Will It Be Miller Time
In Breeders Crowns?

With 22 championship victories to his credit, driver David Miller certainly knows his way to the Breeders Crown winner's circle. Miller comes into this weekend's 12-races-over-two-nights, $6 million extravaganza at Hoosier Park off a strong showing in the eliminations last weekend, scoring six wins, four seconds and two thirds, which sets him up nicely to add to his Crown resume.

“You know what, I thought I was going into (the eliminations) good,” said Miller, who won a record five Breeders Crown final in 2015 at Woodbine. “A couple of them raced better than I expected and a couple didn’t race so good.”

The six Breeders Crown finals for female pacers and trotters will go to post on Friday night (races 7-12) while the six finals for male pacers and trotters (with the one exception being the mare Hannelore Hanover in the Open Trot) are scheduled for Saturday night (races 7-12). Post time for both nights is 6 p.m.

While Crown conditions limited the number of starters in the elims to nine (all on the gate), there will be a maximum of 10 going to post in the finals, which at Hoosier Park means post 10 is the trailing position behind post 1.

Miller’s six elim wins included a sweep of the two Older Horse Pace eliminations with Dealt A Winner and Mach It So. He said it was a tough decision for the final but he went with Mach It So.

“He was just so sharp in the elim and went around there so good. He was strong right through the wire,” Miller explained of his decision to drive Mach It So, who starts from post 5 in Race 12 on Saturday night.

While Miller drove JL Cruze to a third-place finish in one of the two Open Trot elims, he has opted instead to direct the Ron Burke-trained Crazy Wow from post 2 in Saturday’s final. With Yannick Gingras also driving the Burke-trained elim winner Hannelore Hanover, that opened the drive behind Crazy Wow. JL Cruze has since been scratched.

“Ronnie Burke came to me and said if I would drive Crazy Wow, I could have him. So I said OK and made the switch,” said Miller.

As many have observed, Miller believes the title of 3-Year-Old Colt Trotter of the Year will go to the Crown champion. His hopes ride with What The Hill, who captured his elim and starts from post 3 in the final.

“Post 3 is a good spot for him,” said Miller. “I was really happy with him in the elim. The division is very wide open and I hope things go well for him.”

With elimination winners earning the right to draw from posts 1-5 for the final, Miller obviously has enhanced starting positions, including lining up three times in post 1 on Saturday. Miller sees the rail as a good starting spot at Hoosier Park.

Continues on page 2
“I think it’s fine,” Miller said about post 1, which has a 10.6 percent win average this year at Hoosier Park. “I don’t think the inside post is any disadvantage there. Not like at Mohawk where you come off the turn and the start is right there. At Hoosier it’s down there a ways. You have time to get the horse going.”

Miller offered insights about his Crown contenders:
AGENT Q (3-Year-Old Filly Pace, Post 5)
“She raced fine in the elim. I thought off of her trip she would really fire and be good enough to win, but she didn’t have her usual pop.”
RAINBOW ROOM (2FP, Post 3)
“I thought she raced very well in the elim and did it pretty easy. She’s been good right from the start.”
HIGHLAND TOP HILL (3FT, Post 30-1)
“I really hope she races well. She did finish second in the first division of the Kentucky Filly Futurity but she is going to have to have things go really, really good for her.”
BLUE MOON STRIDE (OMP, Post 10)
“I’d rather have the 10 than the 9, that’s for sure. She raced OK (in the elim).”
CRYSTAL FASHION (2CT, Post 1)
“I moved him going into the turn (in the elim) and then he was very game through the stretch. That other horse came at him late and he fought him off. He might not have gone as much as the other division went, but I thought he raced really well.”
KARPATIAN KID (2CP, Post 1)
“If he gets his trip he will be fine. I don’t want to go :26 and :54 for him to get to the front. That’s what happened to him in the Sires Stakes final as he’s not really strong enough to overcome that. In the elimination I got away second and looped them and then got covered up again. He likes that trip. He likes to follow somebody and then he’ll give you a good run. Hopefully I can work something out to where he can follow a good colt who can take him into the stretch pretty good.”
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$400,000 TVG FFA Pace
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Brown Reviews His Crown Contenders

The Breeders Crown eliminations didn’t turn out quite the way trainer Brian Brown had hoped. The star of his stable, the North America Cup winner Fear The Dragon, missed the cut, finishing eighth in one of the two elims for 3-year-old colt and gelding pacers. (See page 11 to read Brown and driver David Miller’s thoughts about the colt’s poor performance.)

Brown will send out Downbytheseaside, Blazin Britches and Who’s Better in the Crown finals.

The 3-year-old pacing colt Downbytheseaside won his Crown elimination easily in 1:51.1 despite starting from post 8 and drew post 1 for the $527,500 final.

“We were very uneasy going into the race,” said Brown, noting that the colt had been diagnosed with a mild liver infection after a poor performance in the Tattersalls at the Red Mile. “Liver infections are hard to clear up, and we don’t really know how he got it. Usually it’s because of moldy hay or grain, but how come the horse standing in a stall right next to him, who got the same feed, doesn’t get an infection?”

As for the Crown final, Brown isn’t overlooking any horse. “Even the two Indiana horses have to be watched,” said Brown. “That Beckham (Beckham’s Z Tam) went a hell of a race, and Rock N Tony was super in winning.”

The 3-year-old filly pacer Blazin Britches went into her Crown elimination healthy, but Brown said her sometimes difficult nature got the best of her in the elim. Driven as usual by Trace Tetrick, Blazin Britches started from post 4 and got away sixth, but Tetrick had to move early and brushed the filly to the front, but they were stuck parked out.

“The middle half was pretty hard for her. That was a long time to be out,” said Brown. “She was keyed up before the race, then Trace got her off the gate OK but she was hard to drive. She’s tough on herself and she needs to relax a little more.”

Brown said he plans to make a bit change for the final, changing from a crescendo (used for pullers) to a plain snaffle. Blazin Britches drew post 1 for the final, which wasn’t Brown’s preference.

“I would have liked to have the three or the four. Trace will have to figure out something to make sure he doesn’t get trapped. I just want him to have options on what he wants to do,” said Brown.

Brown’s third Crown entry, the 2-year-old pacer Who’s Better, rewarded the trainer’s decision to give the winless horse a chance to step up in class. He paced home in :26.4 to finish third in the 1:50.4 win by Stay Hungry.

“I think the 2-year-old colt pace is the most wide-open of the Breeders Crown races,” said Brown. “If he can get the right trip where the outside flow keeps moving, he should be ok as long as the fractions are honest. He’s not a starting-stopping kind of horse.” —By Kathy Parker
Holloway Has Two Crown Contenders
In Rainbow Room, Closing Statement

Trainer Joe Holloway has seven Breeders Crown championships to his credit and with leading contenders Rainbow Room and Closing Statement lining up behind the gate in this weekend’s finals at Hoosier Park, he could add a couple more to his total.

Coming off an impressive 1:52.3 victory in one of two Crown eliminations for 2-year-old filly pacers, Rainbow Room is arguably the one to beat in Friday night’s $600,000 final. The daughter of Somebeachsomewhere-Rainbow Blue has seven wins and three seconds in 10 starts.

While Rainbow Room cruised to her Crown elim victory, Holloway admits disappointment that the first-year pacer had to settle for a pair of seconds during Grand Circuit action at The Red Mile.

“She got beat twice in Lexington and I wasn’t happy, but both times the next-best horse in the race sat on her back and got a perfect trip,” said Holloway. “She got beat and that’s what happens. The first week I didn’t mind as much as I thought she kind of waited on the other horse and got beat. The second week we went too much into a pretty strong headwind, but that being said, I have to take a lot of the blame too. Her feet were bothering her. But I did something to them and it did help and I thought she was really good last week.”

Listed as the 8-5 morning-line favorite, Rainbow Room will be driven by David Miller from post 3. She will be hoping to duplicate the Crown championship effort by her full sister, Somewherovrarainbow, who won the 2012 Two-Year-Old Filly Pace for trainer George Teague Jr.

“(Rainbow Room) has been a sweetheart and continues to be, so I’m looking forward to Friday with her,” said Holloway, who won the Breeders Crown 2-Year-Old Filly Pace in 2000 with Lady MacBeach. “She’s done nothing wrong.”

Closing Statement finished second to Stay Hungry in one of three Crown eliminations for 2-year-old colt pacers, and after the trio of winners drew for posts 1-5, the Holloway trainee landed post 4. Closing Statement is listed as the 6-1 fourth choice behind the three elim victors.

“I’ll take the 4,” Holloway said with a laugh. “When they were drawing it was down to the 4, 9 or 10, so where do you think that sets him up well if he can be like that?”

—Joe Holloway about Closing Statement

Holloway said Closing Statement is a much different horse than Rainbow Room.

“He’s not as easy to drive as ‘Rainbow,’ but he’s coming along,” he said. “He has all the talent, he just has to learn the other parts. She came in mentally prepared from the start; he’s been a work in progress.” — By Gordon Waterstone
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Phaetosive Has Another Chance To Defeat Manchego In 2FT

The $600,000 Breeders Crown 2-Year-Old Filly Trot will feature the third match-up this season between the undefeated Manchego and her strong rival Phaetosive, a winner of four of six starts, and never worse than second.

Manchego defeated Phaetosive in the Jim Doherty Memorial final on Hambletonian Day at the Meadowlands and in the Peaceful Way final at Mohawk. When Phaetosive won her Breeders Crown elimination in 1:53.3, setting a new Hoosier Park track record, and Manchego followed by making her Crown elim her 11th win in as many starts, fans were put on alert that the rivalry between the two fillies was still on.

Owned by Wanda Polisseni’s Purple Haze Stables, Phaetosive won by three lengths despite not having raced in 32 days. Trainer Trond Smedshammer explained Phaetosive’s lack of racing action.

“I didn’t like the schedule. If we wanted to race her in Lexington and the Breeders Crown, we would have to ship to Lexington, then back home. With the New York Sires Stakes finals in New York, I didn’t have anything else going to Lexington, so I decided she would skip Lexington,” said Smedshammer.

Smedshammer said he wasn’t overly concerned with Phaetosive going into the Breeders Crown without a recent race.

“As long as you keep them conditioned and healthy, they don’t lose the ability for speed. These horses only have so many of these fast miles in them. At least it’s not what works for me,” said Smedshammer.

“I’ve never been a big fan of a lot of fast training miles, even with Windsong’s Legacy.”

Phaetosive will start from post 5 in the Breeders Crown final while Manchego drew post 4. Smedshammer also drives Phaetosive.

Smedshammer, who celebrated his 50th birthday earlier this year, left Phaetosive in Indiana following the elimination, but he headed back to New Jersey, where he has 20 horses in the barn. A new addition to Smedshammer’s responsibilities is his first child, a 3-month-old son, Lars, who is named after Smedshammer’s father.

“We have some horses that are two coming three turned out, but I will probably be training 35 again. I’m trying to cut back a little and that’s manageable,” he said.— By Kathy Parker
Upset Elim Winners Looking For Déjà Vu In Finals

While favorites predominantly ruled in last weekend’s Breeders Crown eliminations at Hoosier Park, there were two big surprise winners: Ella Christina, who won the 3-Year-Old Filly Pace elim at odds of 35-1, and Rock N Tony, who captured one of two 3-Year-Old Colt Pace elim at odds of 28-1.

Ella Christina is owned in part by trainer Nick Surick, who won his first-ever Breeders Crown final last year when Someomensomewhere captured the Two-Year-Old Filly Pace. Someomensomewhere, who was also owned in part by Surick and trained by Erv Miller, lit up the Meadowlands’ toteboard in the final at odds of 17-1.

Ella Christina will start from post 3 in Friday night’s $500,000 Breeders Crown final. She will again be driven by Tim Tetrick, who directed the daughter of Western Ideal to the come-from-behind victory in the Crown elimination.

In the elim, Ella Christina started from post 8 and was eighth at the half. Tetrick then moved Ella Christina up the inside around the final turn, remaining there until deep stretch when he made a hard-right move with his charge and she flew past the five fillies still ahead of her to score the quarter-length victory in 1:51. Clocked with a final quarter of :26.3, Surick believes she went even faster.

“She didn’t expect her to win last week because our game plan was to just get her in the final,” Surick admitted. “But the way she won it...to be able to move at the top of the lane and let her pace a straight line for a quarter mile, she’s coming home in 25 seconds. And she went against the bias that night, and that’s what is so impressive.”

Surick and his partners purchased Ella Christina in late July and the filly has since posted five wins and two seconds in 10 starts for her new connections. She scored a career-best 1:50.2 victory in an Oct. 6 late-closer at The Red Mile, and then after leading through three-quarters in the $120,000 Courageous Lady at Northfield Park, she tired to sixth.

“Things just didn’t go our way,” Surick explained of the Courageous Lady. “We were pressed the whole time and on the lead where she doesn’t like it. She also tied up bad. We had shipped her five hours that morning to race and it was the first time we’ve shipped her that far the day of the race.”

Surick said he and Tetrick were thrilled with drawing post 3 for the final and he couldn’t be happier with her preparation.

“I could not ask for her to be any better right now,” said Surick. “She’s sound as a dollar and happy as a clam. I can’t say she’s ever been sharper. She didn’t go into the last race as well as I wanted to, but she came out of it better than she went into it. For the first time I think she has a major shot.”

Surick said no matter Friday’s outcome, he plans to sell Ella Christina at the mixed sale early next month in Harrisburg.

“She’s been a great buy and I hate to see her go when I do sell her in Harrisburg,” he said.

Rock N Tony was driven to his upset score by Hoosier Park’s leading driver, Trace Tetrick. After sitting the two hole through three-quarters in the Crown elim, Tetrick directed Rock N Tony up the passing lane to edge past the pacing Blood Line to win by a length in 1:50.2.

“I wanted to be forwardly placed and was able to get a good trip out of it,” said Tetrick. “I got through the passing lane late and the horse is very sharp right now.”

The win came eight days after Rock N Tony won the $220,000 Indiana Sires Stakes final so the Crown effort by the son of Rockin Image came as no surprise to Tetrick.

“He was really sharp in the final. I moved him pretty hard and he raced real good,” said Tetrick. “I had a lot of confidence in him going into the race because he was real good early and then tailed off a little bit, but he was showing back up at the right time. It was just a mystery though as he had never faced outside competition.”

Trained by Erv Miller, Rock N Tony will start from post 1 in Saturday’s $527,500 final. Tetrick is hoping to work out a similar trip as in the elimination.

“I hope so; I’ll take that,” he said. “He’s in a really good spot. He should be able to push and maintain and hold our position.” — By Gordon Waterstone
We sold the now World Champion JL CRUZE at the Harrisburg Mixed Sale for $37,000 and since that time all he has done is defeat the best trotters in training establishing the World Record 1:49.4 and honors as the Dan Patch “Aged Trotter of the Year” and earn nearly $1,250,000 for his new ownership.

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Local Hopes Try For Breeders Crown Glory

When Hoosier Park was announced as the host track for the 2017 Breeders Crown, many folks who race in the state took note and nominated their horses. Quite a few Indiana-based horses were entered in the Crown eliminations, which required starting fees ranging from $5,000 (Mare Trot, Mare Pace, all 2 year olds) to $7,500 (all 3 year olds), to $8,000 (Open Pace) to $10,000 (Open Trot).

Eight horses based in Indiana advanced to the Breeders Crown finals. They are Rock N Roll World (Open Pace), Seventimesavirgin (Mare Pace), Beckham’s Z Tam (3-Year-Old Colt Pace), Carol’s Z Tam (3-Year-Old Filly Pace), Fiftydallarbill and Skyway Torpedo (2-Year-Old Colt Trot), Rock N Tony (3-Year-Old Colt Pace) and Shnitzledosomethin (2-Year-Old Colt Pace).

The Indiana-sired 2 year olds Fiftydallarbill and Shnitzledosomethin just missed wins in Crown eliminations and will now try again in their respective finals.

“I like this little trotter,” said Trace Tetrick of Fiftydallarbill, a Swan For All who he regularly drives for trainer Bill Crone. “He’s been really good all summer. The race before the elim was in the Sires Stakes final when he made the break when he had the 10 hole and there was a recall and it just didn’t work out for us.”

Peter Wrenn drives Shnitzledosomethin, who was nosed out on the wire in 1:50.4. “He didn’t surprise me at all,” said Wrenn of Shnitzledosomethin’s strong effort. “He’s a very nice horse. It took a perfect trip for the other horse to beat me. In the final, I think my horse will be a player.”

Wrenn will also be driving Skyway Torpedo for trainer Alvin Miller. They’ll be starting from post 10, in the second tier.

“The 10 doesn’t bother me, but he’s going to have to step it up,” said Wrenn of Skyway Torpedo, who advanced to the final by finishing fourth to Fourth Dimension, trotting his own mile in 1:54.3.

“He’s a smart colt. He won’t be embarrassed by any means,” added Wrenn.

Jamie Macomber trains the “Z Tam” horses, Beckham’s Z Tam and Carol’s Z Tam. Both overcame outside post positions (8 and 9) to advance to the finals and then had good luck in drawing better starting posts for the final.

“We’re really the same as everybody, just hoping for a good trip in the final,” said Macomber of her expectations for the two horses driven by her husband, Ricky, and owned by Bill Matz’ Z Tam Stables.

Carol’s Z Tam, who started from post 9 in an elimination, advanced to the final despite falling 14 ½ lengths behind the race leader at the opening quarter. She earned her ticket to the final with a final quarter in :26. Beckham’s Z Tam turned in an almost identical effort, spotting the leader 12 ¾ lengths but also blasting home in :26.

“I would say our horses are the best they’ve been all year,” said Macomber, the leading dash-winning trainer at Hoosier Park.

Back in June, Beckham’s Z Tam took on the best of his division in the North America Cup, but finished last in the elim won by Huntsville.

“He’s a much more mature horse now than when he raced in the North America Cup,” said Macomber.

Macomber said she believes horses that race regularly at Hoosier Park do benefit from their experience, and she’s hopeful that translates into purse checks for her two finalists.

“The last turn here is so different from any place else, and if a horse can get through that, and if they appreciate the long stretch, it can be to your advantage,” she said.

Bill Matz, who owns Carol’s Z Tam and Beckhams Z Tam under the name of Z Tam Stables, agrees with Macomber that being based at Hoosier Park should be an advantage.

“Now, to me, it’s kind of an open race. These others have been pacing (1):48 all year in tough races and shipping all around. We’ve been at Hoosier Park all year,” Matz offered. “We just have to go 100 yards to get to the racetrack; these guys have traveled 600 miles and have been beat up all year. I’m hoping that will be a big advantage.” — By Kathy Parker
Crown Disappointments Set To Square Off In Pegasus

There is no doubt the biggest surprise coming out of last weekend’s Breeders Crown eliminations was that Fear The Dragon and Filibuster Hanover did not advance to the $527,500 final for 3-year-old colt and gelding pacers.

Fear The Dragon was the top-ranked horse in the weekly poll conducted by Harness Racing Communications; Filibuster Hanover was the winner of the Little Brown Jug.

The two division heavyweights won’t be sitting on the sidelines on Saturday, however, as they will both line up behind the gate in the $60,000 Pegasus, an inaugural Grand Circuit event this year at Hoosier Park. Fear The Dragon and driver David Miller drew post 7, while Filibuster Hanover and driver Yannick Gingras will line up in post 10.

“Fear The Dragon (at odds of 3-5) and Filibuster Hanover (at odds of 5-2) finished eighth and sixth, respectively, in the same Crown elim won by 28-1 upsetter Rock N Tony. Starting from post 3, Fear The Dragon got away fifth; despite starting from post 1, Filibuster Hanover settled in sixth, right behind the betting favorite.

Gingras said it was his strategy to try and follow Fear The Dragon, but it backfired when Fear The Dragon turned into dead cover.

“It was my fault as I overthought the race,” admitted Gingras. “My horse is quick so I thought if (Fear The Dragon) could take me into the stretch I could out-sprint him. I thought it was a winning trip and it would make it easy on him a little bit, but it obviously blew up in my face. Fear The Dragon was no good and I found myself too far out of it.”

So why did Fear The Dragon, whose 12 wins this year include the North America Cup, Adios and Hempt, put in such a sub-par performance? Trainer Brian Brown said sickness was likely the culprit.

“He scoped perfect and he was eating fine, but we pulled blood on him and he has a low nutracell count, and his white blood cell count is a little low, which indicates an infection,” Brown said on Thursday morning (Oct. 26). “Sometimes horses have a bad day, but he’s never had a bad day like last Saturday.”

Brown said Fear The Dragon’s Pegasus start could be in jeopardy, depending on pre-race blood test results.

“Our plan is we’re going to pull blood on him Saturday morning, and if his nutracells still show they’re bad, we’re going to scratch him,” said Brown.

—By Gordon Waterstone

Watch The Breeders Crown Live & Replays

If you’re not able to be at Hoosier Park for this weekend’s two-night Breeders Crown championship cards, you can still watch all the action from home via the www.harnessracing.com website, or the Hoosier Park website. Just go to the homepage of harnessracing.com and scroll down to the video box and click “Breeders Crown finals.” That will take you directly to the Breeders Crown page on the Hoosier Park website where you can see not only all the live action, but race replays as well. Also, TVG will provide live coverage of both nights of Crown action, with the Meadowlands’ Jason Horowitz joining TVG’s Tom Cassidy in anchoring the broadcast from the racing network’s studio in Los Angeles.

Leading Breeders of Breeders Crown Starters (1984-2016)

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Leading Owners of Breeders Crown Starters (1984-2016)

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Equine - Pro
A scientifically designed equine probiotic blend to maintain gastro-intestinal health and increase nutrient absorption.

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“Equine Pro is a great product that has reduced stress and made the horses look great. The Blacksmith and I noticed a difference right away. The yearlings were less nervous when they were being shod. I've fed it for a year now and still using it.”
- Jimmy Takter

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- George Ducharme

“I have fed all my horses Equine Pro since the 2016 Harrisburg sale and I'm still on it. I really like the product. It has reduced stress and improved appetites. I like that it's an all-natural product.”
- Dan Daley

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Owners Of Pink Pistol Taking A Shot In Mare Trot

Seven years ago horse agent Pete Shody saw a 4-year-old female trotter named August Revenue win by nearly 10 lengths in 1:54 at Pocono and called her owners to see if the mare was for sale. She was not, he was told, because she was going to bred. But Shody did not forget about her.

Five years later, the Ontario-based Shody came across a 2-year-old filly trotter for sale online for $6,000 (Canadian). Her name was Pink Pistol and she was a daughter of Cantab Hall and August Revenue. Shody was interested immediately. After checking out the filly, he convinced his wife, Sharon Cameron, and several partners to buy her.

Pink Pistol battled a variety of issues in the ensuing years, but has won 10 of 39 career races and earned $123,793. And on Friday, she will compete in the $250,000 Breeders Crown Mare Trot.

The 4-year-old Pink Pistol will start from post 3 with Louis Roy driving for now-trainer Shody and Cameron’s Knightstalker Stable. She is 8-1 on the morning line. Emoticon Hanover, who finished second in last season’s Breeders Crown for 3-year-old female trotters, is the 6-5 favorite.

“It’s a huge thrill,” Shody said. “Being around this business as long as I’ve been, and Sharon has had horses for about five years now, for a small mom-and-pop outfit, it’s pretty much everything you could dream about in the business.”

Added Cameron, “It’s always nice to see the little guys once in while rather than the big barns all the time.”

Knightstalker Stable has two horses, Pink Pistol and 10-year-old male pacer Battle Call. Shody trains both. The stable was named after two of Cameron’s cats, Knight and Stalker, whose names originated from the mid-1970s TV series “Kolchak: The Night Stalker.”

Shody followed his father, who owned several horses, into the sport and worked for Continental Farms in the mid-1980s before starting his own small stable in the early 1990s. He stepped away from training for two decades while focusing on his work as an agent, but got re-licensed last year.

Pink Pistol enters the Breeders Crown off a third-place finish in a conditioned race at Mohawk. She was beaten by a half-length by gelding Lean Hanover in 1:53.2. The second-place finisher in the race was Breeders Crown 3-year-old male trot finalist Seven And Seven.

“I think she’s turned the corner,” Shody said. “She always was a good filly, she just had a lot of issues that lingered for a while. It was an easy decision to put her in (the Breeders Crown) after her last two starts. I think she’s got a good chance, to be honest with you. If you look at the horses she raced with in her last start, it was a real tough field. She’s heading the right way. It’s a race. We’re all trying to do the same thing.” — By Ken Weingartner/Harness Racing Communications

Leading Drivers of Breeders Crown Starters (1984-2016)

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HarnessRacing Weekend Preview
Rock N Tony Giving Owners Thrills

Anthony Lombardi missed being at Hoosier Park to see his 3-year-old pacer Rock N Tony capture the $220,000 Indiana Sires Stakes Super Final. He also skipped making the trip for the Breeders Crown eliminations, when “Tony” pulled off a huge upset. But he says he plans to be there for the Crown championship.

Third choice in the $220,000 Indiana Sires Stakes Super Final on Oct. 13, Rock N Tony turned in an impressive 1:51 performance with Trace Tetrick in the bike. The horse’s trainer, Erv Miller, had encouraged Lombardi, who lives in Illinois, to make the 3 ½-hour trip to see the race live.

“He told me, ‘I really think you need to come down here.’ I said, ‘Erv, I just want a check,’” Lombardi said of deciding to stay home. “We won with both Rock N Tony and Meadow Brook Grace. It was a very bad decision on my part.”

Last weekend, sent off at odds of 28-1, Rock N Tony won his Breeders Crown elimination in a lifetime best time of 1:50.2, paying $58. Once again, Miller had urged Lombardi to be there in person, and again he was absent.

Perhaps a superstitious man would stay away from Hoosier Park on Saturday night, hoping to keep the good luck flowing. Lombardi, however, plans to be there to take in the atmosphere and cheer on his horse.

Lombardi and his partner Rocco Ruffolo bought Rock N Tony as a yearling for $49,000 at the Hoosier Classic sale. At the time, the youngster’s name was The Party’s Rockin. Ruffolo asked Lombardi if they could make a name change. The majority owner obliged, as Ruffolo’s father was also named Tony.

“I usually name them after my kids. Rocco came to me and said, ‘Do you have any problems with us naming him Rock N Tony?’” Lombardi explained. “I said, ‘No, but when you name a horse after yourself, the damn thing better turn out. If he doesn’t, you look like an idiot.’”

Lombardi and Ruffolo can rest assured the name change has worked out well so far. As a 2 year old, Rock N Tony won six of 13 starts on his way to earning $233,575; this year he’s already picked up another $254,237 in purses despite a period of illness.

“The thing with Tony is he’s all heart. If you’ve ever seen him, he’s not a very big colt. He’s not a large, muscle-bound colt,” Lombardi stated. “But his heart; the colt never stops. He’s a thrill to own.” — By James Platz/Hoosier Park
Strong Opinion

The future is now...
with brothers and sisters
to stakes-winning
two & three-year-olds,
and older stakes stars!

Hip 239 Haulin'Oats, bay colt
Art Major-Blogette Hanover-Allamerican Native
Half-brother to MANY FACTS p,2,1:59 ($10,936). From multiple stakes winner BLOGETTE HANOVER p,3,1:51.2f ($214,525), full or half-sister to BOCA HANOVER p,1:51.1f ($526,562), BOUNCING HANOVER p,4,1:52 ($165,577—dam of DAVID’S DREAM p,1:50.1—$267,996), BAREITALL HANOVER p,4,1:54.3 ($163,555), BRISSONTE HANOVER p,1:54.2f ($139,578—dam of BLUSH HANOVER p,1:51.3—$324,912) and Bella Girl Hanover p,2,02:1:1.4f—$17,888.

Hip 280 Rough N Ready, bay filly
Bettor’s Delight—Rough Sketch—Art Major
Full or half-sister to multiple stakes winner IDEAL NUGGETS p,2,1:50.4 ($389,802), multiple 2-year-old stakes winner STRONG OPINION p,1:52.3f—$137,277 (13 foals) and ROUGH ODDS p,3,1:51.3f—$76,885. From stakes winner ROUGH SKETCH p,2,1:55.4h ($117,226), half-sister to MAJOR GENERAL p,3,1:51.1 ($345,378), GOOD WILL HANOVER p,3,1:50 ($281,077) and GIVE ME BEST HANOVER p,1:55.4h ($133,195).

Hip 334 Spare No Money, bay filly
Art Major—Indulge Me—Bettor’s Delight
Full or half-sister to SPENDABUCKONME p,2,1:54.2f ($62,262), 2-year-old stakes winner REIGN ON ME p,2,1:52.4f—$29,832. First foal from a half-sister to multiple stakes winners THE FIREPAN p,3,1:50.4 ($617,097) and SUMMERS FURY p,3,1:54.2f ($106,583).

Hip 457 Time Rolls On, bay colt
Bettor’s Delight—Day After Day—Western Hanover
Full or half-brother to stakes winner WINNING IT p,3,1:52.1f ($151,998), CRAZY EIGHTS p,4,1:52.2 ($77,250) and A HARD DAYS NIGHT p,1:53.3h—$81,901. Second dam is stakes winner TAKE THE PLUNGE 3,1:55.3 ($101,332), half-sister to BRANDOS MUSCLE MAN 1:53.3f ($480,815) and multiple stakes winner YANKEE MATTHEW 4,1:54.3 ($181,832).

Hip 552 Ms Carnoustie, bay filly
Pet Rock—For The Glory—Art Major
Full or half-sister to a 1:55.4 half-sister to stakes winner WINNING IT p,3,1:52.1f ($151,998), CRAZY EIGHTS p,4,1:52.2 ($77,250) and A HARD DAYS NIGHT p,1:53.3h—$81,901. From stakes winner DAY AFTER DAY p,1:51 ($366,161), three-quarter sister to GOTCHA COVERED p,1:50.3—$121,487. From the immediate family of CAMTASTIC DREAM p,1:50.4 ($448,491) and TOWN DREAMER p,1:53.4 ($424,908).

Hip 558 Cash Crazy, bay filly
Art Major—Crazy Eights—Bettor’s Delight
Second foal (oldest now 2) from CRAZY EIGHTS p,4,1:52.2 ($77,250), full or half-sister to stakes winner WINNING IT p,3,1:52.1f ($151,998) and A HARD DAYS NIGHT p,1:53.3h—$81,901. Second dam is stakes winner DAY AFTER DAY p,1:51 ($366,161), three-quarter sister to GOTCHA COVERED p,1:50.3 ($213,487). From the immediate family of CAMTASTIC DREAM p,1:50.4 ($448,491) and TOWN DREAMER p,1:53.4 ($424,908).
**CROWN CHATTER**

**DARLINONTHEBEACH—Mare Pace**

“She’s coming into form. She’s one of the best mares, it’s just that her season got messed up (dealing with an infection during the summer). It’s probably been frustrating for her, too, because horses like her, good horses, know what it means to win and they know what it means to lose. But she’s tough. She bounces back. She’s got grit. She’s a tough girl. Her mom never won a Breeders Crown, so hopefully she can do it. Brett (Miller) drove her perfectly (in the elimination), he drove her with confidence. He left with her and let her do her thing the last part of the race. He never pulled the earplugs on her so I think we’re in good shape.” — trainer Nancy Johansson

**NIKE FRANCO N—Mare Pace**

“It was everything we expected. She was much sharper tonight than she was even at Lexington. Maybe it’s because it wasn’t raining here.” — trainer Jim King Jr.

**BLUE MOON STRIDE—Mare Pace**

“I think I’m initially disappointed (with the elimination). But it’s probably not her game to go back to last and then sprint home. She’s a good, tough mare and she’s probably better off being involved a little bit. She can do a bit of work on both ends. She’s not one that’s going to sprint home in 25 seconds. The last couple of months have been really good. The transition from (age) 3 to 4 is tough and her, Pure Country, Darlinonthetheach, they all struggled a little early. And it looks like they’re all getting a little bit better later.” — trainer Mark Harder

**HANNELORE HANOVER—Open Trot**

“We were happy with her today (elimination victory in 1:52.4, winning by 2 ½ length). She did exactly what she was supposed to do. We tried a new shoe on her last week (at Hoosier) for the first time in her life and I think that was (why she lost). She didn’t like the shoe.” — trainer Ron Burke

**EMOTICON HANOVER—Mare Trot**

“I’m happy with her and that she didn’t have to race (in an elimination). She is easy to keep in shape. She doesn’t need very many starts. She is tough on herself, with traveling and stuff like that. When you give her more days to come back, it works. I think she likes the schedule. We go with what the horses tell us.” — trainer Luc Blais

**MANCHEGO—2YO Filly Trot**

“She’s had a great season and it’d be nice to finish it with a Breeders Crown, there’s no doubt there. She’s a great horse I’ve loved her from the beginning. It’s one thing to like them in the first baby race but they have to improve from there. Thankfully she kept getting better and better.” — driver Yannick Gingras

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ARIANA G—3YO Filly Trot
“‘I’m not overly concerned about her from Lexington as she’s a small girl and it was a very, very tiring track that day. If you used your horse any little bit they couldn’t finish. I didn’t want to put her back on the front but maybe I should have. I didn’t want to make it too hard on her early in the race but I ended up having to come first-up. The two heats did her in but she’s still the horse to beat, no doubt in my mind. On that crap track, I don’t think you should penalize a horse for that.’ — driver Yan-nick Gingras

IDYLLIC BEACH—3YO Filly Pace
“Her race is definitely wide open. Blazin Britches and Caviart Ally are probably the two best fillies in the race and they drew one-two. Tequila Monday drew the nine and that’s a tough spot. Ella Christina, who won the elimination can definitely win the final. You can make cases in this race for five or six fillies. She’d probably be my longshot pick.” — driver Yannick Gingras

CAVIART ALLY—3YO Filly Pace
“She got a little aggressive on me, so we might have to make a couple changes to get her quieted down. It was her first time at the track and as soon as we went out there I could tell she was a little too aggressive. I would have liked to have raced her a little better, but I really didn’t have any option.” — driver Andrew McCarthy

STAY HUNGRY—2YO Colt Pace
“He’s much better off a helmet. Doug (driver McNair) said he was never better (in winning an elim in 1:50.4). He exploded when he popped the plugs.” — trainer Tony Alagna

INTERNATIONAL MONI—3YO Colt Trot
“I was able to come first-up like I’d want to (in the elimination, winning in 1:52.4). Down the lane, I asked my horse, never slowed him down from the second I moved him, and he never slowed down down the lane.” — driver Scott Zeron

OVERDRAFT VOLO—3YO Filly Trot
“I got the trip I wanted (in the elimination, winning by a head in 1:53.3 over Ice Attraction). When I pulled out she was strong, went to the lead and sprinted away, and then she stayed strong when the other filly (Ice Attraction) came to her.” — driver Andy Miller

ROCK N TONY—3YO Colt Pace
“I expected him to be good. That’s why I entered him. He was plagued with sickness about a month ago, but he’s over that now.” — trainer Ev Miller

CAROL’S Z TAM, BECKHAM’S Z TAM—(3FP, 3CP)
“I won the Canadian Pacing Derby in 2004 and my partner and I always talked about, if there was any race you wanted to win, what would it be? And it was a Breeders Crown race. That was always our dream.” — owner Bill Matz (Z Tam Stables)

RESOLVE—Open Trot
“We did not find any physical errors on Resolve (after the Yonkers International, when he finished poorly), but it turned out that he was dehydrated. And then it is not possible to perform. So we tried again in the Breeders Crown elim and there I was pleased with that.” — trainer-driver Ake Svanstedt

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### Harness Racing Leaders

**Horse Racing Leaders**

- **Horses**
  - Fear The Dragon (3pc)
  - Downbythesephes (3pc)
  - Huntsville (3pc)
  - Devious Man (3tc)
  - Ariana G (3t)
  - Keystone Velocity (9ph)
  - Marion Marauder (4th)
  - Hannelore Hanover (5tm)
  - All Bets Off (6ph)
  - Perfect Spirit (3t)

- **Drivers**
  - Vincent Fusco Jr.
  - Patrick Shepherd
  - Jimmy Takter
  - Adam Short
  - Randy Bendis
  - Richard Banca
  - Bob Harmon
  - Erv Miller
  - David White
  - Adam Short
  - Dolores Basalone
  - Jimmy Takter
  - Melissa Beckwith
  - Patrick Shepherd
  - Vincent Fusco Jr.

**Leading North American-Based Money-Winning Horses**

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**Leaders Of The Week**

- Ron Burke
- Nick Surick
- Larry Stalbaum
- Rene Allard
- Rob Harmon
- Erv Miller
- Richard Banca
- Richard Moreau
- David White
- Randy Bendis
- Adam Short
- Dolores Basalone
- Jimmy Takter
- Melissa Beckwith
- Patrick Shepherd
- Vincent Fusco Jr.

Ranked by wins for Oct. 18-24 from results at major North American pari-mutuel tracks.

### Leading Money-Winning Trainers

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<th>Earnings (wk. diff)</th>
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<td>Ron Burke</td>
<td>3,744</td>
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<td>Jimmy Takter</td>
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<td>132-100-76</td>
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<td>Rene Allard</td>
<td>1,630</td>
<td>370-255-196</td>
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<td>Brian Brown</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>145-77-71</td>
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<td>Julie Miller</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>126-99-85</td>
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<td>Ake Svanstedt</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>115-80-65</td>
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<td>Richard Banca</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>162-152-131</td>
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<td>Erv Miller</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>157-119-111</td>
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<td>John Butenschoen</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>92-87-82</td>
<td>.284</td>
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<td>Gilbert Garcia-Herrera</td>
<td>1,168</td>
<td>225-184-154</td>
<td>.324</td>
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### Leaderlines

Compiled by the USTA—through October 24, 2017 (week difference Oct. 18-24).

- Perfect Spirit (3tc) 11 5 1 1 619,128
- All Bets Off (6ph) 23 5 4 3 638,079
- Hannelore Hanover (5tm) 15 8 5 0 689,754
- Huntsville 3pc 14 8 4 1 1,014,428
- Ariana G (3t) 14 11 2 1 873,680
- Keystone Velocity (9ph) 20 7 3 1 729,232
- Marion Marauder (4th) 9 3 3 1 712,347
- Fear The Dragon (3pc) 16 12 2 0 1,264,391
- Downbythesephes (3pc) 17 10 1 3 1,084,735
- Huntsville (3pc) 14 8 4 1 1,014,428
- Devious Man (3tc) 15 4 6 3 921,219
- Ariana G (3t) 14 11 2 1 873,680
- Keystone Velocity (9ph) 20 7 3 1 729,232
- Marion Marauder (4th) 9 3 3 1 712,347
- Hannelore Hanover (5tm) 15 8 5 0 689,754
- All Bets Off (6ph) 23 5 4 3 638,079
- Perfect Spirit (3t) 11 5 1 1 619,128
**CARTER ENERINE 3CT (HoP)**

**Crossroads of America 3FT (HoP)**

**Kindergarten 2YO finals (M)**

**Monument Circle 3CP (HoP)**

**USS Indianapolis 3FP (HoP)**

**Meadowlands opens**

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