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# Harness Racing

## WEEKEND PREVIEW

FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2019

Inside  
Weekly  
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News Digest

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### Feherty Looks For Winning Stroke In Hoosier Debut

Indiana-based Peter and Melanie Wrenn have a new pacer in their stable and it's Feherty, an unraced 3-year-old Tellitlikeitis gelding. Feherty, named for former professional golfer and now on-course TV reporter David Feherty, was recently purchased in part by Dana Parham and sent to the Wrenns after a pair of impressive wins in qualifiers at Harrah's Hoosier Park.

With Peter Wrenn in the sulky, Feherty will make his debut on Friday night at Hoosier Park, starting from post 4 in Race 6, the first \$15,000 leg of the Jerry Landess Series, which is open to non-winners of one pari-mutuel start. Feherty comes into the race off 1:56.3 and 1:53.1 qualifying victories, closing out both miles with last quarters of :26.3 and the second off a back half of :54.4.

"I saw him go the first time and I liked him, but I thought I'd see how he goes again," said Peter Wrenn. "I watched him go again and he was even more impressive. He's a big, strong, beautiful-looking horse."

Out of the mare Cambeth, a half-sister to the \$336,583-winning The Intimidator, Feherty was purchased as a yearling for \$13,000 by Henry Graber and Leander Schwartz. Feherty was sent to trainer Jamie Macomber to race as a 2 year old but he was shut down after training down to 2:05 because of colt soreness, according to Wrenn.

**"We'll race him in this little prep series to see if he is that caliber, and we're hoping he turns into a Sires Stakes colt!"**

*-Peter Wrenn  
about Feherty*

"He was just growing so much they decided to quit with him," said Wrenn. "Nothing major, just basically the colt stuff. He had enough talent. We had him vetted out and everything seems to be A-1."

With Schwartz listed as trainer this year, Feherty

scored open-lengths wins in the qualifiers for driver Trace Tetrick. After the second six-length win on April 6, Wrenn called Parham, who then called Schwartz about a possible sale of all or part of the pacer. According to Wrenn, the next day Parham purchased 50 percent in Feherty, with Graber and Schwartz retaining the other 50 percent as Eleven Star Stables.

Wrenn said he will be able to gauge Feherty's prospects during the three-week Landess Series which culminates in a final on April 26.

"We'll race him in this little prep series to see if he is that caliber, and we're hoping he turns into a Sires Stakes colt," said Wrenn. "But he has a long ways to go yet so we'll take it one week at a time. He sure looks like he has a lot of depth to him."

Wrenn is also looking forward to the 2019 campaign for his 3-year-old trotter Chin Chin Hall, whose two wins last year

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included a Bluegrass division at The Red Mile and a Valley Victory elimination at the Meadowlands, which led to a second-place finish in the \$435,900 final.

"He's coming back strong," said Wrenn. "He seems to have matured gait-wise."

"He's ready to qualify any time but I'm going to hold off until May," he continued. "The plan is to qualify him a cou-

*Continues on page 2 >>>*

ple times strong here (at Hoosier Park) and then go up and race him in an overnight at Mohawk. He fits non-winners of three so Melanie will go up there for a month with him to see where he's at. If he goes right then we'll put him in the Goodtimes elims (on June 7)." — *By Gordon Waterstone*

## Callahan Hopes For A "Home Cooking" Victory

Corey Callahan has 12 drives on Saturday night at the Meadowlands, but his workload gets underway in Race 1 with a horse near and dear to his heart.

Thats Fun is a 3-year-old daughter of Cool Flying Fun out of the mare Riddlemethat, both owned by Callahan's parents, Nick and Dolly Callahan. Thats Fun is trained by Callahan's brother, Shaun.

"This is some serious backyard home cooking," Callahan said about Thats Fun, who starts from post 4 in the \$15,000 conditioned event. "Cool Flying Fun was a horse that was really important to me as he got me on the map. My sixth lifetime win (in 2006) I set a track record (of 1:50.4) at Rosecroft with him. Things got rolling for me then."

After winning more than \$627,000 on the racetrack, Cool Flying Fun had an abbreviated stallion career, breeding just 14 mares. Callahan said as a result of emphysema, Cool Flying Fun had to be euthanized this winter.

Riddlemethat was a winner of nearly \$200,000 who Callahan also drove several times.

"Riddlemethat was an open mare at Dover," he remembered. "But she always had a lot of problems getting in foal."

Thats Fun is winless in seven starts heading into Saturday's race, a non-winners of two pari-mutuel races for 3 and 4 year olds with maidens drawing inside. After opening her

### "This is some serious backyard home cooking."

—*Corey Callahan about his family's homebred filly Thats Fun*

career with six starts at Dover Downs, Thats Fun finished a close second last time out on April 4 at Harrah's Philadelphia, race-timed in 1:54.4.

"She seems like a pretty nice filly, just still a little bit green," said

Callahan of Thats Fun. "She has the Maryland Sires Stakes coming up. Hopefully it will help her going up there."

Callahan believes Thats Fun races best from off the pace.

"She's better following," he said. "One week we put her on the front they went by her. She still has a lot to learn but it seems she has the talent. We'll find out."

Callahan's drives also includes McThriller in the featured \$30,000 Preferred Pace (Race 8). McThriller will line up in post 7 in the nine-horse field, coming off a second-place finish last time out on April 6 in a \$17,500 conditioned event. Alotbetter N, who bested McThriller by a half-length in that race, also steps up in class but drew the inside post 1.

"That class is probably a little bit of a stretch for him," said Callahan, who on March 30 directed McThriller to a career-

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Program  
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## THIS WEEKEND'S FEATURED RACES

All times listed are local.

### Friday, April 12

8:10p YR5 **Matchmaker** Pace div. [Trackmaster PPs](#)  
8:50p YR7 **Matchmaker** Pace div. [Trackmaster PPs](#)  
9:30p YR9 **Matchmaker** Pace div. [Trackmaster PPs](#)

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### Saturday, April 13

8:10p YR5 **Open** Trot [Trackmaster PPs](#)  
8:30p YR6 **Levy Mem.** Pace div. [Trackmaster PPs](#)  
8:50p YR7 **Levy Mem.** Pace div. [Trackmaster PPs](#)  
9:30p YR9 **Levy Mem.** Pace div. [Trackmaster PPs](#)  
9:48p M8 **Preferred** Pace [Trackmaster PPs](#)  
9:50p YR10 **Levy Mem.** Pace div. [Trackmaster PPs](#)

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best-equaling 1:50.4 win at the Meadowlands that included a last quarter of :26 flat. "He kind of outraced his odds (8-1) last week. He's a versatile horse. You can do whatever with him depending on the trip."

Trained by Katricia Adams and now owned by John Barnard, McThriller's ledger includes a bankroll of \$281,734. Some may remember the 5-year-old son of McArdle from his freshman year in 2016 when he captured the Ohio Sires Stakes consolation at Scioto Downs and the Ohio Breeders Championship at Delaware for trainer Brian Brown. — *By Gordon Waterstone*

## World Harness Handicapping Championship Saturday at Big M

This year's \$125,000 World Harness Handicapping Championship (WHHC), presented by DerbyWars.com, will take place Saturday night at the Meadowlands. A guaranteed first-place prize of \$40,000 is up for grabs for the 77 entries, with some people qualifying more than once.

Players that did not earn a seat through a qualifying event can directly buy in for \$1,300, with walk-up registration accepted until 7 p.m. on Saturday. The \$1,300 entry fee includes a \$300 bankroll, with the remaining \$1,000 going to the prize pool.

**"This contest boils down to how many longshots there are."**

—Nick Montemurro

The WHHC contest format requires players to bet 10 races: their choice of eight Meadowlands races and two designated mandatory races, one from the Meadowlands and the other

from Buffalo. The minimum wager is \$30 and maximum \$100, with win, place and show wagering only.

One of those who qualified multiple times is Nick Montemurro, 61, who lives in nearby Bogota, N.J., and owns an engraving company in Hackensack. Montemurro qualified once in a February qualifier at the Meadowlands and another seven times via the DerbyWars.com qualifiers. With WHHC rules stipulating a maximum of three entries, he had to find people to take the additional spots.

"I sold some of the entries and gave some away," said Montemurro.

Montemurro has played in nearly all the WHHC finals over the years, but usually as a buy in, and he has a couple of top-10 finishes on his resume.

"I'm not going to say I'm an awesome handicapper because I'm not," said Montemurro. "I use Harness Eye, and I used to study the program days before and put marks by horses. But I've kind of whittled it down because I found less time is better to look because you don't have a lot of things in your head. I used to look at the program the night before and mark horses I like, then what happens is you're tied into them when you get to the track."

So what does Montemurro believe is the key to a WHHC title?

"This contest boils down to how many longshots there are, and if there are a lot of prices out there the bankroll is going to be high," he said. — *By Gordon Waterstone*

## TV Show The Enemy Within Filmed At Meadowlands

The Meadowlands Racetrack was on television on Monday night (April 8) and it wasn't on TVG. Nor was it on the CBS Sports Network, home of the Hambletonian. The Meadowlands was on NBC as scenes were filmed at the site for the spy thriller show *The Enemy Within*.

"The Meadowlands is still an iconic site and known worldwide, so we were thrilled to have this new TV show come and film here," said Meadowlands general manager/chief operating officer Jason Settlemoir.

Actually, the home of *The Enemy Within* is at the adjacent Meadowlands Arena, which was previously known as the Izod Center. The arena—which had been home to the NBA's New Jersey Nets and hosted many musical concerts—had been sitting empty since it closed in 2015. As a result of tax incentives signed into law last July by Gov. Phil Murphy, the producers of *The Enemy Within* contracted with the state to rent the arena to use as a studio.

*The Enemy Within* premiered on NBC on Feb. 25. The storyline led to characters being at the Meadowlands during a live race program. The scenes were filmed on Friday night, Nov. 16, and the one-hour show included actual race footage shot that night.

"They came about 2 p.m. to set up and didn't wrap up until 4 a.m.," explained Rachel Ryan, marketing manager at the Meadowlands. "They set up a lot of the shooting angles, but the main part of the shooting didn't happen until 9 o'clock."

Ryan said that while extras were used for crowd scenes, some of the locals were included as part of the action.

"Most of the people used were extras, but they did not notify the people who normally sat in that area that they might be on camera. But it wasn't like they recruited any of our normal patrons. And we posted signs to let people know the areas that would be used for filming."

The plot included a chase through the grandstand that led to a fatal shooting on the stairwell. Ryan said that scene was filmed on the east deck stairwell, the one closest to New York City.

Ryan said the crew and extras took advantage of breaks between filming to watch and wager.

"It gave the extras something to do between their takes," she said. "A lot of the crew members were placing bets. And they had come out three times prior to that for some location scouting, and each time they were there they stayed and watched the races and placed bets." — *By Gordon Waterstone*

**"Most of the people used were extras, but they did notify the people who normally sat in that area that they might be on camera."**

—Rachel Ryan



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## Stratton Looking For Spot In Levy, Matchmaker Finals

Driver Jordan Stratton doesn't hide his disappointment about Bit Of A Legend N being sidelined from the George Morton Levy Memorial Series after suffering a quarter crack following the second leg of the six-week event at Yonkers Raceway.

Going into this weekend's final preliminary leg of the Levy—and the Blue Chip Matchmaker—Stratton is on the outside of both series as he hopes to advance a horse into the respective finals for older pacers of both sexes.

"Yeah, when Bit Of A Legend got hurt it took the wind out of my sails," said Stratton.

**"She had a couple starts where she was off her game but she seems back to normal!"**

—Jordan Stratton about Betterb Chevron N

Stratton's Levy hopeful on Saturday night is Pacing Major N, who currently sits 10th in a traffic jam of horses trying to reach the eight-horse final on April 20. With only one of the top 20 horses not on the track in four Levy splits on Saturday, there is

plenty of room for some last-week shuffling.

Pacing Major N drew post 3 in the third \$50,000 division. The 6-year-old son of Art Major showed his 67-1 upset in the third round on March 30 was no fluke by finishing third after a game first-over effort in round four. While Stratton is hopeful, he admits the task might be tough as the field includes four horses ahead of Pacing Major N in the standings, including the Rene Allard-trained Western Fame, whose four Levy starts has led to three wins and a second.

"I don't like being in with Allard's horse," said Stratton.

"He's going good so we'll keep our fingers crossed," said Peter Tritton, Pacing Major N's trainer, in an interview with the USTA's Ken Weingartner. "Yonkers is probably not his favorite track; I think he would be better on a bigger track. He had a bit of trouble getting around those corners and the first couple of runs he wasn't quite right. But we made a couple of changes and I think he's back to where he should be now."

The Matchmaker standings are much more clear. The top three mares on the board—Bettor Joy N, Shartin N and Don't Think Twice A—are sitting the week out with their places in the final secured. But with sixth-place Ideal Lifestyle A not entered, it opens up possibilities for others close behind.

Ninth in points is the Stratton-driven Betterb Chevron N, who has a 3-5-3-2 slate in the four Matchmaker preliminaries. In Friday night's penultimate leg, Betterb Chevron N starts from the outside post in a six-horse field (Race 5).

Betterb Chevron had a string of five consecutive starts lining up on the right side of the starting gate, but in her last two starts in Matchmaker she finished a close third and second. Her runner-up finish in last Friday's fourth round

*Continues on page 4 >>>*

### Levy Memorial Series Point Standings

Name	1st Leg	2nd Leg	3rd Leg	4th Leg	25 pts/start	Total
1. Western Fame	50	25	50	50	100	275
2. Ideal Jimmy	50	50	25	25	100	250
3. JJ Flynn	8	50	25	50	100	233
4. The Wall	50	8	25	50	100	233
5. More The Better N	50	8	50	12	100	220
6. Anythingforlove A	50	5	12	25	100	192
7. Rodeo Rock	50	50	12		75	187
8. Somewhere In L A	25	50	0	8	100	183
9. Bettors Fire N	12	0	8	50	100	170
10. Pacing Major N	5	0	50	12	100	167
11. Endeavor	8	50	8	0	100	166
12. Lyons Steel	8	5	50	0	100	163
13. Gokudo Hanover	12	25	0	25	100	162
14. Imarocnrollegend N	25	25	0	8	100	158
15. The Downtown Bus	0	50	5	0	100	155
16. Mac's Jackpot	25	0	50		75	150
17. I'm Some Graduate	5	8	25	5	100	143
18. Control Tower	0	25	12	0	100	137
19. Dr J Hanover	0	12	25	0	100	137
20. Rodeo Romeo	12	12	12	0	100	136
21. Lockton Luck A	0	25	5	0	100	130
22. Mach Doro A	25	0	0	0	100	125
23. Rock The Nite	0	12	0	12	100	124
24. Always At My Place	0	8	8	5	100	121
25. Ballerat Boomerang	5	8	0	5	100	118
26. Duplicated N	25	12	5		75	117
27. Major Crocker A	5	12	25	75		117
28. Rockathon	5	0	8	0	100	113
29. Somebaddude	25	0		12	75	112
30. Beckhams Z Tam	8	25	0		75	108
31. Bellows Binge	8	12	5		75	100
32. Nocturnal Bluechip		8	8	8	75	99
33. Don Domingo N	5	12	0		75	92
34. Luciano N	12	0	5		75	92
35. Bettor Memories	0	5		8	75	88
36. Mach It So	12	0	0		75	87
37. Mar Nien A	0	5		5	75	85
38. Sams A Champ A	5	0	0		75	80
39. Whittaker N	0	5	0		75	80
40. Micky Gee N	12	0			50	62
41. Bit Of A Legend N	0	0			50	50
42. Windsong Leo	0		0		50	50
43. Rockin Ron	8				25	33
44. Billy Badger N			0		25	25
45. Christen Me N	0				25	25
46. Cruise Patrol	0				25	25
47. Military Master A	0				25	25
48. Weona Sizzler A	0				25	25
49. Funknwaffles					0	0

was a tough loss as she took the lead after moving first-over and then was unable to fend off points-leader Bettor Joy N.

“She’s been really good the last couple starts,” said Stratton about the 6-year-old Bettor’s Delight mare trained by Lance Hudson. “She’s done everything right. She had a couple starts where she was off her game but she seems back to normal.”

Betterb Chevron’s competition on Friday includes from post 5 Seaswift Joy N, who has two wins in the Matchmaker preliminaries. Stratton said while a spot in the Matchmaker final is still a distinct possibility, he won’t let that influence his driving strategy.

“No not really, just try to get the most money you can,” he said. “You’re always trying to win so it really doesn’t change anything. Maybe it would be different if I had my spot secured already, but then she might have had the week off.” –

By Gordon Waterstone

### Blue Chip Matchmaker Series Point Standings

Name	1st Leg	2nd Leg	3rd Leg	4th Leg	25 pts/ start	Total
1. Bettor Joy N	25	50	50	50	100	275
2. Shartin N	50	8	50	50	100	258
3. Don't Think Twice A	25	50	25	50	100	250
4. Feelin Red Hot	25	50	50	25	100	250
5. Seaswift Joy N	50	12	50	0	100	212
6. Ideal Lifestyle A	50	25	25	8	100	208
7. Apple Bottom Jeans	50	50	25	75	200	
8. Kaitlyn N	12	12	25	25	100	174
9. Betterb Chevron N	12	5	12	25	100	154
10. Obvious Blue Chip	0	25	8	8	100	141
11. Twinkle	25	25		12	75	137
12. Medusa	0	12	12	12	100	136
13. Newborn Sassy	8	25	0	0	100	133
14. DelightfulmemphisN	50	5		0	75	130
15. Caviart Cherie	5	8	12	0	100	125
16. Write Me A Song	12	5	0	5	100	122
17. Freakonomics	8	0	8	5	100	121
18. Camera Lady	0	5	0	12	100	117
19. Magic Forces	12	0	5	0	100	117
20. Shezza Gnp N	5	0	5	5	100	115
21. Itty Bitty	8	0	5	0	100	113
22. Sell A Bit N	5	0	0	8	100	113
23. Gold Orchid N	0	12	8		75	95
24. Lispatty	0	0	12	75	87	
25. Angel's Pride		0	8	0	75	83
26. Rockstar Angel A	25	8			50	83
27. Scandalicious	0	0	0		75	75
28. Queen Lostris N	12		5		50	67
29. Bettor's Up	8	8			50	66
30. Dudesalady	8	0			50	58
31. Lakeisha Hall	5	0			50	55
32. Mach It A Par	5	0			50	55
33. Amateur Hour	0	0			50	50
34. Believe In Waco	0				25	25
35. Bronze Over N	0				25	25
36. Monica Gallagher					0	0



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## New Management At Meadows Brings Changes, Wagering Increases

Penn National Gaming has seen positive results since its takeover of The Meadows Racetrack and Casino.

Mark Loewe, vice president of racing for Penn National Gaming at The Meadows, said wagering at the track has increased 25 percent. For the month of March, wagering at The Meadows increased by more than \$3 million, albeit with 29 fewer races last year, when the track was hit by an outbreak of EHV-1.

“First of all, we made changes in the wagering format,” said Loewe of the increase in handle. “We added superfectas in every race, and we were able to get Pennsylvania to approve a change that allowed us to offer greater incentives to play exotics. In Pennsylvania, there was a rule that even with an exotic bet that was a 10-cent wager, you

**Some believe, as Meadows leading driver and Hall of Famer Dave Palone has previously stated, that passing lanes have reduced driving strategy.**

had to bet enough combinations to make it a \$2 wager. The Thoroughbreds had adopted a rule that nullified that, so we just had to request the same treatment.

“We also have superfectas every race, even if there are scratches and the field size is small.”

Every race on the card now offer superfecta wagering with a reduced minimum wager amount of 10 cents. The superfecta wager also now has a “rolling carryover” provision—a superfecta is not hit in any race then 80 percent of that net pool will be carried to the next superfecta pool offered on the card.

In addition, a second Pick 4 and Pick 5 wager, both with carryover provisions, has been added to the 13-race wagering menu. The Super Hi 5 wager will continue to be offered in the last race of the program with a reduced minimum wager amount of 20 cents.

Another big change will take place later this month. The Meadows will be dark the last week of April and during that time the track’s passing lane will be eliminated. The passing lane has been identified as the “Lightning Lane” by track announcer Roger Huston.

Some believe, as Meadows leading driver and Hall of Famer Dave Palone has previously stated, that passing lanes have reduced driving strategy.

“I think it took away a lot of strategy,” said Palone in a 2016 interview published in The Horseman And Fair World. “It probably took speed favoring to an even greater degree because you don’t see the old style of a guy backing up in the last turn trying to work the guys that are inside.

“It’s why everybody looks for position early. Speed is so important because it’s much easier if you can get through on the inside than have to go three and four wide when

the guy on the front end hits the gas. There really isn’t any strategy in working the guy in the two hole; it’s just an all-out sprint to the wire. So the inside horses are going to have a much bigger edge on the guys who are flipping three and four deep.”

Palone gave an example of being in front with a 10-1 longshot with the 3-5 favorite tucked behind in second.

“You’re defenseless,” said Palone. “You know they are going to go left to pass you, and you don’t want to take your horse out of gear because there is the fear of three or four coming from the back. So you hit the gas and pray the 3-5 is basically no good. Before, you could work that 3-5 behind you and make sure he didn’t get out and then hold the others off.” — *By Kathy Parker*



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## Walner, Wiggle It Jiggle It Series Continue At Big M

Lisa and Bob McNerney have bred a stakes-winning trotter in Frau Blucher. Now they aim to own a stakes-winning homebred and have a trio of hopefuls, including Frau Blucher's half-brother Big Poppy.

Big Poppy, a 3-year-old gelding, was unraced last season but is among several Hambletonian Stakes-eligible trotters competing in the Walner Series at the Meadowlands Racetrack. He is a son of Donato Hanover out of Lisa McNerney's mare My Angel, who produced two-time Pennsylvania Sires Stakes champion Frau Blucher (originally named Bella Lisanti).

"We really have some high expectations," said Bob McNerney, who bought his first horse in 1987. "We really love the harness racing. Once you get bitten (by the sport) you're bit. You're always chasing that dream. Maybe this year we'll have something to talk about."

**"We don't know if he's going to be a Hambletonian horse, but he'll be a racehorse."**

*—Bob McNerney about Big Poppy*

McNerney, who is in commercial real estate, and his wife have a small farm in northern New Jersey and live 25 miles from the Meadowlands.

"We have some Pennsylvania (horses), we have some New York, but New Jersey is where we want to be," McNerney said. "Now with the (\$100 million) appropriation coming in it's going to help us a little bit more. I like to go and watch my horses race and grew up with the Meadowlands; that's what we like. Jersey is where it's at."

There is one division of the Walner Series this week, with an 11-horse field going one mile. Big Poppy and driver Eric Abbatiello start from post 1 and are 15-1 on the morning line. Richard "Nifty" Norman trains Big Poppy.

"We don't know if he's going to be a Hambletonian horse, but he'll be a racehorse," McNerney said. "We're hoping he's got some of that (Frau Blucher) blood in him. We're taking a shot this year and see what happens."

Friday's card also includes three divisions of the Wiggle It Jiggle It Series for 3-year-old male pacers. Two Meadowlands Pace eligibles are among the morning-line favorites: World On Edge and newly-minted Delaware Standardbred Breeders Fund champion Goldberg.

"He improved greatly last year when we put him on the big track," trainer Ron Burke said about World On Edge, who capped his freshman season with a third-place finish in a division of the International Stallion Stakes at The Red Mile. "I'm hoping he'll come back this year and have a good year. He's



## Obrigado Settled Into Retirement

The \$1.8 million winning trotter Obrigado is settled into a retirement routine. Mike Andrew (left), who and raised Obrigado at his farm in Gorham, Maine, recently stopped in at Chris and Georgia Coyle's Olive Branch Farm in North Carolina on a sunny day. Chris Coyle also poses with Obrigado. Andrew also bred the millionaire trotters Likeabatoutahell and Little Brown Fox. *(Photo courtesy Olive Branch Farm)*

big and strong and comes from a good family. I think he is going to be a good horse; I don't know if he is a great horse."

Goldberg finished second to eventual Dan Patch Award-winner Captain Crunch in a division of the Nassagaweya and third in his elimination of the Metro Pace. A virus knocked the colt out of the Metro final and sidelined him the remainder of the year.

"He's a little bigger, stronger," said driver Montrell Teague, who bred and owns Goldberg. "He's a lot smarter, he's quieted down a lot. Last year he was pretty rank and this year I've opened him up a little bit and it's worked pretty good so far. He's letting me drive him; last year he was a little more aggressive and didn't really know what he was doing." *(Ken Weingartner)*



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## ONES TO WATCH

Springtime means time for the stars of racing to begin reappearing in preparation for the upcoming stakes season, and several top performers are in action in qualifiers at the Meadowlands on Saturday morning.

**SONNET GRACE**, who captured the \$490,000 Goldsmith Maid final in her freshman finale at the Meadowlands, makes her 3-year-old debut in Race 1. The five-filly field also includes **SPECIAL HONOR**, a winner of an International Stallion split last fall at the Red Mile.

Race 5 also has just five trotters scheduled to line up behind the gate but it's a quintet of stars. From the rail out is 2017 Zweig Memorial winner **YES MICKEY**, stakes-winner and third-place finisher in last year's Graduate final **SORTIE**, 2018 Yonkers International winner **CRUZADO DELA NOCHE**, world champion and New York Sires Stakes champ **PLUNGE BLUE CHIP**, and Harry Harvey Invitational runner-up **TOP FLIGHT ANGEL**.

**ICE ATTRACTION**, who won the 2017 Kentucky Filly Futurity and the 2018 Allerage Farms final at The Red Mile, starts from post 1 in Race 6.

The last half of the 12-race card belong to the pacers and Race 7 sees the season debut of the 2018 Two-Year-Old Filly Pacer of the Year **WARRAWEE UBEAUT**. By virtue of her 1:48.3 win last fall at The Red Mile, Warrawee Ubeaut is the fastest 2 year old in history regardless of sex. Another top pair of 3-year-old fillies making their debut are in Race 8: stakes winners **ST. SOMEWHERE** and **SYLPH HANOVER**.

Dan Patch Award winner **KISSIN IN THE SAND** and **YOUAREMYCANDYGIRL** battled several times last year as 3 year olds and the duo will line up side by side in Race 9 in each of their 4-year-old debuts. Kissin In The Sand had 10 wins and five seconds last year in 15 starts, wrapping up her campaign with three wins in four starts, including a 1:47.4 Tattersalls score at The Red Mile. Youaremycandygirl rode out her sophomore season with a pair of victories, including a Matron win at Dover Downs in her finale.

Not to be overlooked in that race is **PERCY BLUE CHIP**, who upset both abovementioned mares in last year's Breeders Crown 3-Year-Old Filly Pace final at The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono, and Courageous Lady winner **BARON REMY**.

Matron champ **BLOOD MONEY**, also second in the Kentucky Sires Stakes final, goes to the gate in Race 11. That field also includes **DE LOS CIELOS DEO**, who was second in the Pennsylvania Sires Stakes final.

The 2018 Three-Year-Old Colt Pacer of the Year **DORSO-DURO HANOVER** drew the outside post 10 in Race 12. The 2017 Little Brown Jug champ **FILIBUSTER HANOVER**, stablemate in the Ron Burke Stable, is also in the field, as is stakes winners **DEALT A WINNER, THIS IS THE PLAN, THINKBIG DREAMBIG** and **DONE WELL**.



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## Wanda Polisseni Announces Purple Haze Adoption Program

There is good news on the horizon in the Empire State for Standardbreds who are closing in on the end of their career. Prominent New York philanthropist and noted horse owner Wanda Polisseni has announced that the site of her new Purple Haze Standardbred Adoption Program (PHSAP) is nearing completion.

The PHSAP is Polisseni's latest effort designed to ensure a safe route for retired Standardbreds to transition to their life after racing. The base of operations is a 105-acre farm located in Oxford, New York that was purchased in November of 2018.

Although it was a working horse farm at the time it was acquired, it still needed to be tailored to the needs of the organization and its mission and has been undergoing modifications over the past several months. So far 20 new stalls have been built with turn-out paddocks coming soon.

The property includes two barns and a 60 x 80 foot indoor arena. The main house will become the headquarters of the PHSAP as well as the new home of the Harness Horse Breeders of New York State (HHBNYS).

When in full swing the program will be able to accommodate a maximum of 20 horses at a time. The horses will come from owners or trainers who are looking to find a forever home for them after they are done racing.

There will be a written application process, a small placement fee that will go to offset the cost of retraining and all candidates will be vetted before acceptance. Once the program reaches capacity, applicants will go on a waiting list and be accepted in the order they applied. New York-bred horses will receive preference in the application process.

Once in the program the horses will be retrained, adopted out and tracked after they move to their new home. If there



Wanda Polisseni

Joseph Kyle Photo

is a circumstance where a horse is not in a good situation either for itself or the adopter, that horse will come back to the farm and be placed again. The group hopes to take the first horse on the property by the beginning of June.

The program will be looking for volunteers to help with the day to day operations of the farm and are hoping to offer internships to students from neighboring colleges where they can earn credits to work with these horses. The farm is in close proximity to both SUNY Morrisville and SUNY Oneonta.

An outreach program with clinics and educational seminars for schools and other interested groups is also in the planning stages.

A Board of Directors was named to run the day to day business of the PHSAP and include Wanda Polisseni (president), Paul Kelley (vice president), Dave Hanson (secretary), Michael R. Miller DVM (treasurer), Rita Scharman, Claire Chappell and Richard Gutnick and special advisor Kenneth Jacobs. Betty Holt is the executive director. They will hold their first meeting on Thursday, May 16, and begin taking on the work of the organization.

The PHSAP is a 501c3 and will be funded through fundraising and grants. The group has already received donations from Ted Gewertz, Lakeview Equine, Oneida Veterinary and others who are all trying to help get the program underway. But there is still a list of immediate needs that includes Western or English saddles/pads/blankets, bridles, riding helmets, feed tubs, rubber mats, halters and grooming supplies. The PHSAP would be grateful for any help it might receive.

Another major contribution that has been announced is a breeding to the New York stallion In The Arsenal that was donated by the In The Arsenal Syndicate. The breeding will be put up for bids at Ongait.com starting on Tuesday, April 9.

The winner of the auction will receive a 2019 breeding and be guaranteed a live foal. If the mare fails to catch or fails to have a live foal, the successful bidder will be able to breed back again in 2020 at no charge. The winner will also be eligible to the incentive program where if they breed back in 2020 and again in 2021 they will be awarded a share of the syndicate.

News and more information about the Purple Haze Standardbred Adoption Program is available on their Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/purplehazestandardbredadoption-program/>). A new website is in the process of launching and should be online by June. — *By Tim Bojarski/PHSAP*

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# FIRST *Over*

by Kathy Parker

The deaths of Thoroughbred racehorses due to muscular skeletal issues while competing in races or training, and most specifically the euthanasia of 23 horses since December 2018 at the Santa Anita track in California, has prompted a renewed debate on the use of the medication furosemide (Lasix) in racehorses, including Standardbreds.

Discussions about the use of Lasix have been taking place on social media forums such as Facebook, in Letters to the Editor of horse racing industry publications such as Harness Racing Update, on various Thoroughbred industry websites, and even on such mainstream media outlets as the Los Angeles Times and National Public Radio (npr.org).

Comments have included the correct information that Lasix is banned on race day in Europe; however, usually those same commentators have neglected to mention that horses that bleed are routinely trained on Lasix in Europe.

Among the other comments was the statement in one Letter to the Editor that bleeding is rare in racehorses. That has been proven to be untrue thanks to the modern-day use of the endoscope, a small camera on the end of a tube, that allows a veterinarian to see a horse's upper and lower airways, and scientific studies. Another commentator put forth that Lasix masks other drugs. Yes, it did at one time, but because of today's rules for administration of Lasix, and sophisticated testing, researchers and toxicologists say the medication is no longer masking drugs in post-race sample testing.

The tragic death of the horses at Santa Anita prompted that track's management to propose a ban on Lasix and whips. There were protests from horsemen about the ban on Lasix, and rightfully so.

That's because the wide ranging opinions and solutions to end the death of horses from muscular skeletal issues unfortunately has not been driven by facts. It's hard to believe anyone needs a reminder that facts should be driving policy and solutions, but I was when I recently watched an interview with Steve Ballmer, the former CEO of Microsoft, about his reasons for founding the non-partisan website USA Facts, which is attempting to document all government data.

Now, finally, in light of the Lasix debate, the people who work in facts have weighed in on the matter. The Scientific Advisory Group of the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI) has reported that **THERE IS NO CURRENT SCIENCE** linking furosemide treatments to muscular skeletal issues that may be a contributing cause of equine breakdowns in racing.

The ARCI's Scientific Advisory Group is comprised of the top researchers in horse racing. Those members participating in the meeting were Dr. Scott Stanley, Dr. Heather Kynch, Dr. George Maylin, Dr. Ken McKeever, Dr. Cynthia Cole, Dr. Mary Robinson, Dr. Rick Sams and Dr. Thomas Tobin. They reported to the ARCI's Drug Testing Standards and Practices Committee that they discussed the Lasix issue at their meeting on April 2, 2019, and were not aware of any published studies or papers providing any evidence of such a link.

"There remains an attempt on the part of some organizations and individuals to leave the impression that the current equine welfare policy of permitting the voluntary race day use of furosemide under controlled and transparent circumstances is somehow tied to the tragic equine deaths that have occurred at Santa Anita and elsewhere," said ARCI president Ed Martin in a statement.

"The ARCI is never averse to examining an existing policy and we were concerned that such statements might be based upon solid scientific information we have yet been able to analyze. Apparently, they are not. Our science advisors were asked to review this matter and make us aware of any new information that might be relevant to the equine tragedies that have occurred," he said.

ARCI reports that back in 2011, after two ARCI officers called for the phase out of race-day furosemide treatments, an industry debate on the issue prompted the Drug Testing Standards and Practices Committee to conduct a review of the existing policy and held a public hearing during the Saratoga meet.

Input was received from a variety of experts, including Dr. N. Edward Robinson from the Center for Integrative Toxicology at the Veterinary Medical Center at Michigan State University. Dr. Robinson is a recognized expert in the study of animal lung dysfunction, particularly equine airway disease. He directs the Equine Pulmonary Research Laboratory at MSU which is dedicated to studying the pathogenesis and treatment of diseases of the air passages (airways) of the horse.

After completion of that review, the committee decided that there was insufficient science to justify change to the current policy.

The rationale for current furosemide policy was strengthened by a 2014 Consensus statement from the independent American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM) published in the Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine entitled Exercise Induced Pulmonary Hemorrhage in Horses.

And so the top experts about the science of bleeding in racehorses continues to support its use as a permissible race-day medication. Why so many horses suffered catastrophic injuries at Santa Anita is a complicated puzzle that involves much, much more than whether a horse had been treated with Lasix. I hope the horse racing industry collectively allows the experts and their research to drive policy.


**harnessracing.com HEADLINES**

### Tattersalls Spring Mixed Sale canceled

Citing a lack of entries, the Tattersalls Spring Mixed Sale at the Meadowlands, originally scheduled for April 28, has been canceled. [more](#)

### T.C. Lane named USTA COO

The U.S. Trotting Association announced Wednesday that T.C. Lane has been promoted to the newly-created position of chief operating officer. [more](#)

### Ritchie, Takter elected to Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame

The Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame is pleased to announce the people and horses being recognized as inductees in 2019. Six people and four horses have been elected from an extremely deep ballot of candidates. Standardbred inductees include Builder Ian Fleming, Driver Trevor Ritchie and Trainer Jimmy Takter along with horses Tricky Tooshie and Angus Hall. [more](#)

### Ohio Sires Stakes nominations healthy in 2019

The Ohio Sires Stakes nominations for 2- and 3-year-old trotting and pacing colts and fillies remain strong in 2019, with a healthy 1,016 nominations received in the Ohio State Racing Commission (OSRC) office by the March 15 deadline. [more](#)

### Ground broken for new KY harness track

Churchill Downs Incorporated, in partnership with Keeneland Association, broke ground (April 9) on a \$150

million, state-of-the-art, live and historical horse racing venue in Oak Grove, Ky. CDI and Keeneland also unveiled the name and branding for the venue, which will be called Oak Grove Racing & Gaming. [more](#)

### Mohawk wagering up 7.2% this year

Woodbine Mohawk Park has completed its inaugural full-winter of live racing operation with wagering up 7.2 percent during the first-quarter of 2019. [more](#)

### Record purses headed Batavia Downs' way

Even though live racing at Batavia Downs doesn't begin for another three months, track officials have announced that when the summer/fall meet begins on Wednesday, July 24, it will be the most lucrative session of Standardbred competition ever offered in Western New York. [more](#)

### Perfect Spirit wins 2019 debut

Hambletonian winner Perfect Spirit (Andover Hall-Good Common Cents) won his first start of 2019 on Thursday night at the Orebro Racetrack in Sweden. [more](#)

### Dr. Corrine Sweeney elected ARCI chair

Noted equine health researcher and Pennsylvania Racing Commissioner Dr. Corrine Sweeney, DVM, is the new Chair of the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI). [more](#)



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