,762 carryover and \$12,500 guaranteed pool while the late Pick 4 (Races 11-14) offers \$1,563 in added money and a \$10,000 promised pool.

Brandon Blvd makes 2026 debut in \$100K Paul Revere Pace at Plainridge Park

Brandon Blvd (Downbytheseaside-Alexis Faith) was one of the fastest 2-year-old pacers of last season and he will be making his first start of 2026 in the G3 \$100,000 Paul Revere Pace when the Grand Circuit returns to Plainridge Park on Saturday (May 2).

Brandon Blvd was a standout at The Red Mile in Kentucky his entire freshman season, winning three legs of the Kentucky Sire Stakes and finishing second by only one-half length in the \$400,000 final. He then went on to win the Bluegrass and International Stallion Stakes in identical 1:49 1/5 clockings before shipping to Canada for the Breeders Crown.

In his elimination at Woodbine Mohawk Park, Brandon Blvd sat third behind fast early fractions before Dexter Dunn pulled him with live cover heading to three-quarters. When they turned for home, Brandon Blvd pulled away from the field under wraps and won by 1-1/2 lengths in 1:48 4/5, which was a new track and Canadian record for 2-year-old pacing colts, besting the 1:49 mark set by Sweet Lou in 2011.

A week later in the final, Brandon Blvd sat second behind the undefeated and eventual 2025 Horse of the Year Beau Jangles through quarters of 27, 54 and 1:21 4/5 before finishing 2-3/4 lengths behind him in the 1:48 3/5 mile, which was also a new stake, track and Canadian record for 2-year-old pacing colts.

Andrew Harris, who trains and co-owns Brandon Blvd with William Pollack and Bruce Aremann, looked back at the successful season his fast colt had and is very optimistic about his return to the track this year.

"To be honest with you, all his races in Kentucky were outstanding. Then he went to Canada for the Breeders Crown and was phenomenal in the elimination before unfortunately getting a little bit sick before the final. He wasn't 100% going into that so afterward it made the decision easy to shut him down for the rest of the year. He got quite a bit of time to get over that and grow up," said Harris.

A \$425,000 yearling purchase at the 2024 Lexington Selected Sale

who was bred by Crawford Farms, Brandon Blvd ended the season tied as the fifth-fastest (1:48 4/5) and seventh richest (\$389,397) 2-year-old pacer of 2025.

Brandon Blvd was sent back to Kentucky and wintered at Walco Farms before prepping for this season.

"This year he's come back perfect. From the day we brought him back in, he's just been an amazing horse to sit behind, and I'm just blessed to sit behind him," said Harris.

Brandon Blvd has had two qualifiers at The Meadowlands coming into this event. The first, finishing second by a neck in 1:52 with a 25 4/5 final panel while making up 2-1/2 lengths in the process. And the second was on the front, winning in 1:51 3/5 and being eased to the line.

"That's the type of horse he is, you give him a target and he reels it in. And then he was really good on the front and Dexter (Dunn) was shutting him down all the way to the wire and said he was just sitting on him. So I'm pretty confident going into this race. I just went a couple easy trips with him today (Wednesday, April 29) and it seems like he's going into this in great shape," said Harris.

After the Paul Revere, Brandon Blvd is staked to just about everything moving forward. Harris said he will have a couple weeks before his next start, which is the G3 Somebeachsomewhere Stake at Woodbine Mohawk Park on Saturday, May 30.

Post time for the first race at Plainridge Park on Saturday is 4 p.m., with the Paul Revere Pace scheduled to go off at 6 p.m.

The \$100,000 Paul Revere Pace is one of four Grand Circuit events to be held at Plainridge Park this year. It will be followed by the G3 \$100,000 Battle Of Bunker Hill 3-year-old trot (May 16), the G2 \$300,000 Spirit Of Massachusetts Trot and the G3 \$150,000 Clara Barton Distaff Pace (July 19) and the \$80,000 Reynolds Stake for 3-year-old pacers (Oct. 12).

-edited release (Tim Bojarski for Plainridge Park)



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2026 STAKES SCHEDULE

OHIO SIRES STAKES

2-YEAR-OLD COLT TROT

- 1 Scioto Downs Sat. July 11
- 2 Northfield Park Mon. July 20
- 3 Scioto Downs Thurs. Aug. 6
- 4 Northfield Park Mon. Aug. 17
- 5 Scioto Downs Thurs. Aug. 27

2-YEAR-OLD COLT PACE

- 1 Northfield Park Sun. July 12
- 2 Scioto Downs Sat. July 25
- 3 Northfield Park Sat. Aug. 8
- 4 Scioto Downs Sat. Aug. 22
- 5 Scioto Downs Sat. Aug. 29

3-YEAR-OLD COLT TROT

- 1 Miami Valley Sat. May 2
- 2 Scioto Downs Mon. May 25
- 3 Scioto Downs Sat. June 13
- 4 Northfield Park Sun. July 12
- 5 Northfield Park Mon. Aug. 24

3-YEAR-OLD COLT PACE

- 1 Miami Valley Sat. May 2
- 2 Scioto Downs Mon. May 25
- 3 Northfield Park Sat. June 20
- 4 Northfield Park Mon. July 6
- 5 Scioto Downs Sat. Aug. 29

2-YEAR-OLD FILLY TROT

- 1 Scioto Downs Sat. July 11
- 2 Northfield Park Mon. July 20
- 3 Scioto Downs Thurs. Aug. 6
- 4 Northfield Park Sun. Aug. 16
- 5 Scioto Downs Tues. Aug. 25

2-YEAR-OLD FILLY PACE

- 1 Northfield Park Mon. July 13
- 2 Scioto Downs Fri. July 24
- 3 Northfield Park Sat. Aug. 8
- 4 Scioto Downs Tues. Aug. 18
- 5 Scioto Downs Sat. Aug. 29

3-YEAR-OLD FILLY TROT

- 1 Miami Valley Sat. May 2
- 2 Northfield Park Sat. May 30
- 3 Scioto Downs Thurs. June 18
- 4 Scioto Downs Sat. July 4
- 5 Northfield Park Wed. Aug. 26

3-YEAR-OLD FILLY PACE

- 1 Miami Valley Sat. May 2
- 2 Northfield Park Sat. May 30
- 3 Northfield Park Sat. June 20
- 4 Scioto Downs Sat. July 4
- 5 Scioto Downs Fri. Aug. 28

BUCKEYE STALLION SERIES

2-YEAR-OLD COLT TROT

- 1 Scioto Downs Tues. July 14
- 2 Scioto Downs Thurs. July 23
- 3 Urbana Mon. Aug. 10
- 4 Northfield Park Wed. Aug. 19
- 5 Delaware Tues. Sept. 22

2-YEAR-OLD COLT PACE

- 1 Northfield Park Wed. July 15
- 2 Scioto Downs Fri. July 24
- 3 Northfield Park Sat. Aug. 15
- 4 Scioto Downs Sat. Aug. 22
- 5 Delaware Wed. Sept. 23

3-YEAR-OLD COLT TROT

- 1 Scioto Downs Sat. May 9
- 2 Northfield Park Sat. June 6
- 3 Northfield Park Mon. June 15
- 4 Scioto Downs Sat. July 18
- 5 Delaware Tues. Sept. 22

3-YEAR-OLD COLT PACE

- 1 Scioto Downs Sat. May 9
- 2 Northfield Park Sat. June 6
- 3 Scioto Downs Sat. June 27
- 4 Northfield Park Sun. July 19
- 5 Delaware Thurs. Sept. 24

2-YEAR-OLD FILLY PACE

- 1 Scioto Downs Fri. July 17
- 2 Scioto Downs Thurs. July 23
- 3 Urbana Mon. Aug. 10
- 4 Northfield Park Mon. Aug. 17
- 5 Delaware Sun. Sept. 20

2-YEAR-OLD FILLY TROT

- 1 Scioto Downs Tues. July 14
- 2 Bucyrus Wed. July 22
- 3 Northfield Park Sun. Aug. 9
- 4 Scioto Downs Thurs. Aug. 20
- 5 Delaware Mon. Sept. 21

3-YEAR-OLD FILLY TROT

- 1 Northfield Park Sun. May 3
- 2 Scioto Downs Thurs. June 4
- 3 Northfield Park Mon. June 22
- 4 Scioto Downs Sat. July 18
- 5 Delaware Mon. Sept. 21

3-YEAR-OLD FILLY PACE

- 1 Northfield Park Sun. May 3
- 2 Scioto Downs Fri. June 5
- 3 Northfield Park Sun. June 21
- 4 Scioto Downs Fri. Aug. 7
- 5 Delaware Thurs. Sept. 24

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Coyne pair look competitive in Dexter Cup, Lady Suffolk at Big M

By Jay Bergman

Veteran trainer Ron Coyne Jr. doesn't have the size or scope of most major trotting outfits but that hasn't stopped him from coming up with horses of superior talent racing in New Jersey. A few years ago, Coyne had the sophomore Southwind Admiral poised for the Yonkers Trot following a promising 2-year-old season. That son of Tactical Landing suffered an injury that curtailed his sophomore season.

With what he had learned, Coyne returned to the yearling sales to purchase Southwind Alamo in 2024 and on Saturday night hopes he has the goods to compete in the Grade 3 Dexter Cup (race 10) at The Meadowlands, a \$157,125 event that opens the Grand Circuit for the prestigious sophomore trotting division.

"He definitely belongs with these," said Coyne, affirming expectations for the colt that showed glimpses of potential racing exclusively in New Jersey as a freshman.

"He got to bullying last year," said Coyne of the colt's demeanor. "By the end of the year I think it just wore him down."

A solid third behind divisional leader Apex in the New Jersey Classic for freshman colts and geldings last September, Southwind Alamo's lone stakes victory in 2025 came in an early round of the Kindergarten series at The Meadowlands where he took his seasonal mark in his first career pari-mutuel start, a 1:55 1/5 clocking.

Following a solid winter training back, Coyne felt that Southwind Alamo had turned the corner and was going to be a better horse this year. "He started to mature and become a lot easier to handle," said Coyne. "I was happy with the way he qualified both times."

As he did last year, Southwind Alamo came out strongly in his season's debut for Todd McCarthy and powered to a 1:53 3/5 career best, cruising around the Harrah's Philadelphia five-eighths oval impressively. "I'd say he was within himself in that mile," Coyne said of the colt he plucked from the Lexington Selected sale for \$57,000.

"He's filled out physically," said Coyne of Southwind Alamo, who drew post four in the Dexter and meets seven rivals from the sport's major trotting stables.

Coyne's charge is one step ahead of his rivals on Saturday in that he's the only horse to have a race under his belt, with the seven rivals all coming off qualifiers. It's hard to say if that's a major advantage considering trainer Ake Svanstedt and Marcus Melander have significantly larger stables, giving each an easier gauge to a horse's progress. Svanstedt and Melander each have two in the field.

Nordic Dancer S and Magic Punk drew posts five and six, respectively, with the former having limited Grand Circuit exposure as a freshman and Magic Punk showing promise finishing second in both the William Wellwood Memorial and Peter Haughton during a campaign that saw him win four of his eight starts.

Nordic Dancer S took his 1:56 1/5 record in a division of the Simpson at Pocono last October and the full brother to the 2025 Hambletonian champion Nordic Catcher S will need to step up his game this year if he wants to compete at the same level.

Melander's pair of Midwind Chimp (post 1) and Neighver Punt (post 8) spent plenty of time during their frosh seasons racing in Kentucky. The pair lacks much in the way of Grand Circuit credentials, though Neighver Punt was a close second in a division of the International Stallion Stakes at The Red Mile last October.

When you spend seven figures at an auction, as trainer Andrew Harris did for his ownership at Harrisburg in 2024, you are looking for a horse with the pedigree and talent to win the big ones. Cambridge Hanover, a \$1,000,000 buy, did not win a race as a freshman in nine starts but nevertheless was quite intriguing, earning a spot in the Breeders Crown final. The half-brother to former standout Maryland started as many times as his sibling in their first year of racing but had six fewer victories. Cambridge Hanover (post 7) gave the appearance of a different horse in 2026 in both of his qualifiers this year, with driver Jason Bartlett putting the Walner-sired colt in good position and not asking of much. Saturday's Dexter will be a good barometer to see where he fits in the sophomore crop.

Nine fillies entered the \$67,650 Lady Suffolk (race 11) on Saturday and Coyne's Abbey Blue Chip drew post eight. Also by Tactical Landing, Abbey Blue Chip makes her third start of the year in search of a first victory.

"I'm sure she can go with these," said Coyne with some confidence. "She drew post eight in her first start at Pocono and was very good finishing."

Abbey Blue Chip's second outing on April 17 at Harrah's Philadelphia was even better. "She was in with a 4-year-old horse that figured to win and she fought right to the wire," said Coyne.

Abbey Blue Chip had some of the same issues as her stablemate last year according to her trainer and likely ended her season not as sharp as she started it.

The Lady Suffolk marks the sophomore debut of last year's G1 Goldsmith Maid winner All Time Trot S (post 6) for team Svanstedt. All Time Trot S was first or second in six of her seven starts as a freshman and returns to action following a solid 1:56 qualifier on April 24 at The Meadowlands. Svanstedt will send out stablemate Busy Miss Lissy S (post 2), a six-time winner in 2025 that captured the G3 Kindergarten Final but finished third in the Goldsmith Maid.

Sister Wine (post 9) makes her first stakes appearance of the year for trainer Julie Miller. The daughter of Bar Hopping closed out a successful freshman campaign with a win in the Simpson and second-place finish in the Liberty Bell in 2025, earning \$70K for the season.

Coyne has Southwind Alamo well-staked in 2026. The colt is ineligible to the Hambletonian but was named into the Earl Beal at Pocono as well as the Canadian Trotting Classic at Woodbine Mohawk Park. A New Jersey-eligible, Southwind Alamo has the Sire Stakes as well as the New Jersey Classic on his stakes schedule.

Saturday's 14-race Meadowlands card starts at 6:35 PM (EDT) and also features multiple divisions of New Jersey Sire Stakes for 3-year-old pacers.



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Amanda Bailey wears all the hats and does it well



HARNESS FOCUS

By Jessica Hallett  @JHallettPhoto

Amanda Bailey wears many hats – horsewoman, trainer, wife and mother – but none of them exist separately. At the barn she runs alongside her husband, Leon Bailey, her days are an elaborate balancing act of daily barn chores, focusing on the horses, racing and traveling to race, and raising two children, all woven together in a lifestyle that rarely slows down.

Bailey was born into the harness racing industry as her grandfather and dad raced horses together.

“It’s something I’ve always been a part of and enjoy doing,” Bailey said.

At 18, she got her trainer’s license, something she had always wanted to pursue the career she always wanted. However, her parents encouraged her to go to college, so she was steered down a different path.

“While harness racing was always a part of my life, it wasn’t all about that until 10 years ago when I started training horses full time. I’ve mostly taken care of horses with my dad and over the past few years, I have started a small stable with Leon,” Bailey said.

Leon and Amanda have five horses right now in their stable, one of which is Pestcontrol, a 5-year-old gelding product of Schoolkids–Furious Five whose story holds a special place in the Bailey’s hearts.

Pestcontrol, also known as Pesto to his connections, was Bailey’s first horse that she got from her most recent owner Adam Friedland.

“I didn’t officially agree on taking him because I wanted Leon to check him out first,” Bailey said. “Well, I didn’t say anything to Leon yet and the people who had Pesto were calling Leon about shipping him up.”

Pesto showed up at the Bailey’s barn and he was right off the bat a standout horse. Bailey described him as a runaway on the track, naughty in the barn and not racing well.

“I ended up making an instant connection with him,” she said. “I understand his silly quirks and work around them, and it’s paid off. You just have to let him be a goober!”

Pesto competed in the \$10,000 claiming class for the Baileys, getting checks and a few wins. The tide had seemed to turn with his racing performance until one night last summer when Bailey said one of the scariest moments of her life had happened.

Leon had gone to the track late one night to check on waters and could hear a whistling sound. He found Pesto choking and barely breathing. He pulled him out of the stall and the horse was soaked in sweat, shaking like a leaf. Since it was 11:30 p.m., it was impossible to get ahold of a vet, so Leon and Amanda brought him to a nearby vet clinic, where they were able to save him, but then Pesto faced complications from the ordeal.

“He had to stay for a few days and stay on medications,” Bailey explained. “When I finally got him home, it was such a relief until he started having really bad reactions to the medications. They weren’t really sure what was going on.

“At this point the owner had spent an insane amount of money keeping this horse alive and now he’s having all these issues. We were asking, ‘Is he going to be okay? Is he going to race again?’ There were lots of tears and tough conversations, but I couldn’t give up on Pesto. I was bound and determined to help him.”

Pesto was brought to another vet clinic where he stayed for another week.

When he finally came home, he had to be hand-walked for certain amounts of time, fed a special way, and put on new medications.

“It was a lot of work and rehab and time off, but I never ever lost faith in my Pesto. I was training him back this year and he felt so strong. I knew he was going to be alright and make it back. I think he’s got a few more quirks now, but we’ve had two wins in a handful of starts this year and I couldn’t be happier and prouder of Pesto! We have heart talks before every race how someday we are going to go swim with the dolphins, but I’m not sure how that would go, he’d probably be scared to death,” she laughed.

Pestcontrol now has a record of 3-2-1 in nine starts under the guidance of Amanda Bailey with Leon in the bike.

One of Pestcontrol’s wins actually garnered a training double on the card for Bailey – the first in her career as a trainer – after he won alongside



JESSICA HALLETT PHOTO

Pestcontrol with trainer Amanda Bailey and driver Leon Bailey.

his stablemate Star Pilot on the same card in March. The 41-year-old now has 84 wins in 704 career starts over the last nine years.

“The training double felt special to me because it was the first on my own with horses I train for an owner! And the fact that it was Pesto!”

In addition to Pestcontrol, Bailey has a baby in the barn that they broke this past year, so she is excited to watch it grow and develop into racehorses.

“We broke one last year that made it and actually won a sire stakes race here at Saratoga, so that was exciting,” Bailey said.

With five horses and a family, Bailey spends her days doing barn chores, getting horses ready to jog or train and then rushing around to make sure Leon gets to the races. It’s a tough schedule to handle, Bailey explained, especially with having a stable and catch driving, but she said that they try to have horses that not only fit their program, but that she can handle on her own when Leon’s out driving.

Leon drives full time at Saratoga Harness as well as Vernon Downs, where he won his fourth title last year as the leading driver. Together, with Amanda, he is able to balance his catch driving with his stable of five.

“Mandi is the most caring and genuine person I’ve ever met,” Leon Bailey said. “She has a natural gift to make anything or anyone feel content. It’s pretty cool to witness her work her magic. I had to marry her quick before she had time to get away!”

Amanda Bailey wears all of those hats -- horsewoman, trainer, wife and mother – together. She is a caregiver not just to her family but to her horses, proven by her strength and determination to save Pestcontrol and bring him back as an even stronger racehorse. She can always be found in the barn or in the paddock with a smile on her face, with love and care for each and every one of her horses.

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May 8 Borgata Final shapes up as must-see Harness Racing



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman ✕ [BergmanJay](#)

The MGM Borgata series preliminaries are in the books. Over five Mondays 18 races were conducted with generous \$50,000 purses attached. Just eight horses have reached the \$477,000 final on May 8 and to do so they not only had to show up in the entry box but prove their mettle on race day.

Of the finalists, six of the eight managed to race in all five legs. While leading trainer Per Engblom has been a dominant presence at Yonkers over the last few seasons, he deserves incredible credit for having three members of his stable reach this year's final after qualifying two for the 2025 edition.

Huntinthelastdolar and Coaches Corner were fourth and fifth respectively in last year's final and they will join last year's champion Mossdale Ben N in this year's event. The five other members of the field could make this year's final one of the best. While the elimination races tended to bring out odds-on favorites, this year's final is likely to be unpredictable and it is not likely to get any clearer once post positions are drawn on Monday (May 4).

Since there is no draw to work from, we'll go over the octet in alphabetical order starting with Captain Albano, who has the distinction of being the only finalist not to race on the front end in any of his five series starts. Trainer Noel Daley likes the 5-year-old's chances best when he has a target to chase and I guess good fortune had him chasing horses on two occasions in this series and coming away with victories.

Following a subpar – for him – third-place finish from the rail in the opening round, Captain Albano caught odds-on favorite Redwood Hanover on the wire in the second leg, pacing a solid back half without cover. Captain Albano ran into a buzzsaw in Mossdale Ben N and was a decent fourth in the series fastest preliminary, a 1:50 1/5 clocking in leg three on April 13. For me it was his fourth-leg victory that indicated that Captain Albano is now on his best game. Todd McCarthy willingly surrendered the lead from the rail and allowed Sweet Beach Life and Matt Kakaley to cut a leisurely pace. As the second half pace picked up, McCarthy didn't flinch while appearing to lose ground on the leader. There was still no panic with ground to make up on the final turn, but once McCarthy let Captain Albano pace he made up ground quickly and measured the margin of victory with a 26 3/5 kicker. This past Monday (April 27), with Coaches Corner on the point and given respect, Jordan Stratton, subbing for Todd McCarthy who was out of town, had pace guiding Captain Albano to a fourth-place finish that wasn't flashy but included a back half near 53 flat.

Coaches Corner had a slow start as well to this year's edition of the MGM Borgata but managed to squeeze in a pair of wire-to-wire performances, with Jason Bartlett getting double the respect he normally receives given his known talent over the Yonkers surface and beyond, and Coaches Corner's incredible body of work over half-mile tracks. It seems safe to say with two wins and a close second in the final three rounds of preliminary action that the addition of Lasix has helped the 6-year-old Per Engblom trainee. In Monday's (April 27) fifth leg Coaches Corner looked vulnerable when Aye Aye Captain N pulled the pocket on the final turn and met his rival on even terms. Bartlett and Coaches Corner had something in reserve off rated fractions to win in 1:51 1/5. Compromised by post eight in last year's contest, Coaches Corner may be as good in 2026 as he was in 2025, but this year's field appears stronger.

Donegal Luther N is one of the reasons the field is stronger. The Jared Bako-trained 8-year-old was a winner on the front end in the first two legs of the series but after missing round three returned and proved no match for Mossdale Ben N in the fourth leg with Coaches Corner outspurring him for the place spot. In Monday's fifth leg, Jordan Stratton took him on a long first-over drive and the son of Bettor's Creek (Bettor's Delight) displayed a ruggedness, not just passing the leader and finalist Soho Firestone A, but holding off Bartlett and Redwood Hanover in the stretch despite that one having a perfect trip. Donegal Luther N won in 1:52 for the second time in



MIKE LIZZI

With a good post in the final, Mossdale Ben N could be the one to beat in the \$477,000 MGM Borgata at Yonkers Raceway.

the series and perhaps the only question mark about his talent is whether he can get to the 1:50 level likely required for the final.

Trainer Travis Alexander had to be happy with the way Howlenthedhills has improved with each start in the series and the 5-year-old son of American Ideal finished the final preliminary round in fine style. Matt Kakaley was able to weave through traffic to pick up a second-place finish behind Coaches Corner, outspurring some solid rivals including Captain Albano. Howlenthedhills' lone preliminary victory came in the fourth leg against a field that was missing some of the major stars. First or second in more than half of his 50 career starts, Howlenthedhills will need a lot of racing luck to pull off the upset.

Three-leg winner Huntinthelastdolar overcame post six and Mossdale Ben N to capture his third MGM Borgata leg this past Monday, giving him two wins in the series over last year's champion. That said, on April 13 when the two met in the third leg of the series, Mossdale Ben N left Huntinthelastdolar in the dust on the final turn while pacing home in 27 2/5. The fifth-leg victory was by a scant nose, with Huntinthelastdolar getting all the fractions his own way and Jimmy Marohn Jr. reserving Mossdale Ben N until the final quarter. With 26 career wins and over \$1.2 million in earnings, Huntinthelastdolar has the credentials.

Mossdale Ben N has made an impressive return for trainer Peter Tritton and it would be fair to say that driver Jimmy Marohn Jr. has had something to say about the outcome. Marohn's aggressiveness, at least in legs three and four when he raced the 8-year-old son of A Rocknroll Dance on the front end, has paid off handsomely. There was a moment in leg three where Mossdale Ben N didn't make it through the final turn cleanly and may have deserved a disqualification, but he certainly earned the 1:50 1/5 career-best clocking while setting all the fractions. Last year as a confirmed closer he managed to come from seventh at the half for the win. This year Mossdale Ben N can do it either way and that likely makes him the horse to beat.

Of Per Engblom's three finalists, Redwood Hanover, although a two-leg winner, is likely third best based on the level of the fields he beat within the series. While not needing a win in the third leg, Redwood Hanover should have been able to chase down Donegal Luther N in the stretch and the fact he didn't may be a sign that the grueling series has taken its toll.

Soho Firestone A is last alphabetically and one must wonder whether his disappointing finish in Monday's (April 27) last leg is a sign of fatigue or perhaps catch-driver Colin Kelly getting him down to the half too quickly. Soho Firestone A's two series victories came against weaker competition, so his overall class is likely to be tested in the final, a race he'll need a big bounce back to be competitive.

Though there were many short fields throughout the five preliminary legs, post position is still a major factor over the Yonkers strip. Two-thirds (12) of the 18 divisions were won by horses that drew posts 1-3. Only one horse won from posts 6-8 while there were few starters.

No matter how the pills shake out for the MGM Borgata final, the race figures to be the best we've seen in 2026.

Surreal Ideal on a roll heading to Saturday's Mindlin Memorial

By Ken Weingartner

Surreal Ideal has been on a dreamlike roll for trainer/co-owner Vernon Beachy. The 8-year-old male pacer will bring a 12-race win streak to Saturday's (May 2) Grade 3 \$100,000 "The Wizard" Pacey Mindlin Memorial at Miami Valley Raceway, and he has not missed a paycheck in 52 consecutive starts dating back to November 2023.

During that 52-race span, the son of So Surreal-Jkmu-sicofthenite hit the board 45 times, with 25 victories. He finished fourth on five occasions and fifth twice.

"It's very seldom that he goes to the races and doesn't get a check," said Beachy, who has owned Surreal Ideal with Gitup Racing since December 2021 and seen the gelding bank \$576,211 since then. "He's kind of flown under the radar. I guess he hasn't been in the right spots at the right time for the spotlight, but he's been a real good horse for us."

Beachy acquired Surreal Ideal, who was unraced at age 2, near the end of his 3-year-old season. The horse enjoyed success in conditioned classes at MGM Northfield Park and Hollywood Casino at The Meadows as a 4-year-old before a 1:49 3/5 victory at the latter track in August 2022 signaled the prospect of rising to the next level.

"We raced him a few times when we got him and then turned him out for the winter," Beachy said. "Our plan was just to have a conditioned claimer as a 4-year-old, but he turned into quite a bit more than that. Obviously, when he won in (1):49 – that was the first time I ever had a horse win in (1):49 – we thought he was going to be a legit Open horse. But he's just gotten better as we've gone along."

Three weeks after his 1:49 3/5 score, Surreal Ideal won at the Open level at The Meadows, and he has competed in Opens predominantly ever since. Last October, he lowered his lifetime mark to 1:47 2/5 when he won a \$75,000 Free For All by a head over Bythemissal at Woodbine Mohawck Park. Surreal Ideal was sixth after three-quarters but came home in 25 4/5 to get the victory. Only six pacers won with a faster time in 2025.

"That was quite an exciting night," Beachy said. "Coming out of the last turn, we were kind of hoping for third or fourth. One of the best things about the horse is that he never gives up and he loves chasing down horses and he loves beating horses. That's something you can't take away from him. That was definitely the highlight race that we've had so far."

The triumph also proved meaningful in setting the stage for Surreal Ideal's 2026 season.

"My partner always said he thought we should stake him a little bit, and after that race, I had no argument," Beachy said with a laugh. "I couldn't hold him back anymore. So, he's staked up this year. I think the first stake we have him paid into is the Sam McKee Memorial on Hambletonian Day (Aug. 8 at the Meadowlands)."

On Saturday, Surreal Ideal will leave from post 5 in a group of 10 older male pacers. He is the 2-1 morning-line favorite and will have Ronnie Wrenn Jr. in the sulky. The field also includes Little Rocket Man, Charlie May and Bythemissal – who all have earned more than \$2 million lifetime – as well as millionaire Prince Hal Hanover, who is making his 4-year-old debut. Little Rocket Man, Charlie May and Bythemissal drew posts 7-8-9, respectively, while Prince Hal Hanover will leave from post 4.



Surreal Ideal likes to win races by less than a length.

"Saturday will be a bigger test for him," Beachy said about Surreal Ideal. "We'll see. Fingers crossed. I think he drew in a good spot."

Surreal Ideal heads to the Pacey Mindlin Memorial off a nose victory over Bythemissal in the Open Handicap on April 24 at The Meadows. Bythemissal, making his seasonal debut at age 7, inched in front in the stretch but Surreal Ideal, who set all the fractions (26 1/5, 54 1/5 and 1:22 3/5) in the 1:50 mile, battled back to keep his winning streak alive.

It was Surreal Ideal's second race of the year. He captured each of his two previous starts, April 17 at The Meadows and Dec. 6 at Hollywood Dayton Raceway, by a head.

"If you watch a lot of his replays, and look at his lines, it's very seldom that he wins by more than half a length," Beachy said. "If you watch the replays, the slo-mo when they zoom in, his eyes are literally looking back at the other horses. I think he's just playing. I think he could go more if he had to. Bythemissal had him beat last week. He just has a will to win."

For his career, Surreal Ideal has won 43 of 130 races, hit the board a total of 92 times, and earned \$612,653. What has been the key to Surreal Ideal's consistency and longevity?

"He is very easy on himself, so he's really easy to manage," Beachy said. "Anyone could jog him and do anything with him, really. He's just a very nice horse to be around. And we've only raced him in the summer-time, so he's lightly raced."

"At some point, he has to max out. Every year, I think he's getting a little older, that he's going to lose a step. But then he proves us wrong. Hopefully, he has another one of those years."

Racing begins at 1 p.m. (EDT) at Miami Valley. The Pacey Mindlin Memorial is the final race on Saturday's 14-race card, which also includes Ohio Sire Stakes divisions for 3-year-old trotters and pacers.

An advertisement for New Vocations. It features a photograph of a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a dark jacket, standing next to a brown horse. The background is a blurred outdoor setting. The text reads: "After They Race, We Find Them A Place" in a large, white, serif font. Below this is a logo of a white silhouette of a horse and rider on a sunburst background, with the text "NEW VOCATIONS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Underneath the logo is the tagline "Rehab. Retrain. Rehome." in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the website "newvocations.org" and phone number "734-320-7918" are listed, along with "STA Accredited".

Championship meet kicks off at Meadowlands Saturday

It's time for harness racing fans who love stakes races to get out their magic markers and circle some dates on their calendars as this weekend marks the beginning of The Meadowlands' Championship Meet.

The stakes will start sizzling this Saturday (May 2), when the \$157,125 Dexter Cup for 3-year-old open trotters and \$67,650 Lady Suffolk for 3-year-old filly trotters are the first two slabs of prime meat on the grill.

The Meadowlands, known for its marquee nights of racing will then host the following events (with estimated purses) on the following nights:

- May 16 – \$175,000 Arthur J. Cutler Memorial
- May 23 – \$225,000 New Jersey Sire Stakes finals for 3-year-old males and females on the pace
- June 12 – \$225,000 New Jersey Sire Stakes finals for 3-year-old males and females on the trot
- July 4 – \$250,000 Graduate finals for both pacers and trotters; \$175,000 Crawford Farms; \$175,000 Dave Brower Memorial; \$150,000 Six Pack; \$150,000 Perfect Sting; \$50,000 Meadowlands Pace eliminations
- July 11 – \$800,000 Meadowlands Pace; \$400,000 Hambletonian Maturity; \$300,000 Del Miller Memorial; \$300,000 Stanley Dancer Memorial; \$300,000 William Haughton Memorial; \$200,000 Jerry Silverman Memorial; and \$175,000 Dorothy Haughton Memorial
- August 1 – \$100,000 Hambletonian eliminations; \$50,000 Hambletonian Oaks eliminations
- August 7 – \$225,000 New Jersey Sire Stakes finals for 2-year-old males and females on the pace
- August 8 – \$1,000,000 Hambletonian; \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks; \$300,000 Cane Pace; \$300,000 John Cashman Memorial; \$275,000 Sam McKee Memorial; \$175,000 Lady Liberty; \$175,000 Dr. John Steele Memorial; \$120,000 Shady Daisy; and \$225,000 New Jersey Sire Stakes finals for 2-year-old males and females on the trot
- September 11 – New Jersey Classic Series finals for 2- and 3-year-olds – There are four events for pacers for \$150,000 each and four events for trotters for \$250,000 each; and \$150,000 Girl Power
- October 31 – Four \$125,000 Kindergarten Series finals for 2-year-olds
- November 14 – The Fall Final Four: Valley Victory, Goldsmith Maid, Three Diamonds and Governor's Cup, all for a purse of \$400,000; FanDuel Championships: Two \$350,000 dashes for males and two \$175,000 events for females

"We are proud to host some of the biggest races the sport offers year in and year out at The Meadowlands," said track Chief Operating Officer and General Manager Jason Settlemyer. "Our schedule is once again stacked, with Meadowlands Pace Night and Hambletonian Day standing out as our two must-attend cards. The Fall Final Four/FanDuel Championships program has evolved into another gigantic night of racing that the entire sport watches because of its huge effect on divisional championships, not to mention Pacer, Trotter and Horse of the Year voting."

THE SPECTACULAR SEVEN: Here is the new lineup of wagers that will be offered every racing night. They all offer a low 15 percent takeout:

- Races 1-5: 20-cent Early Pick-5
- Races 3-8: 20-cent Pick-6
- Races 6-9: 50-cent Early Pick-4 (\$50,000 guaranteed pool)
- Race 7: 10-cent Early Pentafecta (Hi-5)
- Races 8-12: 20-cent Late Pick-5
- Races 10-13: 50-cent Late Pick-4 (\$50,000 guaranteed pool)
- Race 14: 10-cent Late Pentafecta (Hi-5)

-release (Meadowlands)

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Entries & Results

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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, APRIL 30

RACE 6

(3) MISSISSIPPI STORM drops out of the top class both here and over at the Meadowlands, and I'll look for him to take advantage of the relief.

-Greg Reinhart



FRIDAY, MAY 1

RACE 10

I'll look for (3) SO MUCH MORE to flaunt her back class when taking another step down the ladder. She draws a much better post tonight to boost her chances.

-Kevin Plowcha



RACE 2

(7) COCCO PUFF POWER took all the money and disappointed in her debut for the Engblom barn. That said, she did miss 54 days prior to that start and was overdriven when McCarthy pulled the pocket before the half in that mile. Let's look for an improved effort tonight.

-Derick Givner



SATURDAY, MAY 2

RACE 7

(4) AZRAEL BLUE CHIP couldn't have looked much better in his 3-year-old debut as he won wrapped up by open lengths with a 26 2/5 final quarter. As good as he was, he seems like the value play.

-Givner



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NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

NEW MEADOWLANDS STARTER TOSCANO TO START FRIDAY

After a two-year hiatus from the game he'd been a part of for decades, Andy Toscano is back. Effective Friday (May 1), he will be the man facing the field in the car with the wings as the new starter at The Meadowlands.

"I retired from Yonkers two years ago. I was in the starter car there for 22 years," said Toscano, 66, who was once a trainer and driver at Roosevelt and Yonkers Raceways. "I have worked at Tioga, Monticello, Goshen and Saratoga. They kind of put me where they needed me, but my home track was Yonkers."

Now, Toscano's home venue will be the mile oval that stands in the shadows of the New York City skyline.

"I told (track Chief Operating Officer and General Manager) Jason (Settlemoir) I would help him out whenever I could," said Toscano. "I like Jason, and I look forward to being at The Meadowlands, where they have a lot of good people."

[READ MORE](#)

LOUA DIPA HEADLINES OPENING LEG OF PA SIRE STAKES

Some of the brightest stars in the Pennsylvania-sired firmament will be shining at Harrah's Philadelphia this Friday (May 1) as the 2026 Pennsylvania Sire Stakes and Pennsylvania Stallion Series programs make their 2026 statewide debuts. Over \$200,000 in purses are ready to be distributed for the two divisions of Sire Stakes and five sections of Stallion Series on a 15-race program starting at 12:25 PM (EDT).

The Sire Stakes races are slotted as races seven and 10, and the most attention will likely be concentrated on the latter division, as it marks the return to the races of Loua Dipa. The daughter of Sweet Lou was champion of her division in 2025 and posted the fastest time ever by a freshman filly, 1:48 at Lexington. Also a winner in both her elim and final of the Breeders Crown and successful in the She's A Great Lady, Loua Dipa has qualified in 1:55 1/5 and then went an official workout for the judges in 1:54 4/5, both at The Meadows, the home base of trainer Ron Burke. Ron Wrenn Jr. will be headed eastward to guide Loua Dipa from post five in a field of seven for the ubiquitous Burke Racing Stable LLC and Weaver Bruscelli LLC.

[READ MORE](#)

CONCISE POLISHES OFF WEISS SERIES SWEEP

The Gimpanzee filly Concise didn't exactly make short work of her opposition, but the answer to every question she was asked in the Bobby Weiss Trotting Series for fillies was "Correct" - she won all three of the preliminaries and then the \$50,000 Weiss Championship on Tuesday afternoon at Pocono Downs at Mohegan Pennsylvania.

[READ MORE](#)

YO TILLIE REIGNS IN KENTUCKY SIRE STAKES

Trainer Andrew Harris brought his star trotting mare Yo Tillie back to her old stomping grounds of Oak Grove Racing, Gaming & Hotel for her 4-year-old bow and comfortably found the winner's circle as the 2-5 favorite in the lone \$50,000 dash of Kentucky Sire Stakes (KYSS) for trotting mares on Monday (April 27).

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DILLY HANOVER DELIVERS IN MONDAY'S WEISS SERIES FINAL

Dilly Hanover won the \$50,000 Bobby Weiss Series Championship for 3-year-old male trotters on Monday (April 27) by 2 1/4 lengths over Confident Volo in a career-best 1:54 2/5 at Pocono Downs at Mohegan Pennsylvania. Nose Jammer finished third, pictured out for second at 49-1.

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ELDORADO SCIOTO DOWNS 2026 SEASON STARTING SOON

Eldorado Scioto Downs kicks off their highly anticipated 2026 racing season on Thursday, May 7. Opening week races will be held Thursday-

Saturday with a 5:15 p.m. first post and then continue on a Tuesday-Saturday schedule through July. Condition sheets are now available for the week at horsemen.ustrotting.com with the first box closing on Monday (May 4) at 10:00 a.m.

"We're looking forward to a historic year at the track," said Scioto's Director of Racing Jason Roth. "We have our cornerstone events like the Jim Ewart and Charlie Hill (Memorial races for aged horses) but to close out our regular season hosting Ohio Super Night and then to finish off the year with the Breeders Crown, it will be a season to remember."

Qualifiers will once again be shown on RTN via streaming services such as Roku, Amazon FireStick and online at www.rtn.tv, with program pages available on the [Scioto Downs website](#). The first qualifiers will be held on Friday (May 1) at 12:00 noon.

A complete race schedule can be viewed here, and major event days on tap for the 2026 season at Scioto include:

July 4 - The \$150,000 Next Generation events for 2-year-old Ohio-sired horses

July 18 - the Moni Maker & Nadia Lobell for 3-year-old fillies; the Cleopatra & #SendItIn Invitationals for older pacers

July 30-August 1 - State Fair races for 2 & 3-year-old Ohio-sired horses

September 12 - Ohio Super Night (Sires Stakes Championships); Jim Ewart & Charlie Hill Memorials for aged horses

October 16 & 17 - Breeders Crown eliminations

October 23 & 24 - Breeders Crown finals

New for the 2026 season, both the Pick 4 (offered three times each night) and the Pick 5 (twice) will have a low 14% takeout.

The 91-day regular season 2026 Eldorado Scioto Downs race meet runs from Thursday, May 7 through Saturday, September 19. Races will be held Tuesday-Saturday with special holiday cards on Memorial Day and Labor Day instead of the Tuesday card that week. More information about racing at Scioto can be found on the [Eldorado Scioto Downs website](#).

-release (Scioto)

ROBERT CLEARY TRAINS FOUR PHILLY "Q" WINNERS

Trainer Robert Cleary saw four of his promising three-year-old pacers post victories on the Tuesday morning qualifying program at Harrah's Philadelphia, two on each gait.

Fastest of the quartet of sophomores was the Captaintreacherous colt Treacherous Lou, who sat third-in much of the way, then produced identical 27 back quarters to be along by a head over Sea Bistro Hanover in 1:52 4/5, with Treacherous (just plain Treacherous - announcers beware) just a neck away from getting the decision. Tim Tetrick drove the winner for Royal Wire Products Inc.

Mark Herschberger was behind Cleary's other colt winner Hunting Glory, closing in 55 1/5 - 26 4/5 to get a neck decision in 1:56, also for Royal Wire Products Inc. In addition, Royal Wire owns the faster Cleary filly winner, the Sweet Lou miss Stormy, who also came a long way in her 1:55 1/5 triumph, last half 56 4/5, under Corey Callahan's handling in her first charted trip behind the gate.

Tetrick, who tied for Herschberger as the only drivers with doubles, had another winner for Cleary in the Heston Blue Chip miss Andiamo, who closed in 27 4/5 to stop the timer in 1:56 1/5 for Let It Ride Stables Inc. and Lawrence Rosen. Tony Alagna had a training double on the pace.

On the trot, Inexpressable, a Walner 3-year-old colt who won the Commonwealth Championship in the Bluegrass state, came out of the pocket to withstand Southwind Gallatin by a neck in 1:57 4/5, his own back half in 57 4/5. Driver-trainer Lucas Wallin's Wallin Racing Stable Inc. co-owns the winner with prominent German owner Karin Walter-Mommert.

Today's Philly qualifiers can be viewed online at www.phha.org.

-edited release (Philly/PHHA)

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