Hypnotic AM Hambletonian Bound?

The delayed Empire Breeders Classics for 3-year-old trotters is set for Saturday afternoon at Vernon Downs. Due to the postponement from late May, the male trotters will race in a pair of $97,750 divisions, while 11 fillies will battle in a single $207,250 contest.

The filly field includes Goldsmith Maid champ Senorita Rita and Hypnotic AM, who swept her way through the New York Sires Stakes (NYSS) last year at two. The daughter of Chapter Seven will have her work cut out for her, having drawn the outside post 9 in the bulky field that has two trailers. Brian Sears will again drive for trainer Marcus Melander and owner Courant Inc.

Hypnotic AM won her first seven starts last year—including taking a career-best 1:53 in the $310,000 James Doherty Memorial final at the Meadowlands—before respectively finishing second and third in the Breeders Crown elims and final and wrapping up her $457,506-winning season. She returned to the races on June 20, scoring an easy 1:54.2 win in a NYSS division at Tioga Downs.

“As a trainer, you like that. It was a training mile after her two qualifiers, but you like in the beginning of the season that you can start them and not show what they’ve got in their first start,” said Melander, who celebrated his 28th birthday on Wednesday (July 1). “I was very pleased with that.”

Melander expressed some concern about the unfavorable post draw on Saturday.

“Of course it isn’t going to be easy,” he said. “I think I have the best horse, no doubt about it, but it’s not easy with two trailers and the nine hole. But that’s why I have Brian. He’ll figure it out—hopefully. She can’t be sitting eighth or ninth, she’ll need to find a good position or it will be impossible, but I’ll leave it up to Brian.”

Melander said Hypnotic AM has a NYSS leg at Vernon Downs on July 11 and then she’ll head to the Meadowlands for the Delvin Miller Memorial on July 18. Up next would be the Hambletonian Oaks elims on Aug. 1, but Melander said he is seriously considering racing the filly against the boys in the Hambletonian.

“We’ll see. We’ll see,” said Melander. “Right now the main goal is to be on top for Hambo day, and right now there is no one among the colts that stands out. If I had to give an answer today, I would probably answer that it’d be against the colts. But we’ll see in a couple weeks when everyone has been racing for a little bit. A lot can happen.”

Melander added that if he decides to take Hypnotic AM off the NYSS trail, she is also eligible to the Kentucky Sires Stakes in the fall at The Red Mile.

“If we don’t get enough points to get her in the New York Sires Stakes final we can bring her to Kentucky and try for that Sires Stakes;” he said. “I’m really excited to continue racing her all year. She’s not the biggest horse, but she has a big motor and a lot of speed.” —By Gordon Waterstone
Sophomores Battle Friday In NJSS Finals At Meadowlands

Four $150,000 New Jersey Sires Stakes (NJSS) finals for 3 year olds of both sexes and gaits are on tap Friday night at the Meadowlands. Track oddsmaker Dave Brower has given short odds to a horse in both events for pacers and the race for male trotters. Only in the 10-horse race for filly trotters does Brower give lukewarm favoritism.

Race 2 is the 3-Year-Old Colt & Gelding Trot, and listed as an overwhelming 3-5 morning-line favorite is PlayTrix For Me, who starts from post 6 for driver Scott Zeron. Trained by Linda Toscano, the son of Triztton finished a late-closing second in the NJSS opener on June 19 and then was a near gate-to-wire winner in 1:53.2 in the second leg on June 26. PlayTrix On Me, who romped to a 14 ¼-length win in the 2019 NJSS final, was the betting favorite in both prelims and he will surely be again the choice on Friday.

Given even-money odds (1-1) in the NJSS final for filly pacers (Race 4) is Odds On Sarasota, who starts from post 7 with driver Tim Tetrick. The daughter of Rock N Roll Heaven, who is trained by Ross Croghan, was third in her season debut in a June 12 overnight at the Meadowlands. She then strung together back-to-back wins in the NJSS prelims, scoring in 1:53.1 and 1:55.

Tetrick will also be behind the 8-5 morning-line favorite in the race for male pacers (Race 5), Rock Me Hard, who starts from post 2. Trained by W. Bart Dalious, the son of Rock N Roll Heaven won his NJSS opener in 1:51.4, closing out the 3 ¾-length decision with a back half of :54 and last quarter of :25.4. After a tough overland trip in the second NJSS prelim, Rock Me Hard had to settle for second, beaten a head in the photo finish.

Brower gave a slight 3-1 nod to Dubai Princess in the NJSS final for filly trotters (Race 6), who lit up the board at odds of 14-1 with a 1:52 victory in the NJSS opener on June 19. The daughter of Triztton, trained by Nancy Takter and driven by Yannick Gingras, will start from post 6 for driver Scott Zeron. Trained by Linda Toscano, the son of Triztton finished a late-closing third last time out behind Ab'sattitudexpress.—By Gordon Waterstone
Ohio Sires Stakes
Friday at Northfield Park!
2-Year-Old Trotting Colts & Fillies

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www.racingohio.net
Ohio Champ Bllack Hole
Ready For Graduate Leg

The second of what is expected to be many battles this year between the 5-year-old trotting mares Atlanta and Manchego will take place in Saturday night’s $170,900 Arthur J. Cutler Memorial at the Meadowlands. Also featured on the Fourth of July program are a trio of $50,000 Graduate Series divisions for 4-year-old pacers.

Atlanta and Manchego will line up side by side behind the gate for the 11-horse Cutler (Race 8), with the former in post 5 and the latter in post 6. In their first match-up of 2020 in the opening leg of the Miss Versatility Series on June 19 at the Meadowlands, Manchego edged Atlanta by a nose in 1:50. While it was Manchego’s second win in as many starts this year, it was Atlanta’s first time behind the gate.

If Atlanta or Manchego is successful on Saturday, she will join Bee A Magician (2015) and Hannelore Hanover (2018) as the only mares to win the event for older trotters.

Twenty-five 4-year-old pacers were divided into a trio of Graduate splits, with Warrawee Ubeaut, who starts from post 5 in the first division (Race 4) is the lone filly in the group. In her season debut in the Graduate Series opener on June 21 at Tioga Downs, Warrawee Ubeaut’s first-over journey took a toll as she faded to eighth behind Workin Ona Mystery. Warrawee Ubeaut’s foes include Hurrikane Emperor (post 8), who won a Graduate opening-round division in 1:48.1.

As for Workin Ona Mystery, he’ll look to go back-to-back from post 8 in the third division (Race 10). His foes include Bettor’s Wish (post 2), the 2019 Three-Year-Old Colt Pacer of the Year who is making his Graduate debut after finishing a late-closing third against older horses in the Roll With Joe on June 21 at Tioga Downs.

Dancin Lou, who won the third Graduate division in 1:48.3, drew into the second split on Saturday (Race 6). Dancin Lou will start from post 6, with the 2019 Ohio Sires Stakes champion Bllack Hole to his immediate right in post 7.

Bllack Hole is now in the barn of trainer Scott Di Domenico after competing in the Buckeye State for trainer Clarence Foulk, whose L & L Stables owns the 4-year-old gelded son of Mr. Apples. Bllack Hole won six of seven starts last year, with $226,948 in earnings. After a win and two seconds in three starts at Scioto Downs, Bllack Hole finished third behind Hurrikane Emperor in the Graduate opener in his first start for Di Domenico.

“He’s a nice horse. I had heard a lot about him and I watched a lot of his replays last year, and he just keeps coming,” said Di Domenico. “He’s like a young, 10-year-old kid. He’s playful and all that, and he has plenty of go and gets home strong.”

Tim Tetrick, who directed Bllack Hole to his come-from-behind show finish last time out, will be back in the bike on Saturday. Di Domenico said he only made a shoeing change after Bllack Hole’s arrival.

“I just changed his front shoes to aluminum from steel,” said Di Domenico. “He was pretty self-explanatory.”

While Bllack Hole may have drawn an outside post in the seven slot, it’s actually his best starting position thus far this year. In his three Scioto attempts he started twice from post 8 and once from post 9. Di Domenico said Saturday’s post shouldn’t be an issue.

“There’s a lot of speed in that race,” said Di Domenico. “The Meadowlands is a little bit hard to close into most times because it’s usually more speed-favoring, but in the races for more money, they seem to mix it up. Hopefully he can sit off them a little bit and give them a good run home.” — By Gordon Waterstone
**Versatile Beaumond Hanover Ready To Tackle ONSS Foes**

The Ontario Sires Stakes (ONSS) Gold series gets underway this weekend at Woodbine Mohawk Park, with a pair of races for 2-year-old male pacers on Friday night and a pair of races for 3-year-old male pacers on Saturday night.

Missing in action on Saturday night is Tall Dark Stranger, who was not shipped north of the border by trainer Nancy Takter. Tall Dark Stranger won a pair of ONSS Gold preliminaries last year on his way to capturing both the O’Brien Award as Canada’s 2-Year-Old Colt Pacer of the Year and Dan Patch Award honors in the U.S.

Seventeen sophomore male pacers will line up behind the gate in the two splits. Both appear competitive on paper as four starters in the first division (Race 3) and three starters in the second division (Race 6) come into their respective races off victories.

The four winners in the second $107,200(C) ONSS division include the Dr. Ian Moore-trained Tattoo Artist, who has speed-badge honors in the group with a 1:49.3 overnight win June 20 at Mohawk Park. Trainer Casie Coleman’s Indictable Hanover is two-for-two this year, while the Blake McIntosh-trainee Beach Blanket Book is three-for-three, including a 1:50 effort in a June 26 overnight at Mohawk. The fourth is Night Watchman, who overcame a break at the start to win a June 22 overnight at Mohawk.

Although he is not coming into the first $106,400(C) ONSS division off a victory, Beaumond Hanover already has a 1:49.4 win under his belt in 2020. That effort came in his season bow in a June 9 overnight at Mohawk Park, which was then followed up by a third and second, also in overnights.

A $45,000 yearling purchase, Beaumond Hanover is owned by Jack Darling Stables and trained by Jack Darling. The son of Sportswriter won four of five starts last year, including a sweep of the Harvest Series at Mohawk Park. Beaumond Hanover will start from post 7 with driver Jody Jamieson. Darling said that while Beaumond Hanover finished up strong with the series sweep, it still came after a delayed debut.

“He qualified once (in late June) and when I took him for the second qualifier, he kicked a cement wall and he came out lame,” said Darling, who trains a stable of 10 at Classy Lane Training Centre. “It was just a bump on the outside of his hind cannon bone but he was very lame on it. I had him x-rayed and nothing was broken, it was just a bone bruise. He stayed really lame a couple days and I x-rayed him again and it was still just a bone bruise. But he had to be off for three months just for the bone bruise to heal so I missed the whole summer with him. But he won that series and finished up the year in good shape.”

When Beaumond Hanover made his return to the races last September, he won two qualifiers in impressive come-from-behind fashion, and the same strategy carried through his first three pari-mutuel starts. In his first start, Beaumond Hanover was eighth at the half, more than 10 lengths behind, but he rallied to win in 1:54.1. He raced similarly in his second start but the late bid fell just short and he finished second. In the opening leg of the Harvest Series, Beaumond Hanover was eight lengths behind in sixth at the half but closed fast to score in 1:53.1.

Jamieson then switched strategies for the second leg and final of the series, sending Beaumond Hanover to the front and never looking back. While the front-end strategy was employed for the pacer’s first start this year, the last two have reverted back to coming from off the pace.

“He went a big trip in :49 and change and won pretty easy,” said Darling. “Then he had the 10 hole, which trails here now, and he got into a bunch of road trouble and stopping and starting. He raced OK, but it wasn’t a good race for him. Last week he raced from behind again and he behaved really well. It was a good learning experience for him. So we’re going into the race in good shape.”

Darling said Saturday’s race strategy is solely up to Jamieson.

“Jody can drive him any way he wants,” said Darling. “It will be up to him but he knows what (Beaumond Hanover) can do.”

–Jack Darling

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**Nominations, Purses Up At The Red Mile**

The Red Mile announced Wednesday that the outlook is bright for its 2020 race meet, which begins on Sunday, Aug. 2 and runs through Sunday, Oct. 11.

As of this writing, the Kentucky Sires Stakes (KYSS) Championship Series and Commonwealth Series hosted by the Lexington, Ky. track will have purses as advertised. Also of note, nominations for the track's major open stakes races are up from last year.

The KYSS Championship Series is scheduled to have three $40,000 legs and $250,000 finals for 2 and 3 year olds, while the new Commonwealth Series will have two $20,000 legs and a final worth $50,000.

The Sire Stakes program kicks off Aug. 16 and concludes with the rich finals on Sept. 20 (Championship Series) and Sept. 21 (Commonwealth Series).

The Red Mile's major stakes portion of the meet starts Friday, Oct. 2 and closes with the traditional Kentucky Futurity Day card on Sunday, Oct. 11. Races will be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday during those two weeks with an afternoon post time of 1 p.m.

With nominations for the open stakes races up from last year, purses for the majority of those 20 marquee events are expected to be on par—or likely higher—than those offered in 2019.

One change for this year that should be noted by horsemen is rather than hosting late closers during the final two weeks of the meet, the track will instead have overnights with conditions—and anticipated purses—similar to the late closers of the past.

“We want to encourage owners and trainers participating in stakes to bring their young horses along, as always,” said Red Mile shareholder George Segal. He said the race office will review the horse population and tailor conditions specific to the horses that will be on the grounds or planning to ship-in race day.

With the industry just now coming back from its covid-19 shutdown, Segal said that the payments and starting fees associated with the late-closing program is one less thing horsemen will have to deal with.

“We’ll basically provide them with unique opportunities to showcase their young horses, and of course there’s no better racing surface to do that on than at the Red Mile,” he added.

The two-weeks of major stakes events—coupled with the Lexington Selected Yearling Sale—creates what’s come to be known in the industry as “The Lexington Experience.” The sale will be held at the crosstown Fasig-Tipton Pavilion the evenings of Tuesday, Oct. 6 through Saturday, Oct. 10. (Red Mile)

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**Case Against Trainer, Owner Settled, With Donation To SRF**

On Friday afternoon (June 26), a long and unsuccessful witch hunt against our clients, Bob Bresnahan and Len Sadowsky, came to an end. After spending over a million dollars in legal fees and sending out dozens of subpoenas, PETA, by settling, finally acknowledged that it never really had a case against Mr. Bresnahan and Mr. Sadowsky and settled on behalf of gambler Jeffrey Tretter for the paltry sum of $12,500.

Additionally, as part of the settlement and mandated by Mr. Sadowsky, a donation of $7,500 will be made to the Standardbred Retirement Foundation.

Paying the legal fees out of their own pockets these last three years, Bob and Len stood up for horsemen and horsewomen everywhere against the limitless funds of PETA in its unique attempt to find another way to put an end to horse racing. Bob’s contention that he never raced Tag Up And Go in January of 2016 on any performance-enhancing drugs would have proven successful, and the flimsy RICO claims made against Mr. Bresnahan and Mr. Sadowsky fell apart. This is an enormous victory for the horse racing community.

The case by Tretter was based on the gambler’s assertion that if the Bresnahan-trained, Sadowsky horse was not in the race, the payoffs would have been different and thus he was deprived of a big payoff for his wagers. (with files from the law firm of BARDSLY, BENEDICT + CHOLDEN LLP)
Dear Editor:

I read your article about being black in Harness Racing (June 19 First Over). Great story, by the way. After reading your article I wanted to mention my late father Maxie Lee who began in the sport of harness racing in the 1950s working for Frank Safford. Can you imagine trying to drive and train horses back then and the problems he faced.

I saw hatred and how he was treated, and I remember him saying one night after a race, “I just want to drive horses.” I also saw the compassionate side of GOOD WHITE PEOPLE who stood by him when he was being mistreated.

I remember once at Brandywine when he was supposed to start from the second tier and a horse scratched which would have put him directly behind the gate and they told him no he still had to start from the back. I remember vividly Del Cameron went to the judges and said, “PUT MAXIE BEHIND THE GATE WITH US!” I remember some tracks would not put his name in the program.

I have many awful stories I could tell but the good people stories outnumber them. I want to look forward in the sport I love and the sport my father loved. I appreciate the people at Harrah’s Philadelphia for having the Maxie Lee Memorial each year to honor him.

When I see George Teague and other black trainers I am very proud of them. I know it’s still hard on them but they like my dad said, “I JUST WANTTO RACE HORSES.”

Cordially,
Gregory Lee

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D Racing Stable Horses Precluded From Racing

The field for Thursday night’s $33,000 Open Pace at Yonkers Raceway was reduced by one when trainer Rob Harmon scratched Blaise MM Hanover. The 7-year-old gelding had been claimed for $40,000 in early March by trainer Rene Allard on behalf of his mother Danielle Henri’s Allard Racing Inc. and Earl Hill Jr.

Blaise MM Hanover was entered to race at Yonkers on March 14 with Allard listed as trainer, but the card was canceled due to the covid-19 pandemic. Around the same time, Allard was arrested for his alleged involvement in a doping scandal that earlier saw 27 others indicted and charged.

Soon after, Henri, who resides in a small town in Quebec, transferred all horses under the name of Allard Racing Inc. to a new entity called D Racing Stable, which lists an address in Middletown, N.Y.

"I’ve been told that in order for any of these horses to be able to compete, D Racing Stable must be bought out of the partnerships and it must be done properly, transparently and by the law.”

—Carmen Auciello

also sent to trainer Carmen Auciello, were scratched from qualifiers on Monday at Yonkers.

“After spending hours and hours on the phone on Sunday with many different people of importance in both Canada and the U.S., I decided to scratch the horses and send them back,” Auciello posted on harnessdriver.com and also emailed to harnessracing.com. “Just transferring them to another stable wasn’t enough and it still looked very bad to the public and to my fellow horsepeople. For that, I apologize. In no way was I or any of my clients trying to ‘pull the wool over anybody’s eyes.’ We were just trying to make the best out of a bad situation for a bunch of owners, and trying to get these horses back racing.”

Auciello told harnessracing.com that most of the horses are in the process of being sold, with one going back to Henri.

“I’ve been told that in order for any of these horses to be able to compete, D Racing Stable must be bought out of the partnerships and it must be done properly, transparently and by the law,” wrote Auciello. “As of (Tuesday) afternoon, deals are in the works to buy out Ostro Hanover, Keystone Phoenix and Sandys Beach, in hopes that I can retain them and be able to race them for Steve (Klunowski) and my other new clients.

“I am hoping that in sharing this with everyone, and being up front and honest about it, and taking the proper steps to buy out any remaining pieces owned by D Racing Stable, that these horses will be allowed to compete in the coming weeks, and myself, my clients, and these racetracks will not have to further deal with the ‘black eye’ that descended upon the industry this past week when all of these horses started popping up on the entry sheets with D Racing Stable as owner.

“In life, people don’t always do the right thing. We all make mistakes, and many times can make the same mistake more than once. I’m not perfect, nor do I claim to be. But I am for the good of the sport, and try to always act in the best interest of racing. I feel like I am doing that now, along with the tracks, racing commissions, and the hundreds of horsepeople that put their foot down over the last couple days. Even though I maybe didn’t get it right the first time around.”

Also, Meadowlands owner Jeff Gural told harnessracing.com Tuesday morning that while the 2019 Three-Year-Old Filly Trotter of the Year When Dovescry won a qualifier on June 27 at the Meadowlands, she would not be allowed to race at that track until Aug. 1.

Now in the barn of trainer Brett Pelling, When Dovescry was trained her first two seasons of racing by Allard, who could race his horses at the Meadowlands only in races not operated by the track, thus her win in last year’s Hambletonian Oaks. She had been owned in part by Allard Racing, but as of Feb. 28 was no longer listed as an owner, nor is D Racing Stable. — By Gordon Waterstone
Ohio-Bred 2YO’s Debut In $150,000 The Next Generations

Scioto Downs’ Fourth of July program gets underway at 2 p.m., and the highlight of the afternoon card are the inaugural The Next Generation contests for 2-year-old Ohio-bred pacers of both sexes. Slots for both $150,000 races were sold for $10,000 each, with nominations due on March 15 and the draw for slots held on May 24.

There was an over subscription for both events, but only nine slots were sold for each race. The successful nominators were not required to designate a horse, which subsequently led to some slots being sold privately.

Leading Ohio trainer Brian Brown did not subscribe to either race by March 15 but he will have a starter in both after buying the slots over the last week. Brown said he bought a spot for Sophie’s Candy in the 2-year-old filly pace (Race 8) from Spring Haven Farms, while he purchased the spot for Caviart Sargent in the 2-year-old male pace (Race 11) from Daniel Hale.

Bred and owned by Robert Cope Stables, Sophie’s Candy drew the outside post 9 while the Caviart Farms-bred and owned Caviart Sargent landed post 3. Both freshmen will be driven by Ronnie Wrenn Jr.

While Brown likes the idea of a $150,000 race for first-year starters, he doesn’t like the timing.

“I told the owners from the start I didn’t like this,” said Brown. “I hate the first race of their life being a $150,000 race. I like the race, I like the money, I don’t like it being the first start of the year.”

–Brian Brown

Caviart Sargent finished second—by a head—in her baby-race debut on June 11 at the Delaware fairgrounds, and then was fourth in a June 22 qualifier at Scioto Downs. The son of Well Said is a full brother to Caviart Stetson, who was also trained by Brown and took a mark of 1:49.2 at The Red Mile.

“Luckily we drew the three hole with him,” said Brown. “He’s in a pretty good spot. I think he’s a decent horse so I think he can hold his own in there.”

Sophie’s Candy’s rivals include the Ron Burke-trained Winella Hanover (post 5, Chris Page), whose 1:56.3 win in her season debut on June 28 at Northfield Park is the fastest by a freshman filly pacer on a half-mile track thus far this year. There are a pair of season leaders in the 2-year-old male pace, and they both drew inside Caviart Sargent. The Mark Rowe-trained I’m Sorry Man, whose 1:56.1 win on June 22 at Northfield Park is the fastest by a 2-year-old gelding pacer on a half-mile track thus far this year, and the fastest freshman colt pacer on a half by virtue of a 1:57.4 score June 28 at Northfield, starting from post 2 with driver Page.—By Gordon Waterstone

Maverick: “Significant Dehydration”

Trainer Tony Alagna told Weekend Preview late Wednesday afternoon that tests taken on Maverick following a third-place finish in his baby-race debut Monday, June 29 at Gaitway Farm in New Jersey, showed signs of “significant dehydration.”

Maverick is a $1.1-million yearling purchase who is a full brother to the 2019 Trotter of the Year Greenshoe.

Driven by Andy McCarthy, Maverick sat in the two-hole behind tempo-setting Robert’s Hanover, who carved out first-half fractions of :29.4 and :59.3. McCarthy pulled the pocket shortly before the three-quarters was reached in 1:27.4, but the son of Father Patrick stalled in the stretch. Tart Tongue, who sat third, passed the two leaders to win in 1:58.

Maverick trotted a last quarter of :30.3 and was unable to pass Robert’s Hanover for second, finishing 2 3/4 lengths behind the winning Tart Tongue.

“Maverick’s bloodwork came back this morning with significant dehydration,” said Alagna. “We ran some fluids today and we will continue to monitor him going forward. It’s an easy fix that just occurred at a poor time.

“Maverick has never had an issue with this previously, so hopefully it was an isolated on a hot day We will take precautions to help him out going forward.”

Maverick, the highest-priced yearling ever sold at auction when the gavel came down at last fall’s Lexington Selected Yearling Sale, is owned by Maverick Racing (Brad Grant, Marvin Katz, Al Libfeld, Daniel Plouffe and Steve Heimbecker).—By Gordon Waterstone
Hall Of Famer Stillings Retires From Driving

Hall of Famer Richard “Dickie” Stillings has retired from driving in races after more than 50 years in the sulky. Stillings’ last drive, on June 22, was up behind Backstreet Romeo, a green 3-year-old trotter he also trains and co-owns.

Stillings is now 76 and while his body is still lithe, he says it was time, following a career with 5,920 wins and $44 million in purse winnings.

“I went about my business and now it’s time,” said Stillings. “Of course, time went by too quick.”

Backstreet Romeo raced on Monday afternoon at The Meadows, finishing second with Stillings’ good friend Dave Palone in the sulky. When asked if he gave Palone any advice, Stillings laughed and said, “No!”

A native of Ohio, after graduating from high school Stillings went to work for Dick Buxton, where horsemanship was on display in every task. After a stint in the Army, serving during the Vietnam War, Stillings moved to Washington, Pa., to train and drive horses at The Meadows. When he met local businessman Roy Davis, Stillings got his chance at training well-bred horses and his career as both a trainer and driver took off.

He won the Little Brown Jug with Barberry Spur and Jaguar Spur; the Breeders Crown with Kentucky Spur and Esquire Spur; and finished second in the Hambletonian with Pegasus Spur.

Although many good horses came his way and provided his stable with power, Stillings’ prowess in the sulky was always respected and made him a popular driver among other trainers, allowing him to fashion perhaps the most unique career in harness racing.

For 19 straight years, from 1978 through 1996, Stillings achieved a UDR of .300 or better. In all but eight of those 19 years, he drove in 500 races and kept a stable that numbered as many as 25-30 head. When Stillings celebrated his 68th birthday on March 7, 2012, he drove in 11 of 15 races at The Meadows, with all but two of his mounts catch-drives. And he won three of them with the two big longshots from other barns.

Palone, Stillings’ one time on-track rival and friend and the sport’s all-time leading dash-winning driver, might be his biggest fan.

Talkin’ Horses With Stillings
(from a 2012 interview)

Who is the fastest horse you’ve ever driven?
Jaguar Spur. He was fast and a tough horse. It didn’t matter what size track or where he was at, he was just a tough individual.

Who has been your favorite horse?
Probably Kentucky Spur. He wasn’t a very sound horse, but he had a lot of guts. But it’s hard to pick one. You fall in love with all of your horses. Rembrandt Spur is one of my favorites. He’s like a pet, you could take him inside your house!

Do you prefer trotters or pacers?
It doesn’t really matter. It’s a please to train or drive them both.

What change in the sport has made the biggest difference on the track?
Horses are just better bred now. The breed is so much better; great horses can come from anywhere. And horses get more mature at a younger age.

What’s the greatest race you’ve ever seen?
All the Little Brown Jug finals. I haven’t seen them all live, but I’ve seen them all either in person or the replays.

Who is the greatest horse you’ve ever seen?
I’ve seen a lot of really great horses, Adios Butler, Bret Hanover, Cardigan Bay, and I got to see Impish and Sprite Rodney race as a team when I was working for Dick Buxton in Lexington.

“I think his horsemanship is what makes him so great,” said Palone in a 2012 interview. “He’s also on the track training his own horses and the whole time he’s watching other horses as well. He knows every horse on the grounds. He finds the easiest way for a horse to win.”

In 2012, a year before his Hall of Fame induction, Stillings was asked what he thought was the key to being able to compete with much younger men on the track. The soft-spoken horseman said simply and sincerely, “The horses do most of the work.”

Stillings’ last victory came Nov. 1, 2019, at The Meadows, when he worked out a second-over trip with Mister Gelato, who won by 8½ lengths.— By Kathy Parker
Career Best For Hey Livvy; Mustang Kelsey Has Big Night

The $36,000 Preferred Trot at Woodbine Mohawk on Monday night featured two Hambletonian winners, Forbidden Trade and Marion Marauder. Neither was the winner, however.

The majority of the public's money went to Musical Rhythm, who was shooting for a repeat in the class. His stablemate, P L Jill, was the second choice in the wagering at odds of 5-2. But neither of those horses won.

Instead, the 5-year-old mare Hey Livvy, a daughter of Donato Hanover, rallied off of cover to edge P L Jill by a head in 1:51.2. The time was a lifetime best for Hey Livvy, who has been trained by Jeff Gillis since late in her 3-year-old season.

Hey Livvy got away seventh and held that position until the half, then slipped into the flow on the backstretch to win by a head over P L Jill in a career-best clocking of 1:51.2. Mass Fortune K followed Marion Marauder's cover and grabbed third.

Marion Marauder worked hard in his first-over trip and faded to fifth while Forbidden Trade trotted home in :26.3—fastest last quarter in the field—to take fourth.

Later on the Monday card, the broodmare Mustang Kensley was deserving of recognition. Two of her seven foals of racing age won races 9 and 10.

In Race 9, Mustang Kensley’s 3-year-old daughter All Day Sunshine won in 1:52 for trainer Dan Lagace and driver James MacDonald. Then in Race 10, Jody Jamieson drove her 8-year-old son Make Some Luck to a 1:51 score.

Jamieson’s wife, Stephanie, trains Make Some Luck, a winner of $433,244.

On Facebook, Jody Jamieson acknowledged the special late daily double for Mustang Kensley, “Pretty cool...”
Yonkers moves series to November; International Trot canceled
Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts announced the dates of several stakes races to be held at Yonkers Raceway. The previously scheduled races were interrupted earlier in the season due to the covid-19 pandemic and have been rescheduled for later this year. more

Freshman trotters to vie in OSS action Friday
Harness racing fans will get their first look at the next generation of champions when eight $40,000 divisions of 2-year-old Ohio Sires Stakes trotters go postward in the first leg of the series on Friday night at Northfield Park. more

Strong drivers’ colony at the Meadowlands
During the four weeks since the end of the coronavirus shutdown at the Meadowlands, the racing has offered its usual high-octane action. What’s been different is that arguably the sport’s best driver colony has managed to get even better. more

USTA seeks rule changes proposals
The U. S. Trotting Association (USTA) is making its annual petition to the membership to submit rule change proposals to the organization on issues that they believe need to be addressed or modified. Industry participants and racing fans are always coming up with ideas to make the sport better, whether it be by casual conversation, posts on social media or calls made to various organizations, including the USTA. more

Harrington cancels Quillen Memorial Pace
Live racing at Harrington Raceway will continue through July 15 on a Monday-through-Wednesday basis before a short summer hiatus. There will be no racing during the Delaware State Fair and the Bobby Quillen Memorial has been canceled. more

Breeders win lawsuit against province of Ontario
In a decision dated June 29, 2020, Ontario Superior Court Justice Michael Emery announced that he has ruled in favor of a motion brought forth by a group of Ontario Standardbred breeders against the Province of Ontario in regard to the cancellation of the Slots at Racetracks Program (SARP). more

Tall Dark Stranger wins in 1:47.4; Gimpanzee rallies from far back
For Tall Dark Stranger, it’s all systems go for the Meadowlands Pace. Trainer Nancy Takter had her prized colt in a less-than-ideal spot for his 3-year-old debut, facing older foes in a high-end conditioned pace, but in this post-coronavirus reality where many plans have had to be re-worked, everything turned out as well as she could have hoped. more

Blooded Horse Summer Sale to offer online bidding
The 64th annual Blooded Horse Summer Sale will be held Tuesday, Aug. 25 and Wednesday, Aug. 26 at the Champions Center in Springfield, Ohio. more

Goshen Yearling Sale set for live auction
Despite the many hardships faced by everyone in the harness racing industry this year due to covid-19, Goshen Standardbred Horse Sales has announced that after much concern and study about the virus, their annual yearling sale will go on as planned at noon on Monday, Sept. 14. more

Winbak hosting new Ontario Select Sale
On Saturday, Oct. 17, Winbak Farm of Ontario will be hosting the new Ontario Select Yearling Sale. The sale will be held the same weekend as the Ontario Sire Stakes Super Finals. There will be 100-120 horses to be sold, limited entries are available. more

Canadian Hall of Fame cancels 2020 inductions
At a meeting held June 23, the Board of Directors of the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame (CHRHF) made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Hall of Fame Induction Gala, due to the restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the intention of the CHRHF to induct the Class of 2020, along with those inducted in 2021, at ceremonies tentatively scheduled to take place during the summer of 2021. more

Dancer bill to let NJ residents place bets advances
Horse racing has been a crucial part of New Jersey’s economy and its history since the late 1800s. A lot has changed within the horse racing industry, and Assemblyman Ron Dancer wants the current law on betting to reflect those updates. more

Van Otterloo, Eick win HHYF scholarships
Matthew Van Otterloo from Rock Valley, Iowa has been selected as the $2,500 Curt Greene Memorial Scholarship recipient from the Harness Horse Youth Foundation (HHYF). Matthew comes from a family of harness horsemen and will study Animal Science/Pre Vet at Dordt University as an incoming freshman this fall. more

Pennsylvania fair season gets underway July 8
The Pennsylvania fair harness racing season will get underway on Wednesday, July 8 and Thursday, July 9 with a two-day Fair Sires Stakes event at the Lycoming County Fair in Hughesville, Pa. more
### Harness Racing Leaders

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

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### Leading Money-Winning Drivers

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<th>Sire Name</th>
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<td>Aaron Merriman</td>
<td>$2,047,657 (134,422)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tim Tetrick</td>
<td>$1,830,178 (203,642)</td>
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<td>Jason Bartlett</td>
<td>$1,731,797 (82,798)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Page</td>
<td>$1,690,122 (175,733)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brett Miller</td>
<td>$1,555,191 (131,775)</td>
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<tr>
<td>George Brennan</td>
<td>$1,492,693 (65,300)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corey Callahan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dexter Dunn</td>
<td>$1,365,994 (127,185)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trace Tetrick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronnie Wrenn Jr.</td>
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<td>Tyler Smith</td>
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<td>Matt Kakaley</td>
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<td>Joe Bongiorno</td>
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<td>Jordan Stratton</td>
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<td>Jim Marohn Jr.</td>
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### Leading Money-Winning Trainers

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<td>Ron Burke</td>
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<td>Richard Moreau</td>
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<td>Rene Allard</td>
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<td>Carmen Auciello</td>
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<td>Andrew Harris</td>
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<td>Virgil Morgan Jr.</td>
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<td>Richard Banca</td>
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<td>Scott Di Domenico</td>
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<td>Jim King Jr.</td>
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<td>Benoit Baillargeron</td>
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<td>Nick Surick</td>
<td>579,930 (0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Cullipher</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Rhoades</td>
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<td>Jennifer Bongiorno</td>
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<td>Joseph Columbo</td>
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### Leading Breeders

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<td>Seelster Farms Inc.</td>
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<td>Blue Chip Bloodstock Inc.</td>
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<td>Midland Acres Inc.</td>
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<td>Vieux Carre Farms</td>
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<td>Victory Hill Farm Inc.</td>
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### Leading Money-Winning Sires

#### All Age Pacers

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<td>MACH THREE</td>
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<td>AMERICAN IDEAL</td>
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<td>ART MAJOR</td>
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<td>SHADOW PLAY</td>
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<td>ALWAYS A VIRGIN</td>
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<td>ROCK N ROLL HEAVEN</td>
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<td>SPORTSWRITER</td>
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<td>WELL SAID</td>
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<td>DRAGON AGAIN</td>
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<td>ROCKIN IMAGES</td>
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<td>BIG JIM</td>
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<td>MCARDLE</td>
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#### All Age Trotters

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<td>CANTAB HALL</td>
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<td>YANKEE GLIDE</td>
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<td>ANGUS HALL</td>
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<td>TRIUMPHANT CAVIAR</td>
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<td>TRIXTON</td>
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#### USTA statistics through June 30, 2020
### July 2020

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**NOW ACCEPTING ENTRIES**

**MICHIANA CLASSIC YEARLING SALE**

For foals of 2019

Wednesday, November 25, 2020

To be held in the premier 250,000 square foot Michiana Event Center (MEC) in Shipshewana, IN

Entry deadline: August 1

[www.michianaclassicsale.com](http://www.michianaclassicsale.com)

574-825-4610 • Email steve@hoosiersale.net

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**For the Fourth Annual**

**HOOISER CLASSIC SALE COMPANY LLC**