Soto Poised To Take Lead
In Levy Standings

Round four of the six-week George Morton Levy Series is on tap Saturday night at Yonkers Raceway, with three $50,000 divisions going postward as races 6, 7 and 8.

One horse missing in action this week is points-leader Missile J, who is getting the night off while resting on the laurels of sweeping his divisions of the three preliminaries raced thus far.

One horse poised to take the top spot after the fourth leg is Soto, who is second after posting two wins and a third in his three Levy divisions. If Soto finishes first or second on Saturday he will rocket past Missile J and into the lead.

Soto, a 5-year-old son of Rock N Roll Heaven, has been more than a pleasant surprise for trainer Eric Ell, who purchased the pacer for $40,000 on behalf of owners Ken Wood, Bill Dittmar Jr. and Stephen Iaquinta at the 2015 Harrisburg mixed sale.

Originally a $130,000 yearling purchase in the barn of trainer Jimmy Takter, Soto competed mainly on the New York Sires Stakes circuit at ages two and three, earning $111,530 for his prior connections. Since the purchase, Soto has posted 17 wins, including a career-best 1:48.4f last year at The Downs and Mohegan Sun Pocono, with $265,045 in earnings.

Ell said it wasn’t until Soto posted three top-class wins in January and February at Dover Downs did visions of the Levy Memorial Series come into his head.

“We never dreamt he would be a Levy-type horse but he progressively got better at Dover,” explained Ell. “Our intent when we put him in there was that he’d have five weeks racing for $50,000 a week, giving us an outlet to race him somewhere for good money.

“I knew he could get around a half and I knew he had gate speed, so our logic was that if we could get 10 percent of the five weeks at $50,000, that would be $25,000 and that would pay for his entry fee and give us an outlet to race.”

Soto has sandwiched a third-place finish between two victories in the Levy legs. All three times driver Matt Kakaley took advantage of the passing lane, although there was a problem in his show outing.

“He would have won all three legs, but the second week when he was third, he was on the left line so bad Matt couldn’t get him in the passing line,” said Ell. “Matt said he

Continues on page 2 ››››
had tons of pace and enough horse to win, but he couldn’t get him shifted down in. Once he did, he said he exploded again, but it was too late.

Last week, Matt said he was perfect, and he pulled him in there and shot right by.

“One thing about him, he won’t leave anything on the table. It’s not for lack of determination; he’s going to give you every ounce of everything he’s got every week, that’s for sure.”

Ell said he is hoping for a big effort on Saturday from Soto, which would translate into a week off while awaiting the lucrative Levy final on April 22.

“I wanted to give him a week off because the long ships and the hard racing is really starting to tell on him,” said the Delaware-based Ell. “I wasn’t for sure if he’d be in the final, so my logic was that I would race him this week and I definitely know he’s in the final, I’m going to give him the week off before the final and freshen him up and give him a training trip.”

Soto has drawn well in his Levy legs, starting from post 3 once and post 2 twice. Soto will start from post 2 again on Saturday, with Daniel Dube driving as Kakaley is committed to the Ron Burke-trained All Bets Off, who drew post 8. Ell admits he has his fingers crossed for future Levy draws.

“Luckily and by the grace of God, he’s drawn a good post position every week,” he said. “As long as he gets away close he can race with the good horses. But if he drew six, seven or eight, he’d come back to reality. The law of averages says he’s going to draw outside for the final, so we have to get all we can get now.”

Ell also gave an update on world champion 6-year-old trotter JL Cruze, who is being aimed at the Arthur J. Cutler Memorial on May 6 at the Meadowlands. JL Cruze, a winner of $881,011, was the 2015 Dan Patch Older Trotting Horse of the Year.

“He’s back in training and his first race will be (the Cutler),” said Ell. “I trained him down really good on Sunday and will train him again on Friday. He’s probably about four trainings away, and then I’d like to qualify him a couple of times and maybe one race before his first race. If I don’t have him ready for that then we’ll miss it, but that’s what we’re shooting for.”

Ell said JL Cruze’s issues with his heart and dehydration are hopefully a thing of the past.

“He’s feeling good and looks good, and he put on some weight” said Ell. “I think we finally have the thumping issues straightened out. Hopefully he can get all his ducks in a row this year. And dehydration issues as we couldn’t get him to drink water away from home.” — By Gordon Waterstone
Grand Circuit superstars
and real racehorses created in New Jersey

Trixton
2, 154,4,3 1:50.3 ($947,057)
Muscle Hill-Emile Cas Ei
Not only the apex pedigree in the trotting world
today but by far the most accomplished
and obvious line extending son of super sire
Muscle Hill from a full sister to major stallions
Andover Hall, Conway Hall and Angus Hall.
Trixton’s book is full
and closed in Europe for 2017.
Limited breedings available in North America.

2017 stud fee: $12,000

Lis Mara
p,3,1:51.4, 4,1:47.3 ($2,141,681)
Cambest-Lisheen.
Sire of the brilliant free-for-aller Mel Mara.
p,1:47 (706,464) and the 2016 open class stars
Validus Deo, p,1:48.4 ($433,171),
Thunder Seelster p,1:49 ($363,268)
and Ontario Seelster p,1:49 ($342,213).
From limited opportunity,
Lis Mara sired 4 sub 1:50 pacers and 3 $100,000
plus winners in 2016. And they race on!

2017 stud fee: $2,500*

*Lis Mara is eligible to the ongoing NJ pacing stallion rebate program. Mares need not be residents of New Jersey in order to qualify. Anyone who breeds to Lis Mara will be paying less than a $2,000 stud fee after the rebate.

Given the ongoing legislative support for the betterment of racing and the prospects of a new administration in the next year, there is every reason to believe that New Jersey sired colts and fillies will have increased value in the not so distant future.

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Sears Looks To Return To Sulky Next Week

Hall of Fame-bound driver Brian Sears plans to return from his winter hiatus next week following an extended break in North Carolina. Sears last raced Nov. 29 at Yonkers Raceway.

Sears had laser eye surgery in December and expected to return to action in February, but decided to prolong his time off until April. He spent part of his break in Pinehurst, where he made trips to the local harness racing track several times a week while also enjoying the opportunity to work on his golf game. He plans to resume racing April 13 following a trip to the Masters Golf Tournament.

“Everything is good,” said the 49-year-old Sears. “I’m looking forward to starting back. Too much of a good thing isn’t good. But it’s been fun. I’ve enjoyed my time.”

One particularly enjoyable moment came March 19 when Sears recorded a hole-in-one at the Legacy Golf Links, located near Pinehurst. It was Sears’ first-ever ace.

“That’s one thing I accomplished this winter,” Sears said with a laugh, adding, “It doesn’t mean my golf game is that much better, it just means I’m playing a lot of golf. But it was cool.”

Sears won 301 races last year and $7.49 million in purses. His top wins came with Control The Moment in the Meadowlands Pace and Flanagan Memory in the Breeders Crown Open Trot.

In September it was announced that Sears was voted into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame by the members of the U.S. Harness Writers Association. Sears will be inducted July 2 in Goshen, N.Y., the home of the Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame.

For his career, Sears has won 9,715 races and $176 million in purses. He ranks 14th in North American history for wins among drivers and sixth in purses. He led the sport in earnings in 2005, with a then-record $15 million, and has finished among the top 10 in purses each of the past 13 years.

(Ken Weingartner for HRC)
World Traveler Hamilton Returns To WEG

Where in the world is Mike Hamilton? That’s the question many have been asking since Hamilton stepped away from his job as race analyst for the Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG) racetracks Woodbine and Mohawk in late June 2014.

The simple answer is: Everywhere. Hamilton left his job and home in Toronto to travel the world, and he chronicled his journey on his blog 100saturdays.com.

Hamilton is now back in Toronto, preparing for his return as author of the Mohawk Journal in the race program. He told Weekend Preview via email Monday night that his interest in returning to WEG was piqued a few weeks ago when he learned former colleague Greg Gangle was leaving WEG for a job at Western Fair.

“I went from homeless in Spain to employed and buying furniture in Toronto in the span of five days.” —Mike Hamilton

“I was in Istanbul when I heard through the grapevine that Greg Gangle had accepted a job with Western Fair. I contacted a former colleague at WEG and asked if they’d consider splitting the job into two positions: (1) writing the Journal and (2) the on-air work,” wrote Hamilton in his email. “They said that in fact they were considering that option and they’d get back to me.

“I then spent about a month traveling between Istanbul and Paris, retracing the route of The Orient Express. A month passed with no word about the job so to be honest, I had given up on the idea and had flown from Paris to Seville (Spain) when I got an email. I was two days away from beginning a 1,000-kilometer walk from Seville to Santiago de Compostela when WEG’s Rob Platts contacted me. We had an agreement in two days and in another two days I was on a plane to Toronto.”

Hamilton sold virtually all his possessions when he left on his world-wide adventure 33 months ago, so he said he’s been busy since returning home.

“I’ve been here five days and I’ve found a place to live, signed a lease, got the keys, moved in, bought a bed, desk, big boss-man chair, and a sofa,” said Hamilton. “I sold all but some art and family mementos before I left so this feels like I’m 19 all over again and outfitting my first apartment.

“I have rented an artist’s loft in a funky old building in Toronto that I lived in in the early ’90s. It’s still here, not yet torn down to make way for condos like so many lofts and all the industrial space in the area. They had a unit that was going to be available on May 1 but if I was willing to view it and sign a lease before they could clear out the junk from the last tenant—a good candidate for the TV show “Hoarders”—then I could have it. I went from homeless in Spain to employed and buying furniture in Toronto in the span of five days.”

Hamilton admits there could be more traveling in his future.

“After a year in Toronto I’m sure I’ll get itchy feet and this job will allow me to earn some income AND travel at the same time. While in Argentina, Portugal and Thailand I thought that I could return for a (Canadian) winter at some point. I was thinking about my retirement years but in theory this job will allow me to return to those places a bit sooner. I would not attempt to travel AND write simultaneously but I could settle down in almost any foreign country for a few months as long as there’s a reliable internet connection.

“I plan to spend this coming summer and next winter in Canada. Although I loved traveling, I’m looking forward to staying put for a year, being able to make my own grilled cheese sandwich any time I want, sleep in my own bed, have a place to hang clothes (as opposed to just stuffed in a backpack) and all the other little things that one takes for granted when you’re NOT on the move for 1,000 nights.” —By Gordon Waterstone

Meadowlands Explains High Five Snafu

Due to an error at Sportech’s hub in Mount Laurel, N.J., the Meadowlands 5th race Jackpot Super High Five pool was mistakenly paid out in full last Saturday to 23 winning tickets.

By rule, the wager pays out in full only when there is a single winning ticket. Otherwise, 75 percent of the net pool is paid out to the multiple winning tickets while the remaining 25 percent is added to the jackpot.

The 23 winning tickets were each overpaid $714.78 rather than the correct price of $158.80.

Sportech acknowledged that an employee incorrectly formatted the betting program into the pari-mutuel system prior to the race.

Sportech has agreed to add $12,787.31 to Friday’s Race 5 Jackpot Super High Five pool, which is the amount that should have been carried over from Saturday.

“This was simply a matter of human error,” explained Jason Settlemoir, Meadowlands GM and COO. “In this case, it was an error that worked out in favor of the customer, and we appreciate Sportech working with us to correct this error quickly, contributing the additional funds for Friday’s jackpot, and putting the betting public’s interests first and foremost.” (Meadowlands)
PAYMENTS DUE APRIL 15
One list and one check keeps your horses eligible to these top events.

TWO-YEAR-OLDS
BREEDERS CROWN No. 31
Filly events to race Friday, October 27 at Hoosier Park
Elimination heats, if necessary, will be raced Friday, October 20
Colt & Gelding events to race Saturday, October 28 at Hoosier Park
Elimination heats, if necessary, will be raced Saturday, October 21
Purses for the 2-Year-Old Finals in 2017
US $600,000
Sustaining Fee $500
Final Sustaining Payment - $600 – due May 15
Entrance Fee: $5,000

THE ELEVATION
$150,000 Est. in 2017
-$500-
Open. To be raced Friday, September 22 at Hoosier Park
Final Sustaining Payment - $500 - Due May 15
Entrance Fee: $750

KENTUCKIANA STALLION MANAGEMENT PACE & TROT 2017
2-Year-Old Filly Pace – Open To The World.
$250,000 Est. in 2017
To race Friday, September 22 at Hoosier Park
-$500-
Final Sustaining Payment - $1,000 – due May 15
Entrance Fee: $1,500

MADISON COUNTY (for 2-year-olds)
$75,000 Est. in 2017
-$300-
Filly events to be raced Thursday, October 12 at Hoosier Park
Colt & Gelding events to be raced Saturday, October 14 at Hoosier Park
Entrance Fee: $300

MATRON SERIES 2017 (FOR 2-YEAR-OLDS)
$637,000 Total Purses in 2016
-$400-
To be raced Thursday, November 9 at Dover Downs
Top 8 format.
Final Sustaining Fee - $500 – due May 15
Entrance Fee: $1,000

THREE-YEAR-OLDS
BREEDERS CROWN® NO. 30
Each of the four 3-year-old finals will be guaranteed US$500,000 in 2017
-US $900 (all payments in US Funds)-
Colts & Geldings to race Saturday, October 28, at Hoosier Park
Elimination heats, if necessary, will be raced Saturday, October 21
Fillies to race Friday, October 27, at Hoosier Park
Elimination heats, if necessary, will be raced Friday, October 20
(A March 15th 3-year-old payment was necessary)
For more information about supplements and regular entries, please contact the office
Entrance Fee: $7,500

2017 THE JENNA’S BEACH BOY
Early Closer For 3-year-old Colt and Gelding Pacers
-$100,000 Est. in 2017-
-$1,000-
To race Friday, September 22 at Hoosier Park
Entrance Fee: $2,000

MATRON SERIES 2017 (FOR 3-YEAR-OLDS)
$530,250 Total 3-Year-Old Purses in 2016
-$750-
To be raced at Dover Downs Thursday, November 16
Top 8 format
Entrance Fee: $1,500

2017 CARL ERSKINE
$225,000 Est. in 2017
-$1,000-
Open. To race Saturday, November 4 at Hoosier Park
Entrance Fee: $2,000

MONUMENT CIRCLE
$200,000 Est. in 2017
-$1,000-
Colts & Geldings only. To race Saturday, November 4 at Hoosier Park
Entrance Fee: $2,000

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS & UP
2017 BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE
$200,000 Guaranteed in 2017
-Supplemental Nomination, April 15: $6,000-
To race Saturday, June 3 at Northfield Park

2017 BREEDERS CROWN No. 29
For 3-Year-Old & Older Trotters - $500,000
To race Saturday, October 28, at Hoosier Park
Elimination heats, if necessary, will be raced Saturday, October 21
-$1,500-
Entrance Fee: $10,000
For 3-Year-Old & Older Pacers - $400,000
To race Saturday, October 28, at Hoosier Park
Elimination heats, if necessary, will be raced Saturday, October 21
-$1,500-
Entrance Fee: $8,000

DAYTON TROTTING AND PACING DERBY
$150,000 Est. each in 2017
-$1,000-
To race Friday, September 29 at Hollywood Gaming at Dayton Raceway
Entrance Fee: $2,000

2017 MIAMI VALLEY DISTAFF PACE & TROT
$100,000 Est. each in 2017
-$900-
Mare trotters to race Sunday, May 7 at Miami Valley Gaming
Mare pacers to race Monday, May 8 at Miami Valley Gaming
Entrance Fee: $2,000

THE SPIRIT OF MASSACHUSETTS TROT (NEW)
$250,000 Guaranteed
-$1,000-
To be raced Friday, July 28 at Plainridge Park Casino
Final Sustaining Payment - $1,500 – due May 15
Entrance Fee: $2,500

Payment forms for all events available from The Hambletonian Society and in PDF format at www.hambletonian.org.

Make checks payable and send all entries to: THE HAMBLETONIAN SOCIETY
109 South Main St., Suite 18, Cranbury, NJ 08512-3174
Burgess Leads 2017 Canadian HOF Class

Veteran horseman Blair Burgess has been announced as a 2017 inductee to the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame (CHRHF), with the Standardbred class also including builder Dr. Gordon Gilbertson along with horses Mach Three, Elegantimage and Happy Lady.

Burgess has accumulated more than 1,040 wins and earnings in excess of $27.6 million as a trainer, including two victories in the Hambletonian (Amigo Hall in 2003 and Glidemaster in 2006), two in the Meadowlands Pace (Frugal Gourmet in 1987, Real Desire in 2002), plus wins in the Little Brown Jug (Tell All in 2007), the North America Cup (Tell All in 2007), the Kentucky Futurity, the Trotting Triple Crown (Glidemaster in 2006), and a Breeders Crown championship (Real Desire in 2001).

Burgess, son of Robert Burgess, who was inducted into the CHRHF in 2011 as a builder, received an O’Brien Award as Canada’s Trainer of the Year in 2007, while he also trained winners of seven O’Brien Awards, and nine Dan Patch Awards. Two of his trainees have been named the U.S. Pacer of the Year (Real Desire in 2002 and Tell All in 2007). Glidemaster was named U.S. Trotter of the Year in 2006. Burgess-trained horses who earned in excess of $1 million include Real Desire, Glidemaster, Tell All, Amity Chef, Quality Western and Amigo Hall.

The late Dr. Gordon Gilbertson, DVM, revolutionized an aspect of the Standardbred racing industry when he invented the Quick Hitch, a new style of harness.

Mach Three was bred by Karl Magid, owned throughout much of his race career by the late Joe Muscara Sr., and trained by Bill, Brett, and Shawn Robinson, along with Monte Gelrod. In 2001, at age two, Mach Three posted a record of 7-2-0 in nine starts, winning the $1.1 million Metro Pace at Woodbine Racetrack. In 2002, Mach Three won the $1 million Meadowlands Pace in a career-best 1:49 and was the first colt to win both of those races. He had a record of 11-2-0 in 18 starts to give him a career record of 18-4-2 in 27 starts and earnings of $2,376,700. In a stallion career split between Tara Hills Stud Farm in Ontario and Alabar Farms in New Zealand, he produced 1,300 plus offspring to date, with total progeny earnings of $105.4 million for average earnings per starter of $113,990, including 306 horses with earnings of $100,000 or more.

Mach Three’s influence on the Standardbred breed will forever be cemented as the sire of the legendary Hall of Fame racehorse and supersire Somebeachsomewhere. To date Mach Three has sired five millionaires including Mach It So, Monkey On My Wheel, Solar Sister, Camaes Fellow and the aforementioned Somebeachsomewhere.

Trotting filly Elegantimage was bred by Diane Ingham and Harry Rutherford. Trained throughout her career by Brad Maxwell, and driven primarily by CHRHF member Steve Condren, she was a standout from age two when she recorded three Ontario Sires Stakes (OSS) wins in five starts. She won the 1996 O’Brien Award as Canada’s Two-Year-Old Trotting Filly of the Year following a season that included nine wins and three seconds in 15 starts for earnings of over $352,000. The Balanced Image daughter continued her dominance at age three, winning eight of 10 OSS starts, and winning the 1997 Canadian Breeders Championship final en route to receiving the O’Brien Award in the 3-year-old trotting filly division.

During her race career, she posted a race record of 20-7-3 and lifetime earnings of $955,368 in 41 races for owners Hyatt Holdings, Doug Millard, Jerry Van Boekel and Steve Condren Stable. As a broodmare, her progeny have earned $986,223 with average earnings per starter of $140,889. Her top performer was the Kadabra filly, Elegant Serenity, a winner of over $500,000 with a mark of 1:53.2.

Happy Lady, a daughter of Most Happy Fella, raced in 1977 and 1978 for owners Myra Masterson and Linda Lockey. She was bred by J. William Masterson of St. Catharines and though her racing career was brief, she won $528,825 in purse earnings and attained a mark of 1:55.3.

Tragically, on Jan. 10, 1981 at Castleton Farms in Kentucky, she perished in a barn fire, along with 13 other mares, while in foal to Bret Hanover. (CHRHF)
Hans Enggren has bred scores of horses over the years under the banner of his Meadowbranch Farm, but these days Enggren is more concerned about racing than he is breeding. That's because he is awaiting the return to racing of his top free-for-all trotter Resolve.

Resolve is presently training with Ake Svanstedt at Svanstedt’s winner headquarters in Vero Beach, Fla.

“He is training so well you can’t believe it,” said Enggren of his now 6-year-old stallion by Muscle Hill. “Ake said he plans to qualify him around the last week in April. I’m going to return north soon so I can see him.”

Enggren said Svanstedt’s plan calls for Resolve to make his first start in the Arthur J. Cutler Memorial on May 6 at the Meadowlands. If all goes well, they would accept an invitation to take Resolve to compete in the Elitlopp in Enggren’s homeland of Sweden.

“Ake knows that I will not go,” said Enggren of making the trip to Stockholm to see Resolve race, as he did last year when the horse finished second to Nuncio. “As much as I want to go, I can’t at my age. It’s just too much. It was wonderful to go to Yonkers last fall for just a one-day trip and win a big race (the International Trot).”

Enggren has six other horses in training with Svanstedt. He also has three broodmares, Wen-Mar’s Memo (Carry The Message-Lightly Sakra-Supergill) and her Muscle Massive daughter Meadowbranch Wendy 4, 1:52.3, and Meadowbranch Jill 4, 1:56.4f (Cantab Hall-Meadowbranch Orfia-Super Bowl). All three mares are boarded at a farm Enggren once owned, not far from his present home in Abbottown, Pa. All three mares are booked to be bred to Bar Hopping.

More than 20 years ago, Enggren was a director of the U.S. Trotting Association (USTA) and for three straight years he went to the annual USTA meeting with the primary mission of getting the board to approve the registration of foals conceived by transported semen.

“To me, that might be the best thing that I’ve ever accomplished in harness racing,” said Enggren earlier this week from Pompano Beach, Fla., where he spends the winter months. “I had a filly die when she went up to New York to be bred. I just hated putting the mare and foal on the truck, and I was in Pennsylvania breeding trotters and Speedy Crown was in New Jersey and New York, so if I wanted to breed to him they had to be put on the truck.”

Enggren recalled that the late John Cashman Jr., president of Castleton Farm, was not in favor of the rule change and was a very influential USTA director.
Allard-trained Trotter Suspended In Ontario

The Rene Allard-trained 4-year-old trotter One Too Many has been suspended from racing from March 31 through June 28 as a result of a positive post-race test.

Allard also owns One Too Many, who is winless in eight starts this year. One Too Many finished second on March 18 and third on March 25 at Woodbine.

The exact cause of the positive has not been made public by the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC), but horses are suspended immediately in Ontario if there is a positive finding of a Class 1, 2 or 3 drug.

Allard is the leading trainer at Woodbine thus far in 2017 with his 178 starts resulting in 49 wins (27.5 percent), 25 seconds and 26 thirds, and a UTR of .402. While Allard started horses at Woodbine on Monday, April 3, he has no starters listed through Saturday night at Woodbine. Allard does not appear on the ORC list of suspensions, and he continues to race at tracks in the U.S., including Yonkers, Harrah’s Philadelphia, The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono and Saratoga Harness.

Woodbine Entertainment Group senior vice president of racing Jamie Martin declined to comment on any possible sanctions against Allard, referring the matter to the ORC, which had not responded to an email from Weekend Preview as of press time.

Also, the 4-year-old trotter Manwithamission has been suspended from racing from Feb. 24 through May 24. Trained by Alvin Hamilton, Manwithamission posted victories on Feb. 9 and Feb. 18 at Woodbine. Following the second win, the trotter was purchased by Burke Racing, Weaver Bruscemi LLC and Phil Collura, and despite the suspension in Ontario, the Ron Burke-trained horse won a race at Yonkers on March 28 and is back in to start on Friday night.

Ontario Racing Commission
Current Horse Suspensions for Positive Tests Outstanding as of April 6, 2017

- Bipartisan Hanover—Suspended Feb. 15, 2017 to May 15, 2017
- Manwithamission—Suspended Feb. 24, 2017 to May 24, 2017
- One Too Many—Suspended March 31, 2017 to June 28, 2017
- Perubydooby—Suspended Oct. 1, 2012 to indefinitely
- She’s A Maniac—Suspended Feb. 1, 2017 to May 1, 2017
- Tattle Tale Hall—Suspended Feb. 7, 2017 to May 7, 2017

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www.harnessracing.com
Aaron Merriman drives 9,008th winner
Aaron Merriman, harness racing’s “winningest” driver in 2015 and 2016, collected career win 9,000 Tuesday at The Meadows when he piloted DD’s Comet to victory in the fourth race. more

Wind Surfer scores 50th career win
Wind Surfer trotted home for his 50th career victory, winning the 10th race at Northfield Park on Wednesday. The 12-year-old veteran, with 277 career starts, also has 44 seconds and 40 third-place finishes. more

USTA to hold announcing workshop
The U.S. Trotting Association, in conjunction with the Meadowlands Racetrack, will conduct a workshop for those interested in learning to call races on Saturday, June 17, at the Meadowlands. The workshop, open to all ages, will be conducted by Meadowlands and Freehold Raceway announcer Ken Warkentin. more

Ohio commission moves forum date
The Ohio State Racing Commission’s (OSRC) open forum on out-of-competition testing has been rescheduled from April 5 to April 24 at 10 a.m., at the Riffe Center, 77 S. High Street, Room 1960, in Columbus. more

Dr. Patty Hogan holding career event
Dr. Patty Hogan will host a career exploration event for 14 to 18 year olds considering equine veterinary and horse health careers on Saturday, June 24, at Hogan Equine Clinic, on the grounds of Fair Winds Farm in Cream Ridge, N.J. more

SRF holding raffle for trip to Elitlopp
The celebrated Elitlopp in Sweden is one of harness racing’s largest events for those who love the sport of racing. This fabulous trip is a fundraiser for the Standardbred Retirement Foundation through its annual raffle, with tickets now available. more

Vernon’s Shari Okusko dies
Shari L. Okusko, a well-known member of the Vernon Downs racing community, died Monday, April 3, at the Crouse Irving Hospital under the care of the Comfort Care Team. She was 48. Ms. Okusko was born on April 27, 1968, the daughter of Howard and Carol Okusko Sr. She graduated from Vernon-Verona-Sherrill Central High School in 1986. more
Harness Racing Leaders

Compiled by the USTA—through April 4, 2017 (week difference March 29-April 4).

Leading North American-Based Money-Winning Horses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breeder</th>
<th>Starts</th>
<th>Winners</th>
<th>Wins</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms Inc.</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>$4,022,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winbak Farm</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>3,037,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittany Farms</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1,196,749</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seelster Farms Inc.</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1,120,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perretti Farms</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>962,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Chip Bloodstock Inc.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>Steve Stewart</td>
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Leaders Of The Week

Ranked by wins for March 29-April 4 from results at major North American pari-mutuel tracks.

Drivers

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<tr>
<th>Driver</th>
<th>Starts</th>
<th>W-P-S</th>
<th>UTR</th>
<th>Earnings (wk. diff)</th>
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<td>Aaron Merriman</td>
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<td>22-20-17</td>
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<td>Jason Bartlett</td>
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<td>Tim Tetrick</td>
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<td>Corey Callahan</td>
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<td>Tony Morgan</td>
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<td>12-6-6</td>
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<td>Matt Kakaley</td>
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<td>Simon Allard</td>
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<td>11-4-0</td>
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<td>Jordan Stratton</td>
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<td>Josh Sutton</td>
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<td>Trace Tetrick</td>
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<td>9-10-7</td>
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<td>Jack Harris</td>
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<td>Louis Roy</td>
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Trainers

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<td>Ron Burke</td>
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<td>Rene Allard</td>
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<td>Melissa Beckwith</td>
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<td>Scott Di Domenico</td>
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<td>Gilbert Garcia-Herrera</td>
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<td>Nick Surick</td>
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<td>Robert Lounsbury</td>
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<td>Sabrina Clevenger</td>
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<td>Travis Cullen</td>
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<td>Andrew Harris</td>
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<td>C. Brian Loney</td>
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<td>Clyde Francis</td>
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<td>Doug Hamilton</td>
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<td>Dylan Davis</td>
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<td>Herman Hagerman</td>
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<td>J.D. Perrin</td>
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<td>Jim King Jr.</td>
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<td>Tyler George</td>
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<td>Vincent Fusco Jr.</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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<td>April Fool’s Day</td>
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<td>Weiss H&amp;G Pace (PcD)</td>
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<td>Mya Tri F&amp;M Trot (HoP)</td>
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<td>OHS3 FP (MVR)</td>
<td>OHS3 FT (MVR)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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