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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Bartlett seeks Triple Crown sweep at Yonkers Friday

Irvine photo finish in father-son battle at The Meadows

Keith Gisser: Fairs, stakes & more

Jay Bergman: Early standout 2-year-olds

Touchedbythesea aiming for perfect start in Buckeye Stallion Series

Best Bets & Analysis

Track records in Sire Stakes at Buffalo, Oak Grove; Saratoga to host memorial service on June 28; Top 3YOs battle ahead of Pace at Big M Friday

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

Svanstedt's long wild ride



COURTESY SARAH SVANSTEDT



EDITOR'S EYE

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

Sarah Svanstedt has no memory of the accident that occurred at Woodbine Mohawk Park on June 12 and left her unconscious on the track. She remembers warming up the Swedish-bred All Time Trot (pictured above), who she was scheduled to drive later that evening. Her next recollection is being in the hospital.

According to multiple accounts, Svanstedt was going a warm-up mile and coming to top speed around the far turn while along the pylons of the seven-eighths mile track when a horse warming up in the opposite direction with Dr. Ian Moore got spooked by some equipment on the track and made a U-turn in her direction.

"It was a freak accident, as most of them are; nobody's fault," said Dr. Moore. "[My] horse was spooked by a tractor and it was just bad timing for all concerned."

Sarah, who spends countless hours on the track as second trainer for her husband Ake Svanstedt,

is only left to guess that her vision must've been somewhat compromised by the tractor.

"If I would have seen a horse coming towards me, I could have stopped or gone right or left to kind of try to not get hit by the horse," said Svanstedt, who admits that she was likely occupied with checking her watch and getting her horse to speed, and certainly not expecting a horse to come out of nowhere. "I'm just trying to find answers as to why this happened."

Sarah was left helpless, face-down on the track, when Moore, who was also unseated, came to check on her. "He said he couldn't find my pulse. I can just imagine what was going through his head," said Svanstedt. "The poor guy was probably thinking I'm dead."

According to Svanstedt, a stable employee named Mike came to assist her on the track, turned her body over and got the dirt off her face and mouth. He was doing his best to tend to her while avoiding too much movement for fear of causing further damage.

As this was going on, Dr. Moore's horse continued to run loose on the track as All Time Trot just stood and watched. While Svanstedt has no

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



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memory of it, Mike and others told her it was about 15 minutes before the paramedics made their way to her because they are not permitted on the track when a horse is loose.

“This incident was unique in the case that it happened during warmups and not during a race like most on-track incidents, in which the Starter would be first on the scene. It’s our track protocol that the paramedics proceed to the incident once all horses are caught in the interest of safety. Our Racetrack Supervisor and Starter do respond immediately to any incidents,” said Bill McLinchey, Vice President of Standardbred Racing for Woodbine Entertainment.

Speaking with officials from other tracks, it really depends on the jurisdiction as to who makes the decision on when the ambulance comes on the track to care for any injured parties. The State or region also plays a factor in whether the paramedics are charged with immediate transport to the hospital.

Svanstedt said she was told that after going inside the track-assigned ambulance, they waited just outside the paddock for a “real” ambulance to arrive and transport her to the hospital. She wondered aloud whether there was a better way to handle the entire situation at tracks across North America.

“For the ambulance crew to not immediately go out to the person, I have no words for that,” said Svanstedt about the delay while the loose horse was wrangled. “It is a high-risk sport. You are signing up for it on your own but you would like to know there is a good backup plan in place in case something goes wrong.

“I was knocked out and at that moment no one knows how my brain is, how my back is, if I broke my neck.”

Svanstedt was told by Mike that she was speaking on her ride to the hospital but she has no recollection of any conversation. The accident took place between 7:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Svanstedt said the first thing she remembers is being taken in for a CAT Scan at 9:30 p.m.

The 45-year-old Svanstedt recalls her time in the hospital being almost as eventful as her on-track misfortune. There was a bone sticking out of her shoulder as a result of a completely broken collarbone and she suffered a dislocation of her right thumb. X-rays were delayed until after 1:00 a.m. and then a decision needed to be made on potential surgery.

“[The doctor said] I might need to have surgery and if they do it I have to stay for a few days for observation,” said Svanstedt. “At that point, obviously I know I’m in Canada and in my head I just want to go home to my kids and family. I said, ‘no, I am not going to do anything.’”

After a period of observation due to her concussion, she was eventually cleared to sign out of the hospital at 3:30 a.m. but had no one to take her back to the hotel. She said she was placed in a wheelchair in the waiting room and provided with a blanket while she waited for the right hour to get transportation. Once she got her wits about her, Svanstedt asked for the hospital attendant to call her a taxi, but her night still had one more turn to take.

“I couldn’t remember my room number, so they had to go to my ID and try to find my room,” said Svanstedt, who had three rooms on her reservation. “I told them whichever room has Sarah is my room. He looked at



NEW IMAGE MEDIA

Dr. Ian Moore escaped the June 12 accident with only minor injuries and was back in the Woodbine Mohawk Park paddock the next night.

my ID and he said, ‘it’s not matching the room.’”

As it turns out, Christine was listed on the room, which is her middle name. At first the hotel attendant didn’t want to budge since it was sketchy to have someone walking in at that hour and in some disrepair. “I said, ‘if you don’t give me the key now, I’m going to throw up right here with pain,’” said Svanstedt.

And that ended a wild 10-hour period for Svanstedt where she went from warming up what was supposed to be the 5-2 morning line favorite in the C\$82,750 Casual Breeze to being out of action for an undetermined period of time with multiple injuries. For now she is passing on having two surgeries to fix her collarbone and instead resting at home and attend-

ing extensive physical therapy as a viable alternative. She is also pondering what went wrong on the track that fateful night and how to make positive change ahead of the next potential on-track mishap.

“Everyone in this sport has families, and we’re doing it because we love horses and the sport, but we also need to be safe out there if something happens, because as of now, I don’t want to be part of this ever again,” said Svanstedt, who added that what she needs to get back out there – outside of a clean bill of health from her doctor – is to know that everything possible is being done to make sure the environment is safe on the track and the all preventative measures are taken just in case an incident occurs.

In sports it is said that the best offense is a good defense. Perhaps the best defense against the next on-track accident is good preparation.

With that, the native of Sweden discussed a number of changes she viewed as viable options for tracks to consider, including creating a barrier around an injured person with the starting car and the ambulance to keep any loose horse at bay while they attend to their needs. There is also the thought that track maintenance crews should limit the amount of equipment on the track when horses – especially younger ones – are warming up to avoid potential issues. Finally, Svanstedt mentioned the number of times she has seen a water truck operator at certain tracks looking at their phone instead of the path ahead and felt more attention should be paid by those operating heavy equipment.

For Woodbine’s part, McLinchey did say they would review the incident and make adjustments if needed. “It is Woodbine policy that we do a full review of any on- or off-track incidents to determine how the situation was handled and if any changes to our protocols are needed for future situations,” said McLinchey.

For Svanstedt, despite her misfortune, she remains thankful.

“I’m just glad that I can tell the story and talk, and it wasn’t worse than what I could have been,” concluded Svanstedt.

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Bartlett seeks Triple Crown sweep at Yonkers on Friday

By Jay Bergman

For defending driver of the year Jason Bartlett being on the road has become more commonplace. The days of just racing at Yonkers and dominating are over as Bartlett spent the first half of the week at Oak Grove competing in the lucrative Kentucky program. He went to Buffalo on Wednesday for New York Sire Stakes and hopes to end his week on a high note competing in a pair of Triple Crown events at his home track.

To no surprise, Bartlett will pilot the favorite Spencer Hanover in the \$250,000 Grade 2 MGM Yonkers Trot as well as a horse that could be favored in the \$200,000 Grade 2 MGM Grand Messenger, Fragment.

Spencer Hanover, a Chapter Seven-sired colt trained by Marcus Melander, got into high gear last fall capturing the Breeders Crown for Bartlett at Woodbine Mohawk Park. He's returned in brilliant form in 2026, annexing the initial \$500,000 Oak Grove Trotting Derby for Bartlett in May and more recently taking the \$176K Empire Breeders Classic at Vernon Downs in a 1:54 3/5 mile that didn't look all that imposing.

"He gets relaxed on the front end," said Bartlett. "I don't even think he saw that horse on the far outside."

The time of the mile or margin of victory was not of concern to Bartlett, who understands the horse intimately. Since Bartlett took over the driving duties behind Spencer Hanover last October the horse has only lost twice.

"He's only got beaten on the mile track when he's been on the front end," said Bartlett, indicating that on both occasions Spencer Hanover was not tired.

In Friday's Yonkers Trot over a half-mile track and going a distance of one-and-one-quarter miles, Bartlett's skill will certainly be tested and whether Spencer Hanover sees the front at any time in the mile remains a mystery.

"A lot is going to depend on how hard the horse in front of us leaves," said Bartlett, who landed post nine from the second tier in a field of 10 and thus may have limited options at the outset.

Spencer Hanover's Breeders Crown victory last year came from off the pace and the driver is optimistic his horse will be able to navigate the track and distance.

"I'm sure Marcus (Melander) will have him ready," said Bartlett, referring to the conditioner who will be searching for his fourth Yonkers Trot win, having won most recently last year with another son of Chapter Seven named Super Chapter.

With lucrative races still ahead, Spencer Hanover hopes to add to his \$1.04 million career bank account against nine rivals and not only must overcome the post draw but a pair of solid colts from that first tier that he raced against in the Oak Grove Derby. Trainer Matt Burkholder brings Requiem (post 3) and Silverstein (post 4) in his first try at the Yonkers Trot.

"They've trained over the half-mile track their entire careers," said Burkholder of the pair. "Requiem was very sharp in his qualifier."

A son of Muscle Hill, Requiem finished third in the Oak Grove Trotting Derby in May and then captured a qualifier on June 9 at The Meadows in a brisk 1:53 2/5 mile.

"Silverstein has accomplished more so far," Burkholder said, drawing a distinction between his two contenders. "He was very strong at Tioga."

Silverstein enters the Yonkers Trot following a New York Sire Stakes win on June 5 for new driver Matt Kakaley, who subbed admirably for the recovering Hall of Famer Dave Miller, Silverstein's regular pilot.

Yonkers leading trainer Per Engblom loses Bartlett but picks up Dexter Dunn for Kingmen (post 1), a son of Walner that has been racing

competitively in New Jersey while drawing outside in his most recent starts.

Scott Zeron was named on both Inexpressable (post 5) and Ardonne (post 8) and went for the latter, with Tim Tetrick picking up the drive on Inexpressable for trainer Lucas Wallin.

"He made a break when we raced him here in May," said Wallin. "But he hit a boot and it had nothing to do with the turns."

A son of Walner from the immediate family of Maryland, Inexpressable was an impressive 1:53 winner at Harrah's Philadelphia on June 4.

Ardonne was the winner of last year's Wellwood Memorial at Woodbine Mohawk Park but has only hit the board once in three tries in 2026.

Trainer Ake Svanstedt is also in search of his fourth Yonkers Trot win and has three of the 10 in the field, each with limited experience. Create Escape (post 2) Secured (post 6) and Nordic Dancer S (post 10) collectively have one victory in 10 tries this year.

The Ron Burke-trained AI rounds out the field from post seven. A five-time winner as a freshman, AI has finished second in two of his four appearances this year.

Burke is better represented in the eighth race Messenger, with three of the seven horses coming from his stable. AI Papi (post 3) was most



Spencer Hanover (5) recently won the Empire Breeders Classic at Vernon Downs.

FOTOWON

recently fourth in the North America Cup. Frantic Hanover (post 4) earned \$543K as a 2-year-old and is looking to bounce back to that form following a pair of qualifiers at The Meadows. Melillo (post 7) is a 1:48 4/5 Pennsylvania Sire Stakes winner this year at Harrah's Philadelphia that finished fifth in the North America Cup.

Bartlett will guide Fragment in the mile-and-one-quarter contest. "When I drove him at Buffalo (June 3) I knew he wasn't himself," said Bartlett. "Per (Engblom) discovered he was bleeding and put him on Lasix."

Fragment returned on June 19 at The Meadowlands and captured a qualifying race in 1:51 1/5. "He felt like he was back to his old self," said Bartlett of the Huntsville-sired colt that won nine times as a freshman, with the very first win coming in his career debut at Yonkers last June 19.

Rounding out the field for the MGM Grand Messenger are Mighty Matt (post 1), Hunt Off The Press (post 5) and Apocalypsebluechip (post 6).

The Messenger and the Yonkers Trot are part of a 10-race card that starts at 6:45 p.m. (EDT) and also includes split divisions of filly companion stakes. The \$55,000 Grade 3 New York New York Mile for 3-year-old filly trotters goes as races one and three while the \$50,000 Grade 3 Park MGM Filly Pace for sophomores goes to post in the second and fourth races.

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Irvine photo finish in father-son battle at The Meadows

By Derick Givner

In a nod to the upcoming Father's Day holiday on June 21, The Meadows played host to two father-son races one day prior pitting multiple generations of drivers and trainers against each other. Management set the stage for a heart-warming outcome and a family rich in harness racing history delivered with a thrilling finish separating father and son by just a nose at the wire.

At the top of the stretch for the seventh race special event it seemed as though even-money favorite Killer Instinct with up-and-coming 24-year-old Justin Irvine was ready to put away the field as they swung wide to get the lead. Little did Justin know that dad was waiting in the wings, tracking his cover every step of the way. Perhaps with one final lesson for his son, Don Irvine, Jr. edged past right at the wire to pull off the 17-1 upset with Junior Universe.

"We've raced together before but I don't think I've ever been in that position, like following [Justin] on the last turn like that. I had bumped him in the helmet on the last turn on purpose, you know. And he looked up, he told me afterwards, he said, oh, damn, it's dad. Then we went head-to-head all the way down the stretch and I thought it possibly could have been a dead heat. I said, 'I don't know if I got you. I think you got me but it's close.' It's different to have a stretch drive that far against your own boy like that, you know?"

"I really enjoyed the concept of the father-son race. It brought a lot of accomplished horsemen back into the bike again; not only my dad but the other dads as well. The only thing that could've gone better was if I beat my dad," joked Justin Irvine, who added that he's faced his dad a handful of times in the past. "It was nice for him to win. He's had lots of success in this business, so if that was his 'one last hoorah' it would be a fairytale ending to a storied career."

Don is wrapping up a long career which has seen him win 7,687 races. While at 75 his career is winding down – he drove in just eight races in 2025 and was making his first start this year in the father-son event - Justin is in the midst of a breakout season, already at 268 wins (through June 23) and just 57 away from his career high set in 2025.

According to Don the decrease in starts wasn't so much by design but due to health issues that have kept him under the weather for the last couple of years. Whether or not he'll go out on a win versus his son is still up in the air.

"I feel pretty good right now but I don't know if I'll drive a lot. [Justin] does all the driving and I only have a small stable," said Don, who pondered the thought of going out a winner. "Maybe I should just retire there, right?"

A man with far fewer career driving victories took home the second Father's Day race, but he also happens to be the winningest trainer in history. Ron Burke, who is closing in on 17,000 career training wins but has just 35 drives this century, pulled off the 5-1 upset with Classical Jane in race 10 on the card.



(above) Justin Irvine is all smiles despite getting nosed out at the wire by dad Don Irvine, Jr. in a father-son race at The Meadows on June 20. (below) Ron Burke made a rare sulky appearance and won the second division of the race.



Although Burke's son Brad wasn't in the photo and finished fifth, it was a special moment for him to get behind the gate with his 25-year-old who is learning the ropes with just 87 career starts over the last two years.

"We've never been in a real race together and it was very cool," said Ron Burke. "I might make that my last drive ever."

Other father-son combinations appearing in the two races included Rodney and Kyle Bolon, Steven and Justin Walters, and William and Brian Zendt.

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CONFESSIONS

By Keith Gisser

Fairs, Stakes & More

After focusing on one single topic over the last few columns, this time around we hop around the harness racing landscape with thoughts on multiple topics.

I hereby resolve

People are constantly talking about the roots of harness racing and how we have lost them. Well, if you want real grassroots racing, you needed to be in Philadelphia earlier this week. Not the one in Pennsylvania where my friend Mike Bozich calls the races, but the one in Mississippi. On Sunday, June 21 there were eight heats with full fields scheduled. But weather intervened, meaning Monday featured 13 heats. Except the weather intervened again. The Sunday card got raced, but the Monday card was held until Tuesday. The track scores four across and 10 of the races had seven entries. That's right, three trailers! Purses? \$1200 per race. There's no pari-mutuel wagering, but I have a hunch there are a lot of side bets. No charted lines, either. The fastest mile of the day was Jim's Big Boy in the 4-year-old and up Winners of Over \$2,000 lifetime. He was driven by Jamaica Patton for trainer Detricke Kelly.

Located 90 minutes Northeast of Jackson and three hours North of Biloxi, the thriving town of 7,200 is the county seat of Neshoba County and the races are the highlight of the annual Neshoba County Fair. Okay, maybe not the year Ronald Reagan made his first post-nomination speech there in 1980. I hereby resolve to attend these races once before I die. And while there, I will make a point of visiting Williams Brothers Store, a true old-fashioned general store founded in 1907 as a source of anything from "horse collars to straw hats." Sorry Tioga Downs, we may need to schedule the Handicapping Herpetologist on a different weekend next year.

Great White North

With the huge run-up to the North America Cup, featuring Ontario-bred and 2025 Horse of the Year Beau Jangles and Indiana-bred Odds On Mr Mamba, who bested him, let's not forget that Ohio was pretty well represented, too. Brandon Blvd and Lindy Dragonwater are Ohio-breds by Downbytheseaside. Lindy Dragonwater is co-owned by Knox Services of Mount Vernon. Azrael Blue Chip is owned by CT Stables of Washington Court House. Melillo is co-owned by Jason Melillo of Powell. And the well-traveled Ronnie Wrenn Jr., who lists his home as Chagrin Falls, Ohio, was listed on two horses, the only driver who had to make a choice, as he was listed on both Ron Burke-trainee Mellilo and Lindy Dragonwater. Other than Brandon Blvd, the Buckeye contingent may have had a tough night, but the Buckeye State was still as well represented, if not more so than any other jurisdiction.

Stop whining

I was excited to see Besim (The Dream) Odza with a starter in the North America Cup, even if a shoeing change did not work out for Azrael Blue Chip. I first met Besim when he was participating in, and I was a facilitator at, a leadership camp in Goshen, New York for the Harness Horse Youth Foundation. People keep complaining that we are not doing enough to get youth into the business, but HHYF has produced horsemen like Odza, Case Bateson (who won a Buckeye Stallion Series final last year), Brady Galliers, and others. Ben Hollingsworth is a former HHYF summer intern and he had a Jugette starter last year. Perhaps you've heard of Tony Alagna? An alum! And we talked last time about Molly D'agostino and her MMXX Standardbreds. She is also an HHYF alumnus. But HHYF grads have gone on to become veterinarians, race-track officials and more. Joanna Ricci, another one of the HHYFers I had the pleasure of working with, has done marketing work for The Meadows and The Red Mile and is currently with MyRaceHorse.com, a fractional Thoroughbred group that has won Triple Crown races and Breeders Cups. HHYF is not the only organization doing great stuff for our young aspiring horsemen – several states have youth driving series or championships – but they are at the forefront. Stop complaining and support them.

Too much, too soon?

It seems 2-year-olds are going faster and faster, sooner and sooner these days. And I am not sure that is great for the sport. I am not talking about early county fair racing, which is basically paid training miles. Frankly, I am not a fan of these early 2-year-old races. I like a more traditional timeline – start qualifying 2-year-olds mid or late June, with first stakes races in mid-July. Here in Ohio, the \$100,000 Next Generation races changed all of that. We now need to have our 2-year-olds ready to go two weeks earlier, when they are still growing, and some are (chronologically) actually not actually even 2.

On Monday, June 8 in a Scioto Downs qualifier, Banana Beach (Pebble Beach-Sweet Anna Banana) posted a gate-to-wire 1:54 4/5 victory by 11-plus lengths! Why? Sure, it stamps her as a favorite for her split of the Next Generation, but will she be around in September for the Sires Stakes Championships? Kalshi says "not playable."

On June 9, The Meadows conducted nine 2-year-old qualifiers. Most of these races were more reasonable, in the 1:58-2:00 range, and you have to assume these fillies and colts will qualify one more time before racing for purses. But as of June 20, we already had over 100 freshmen who had earned purse money and two dozen with multiple wins. Hey, it's your horse, so do as you please, but it doesn't mean I have to like it. Or maybe I should take my advice from the previous paragraph and stop whining.

Column Aside

Last time I wrote about MMXX Standardbreds and Homicide Hunter, who was heading to the PtHA World Championships in Tulsa, Oklahoma. All he did was win one World Championship and two Reserve World Championships, the first Standardbred to do so.

That's it for this time. Now go cash. Hopefully on a 2-year-old who goes fast, but just fast enough. Or maybe on a Neshoba Fair side-bet.

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JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [✕ BergmanJay](#)

Early standout 2-year-olds

For standardbred lovers this is probably the best time of year. The inspiration that brings yearling buyers to the fore from September through November evolves into a half-year of training. When the calendar hits June, all the hopes and dreams of big prices paid and great training reports received turn into a dose of reality that separates fact from fiction, or better yet hope from reality.

As an outsider not privy to what the trainers or owners saw when they shopped the yearling market and certainly not witness to conversations regarding promise or progress in the six months that followed, my only inspiration comes from watching pacers and trotters roll out in countless baby races across North America.

Such was the case last week and when I first spotted a colt by Green Manalishi in a 2-year-old event at Woodbine Mohawk Park on Saturday (June 20). Grand Manalishi cruised to a wire-to-wire victory for Tyler Jones in a 1:58 2/5 mile. What caught my eye was not just the final time but the way the colt hit the ground perfectly with each stride and cut the pace, reserving a 28 2/5 final quarter while in need of no urging. As is generally the case when I am impressed with a performance, I seek guidance from the pedigree to expand speculation. In the case of Grand Manalishi there is plenty of upside in a pedigree that oozes talent, not necessarily at first asking, as he's the seventh foal from the mare Grand Canyon and first colt to take a record. Grand Canyon is a Donato Hanoversired sister to Grand Stand, the dam of 2023 Yonkers Trot winner Up Your Deo. The second dam Grand Cameron is one of only three foals from the \$1.8 million winner Cameron Hall, herself a close relative to champion racehorses and stallions Andover Hall, Cantab Hall and Conway Hall. Dustin Jones trains Grand Manalishi, from Green Manalishi's third crop, and perhaps destined to be among his best male performers.

A day earlier I watched Ake Svanstedt send out a trotting colt that has both talent and an exemplary pedigree to boot. Mats, the first colt and second foal from the \$400K winning Beautiful Sin, blitzed a final quarter in 27 for the second time in a row, this time completing the mile in 1:57 3/5, two full seconds faster than his first victory on June 6. Mats, a son of Walner, got out of the gate quickly but the quarter came up slow and he was slotted third through much of the mile. What was impressive was once Svanstedt pulled the trigger getting off the pylons on the final turn, Mats shifted into a gear and quickly drew away from horses at his flank. Mats is by Walner and from a dam that sold for \$480,000 as a yearling in 2017 from Jeff Gural's consignment.

The dawn of the 2-year-old stakes season came earlier this week when Oak Grove hosted Kentucky Sire Stakes races. It's hard to believe the manners and speed in some of the trotting fillies and colts witnessed in action on the Tuesday (June 23) program. Making matters that much more interesting was a host of young sires putting their mark in a program that is incredibly competitive given the rules surrounding the Kentucky program.

Swedish-based sire Calgary Games has made an impact with limited

offerings in North America and he appears to have another solid prospect in Delivery Boy, a colt trained and driven by Dewayne Minor. Delivery Boy marched first-over from seventh and last at the quarter to an eye-catching 1:56 4/5 victory in a \$40,000 Kentucky Sire Stakes division. A 28 2/5 quarter at the end was just good measure on a colt that looked like he could go around again, and this time not parked for three quarters. Delivery Boy is the seventh foal from Demoiselle Hanover, a half-sister to Donato Hanover. Just a \$20,000 yearling purchase from the Hunterton Farm consignment at the Lexington Selected auction last fall, Delivery Boy has paid for himself already.

Gimpanzee has had some success from his first two crops but is still in search of one home run-type to solidify his stallion value. Carbon Fiber, a \$20,000 yearling buy at Harrisburg, is named for the material that lightens the weight of many a supercar and allows them to go faster. The moniker fit perfectly when Carbon Fiber was light on his feet marching from fifth to first in the blink of an eye on the backstretch. Yannick Gingras guided the Ron Burke-trained colt to a handy 1:56 1/5 victory by nearly a dozen lengths. I'm not sure why Carbon Fiber didn't sell for more as the first foal from Brunella, a full sister to Insta Glam, the wickedly fast filly that led against colts in the first Mohawk Million and finished fourth. The family also includes the \$1.1 million winner The Bank, the surprise Breeders Crown winner as a 3-year-old in 2015.

The first crop of Rebuff was expected to contend in Indiana this year as freshmen. That Redice woman-handled a field that included top stallions from Pennsylvania and New Jersey was a bit of a surprise. Redice put a 27 4/5 kicker at the end of a 1:56 3/5 mile with Atlee Bender driving for trainer Erv Miller. A \$30,000 Lexington Selected yearling, Redice is the first foal from Fuzzy Dice. From a pedigree perspective you must go back 20 years to find the 2005 Hambletonian winner Vivid Photo on the maternal side.

At this time of year I generally try to steer clear of pacers, only because a 1:55 clocking will hardly separate the good from the great. Over the last few years we've seen 2-year-old pacers flirt with 1:50 clockings in July, and thus there's a large pool of horses that may never reach that level but could still be decent raceway horses. There was one horse I watched on Wednesday (June 24) morning at Gaitway Farm that fit a different profile. Trainer Chris Ryder has appeared to have a magical touch with pacing fillies over the last decade and beyond. Sister Girl Blues put forth a 1:55 mile that stood out from the rest on the Gaitway program with Chris' son Patrick in the bike. Sister Girl Blues is a daughter of Captaintreacherous that

cost \$170,000 on the first day of last year's Lexington Selected Sale.

"There were two fillies I liked on the first day," Chris Ryder said on Wednesday. "There was this filly and another one that was going to sell after her that I thought would go for too much money."

Ryder plucked Sister Girl Blues as HIP number 28 on the program and let HIP number 44 sell later.

"The other filly was bought by Andrew Harris and she went for \$500,000," said Ryder.

The two yearlings, now 2, have similar pedigrees in that Sister Girl Blues is the first foal from Warrawee Youknow, an unraced full sister to Warrawee Ubeaut. The filly Ryder didn't get and Andrew Harris did was Seaside Ubeaut, the second foal from Warrawee Ubeaut and first by Downbytheseaside. For the record, Seaside Ubeaut, bred by Burke Racing Stables and Crawford Farms Racing, has won both of her qualifiers in identical 1:56 4/5 clockings.

No doubt there will be countless horses that have yet to make a first appearance that will enter the fray. I'm looking forward to seeing how they all do.



TONY CENTONZE PHOTO

Delivery Boy had a very timely arrival with a 1:56 4/5 victory by 2 1/4 lengths in his Kentucky Sire Stakes debut at Oak Grove on June 23.

Touchedbythesea aiming for perfect start in Buckeye Series

By Wesley Mayberry for OHHA

It's been a sort of feast-or-famine season for Touchedbythesea. The 3-year-old pacer has three wins but has missed the board in his three other starts thus far.

"I think a lot of it is that he's just learning how to race," Knox Services' Kris Brechler said of the inconsistency. "I'm very happy with how he's done in the races. In his first couple starts, it was more about learning how to race, and I think he's getting better and better the more he races."

Knox Services, of Mount Vernon, Ohio, co-owns Touchedbythesea with Burke Racing Stable, Slaughter Racing Stable, and Weaver Brussemi. The Downbytheseaside gelding out of Summer Touch — the 2020 Ohio 2-Year-Old Pacing Filly of the Year who set a world record and won the Ohio Triple Crown that season — didn't race as a freshman last year, as his connections believed he needed more development. So the early-season inconsistency may be inherent in his relative lack of on-track experience.

"I think he just needed some maturity from last year to this year," Brechler said. "He's maybe not the best colt out there, but he's a nice colt that gives you his best effort every time he's out on the track. He's doing everything we've asked of him and seems to be getting better and better each and every time he races."

With Touchedbythesea untested entering his 3-year-old season, Brechler admitted to not knowing what to expect of him.

"I knew that he had some talent but didn't know how much talent he had, so anything good was going to be a plus," he said.

Touchedbythesea made his debut in an overnight race at The Meadows on April 22, finishing fourth. His first victory came one week later in another overnight race at the same track, perhaps giving his connections a glimpse of his potential.

"After his first couple starts, I thought he would be a great Buckeye (Stallion Series) horse," Brechler said.

That has proven to be the case. In the first leg of the Buckeye Stallion Series on May 9 at Eldorado Scioto Downs, the Ron Burke trainee won in a lifetime mark of 1:52 3/5, tying for the fastest mile of the six divisions of the BSS that night as Chris Page took over driving duties from Ronnie Wrenn Jr.

"Chris did a great job getting him in position," Brechler said. "I thought he had a chance to win, and he ended up winning. It was a good race for him."

Touchedbythesea finished fourth his next time out in an overnight race at Scioto but rebounded for another BSS victory in 1:54 3/5 in the second leg on June 6 at Northfield Park Racino. He is the only sophomore male pacer with multiple BSS wins this year and is a morning-line favorite as he goes for a third victory in the series despite coming off a seventh-place finish on June 18.

Scioto Downs is hosting six \$20,000 divisions of the third leg of the BSS for sophomore colt pacers on Saturday, June 27, and Touchedbythesea opened as the 2-1 favorite in the fifth division. He drew post four in the nine-horse field that includes four other horses — Gypsy's Brother (Tyler Smith), Legends Rule (Brett Miller), Odds On Rpj (Luke Hanners), and The Ebony Dragon (Austin Hanners) — with BSS victories to their credit this year. Virgil Morgan Jr. trainee Odds On Rpj is the 5-2 second choice on the morning line and will leave from the rail. Brechler pointed to Odds On Rpj and The Ebony Dragon, trained by Tyler Bates, as perhaps Touchedbythesea's top challengers on Saturday in what he sees as a good measuring-stick race for his horse.

"It's going to be a really tough race for him, so we should find out more about him after this race," Brechler said. "But I think he has a good chance to win. He's raced some of these horses before and has been right there with them."

First Division

First-leg winners Global (Cameron McCown) and Odds On Phil (L. Hanners) highlight the field. Trained by Brian Brown, Global has hit the board in seven of nine seasonal starts with five wins and is the 2-1 morning line favorite after drawing the rail. Morgan Jr. trainee Odds On Phil, the 3-1 second choice, will leave from post two.

Third Division

The remaining three sophomore colt pacers with BSS wins this year —

Odds On Sugar (L. Hanners), Thunder Jam (Miller), and Ultimate Catch (Chris Lems) — highlight the nine-horse field. Odds On Sugar, trained by Morgan Jr., opened as the 2-1 favorite and will leave from post two. He has a record of 1-1-1 in four seasonal starts. Thunder Jam is a Tim Twaddle trainee with four wins, one second, and one third in eight starts this year, and Ultimate Catch has four wins and one third in eight seasonal starts for trainer Scott Cox. They drew posts three and nine, respectively. Sunnys In The Sea (Smith) opened as the 4-1 second choice and will leave from post four.

Other Notes

Starblazer (L. Hanners), a Morgan Jr. trainee, is the 2-1 morning line favorite in the second division. He will leave from the rail.

Tsunami Seas (Miller) opened as a heavy favorite in the fourth division at 6-5. Trained by Morgan Jr., he has three wins and two seconds in five seasonal starts and drew post four.

Stoke The Fire (Lems), the 2-1 morning line favorite in the sixth division, will leave from post three. Trained by Cox, he has four wins in eight starts this year.

The six BSS races are part of a 16-race card at Scioto on Saturday. First-race post time is 5:25 p.m.

Saratoga to host memorial service honoring 17 horses lost in June 16 fire

Saratoga Casino Hotel and the Saratoga Harness Horseperson's Association have announced a public memorial service to honor the 17 horses that perished in the devastating barn fire on June 16, 2026.

The horses were laid to rest in a private burial held at dusk on the morning of Wednesday, June 17, on the grounds of Saratoga Casino Hotel. Each horse was respectfully buried in its own individual plot.

To ensure their memory endures, a permanent monument bearing the names of all 17 horses will be installed at the burial site as a tribute to their lives and the impact they had on the harness racing community.

The memorial service will take place on Sunday, June 28, at 10:45 a.m. in the harness track Winner's Circle at Saratoga Casino Hotel. The ceremony is open to the public, and community members are invited to join horse owners, trainers, drivers, caretakers, and racing fans in remembering the horses lost in the tragedy. Live harness racing will immediately follow the memorial with a first post time of noon.

Speakers at the memorial service will include Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, Saratoga Springs Mayor John Safford, Saratoga County Supervisor Sarah Burger, and representatives from Saratoga Casino Hotel and the Saratoga Harness Horsepersons Association. Each will offer remarks in honor of the horses and recognize the profound loss felt throughout the racing community.

"The loss of these 17 horses is a tragedy that has touched every corner of the racing community," said Sam Gerrity, Chief Executive Officer of Saratoga Casino Hotel. "This memorial service and monument will serve as a lasting tribute to their lives and offer a place for remembrance and reflection."

"Each of these horses had a unique story and a special place in the hearts of those who cared for them," said Henry Westbrook Jr, President Saratoga Harness Horseperson's Association. By laying them to rest with dignity and creating a permanent memorial in their honor, we hope to preserve their memory for generations to come."

Horses to Be Honored at Memorial Service: Arlanda, Conquest As, Crazy Jet, Five Star Lou, Free Willy Hanover, Gimlet Hanover, Influencer, Lyons Dukey, Muscle Dynasty, Our Father Lindy, Perfect Bang, Quite Like Me, Race Me Bombshell, Shalamar Hanover, Trackstar, Tropical Cyclone, and Red.

-release (Saratoga Casino Hotel & Saratoga Harness Horseperson's Association)

RACE OF THE WEEK

9 YONKERS FRI

1 1/4 Mile Trot MGM YONKERS TROT FINAL, GRADE 2, Purse \$250,000

\$2 LATE DOUBLE (9-10) | \$2 EXACTA | \$2 TRIPLE | \$10 SUPERFECTA

1 pp1 KINGMEN

3:155 (5/8) \$5,417

6-1 D. Dunn 22-2-4-6 (1091)

12 Jun26	10M1	wf82 ²	274	:55	1:23	1:50	NJSS-Pltnm-R1	225000	7	7 ⁷ ₃	7 ⁶ ₁	6 ⁵ ₅	5 ⁵ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	JaBarritt	PeEnghlomb	29	27	28	27	1:51	92	+11.8w	49.80	ApexDblHlAmercPr	Off pace,3rd ov no bid-8
5 Jun26	8M1	fst83 ³	281	:57	1:25	1:52	NJSS-Pltnm	25000	7	8 ⁸ ₁	6 ⁵ ₁	8 ⁶ ₁	6 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	JaBarritt	PeEnghlomb	29	28	29	25	1:53	85	+7.8w	47.90	AmercPrWApxDblHl	Off pace,ang in no bid-11
23 May26	14M1	slv53 ³	291	:57	1:27	1:54	NJSS-Pltnm	25000	4	3 ³ ₃	3 ⁴ ₁	3 ² ₁	3 ³ ₁	2 ² ₁	JaBarritt	PeEnghlomb	30	28	29	27	1:55	79	-4.6w	2.40	AmercPrWKingmenArdn	Sat ang,pst 3/4,study-5
16 May26	11OaG	fst84 ⁴	262	:54	1:22	1:51	D-OakGrDerby	50000	7	7 ⁸ ₈	5 ⁶ ₆	5 ⁵ ₃	6 ⁵ ₂	6 ⁶ ₃	ToMcCrthy	PeEnghlomb	28	28	27	29	1:53	97		66.60	SpncrHwEndurance Reqm	-9
4 May26	9OaG	fst78 ⁸	271	:56	1:24	1:52	D-OGDrbyElm	50000	3	4 ⁴ ₁	4 ⁴ ₁	4 ³ ₁	4 ³ ₁	3 ⁴ ₁	JaBarritt	PeEnghlomb	28	29	27	28	1:53	93	7w	5.09	Silvrstn Reqm Kingmen	Cvr,w/In no match-6
20 Apr26	5PcD	fst40 ⁸	291	:58	1:26	1:55	NW4	15500	5	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ² ₁	JaBarritt	PeEnghlomb	29	28	28	28	1:55	81	+2.10w	*30	KingmenDmeOn RspclNhr	Down road,handy-8

b c 3, by Walner, Pats Inspiration by Credit Winner
Peaceful Acre Farm,Lititz,PA/Klee Boloski&Verno,Minneapolis,NY

P. Engblom 456-107-83-64 (235)

12000	6	4 ⁵ ₅	4 ⁵ ₁	3 ³ ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	JoAhle	AkSvnsttd	29	29	28	28	1:55	81	+7.6w	2.50	JlvsTrix CrtEscape AttnsSmr	-8
10000	4	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ³ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	JoAhle	AkSvnsttd	26	29	29	30	1:55	85	+2.00	MegbioloMwDnChmp WaterSide	-8	
20000	6	3 ³ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	1 ¹ ₁	JoAhle	AkSvnsttd	28	29	29	27	1:55	77	+7.4w	3.40	CrtEscpSmRTrfM	2w,ld,yld pf 1/2,safely-10
14500	7	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	AkSvnsttd	29	29	29	28	1:57			rb	CambrDhwCrtEscpNlnKln	Ld,well-rtd,ovrkn l-8	
73000	7	8 ¹² ₁	8 ⁷ ₁	8 ⁵ ₁	6 ⁴ ₁	7 ³ ₁	TtTrick	AkSvnsttd	30	27	28	26	1:53	87		42.15	Silvrstn HighBlHw Inxprsb	Down road,handy-8

Last 5 Sts-\$24,750

1:55 PcD 5/8

26 YR	0	0	0	0	-	26 Tot	6	1	1	1	\$32,500
25 YR	0	0	0	0	-	25 Tot	10	2	3	0	\$116,154
24 YR	0	0	0	0	-	Life	16	3	4	1	\$148,654

2 pp2 CREATE ESCAPE

2:154.3 (1) \$6,733

9-2 J. Ahle 2-0-0-0 (1,000)

7 Jun26	9PH	fst88 ⁸	284	:58	1:27	1:55	NW3	12000	6	4 ⁵ ₅	4 ⁵ ₁	3 ³ ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	JoAhle	AkSvnsttd	29	29	28	28	1:55	81	+7.6w	2.50	JlvsTrix CrtEscape AttnsSmr	-8
16 May26	7PRc	fst76 ⁶	263	:53	1:24	1:52	BUNKERHILL-G3	100000	4	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ³ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	JoAhle	AkSvnsttd	26	29	29	30	1:55	85		*2.00	MegbioloMwDnChmp WaterSide	-8
8 May26	5M1	fst59 ⁹	283	:57	1:27	1:55	3ycw2	20000	6	3 ³ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	1 ¹ ₁	JoAhle	AkSvnsttd	28	29	29	27	1:55	77	+7.4w	3.40	CrtEscpSmRTrfM	2w,ld,yld pf 1/2,safely-10
24 Apr26	5M1	fst63 ⁹	293	:59	1:29	1:56	Qua	14500	7	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	1 ¹ ₁	AkSvnsttd	29	29	29	28	1:57			rb	CambrDhwCrtEscpNlnKln	Ld,well-rtd,ovrkn l-8	
24 Oct25	10M1	fst63 ⁹	283	:56	1:25	1:54	Qua w2cd	14500	1	3 ¹ ₁	3 ² ₁	3 ² ₁	3 ² ₁	1 ² ₁	JoAhle	AkSvnsttd	28	28	29	28	1:54	77	+3.3w	4.80	CrtEscpCochChnMPrms	3hole,ang in,handy-9
3 Oct25	8Lx1	fst77 ⁷	274	:56	1:25	1:51	INSS-G3	73000	7	8 ¹² ₁	8 ⁷ ₁	8 ⁵ ₁	6 ⁴ ₁	7 ³ ₁	TtTrick	AkSvnsttd	30	27	28	26	1:53	87		42.15	Silvrstn HighBlHw Inxprsb	-8

b c 3, by Gimpanzee, Final Countdown by Yankee Glide
Create Escape Stable,Cream Ridge,NJ

A. Svanstedt 4-2-0-0 (5,000)

59100	4	4 ⁵ ₅	4 ⁵ ₁	3 ³ ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	DylHckbne	AkSvnsttd	28	29	27	28	1:54	85		e5.68	RedTheRm HighwaySix TwnSvns	-6							
59100	5	4 ⁴ ₁	4 ³ ₁	4 ⁴ ₁	3 ¹ ₁	3 ¹ ₁	DylHckbne	AkSvnsttd	30	28	28	29	1:56	71		e7.64	SpncrHw TrnsMschf Secured	-6							
20000	3	5 ⁵ ₅	5 ⁵ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	6 ⁹ ₃	6 ⁹ ₃	AkSvnsttd	28	27	28	30	1:54	78	+7.4w	21.50	MegbioloMwDnChmp WaterSide	Inside,ang in no bid-6								
11 May26	7M1	fst66 ⁶	301	:58	1:28	1:56	Qua	8	5 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	5 ⁴ ₁	4 ⁴ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	AkSvnsttd	31	28	29	27	1:57			rb	Glam LandOIns UltmTr	Tuck,ang in no bid-8	
11 Nov25	8PH	gd90 ⁹	281	:59	1:27	1:57	NW2	14500	7	3 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	4 ² ₁	4 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	AkSvnsttd	28	31	28	29	1:57	66	-3.5w	*7.0	MasetoSecured DogfstHw	Tck,wide,gd frsh-8
14 Oct25	2PH	fst58 ⁸	293	:59	1:28	1:58	Qua	2	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	SaSvnsttd	30	29	29	29	1:58			rb	MstrNcCpSntsPr Secured	-5	

Last 5 Sts-\$28,250

1:55 M1

26 YR	0	0	0	0	-	26 Tot	3	1	1	0	\$20,200
25 YR	0	0	0	0	-	25 Tot	5	1	2	0	\$32,775
24 YR	0	0	0	0	-	Life	7	3	1	1	\$43,975

2A pp6 SECURED

2:159.2 \$3,349

9-2 A. Svanstedt 2-1-0-0 (5,000)

5 Jun26	51gD	fst87 ⁷	271	:57	1:25	1:53	NYSS	59100	4	5 ⁶ ₅	5 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁴ ₁	4 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	DylHckbne	AkSvnsttd	28	30	27	28	1:54	85		e5.68	RedTheRm HighwaySix TwnSvns	-6
25 May26	6VD	gd82 ²	291	:58	1:25	1:53	NYSS	59100	5	4 ⁴ ₁	4 ³ ₁	4 ⁴ ₁	3 ¹ ₁	3 ¹ ₁	DylHckbne	AkSvnsttd	30	28	28	29	1:56	71		e7.64	SpncrHw TrnsMschf Secured	-6
15 May26	2M1	fst64 ⁴	272	:54	1:22	1:51	3ycw2	20000	3	5 ⁵ ₅	5 ⁵ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	6 ⁹ ₃	6 ⁹ ₃	AkSvnsttd	28	27	28	30	1:54	78	+7.4w	21.50	MegbioloMwDnChmp WaterSide	Inside,ang in no bid-6	
11 May26	7M1	fst66 ⁶	301	:58	1:28	1:56	Qua	8	5 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	5 ⁴ ₁	4 ⁴ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	AkSvnsttd	31	28	29	27	1:57			rb	Glam LandOIns UltmTr	Tuck,ang in no bid-8		
11 Nov25	8PH	gd90 ⁹	281	:59	1:27	1:57	NW2	14500	7	3 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	4 ² ₁	4 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	AkSvnsttd	28	31	28	29	1:57	66	-3.5w	*7.0	MasetoSecured DogfstHw	Tck,wide,gd frsh-8	
14 Oct25	2PH	fst58 ⁸	293	:59	1:28	1:58	Qua	2	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	SaSvnsttd	30	29	29	29	1:58			rb	MstrNcCpSntsPr Secured	-5		

b g 3, by Chapter Seven, Frannie Hanover by Muscle Hill
Olm Stable,Delray Beach,FL/Ake Svanstedt Inc,Wrightstown,NJ

A. Svanstedt 4-2-0-0 (5,000)

59100	4	5 ⁶ ₅	5 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁴ ₁	4 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	DylHckbne	AkSvnsttd	28	30	27	28	1:54	85		e5.68	RedTheRm HighwaySix TwnSvns	-6							
59100	5	4 ⁴ ₁	4 ³ ₁	4 ⁴ ₁	3 ¹ ₁	3 ¹ ₁	DylHckbne	AkSvnsttd	30	28	28	29	1:56	71		e7.64	SpncrHw TrnsMschf Secured	-6							
20000	3	5 ⁵ ₅	5 ⁵ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	6 ⁹ ₃	6 ⁹ ₃	AkSvnsttd	28	27	28	30	1:54	78	+7.4w	21.50	MegbioloMwDnChmp WaterSide	Inside,ang in no bid-6								
11 May26	7M1	fst66 ⁶	301	:58	1:28	1:56	Qua	8	5 ⁶ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	5 ⁴ ₁	4 ⁴ ₁	5 ⁵ ₁	AkSvnsttd	31	28	29	27	1:57			rb	Glam LandOIns UltmTr	Tuck,ang in no bid-8	
11 Nov25	8PH	gd90 ⁹	281	:59	1:27	1:57	NW2	14500	7	3 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	4 ² ₁	4 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	AkSvnsttd	28	31	28	29	1:57	66	-3.5w	*7.0	MasetoSecured DogfstHw	Tck,wide,gd frsh-8
14 Oct25	2PH	fst58 ⁸	293	:59	1:28	1:58	Qua	2	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	2 ¹ ₁	SaSvnsttd	30	29	29	29	1:58			rb	MstrNcCpSntsPr Secured	-5	

Last 5 Sts-\$13,672

1:59.2 Stg

26 YR	0	0	0	0	-	26 Tot	3	0	0	1	\$10,647
25 YR	1	0	1	0	-	25 Tot	6	1	1	2	\$60,135
24 YR	0	0	0	0	-	Life	9	1	1	3	\$70,782

2B pp10 NORDIC DANCER S

2:156.1 (5/8) \$4,495

9-2 Ty. Buter 384-29-53-51 (1076)

5 Jun26	2M1	fst83 ³	281	:57	1:25	1:52	NJSS-Silvr	10000	7	2 ² ₁	2 ² ₁	2 ¹ ₁	3 ⁴ ₁	4 ⁷ ₁	AkSvnsttd	28	29	28	27	1:53	84	+7.8w	6.60	KingOthWdNlnKlnMscMxms	Ust pd 1/4,ok no bid-7
23 May26	7M1	slv53 ³	291	:58	1:27	1:55	NJSS-Pltnm	25000	6	6 ⁸ ₁	6 ⁸ ₁	5 ⁴ ₁	5 ⁵ ₅	5 ⁵ ₅	AkSvnsttd	30	29	28	27	1:56	74	-4.6w	52.60	GabesLuokMgShnPrctMln	Off pace,rail no bid-6
16 May26	13M1	fst75 ⁵	282	:57	1:26																				

3YOs battle at Big M Friday

By Dave Little for Meadowlands

Because of a World Cup soccer match that is taking place at MetLife Stadium on Saturday (June 27), live racing at The Meadowlands will be offered just once this week, on Friday (June 26) night.

Post time is the usual 6:35 p.m. and there will be 15 races on the card, including a feature that will be of great interest to those looking forward to the July 11, \$800,000 (est.) Meadowlands Pace presented by Genova Burns LLC.

The 13th race on the program features a \$35,000 purse for 3-year-old colts and geldings who are non-winners of five races lifetime, but with six of the seven horses eligible to the Pace, it might as well have been written as a 3-year-old open.

Of the half-dozen Pace horses in the field, three are in the track's weekly Road to the Meadowlands Pace Top 10, and all are looking for an effort to prepare them to race well in the Pace eliminations on Saturday, July 4.

Always B Charlie, No. 8 in the poll, is a lightly raced son of Always B Miki-My Little Delight who qualified a week ago fourth in 1:52 4/5 while Fragment was winning in 1:51 1/5. He'll depart from post three and is 6-1 on the morning line. The Nancy Takter trainee, who will be driven by Scott Zeron, has won three of four starts this season, including a 1:51 2/5 score in his last pari-mutuel try at Pocono Downs.

The Besim Odza-trained Azrael Blue Chip (Perfect Sting-Bathsheba), No. 9, had a tough go of it in the North America Cup, finishing 10th after changing to all aluminum shoes. The Cup final was his first non-top-three finish this year, so Odza is hoping for a rebound in the Pace after Friday night's prep.

"I definitely was at fault (in the Cup)," said Odza. "But we are back to normal. He trained great (Wednesday). I think he's at like 90 percent right now. There are still things I am working on, but right now, he's right where I want him."

With Andy McCarthy opting to race at The Meadows in the Currier & Ives, Brett Beckwith will pick up the drive with Azrael Blue Chip, who has post two and is the 3-1 early favorite. "Brett's got a good set of hands, so I think he'll get along with him."

Gentleman's Club, No. 10, hasn't been seen since a seventh-place finish in his Cup elimination, when the son of Downbytheseaside-See You At Pealers got fired up as favorite Beau Jangles challenged him through demanding fractions, which ended up with Gentleman's Club not making it to the final.

"I think we'll race him off the pace (on Friday)," said trainer Aaron Lambert. "We don't want to get him revved up again." Another horse who is driven regularly by McCarthy, Dexter Dunn will take the lines Friday night with the 7-2 chance who leaves from post five.

TRACK RECORD PERFORMANCE BY SHOW ME YOUR ACE IN KY SIRE STAKES

One race after the track record for 3-year-old pacing colts at Oak Grove was bested, Chris Ryder trainee Show Me Your Ace snatched the title with a 1:49 win, going pillar-to-post in the fourth of four \$40,000 Kentucky Sire Stakes (KYSS) divisions for his cohort on the Wednesday (June 24) card.

[READ MORE](#)

READ THE ROOM, JEFF GREGORY STAR ON WEDNESDAY'S NYSS PROGRAM

There were a couple of big headlines that came out in the two \$58,000 (approx.) New York Sire Stakes for the 3-year-old colt and gelding trotters on the Wednesday (June 24) program at Buffalo Raceway, as a track record was absolutely demolished while a driver hit a career milestone in collecting a victory.

[READ MORE](#)

SUPER CHAPTER, PRINCE HAL HANOVER ENTER TOP 10

Super Chapter and Prince Hal Hanover joined the Top 10 while Odds On Mr Mamba led an unchanged top seven in the Week 2 edition of the Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown poll released Wednesday (June 24).

[READ MORE](#)

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, JUNE 25

RACE 6

(4) TAVERN ON THE GREEN hasn't missed a beat since getting roughed up in his first Grassroots try. He should get towards the front much easier this time.

-Kevin Plowcha



WOODBINE
MOHAWK PARK

FRIDAY, JUNE 26

RACE 5

(3) ELEGANT A was outgamed in the late stages last week looking to take a second straight but that runner-up finish enables her to slide back into this class and that combined with the reasonable post makes her the choice.

-Matt Rose



RACE 13

(7) UBRUTE faced the three best horses in the division in his North America Cup elimination and only lost by a few lengths. With only one start in 41 days, he would seem to be in the need of a good tightener if he is truly Meadowlands Pace bound. I'll be shocked if he doesn't bring a top effort.

-Derick Givner



SATURDAY, JUNE 27

RACE 11

(1) LOUS WORLD looks to be in a great spot for a Mark Mac speed try. His last few efforts have left him in no man's land against Open level horses.

-Plowcha



WOODBINE
MOHAWK PARK

FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis

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

Meadowlands Analysis

[Friday](#)

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

FRESH FACE YANKEE REMAINS UNDEFEATED IN 2026

Fresh Face Yankee, driven and trained by Jay Cross, did not miss a beat in her dominant return, winning the \$96,000 third leg of the Indiana Sire Stakes 3-year-old filly trot at Harrah's Hoosier Park on Tuesday (June 23).

[READ MORE](#)

KENTUCKY SIRE STAKES FIVE-BAGGERS FOR DUNN, MELANDER

Driver Dexter Dunn and trainer Marcus Melander flourished on the 16-race card of racing at Oak Grove Racing, Gaming & Hotel on Tuesday (June 23) with five wins each on the card stacked with all trotting events and 15 divisions of Kentucky Sire Stakes (KYSS).

[READ MORE](#)

HARRAH'S HOOSIER PARK PURSES TO GO UP STARTING FRIDAY

Beginning on Friday, June 26, Harrah's Hoosier Park horse men will see a purse increase go into effect on races that are non-winners of X amount in their last four races, the third purse increase instituted for the 2026 racing season.

[READ MORE](#)

\$75,000 MOHEGAN CUP ANNOUNCED FOR PACING MARES

Rick Kane, Director of Racing at Pocono Downs at Mohegan Pennsylvania, has announced the creation of a \$75,000 race for top pacing mares, the Mohegan Cup, to be held on Sunday, July 26 during a 5 p.m. twilight card.

[READ MORE](#)

THREE TIMES BETTOR, GIMPANZEE DANCER REPEAT IN KYSS FINALS

Brett Pelling pupil Three Times Bettor and Chris Beaver trainee Gimpanzee Dancer defended their Kentucky Sire Stakes (KYSS) titles at Oak Grove with wins in their respective \$150,000 finals on Monday (June 22), a card featuring nearly \$1 million in purses.

[READ MORE](#)

SEVERAL REPEAT WINNERS IN POCONO BABY QUALIFIERS

In the final morning session for baby qualifiers at Pocono Downs at Mohegan Pennsylvania, five of the eight freshman contests were for pacing colts, and they were swept by trainers Travis Alexander and Hunter Oakes.

Alexander had three of the winners, including 1-2 finishes in two of the races; they also happened to be the quickest pair as well as both being repeaters. Primacy Station went down the road in 1:55 3/5 - 56 1/5 - 27 4/5, with the American Ideal- Preeminence colt beating out barnmate Brookie Cookie for the ownership of Alexander Racing Stable LLC, C M T Farms, EVM Racing LLC, and James Scarpas.

Also with double success in the morning races is the Heston Blue Chip - Counterparty Risk colt Current Events, who here sat in the pocket behind stablemate Takes Courage then beat that one by a neck in 1:56 3/5 - 57 2/5 - 28 3/5 under Ridge Warren's handling. Alexander's third winner among the males was the American Courage - Ascending colt Bastonata Bluechip, with Kakaley guiding him to a 1:58 1/5 - 57- 28 victory.

Oakes's two colts were both driven by Tyler Buter. Babylon Blue Chip (a Huntsville - Onassis Blue Chip colt) overcame interference past the three quarters and still finished in 1:57 - 56 first over for the triumph, making him a member of the Two Win Club, while the Captain Crunch - Dandy's Sweetness gelding Dapper Station won from in front in 1:57 2/5 - 57 - 28; he too now has two baby victories.

There was one division for each of the other three groups of two-year-olds, and Alexander-Kakaley accounted for the filly pace as well: Sublime Hanover (Stay Hungry - So Perfect) came out of the two-hole to win in 1:58 4/5 - 57 2/5 - 28 2/5 for Fiddler's Creek Stables LLC and Alexander Racing Stable LLC.

On the trotting side, the Walner - Bella Glos colt Extra Anelo wired his field in 2:00 3/5 - 58 3/5 - 28 1/5 for driver Tyler Buter and trainer Ray Schnittker, co-owner with Ted Gewertz and Nolamaura Racing LLC, while the Captain Corey - Swizzle Sticks filly Stir The Pot was first-over from well back in winning in 2:01 2/5 - 59 - 29 1/5 for driver Braxten Boyd, trainer Jenny Melander, and the partnership of Charles Stansley, Lenavitt Investments LLC, John Licausi, and Arden Homestead Stable.

It won't be long now before the two-year-olds begin their stakes careers: the first freshman stake at Pocono is an All-Stars event for the trotting colts on the Fourth of July, a Saturday, while the Pennsylvania fair season opens three days earlier in Butler.

Replays of the baby qualifiers can be viewed at www.phha.org.

-edited release (Pocono/PHHA)

BABIES CONTINUE THEIR LESSONS AT HARRAH'S PHILLY

Pacers dominated the Tuesday morning qualifying action for two-year-olds at Harrah's Philadelphia, with four events for each sex being carded.

Fastest youngster of the day was the Captaintreacherous - Rockingcam Park colt Renegade Hanover, who had the lead throughout after starting from the rail and coming home in 57- 28 1/5 in a 1:57 mile. The youngster is owned by Polie Mallar, David Fraser Sr., Dennis Osterholt, and Thaddeus Wier; trainer Mallar teamed with driver Troy Beyer for two of the four sections for males, while the other two were won by the father-son team of driver Patrick and trainer Chris Ryder.

Speaking of father-son combos - Captaintreacherous also was the sire of two of the filly pace winners, and his son Captain Crunch sired the other two. Fastest of the fillies was the Captain Crunch filly Buneas Dias, going coast-to-coast in 1:57 1/5 - 57 2/5 - 28 3/5 for driver Russell Foster, trainer Eli Scott Jr., and the partnership of Eli Scott Racing LLC, Barry Mandell, and Larry Brown.

Coming through the stretch of the final filly contest, it was apparent that Chris Ryder was going to get a third training credit, but one could not be sure with whom - Renegade Hanover (driven by Pat Ryder) or Rascal Robbie (driven by Beyer). In the end Treacherous Wings (Captaintreacherous-Alicorn) rallied from the pocket to catch her stablemate by a nose in 1:59 1/5 and make for a Ryder-Ryder triple.

Only three of the morning's eleven qualifiers for two-year-olds were for trotters, and the most interesting of the three success stories was also the quickest winner. That was the filly Nobody Knows It, racing out of the pocket and coming home in 2:01 3/5 - 58 2/5 - 29 for driver Corey Callahan and trainer-owner Richard Hans.

When you mention "Richard Hans" the words "Googoo Gaagaa" are usually not far behind, and such is the case here: Nobody Knows It is by Betting Gangster S, a \$437G winner overseas whom Hans stands and who produced the 1:55 1/5f Maryland champion And Just Like That from his first crop. And Just Like That Is from the Googoo Gaagaa mare Goorateness, and Nobody Knows It is out of the Googoo Gaagaa mare Goo Luck Charm.

The Harrah's qualifiers can be viewed at www.phha.org.

-edited release (Harrah's Philadelphia/PHHA)

ELVER HANOVER RETIRED FROM RACING

Former fastest male 2-year-old pacer of all time and 2019 Ohio Horse of the Year Elver Hanover has been officially retired from racing.

Purchased as a yearling by Burke Racing, Elver Hanover was trained throughout his racing career by Ron Burke. Elver Hanover retires with a record of 1:48 3/5 taken at the age of 2, \$969,901 in earnings, and with 35 wins from 170 lifetime starts.

Never raced in a claiming race, Elver competed at the top level each year he raced, racing in the Open Handicap at Northfield Park as recently as August of 2025.

An extremely kind and gentle horse, Elver loves people and his interactions with them. Having spent much of his career in the first stall of the barn at The Meadows, Elver was often the first horse visitors to the barn stopped to see. He is universally loved by all that know him.

Elver Hanover retired sound, healthy and happy, and now lives on the farm of Bridgette Jablonsky, his part-owner and one of the people who love him the very most.

-edited release (Dr. Jablonsky)