A “Fresh” Bettor’s Wish Favorite In Canadian Pacing Derby

As a result of covid-19 travel restrictions, U.S.-based trainers have had to find locally-based drivers to handle horses in major stakes events in Canada this year. That will again be the case Saturday night at Woodbine Mohawk Park, including in the $540,000 Canadian Pacing Derby for older horses, which will see eight starters have a non-regular driver in the sulky.

“He hasn’t raced in three weeks, but that’s OK as he’s fine and fresh.”

—Chris Ryder

this case it’s a reuniting of horse and driver as MacDonell drove the 4-year-old son of Bettor’s Delight in nine of his 12 starts as a 2 year old, with a record of 5-3-1.

It was MacDonell who drove Bettor’s Wish to his first career victory in his debut as a freshman, capturing an overnight at Mohawk in 1:54. As we all know, Bettor’s Wish has gone on to much bigger accomplishments, including being voted the 2019 Three-Year-Old Colt Pacer of the Year after posting 13 wins and six seconds in 19 starts.

Bettor’s Wish will start in post 1 in the Canadian Pacing Derby, bringing with him a seasonal ledger of 6-2-1-2. After bleeding during an eighth-place finish in the July 1 1 Graduation final at the Meadowlands, Ryder put Bettor’s Wish on Lasix, and the pacer has responded.

In three starts since being put on the anti-bleeding medication, Bettor’s Wish has a first, second and third, with his win a career-best 1:47.3 effort in the $229,600 Sam McKee Memorial on Aug. 8 at the Big M.

Bettor’s Wish finished second less than a week later on Aug. 14 to Century Farroh in the $225,000 Dan Patch in his last appearance.

“He hasn’t raced in three weeks, but that’s OK as he’s fine and fresh,” said Ryder. “The last two races were six days apart and he shipped across half the country. I’m happy with him and post 1 is OK.

“And Paul (MacDonell) drove him his 2-year-old year so he knows the horse.”

A winner of more than $2.1 million for owners Ryder, Bella Racing, Fair Island Farm and Bettors Wish Partners, Bettor’s Wish had been scheduled to go to stud this year. Ryder said Bettor’s Wish will now head to the stallion barn in 2021. He was bred to 58 mares this year while remaining in training.

“He’s going to stud next year so he doesn’t have many more starts left,” said Ryder, who sent Bettor’s Wish to Ontario-based trainer Chantal Mitchell for the race, although with just this one start he remains programmed as trainer.

Trainer Ron Burke will start four horses in the Canadian Pacing Derby, including Backstreet Shadow from post 3 and Dorsoduro Hanover, Filibuster Hanover and This Is The Plan, who start from posts 8, 9 and 10.

Continues on page 2 ››››
Manchego, Atlanta Taking On Guys Again In Maple Leaf

Ten of the sport’s leading older trotters will go behind the gate in Saturday night’s $560,000 Maple Leaf Trot at Woodbine Mohawk Park. The field includes eight males and a pair of females, including Atlanta and Manchego. It will be the second time this year the two distaffers will take on male competition in the same race, and in that contest, the $170,900 Arthur J. Cutler Memorial on July 4 at the Meadowlands, Atlanta and Manchego respectively finished one-two.

Atlanta, coming off an uncharacteristic break last Saturday night in the Armbro Flight at Mohawk, will start from post 4. Manchego drew post 10, but that slot was shifted earlier this year to the trailing position behind post 1.

With regular driver Dexter Dunn unable to travel to Mohawk due to covid-19 restrictions, Manchego will also have a new pilot in the Maple Leaf Trot. Trainer Nancy Takter has enlisted Louis Philippe Roy to direct the 5-year-old daughter of Muscle Hill.

While Manchego won’t be familiar with Roy, this will be the third time in her 51-start career that she will line up as a trailer. In 2018, Manchego won the $172,000 Moni Maker at Harrah’s Hoosier Park in 1:53 after starting from the trailing spot on the seven-eighths mile oval, and last year she toured the five-eighths mile oval at Scioto Downs in 1:52.4 in winning a $50,000 Open.

“I don’t think the trailing spot is going to be an issue,” Takter said about Manchego, who finished seventh in last year’s Maple Leaf Trot won by Guardian Angel AS. “But she likes the front and Louis (Roy) is going to have to do some maneuvering to get her there at some point.”

Takter is not in favor with Mohawk’s decision to move post 10 from the outside to the inside. She pointed specifically to a pair of races at Mohawk—one last year and another just last Saturday in the North America Cup, which she won with Tall Dark Stranger.

“Ramona Hill won the Breeders Crown from the 10 hole last year after she blasted off the gate and got to the front. She would have never been able to do that if she was the trailer,” said Takter. “Look at a horse like Odds On Osiris, who had the 10 hole in the North America Cup. He was never involved in the race. If he had the 10 hole on the gate they could have blasted him off the gate.

“If they want to do that for overnight races, that’s fine, but for stakes races at least give us the option to let them know by scratch time whether we want to be the trailer or on the gate.”

So which way would Takter choose if given a choice?

“It would be up to the driver, but I would think she would probably be better on the gate,” she said. “She can leave the gate faster than most open pacers.” — By Gordon Waterstone
What a Night!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CONNECTIONS
OF THESE SENSATIONAL CHAMPIONS

TALL DARK STRANGER
p2, 1:49.1s, 3, 1:47.1'-20 ($1,941,999)
Bettor's Delight - Precocious Beauty by Art Major

$1,000,000 NORTH AMERICA CUP FINAL WINNER
Owned by: Crawford Farms Racing, Marvin Katz, Caviart Farms, Howard Taylor
Bred by: Jim Avritt
We are proud to have sold Tall Dark Stranger at the 2018 Lexington Selected Yearling Sale.

PARTY GIRL HILL
p3, 1:49f'-20 ($407,881)
Captaintreacherous - Look Cheap by G layergear
$400,000 FAN HANOVER FINAL WINNER
Owned & bred by: Tom Hill
We are proud to have foaled & raised Party Girl Hill for long time client Tom Hill.

HEY LIVVY
1:51.1s'-20 ($356,363)
Donato Hanover - Nevis Bi by Self Possessed
$220,000 ARMBRO FLIGHT FINAL WINNER
Owned by: Blue Chip Bloodstock Inc,
Ellen Ott, Trevor Henry
Bred by: M. Biasuzzi Stable Inc.
We are proud to have foaled, raised & sold Hey Livvy at the 2016 Lexington Selected Yearling Sale.

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Photos: New Image Media
Campbell Hopes For Good Results In PASS, Maple Leaf In “Yo-yo” Year

Jim Campbell started out the season with the top 2-year-old trotting colt from the 2019 season in his barn. There were others who had shown promise as rookies and were returning to race, plus the 5-year-old trotter Crystal Fashion, who earned $478,175 last season. And of course, Campbell was working with a new crop of youngsters.

Like the majority in this covid-19 year, things have not gone quite as he hoped. Most notably, Real Cool Sam, the 2019 Two-Year-Old Colt Trotter of the Year, didn’t make it to the Hambletonian and won’t be racing the rest of this season.

“It’s been a real yo-yo of a year,” he said when asked about his season to date. “We’ve had some things go right but a lot go wrong.”

Real Cool Sam made two pari-mutuel starts this year but was never a factor. Campbell was trying to manage a suspensory problem that had beset the colt.

“He had some soundness issues coming back this year and he started to get off in his right hind and ended up with a slight tear in his suspensory, so we had to quit with him,” shared Campbell, who added that the plan is to bring the horse back for a 2021 campaign.

While the year has had its disappointments, Campbell has three horses in big purse races this weekend. Campbell will start Crystal Fashion in the Maple Leaf Trot at Mohawk Saturday and has two horses in Pennsylvania Sires Stakes finals for 3 year olds on Monday at Harrah’s Philadelphia.

Crystal Fashion finished third in the Aug. 16 Crawford Farms Trot at Tioga Downs, finishing only one-half length behind race winner Guardian Angel AS. He drew post 8 in the $560,000(C) Maple Leaf and will have Bob McClure driving him.

“I was really encouraged with the Tioga race,” said Campbell. “He was his old self and was flying late and actually passed horses just past the wire. Post 8 is not the ideal spot, but there are speed horses throughout the race so I expect there to be lots of speed.”

On Sunday in Philly, Campbell will be starting Sandbetweenmytoes in the Pennsylvania Sires Stakes finals for 3 year olds on Monday at Harrah’s Philadelphia.

“He was loaded with pace and I think he tried to go too fast too quick.”

--Trainer Jim Campbell about Sandbetweenmytoes’ break in an Adios elim

Leaf and will have Bob McClure driving him.

On Sunday in Philly, Campbell will be starting Sandbetweenmytoes in the Pennsylvania Sires Stakes championship for 3-year-old pacing colts and geldings. Although a winner of four of eight starts thus far this year, Sandbetweenmytoes made a miscue in his Adios elimination that is one of the disappointments of Campbell’s year. Sandbetweenmytoes was second at the three-quarter mark and was poised to challenge for a win, but he broke stride.

“He was loaded with pace and I think he tried to go too fast too quick,” said Campbell in analyzing what happened. “It was very disappointing. He acts really good now. He’s been good ever since, and he’s gotten around the Chester track fine.”

Campbell’s other PASS championship finalist is the trotting filly Next Level Stuff, who will start from post 1. The daughter of Sebastian K finished second to Sister Sledge in her last start, on Aug. 25 in the last PASS leg, and she’ll be facing that foe again (Sister Sledge will start from post 6 with Brian Sears driving).

“I was real happy with her that start,” said Campbell of the runner-up finish to Sister Sledge. “It is a very tough division. Hopefully, Tim (Tetrick) will get her positioned well and we’ll see what she can do.”

After the PASS finals, Campbell will concentrate on racing at the Red Mile, where he presently has seven youngsters, among them Cricket Fashion 2, 1:55.2, a full brother to Bar Hopping. Campbell said that although owner Jules Siegel (Fashion Farms) had purchased a slot in the Mohawk Million for 2-year-old trotters, Cricket Fashion will instead stick with the Kentucky Sires Stakes program.

“This whole covid thing has made a lot of people change their minds about their plans,” said Campbell of passing on the chance to race for a million dollars.—By Kathy Parker
Tall Dark Stranger To Race In KYSS And Pass On Jug

Fresh off his victory in last Saturday’s $1 million North America Cup, Tall Dark Stranger will enjoy some time in the Bluegrass State as he is headed to The Red Mile where he will start in the third and final leg of Kentucky Sires Stakes (KYSS) on Sunday, Sept. 13.

With only small fields of 3-year-old male pacers having started in the first two preliminary legs, Tall Dark Stranger is a certainty to race in the $250,000 KYSS final on Sunday, Sept. 20. As a result, Tall Dark Stranger will not race in the two-heat Little Brown Jug scheduled for four days later on Thursday, Sept. 24, at Delaware, Ohio.

“We’ll probably just keep him on a big track,” trainer Nancy Takter explained. “Of course, if he doesn’t make the Sires Stakes final then we’ll have to take different tactics.”

Takter will have a second KYSS finalist in Fortify, who was third in the first leg and won the second leg on Sept. 1 in a career-best 1:49.2. In that race, Adios champ Catch The Fire—in his first start on Lasix after bleeding last time out in the Aug. 15 Milstein Memorial at Northfield Park—finished fifth. Catch The Fire is being pointed toward the Little Brown Jug and not the KYSS final.

While Takter will be in Lexington for the KYSS, she was unable to travel to Woodbine Mohawk Park for the North America Cup. Having raced earlier last Saturday at The Meadows, Takter made a pitstop in Ohio on her way to Lexington where she watched Tall Dark Stranger win the NA Cup at the home of driver Brett Miller and his wife, Stacey.

When asked about Tall Dark Stranger’s accomplishment as the first horse to ever win the Meadowlands Pace prior to the North America Cup,” Takter said with a laugh, noting the NA Cup’s delay from June to late August because of scheduling changes brought about by the pandemic. “He’s the only one to ever go behind the gate in the North America Cup as the Meadowlands Pace winner.” — By Gordon Waterstone
YEAR OF THE CROWN

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Mohawk Insights

MAPLE LEAF TROT

GUARDIAN ANGEL AS (post 3)

“It’s a very tough race. It’s all top horses and you can’t count anyone out. It’s all how the horses are that day, the trips; there’s a lot that plays into it. I’m just hoping for a lot of racing luck and that he is in good form. That’s all you can hope for. I’m very happy with the draw. Jody (Jamieson) knows how to drive horses, so I’m not worried about that. I’m sure he’s going to do a great job.” — trainer Anette Lorentzon

ATLANTA (post 4)

“Sometimes when you let her loaf a little too much she can get a little bit bumpy in the turns. At first she felt like that going into the first turn but then she just rolled off. I think she’ll be fine. A month ago we changed the shoes on her and it worked out but now we’ll go back to the old shoes and go from there.” — driver Yannick Gingras, explaining an uncharacteristic break in last Saturday’s Arm-bro Flight

GOODTIMES

HAYEK (post 2)

“I didn’t think last week was his best race. The week before at Grand River, he tore the track apart. I thought last week he could have been a little dull. Hopefully, he will bounce back this week. He’s got enough speed to go.” — trainer Ben Baillargeon

HP ROYAL THEO (post 4)

“He’s more mature this year. He does his work and he relaxes. Last year he had an issue with tying up and this year he’s been nothing but good. He’s very tough. He likes to race, and he doesn’t want to get beat. He’s a gritty horse. When he’s in to go, he will give you 120 percent. He will give you more than he has in a race, that’s what is good about him. This will be a good test this week. Last week he won pretty handy from the nine hole. Ready For Moni looks like a good horse and Play Trix On Me raced very good last week. We’ll see what happens.” — trainer Ben Baillargeon

READY FOR MONI (post 5)

“He’s been racing super; he’s such a nice horse. We didn’t have him perfectly sharp for the Hambo. I think we needed one more start in him and he would have been even better. The good news is that it’s a long season and he has big races ahead of him. I think he’s going to be really good finishing out the year.” — trainer Nancy Takter
Gordon Waterstone’s
Eye On Mohawk Park

I’m thrilled to report I hit the Late Pick 5 last Saturday at Woodbine Mohawk Park on both my regular play and my economy play. If you followed my picks and spent the $86.40 for a 20-cent ticket you saw a small profit with a return of $94.37, but if you played the economy ticket at a cost of $10.80 for a 20-cent ticket you reaped a nice dividend of $83.57.

So I’m going to attempt to go back to back at Mohawk Park on Saturday night. Here are my selections on the Early Pick 5 that gets underway in Race 1 and includes a pair of Ontario Sires Stakes, the Goodtimes final, a conditioned pace, and the Maple Leaf Trot. The Early Pick 5 offers a guaranteed pool of $100,000 with a 20-cent minimum ticket and 15 percent takeout.

**RACE 1**
DESPERATE MAN (6) has made easy work in a three-for-three Ontario Sires Stakes record and shows no signs of slowing down. He’s a single on the economy ticket, but since I don’t want to get bounced in the opener I’m also using Battle of Waterloo champ BETTOR SUN (3) and LAWLESS SHADOW (7), who was most impressive last time out winning a Nassagaweya division gate-to-wire despite starting from the outside post 9.

**RACE 2**
LAURAS LOVE (3) has the target on her back her after chasing star Party Girl Hill the last two weeks in the Fan Hanover elim and final. She had won two straight going into the Fan Hanover and in a short field she looks awful tough to beat. I’ll take a stand and make her a single.

**RACE 3**
It’d be a surprise if the winner of the Goodtimese final isn’t one of the elim winners. Go with Goodtimes elim winners READY FOR MONI (5) and HP ROYAL THEO (4).

**RACE 4**
We’re spreading out more here in using five horses with nice posts. I go back to the July 18 line on TYGA HANOVER (6) when he wired this class as the betting favorite. Since then he’s had some road trouble, a pair of tough trips from outside posts, a third after starting from the trailing 10 post, and then a first-over trip in the Preferred after being shipped to the smaller oval at Grand River. YANKEE OSBORNE (4) is an interesting horse coming from Charlottetown as he shows speed and could get position early. YACHT SEELSTER (3) should show early speed from the inside post.

**RACE 5**
There are cases to be made for a lot of horses here and cases to be made against those same horses. I’m going to ATLANTA’S (4) break last time out as a freak thing. Driver Yannick Gingras told me he expects a shoeing change this week and since she’s got her nose on the gate, I’ll give her the edge. MANCHEGO (10) will have her work cut out for her from post 10 with a new driver in Louis Roy, but she’s won twice before from the trailing spot. GIMPANZEE (9) obviously has the talent to win but he’s got the outside post 9 and a new driver in Doug McNair. GUARDIAN ANGEL AS (3) won this race last year and a repeat wouldn’t surprise. The economy play can zero in on those horses but the safe play is here is to hit the “all” button.

**20-CENT TICKET:** 3,6,7/3/4,5/1,2,3,4,6/All **COST:** $60

**ECONOMY PLAY:** 6/3/4,5/1,2,3,4,6/3,4,9,10 **COST:** $8
With OSS Championships, Huge Card At Scioto Sunday Night

The Ohio Sires Stakes championship program gets underway at 6 p.m. Sunday night at Scioto Downs, with spectators permitted and social distancing protocols in place. In addition to the eight $300,000 championships for 2 and 3 year olds, the card also includes two $100,000 divisions of the #Senditin Invitational Pace, races named after handicapper Gabe Prewitt’s catchy Twitter handle to encourage wagering at Scioto and other Caesar’s racing division tracks.

Having Ohio’s best horses on the track means Ohio’s top drivers will be at Scioto, but they’ll be joined by a few national kingpins as well. David Miller, Tim Tetrick, Dexter Dunn and Andrew McCarthy are planning to drive in the Pennsylvania Sires Stakes championships at Harrah’s Philadelphia on Sunday afternoon. Post time for the last of the PA championships is set for 4:20 p.m., so they’ll be flying to try to make their first drives.

Here is a snapshot of the competition:

**Race 3—2YO Filly Trot**

The field includes the undefeated five-time winner Herculesa. Trained by Virgil Morgan Jr., the filly by My MVP had bad luck at the draw, landing post 9.

**Race 4—2YO Filly Pace**

Ron Burke will have 21 starters at Scioto Sunday night and three of them are in this event, and the fillies drew the inside three posts. The trio includes world champion Summer Touch p,1:51.4h, who will start from post 1, plus Winella Hanover and Pinknperfect.

**Race 5—3YO Filly Pace**

McMarkle Sparkle is the fastest filly in the field on paper with a record of 1:50.1f. With no one in the field on a winning streak, there are several fillies with potential to win. The 2-1 morning line favorite is the Ron Burke-trained Crowntimerockette, who beat PJ’s Legacy and McMarkle Sparkle in the last Sires Stakes leg on Aug. 20 at Northfield.

**Race 6—2YO Colt Trot**

Two-year-old trotters can be unpredictable, but trainer Chris Beaver will have multiple chances to win this race, sending out four of the nine contenders. Beaver’s horses include the 2-1 morning line choice Winning Ticket, who on Aug. 20 at Scioto won his last Sires Stakes leg in 1:55.3 by eight lengths.

**Race 7—3YO Filly Trot**

Guinevere Hall is a world champion and is also undefeated in six starts this year, but she drew post 8. Trainer Chris Beaver has three fillies who have shown 1:53 speed in the race: Lima Gold (post 1), Delovely Hall (post 4) and Kikimora (post 7), the defending champion in the division.

**Race 8—2YO Filly Pace**

After breaking stride in his first start of the year, Heart Of Chewbacca has reeled off four straight wins for the Ron Burke Stable, including a 1:51.1 score in Sires Stakes action. Heart Of Chewbacca’s last race was Aug. 17. Three colts tuned up with fast preps in stakes races at the Red Mile Aug. 24 and 25: Laughagain Hanover (1:52 winner), Cavallent Sargent (beaten a neck in 1:51.3) and Odds On Pick Six (fifth, pacing in 1:52.2).

**Race 9—3YO Colt Trot**

On paper, the race belongs to defending divisional champion Action Uncle, trained by Virgil Morgan Jr. With a good inside post (2) and regular driver Brett Miller, he’ll have his chance to win another title.

**Race 10—3YO Colt Pace**

Surprisingly, only seven horses were entered in the race. Ocean Rock, second in the Milstein Memorial, has been given the edge by the morning line oddsmaker at 3-5, but defending divisional champion Elver Hanover will start just to his inside in post 3, which should make a very interesting race. Stanford Court, a speedster with four wins and three seconds in eight starts for trainer Brian Brown, will start from post 6.

**Race 12—#Senditin Invitational Pace**

All but two of the nine starters have won in sub-1:49 time this year. Leading the speed parade is Hurrikane Emperor (1:47), who is shipping in for trainer John McDermott and will be driven by Mark MacDonald. The field also includes 11-time winner Southwind Amazon; the 1:47.2 winner Little Rocket Man; and the Virgil Morgan Jr.-trained Our Majordan A (1:47.3), who will start from post 9.

**Race 14—#Senditin Invitational Pace**

Another field of fast horses including the mare Warrawee Ebay, who comes into the race after winning the Roses Are Red at Woodbine Mohawk last Saturday. The field also includes Workin Ona Mystery, who showed his mastery of a five-eighths mile oval when he won at The Meadows in 1:48.3f last Saturday for trainer Brian Brown.
New Yorkers Will Be Watching
Ohio Sires Stakes Finalists

Joe Spadaro has come a long way from his Queens, N.Y.,
childhood, working nearly his entire life in the harness rac-
ing industry, first as a trainer, then as a racing executive
and now has an owner-breeder.

“Growing up in New York, harness racing was big time,”
Spadaro, 78, recalled. “Later, when I lived in Hicksville,
Long Island—about three miles from Roosevelt Raceway—I
started training horses. It took me a long time to get estab-
lished as a trainer—back then you had to earn your way into
getting stalls at Roosevelt and Yonkers based on the quality
of horses you had. I also bought and resold horses and did
a lot of traveling along the East Coast and throughout Penn-
sylvania and Ohio.”

Spadaro trained Standardbreds from 1976 through 1989,
competing mostly on the New York and New Jersey
circuits.

“When Roosevelt shut down in 1989, I decided to move
into a different area of racing and got a job with the New
York Thoroughbred Breeding and Development Fund,”
Spadaro said. “I worked there until I retired in 2007—mov-
ing up from field inspector to the Deputy Director position.”

It was during those years that Spadaro became close
friends with famed Thoroughbred announcer Tom Durkin
and began purchasing horses as
an owner-breeder.

“We became good friends, and
the name Spaaatners actually
came about because Tom was the
announcer at Saratoga, which
people refer to as ‘The Spa, and
he used to draw out the word
‘spaaaa’ when he was announc-
ing there,’” he explained.

“We purchased the Lindy Lane
mare Electra Hanover from Albert Adams, at his farm Win-
terwood Farm in Bellville, Ohio, and she was in foal at the
time, so it was a package deal. We bred her to Conway Hall
and the result was Coraggioso. It was Tom’s job to name the
foals we bred and as we both love Italy; he gave most of the
foals Italian names.”

Coraggioso, the Italian word for courageous, was foaled at
Winterwood Farm in 2009 and raced four years, becoming a New
York Sires Stakes champion and taking a record of 5, 1:52.4
with earnings of $677,398.

“Coraggioso was a big horse and my goal was to show
how, even though as big as he is, that he could get
around a half mile track,” Spadaro stressed. “Ohio was
just breaking out and it was the perfect time for him to be
showcased there, but that didn’t happen as he pulled a
suspensory. We waited a year to try to bring him back to
the races, and did everything we could, but it just didn’t
happen.”

Retired Standardbreds Join
NYC Mounted Police Unit

Cheyenne Western and Weapons Dealer joined their
friends at the New York City Mounted Police Unit, says
the Standardbred Retirement Foundation (SRF).

Genius At Work was the first to join the ranks of the
Police Department and his work ethic and wonderful
demeanor has led to others being invited to see if they
can make the cut.

There is a lot involved in trying a horse for mounted
police work. These horses must load and travel well,
stand quietly in all situations when asked, tolerate
crowds, smoke, bicycles, loud noises, guns, motorcy-
cles, construction sights, flags, and much more. Their
mannerism must also be stellar when called upon for
public relations.

To be ready for this kind of work these horses go
through about three months of training before they
are tested on back streets. If they pass the test they
get an official badge. The NYPD Unit has about 50
horses presently and were ready should they have
been called upon during the troubling times NYC
was experiencing.

Cheyenne Sebeer, a 172 hand gentle giant, made it
through recently in record time. Cheyenne Western left
SRF’s Cream Ridge, N.J., location on Sept. 1 along with
Weapons Dealer to try out for the task.

The NYPD as well as Philadelphia, Newark, Rockland
City, Otisville and other units in the country, along with
several Sherriff’s departments have SRF horses as
well. This breed has earned the name “Brainiac Breed,”
and rightfully so. That is a very common term used
when describing the Standardbred. (Standardbred Re-
tirement Foundation)
The road map was a bit different this year due to scheduling changes as a result of the covid-19 pandemic, but the dates for the Pennsylvania Sires Stakes (PASS) championships remained in cement: The $253,000 PASS finals for 2-year-olds will be contested on Saturday at The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono, while the $252,000 PASS finals for 3-year-olds will be raced on Sunday at Harrah's Philadelphia.

Trainer Nancy Takter will send out five PASS finalists over the Labor Day weekend, including freshmen Type A, Insta Glam and Always A Miki, and sophomores No Lou Zing and JK First Lady.

### PASS Championship finals

#### Mohegan Sun Pocono, Saturday, Sept. 5, $253,000 Two-Year-Old Colt Trot, Race 9, Post Time: 2:30 pm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post—Horse (Sire)</th>
<th>Driver/Trainer</th>
<th>Odds</th>
<th>Breeder/Yealng Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—Type A (Southwind Frank)</td>
<td>A. McNamara/N. Takter</td>
<td>8-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2—Arnold N Dicky (Bar Hopping)</td>
<td>D. Palone/C. Sylvester</td>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Concord Stud Farm/$17,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>3—Captain Corey* (Googoo Gaagaa)</td>
<td>A. Svanstedt</td>
<td>2-1</td>
<td>Carter Duer/$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4—In Range (Bar Hopping)</td>
<td>T. Tetrick/M. Melander</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Windsong Stable/$185,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>5—Tart Tongue (Southwind Frank)</td>
<td>J. Bongiorno/J. Bongiorno</td>
<td>8-1</td>
<td>Stewart-Kemppi St, Pond-A-Acres/$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6—Fly Light* (Father Patrick)</td>
<td>A. Miller/A. Svanstedt</td>
<td>2-1</td>
<td>Marvin Katz &amp; Al Libfeld/$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7—Johan Palena (Bar Hopping)</td>
<td>D. Dunn/A. Svanstedt</td>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Kentuckiana Farms &amp; Bender Sweden/$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8—Ethan T Hanover (Bar Hopping)</td>
<td>B. Sears/P. Engblom</td>
<td>12-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9—Take All Comers (Creatine)</td>
<td>S. Zeron/J. Campbell</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Runthetable Stables &amp; Chelsea Batelli/Homebred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*coupled in wagering due to common ownership

### $253,000 Two-Year-Old Colt & Gelding Pace, Race 10, Post Time: 2:45 pm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post—Horse (Sire)</th>
<th>Driver/Trainer</th>
<th>Odds</th>
<th>Breeder/Yealng Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—Straight Talk (Sweet Lou)</td>
<td>J. Bongiorno/R. Burke</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>Vieux Carre Farm/$24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2—Southwind Genry (Always B Miki)</td>
<td>D. Miller/R. Burke</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Southwind Farms/$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3—Crunch Hanover (Captaintreachereous)</td>
<td>S. Zeron/L. Toscano</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$115,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4—Lou’s Pearlman (Sweet Lou)</td>
<td>M. Kakaley/R. Burke</td>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Burke Racing &amp; Weaver Bruscoli/Homebred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5—The Legend Hanover (Somebeachsomewhere)</td>
<td>T. Tetrick/B. Brown</td>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6—Bayfield Beach (Somebeachsomewhere)</td>
<td>A. McCarthy/B. Brown</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Schooner Stable II/$105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7—Leterl Lad Hanover (Somebeachsomewhere)</td>
<td>D. Palone/R. Burke</td>
<td>15-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8—Always A Miki (Always B Miki)</td>
<td>D. Dunn/N. Takter</td>
<td>7-2</td>
<td>Sargent Stables/$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9—Chase H Hanover (Captaintreacherous)</td>
<td>B. Sears/C. Cox</td>
<td>9-2</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### $253,000 Two-Year-Old Filly Trot, Race 10, Post Time: 2:45 pm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post—Horse (Sire)</th>
<th>Driver/Trainer</th>
<th>Odds</th>
<th>Breeder/Yealng Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—Pub Crawl (Bar Hopping)</td>
<td>A. Miller/J. Miller</td>
<td>5-2</td>
<td>Christian K. Stoltzfus/$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2—You Ato Dream (Donato Hanover)</td>
<td>J. Gregory</td>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>M. Biasuzzi Stable/$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3—Gimmie Shelter (Father Patrick)</td>
<td>D. Dunn/M. Palone</td>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Marsh Valley Standardbreds/$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4—Flawless Country (Southwind Frank)</td>
<td>A. Svanstedt</td>
<td>5-2</td>
<td>Kentuckiana Farms/$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5—Anoka Hanover (Donato Hanover)</td>
<td>A. McCarthy/N. Daley</td>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6—Insta Glam (Father Patrick)</td>
<td>T. Tetrick/N. Takter</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Goran Fahl &amp; Christina Takter/Homebred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7—DD’s Diamond (Father Patrick)</td>
<td>B. Sears/P. Engblom</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>Red Wells Stable/Homebred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8—Gold Stones (Muscle Massive)</td>
<td>M. Kakaley/R. Gillock</td>
<td>15-1</td>
<td>Robert J. Key/Homebred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9—Evening Stroll (Cantab Hall)</td>
<td>S. Zeron/J. Campbell</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>Tony Holmes &amp; Walter Zent/Homebred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### $253,000 Two-Year-Old Filly Pace, Race 12, Post Time: 3:15 pm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post—Horse (Sire)</th>
<th>Driver/Trainer</th>
<th>Odds</th>
<th>Breeder/Yealng Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—Wicked Ways (Captaintreachereous)</td>
<td>B. Sears/R. Burke</td>
<td>10-1</td>
<td>S. Stewart &amp; C, J and F Nash/$120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2—Marsha Hanover (Captaintreachereous)</td>
<td>S. Zeron/L. Toscano</td>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3—Thebeachiscalling (Somebeachsomewhere)</td>
<td>A. McCarthy/C. Ryder</td>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>Kentuckiana Farms/$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4—Grace Hill (Always B Miki)</td>
<td>D. Dunn/R. Norman</td>
<td>5-2</td>
<td>White Birch Farm/$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5—Blue Diamond Eyes (Captaintreachereous)</td>
<td>D. Miller/R. Burke</td>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Brittany Farms/$180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6—Continuolia (Sweet Lou)</td>
<td>J. Bongiorno/R. Burke</td>
<td>5-1</td>
<td>Burke Racing &amp; Weaver Bruscoli/Homebred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7—Uptown Hanover (Somebeachsomewhere)</td>
<td>M. Kakaley/R. Burke</td>
<td>12-1</td>
<td>Hanover Shoe Farms/$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8—Lyons Softassilk (Somebeachsomewhere)</td>
<td>T. Tetrick/J. King Jr.</td>
<td>15-1</td>
<td>Vieux Carre Farms &amp; Linwood Higgins/$37,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9—Let ‘Er Buck (Betong Line)</td>
<td>M. MacDonald/R. Schnittker</td>
<td>20-1</td>
<td>Raymond Schnittker/Homebred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
happy. He’s a little bit of an overachiever so I’m surprised and happy at this point.”

Insta Glam will start with driver Tim Tetrick in post 6 in the PASS championship for freshman filly trotters. The daughter of Father Patrick is a three-time winner thus far in her career, including a career-best 1:54 in the last PASS leg on Aug. 27 at Harrah’s Philadelphia. Insta Glam is the 3-1 second choice behind the Svanstedt-trained Flawless Country, who is 5-2 and comes into the race riding a three-race win streak.

“She’s a really nice filly,” Takter said about Insta Glam. “She was really perfect last time and that was a heck of a mile at Chester in 1:54 flat since the track was not fast that day. To come off the rail in a :27 quarter like she did, was really good. I think she has a really good shot in there.”

Always A Miki starts in post 8 with driver Dexter Dunn in the PASS final for 2-year-old male pacers. A three-time winner this year, Always A Miki got caught late by Southwind Gendry in the last PASS preliminary. Always A Miki is the 7-2 second choice behind the 3-1 Southwind Gendry.

“Post 8 will make it a little bit more difficult,” said Takter. “He’s a super overachiever. He’s not very big but he usually gets the job done.

“He raced really good last start at The Meadows. Dex (Dunn) said he maybe should have slowed a little bit more in the third quarter. He shows up every time and does his work. He’ll probably have a little bit of a tough race from the eight hole, but I think he’ll be fine.”

In Sunday action, the Takter-trained No Lou Zing comes into the final for 3-year-old male pacers off a career-best 1:49.3 romp in the last prelim. Dunn will drive the gelded son of Sweet Lou from post 6.

Owners, Trainers, Limited Spectators Approved At Red Mile

The Red Mile will be hosting a very limited number of spectators to its live race meet, beginning with the Sept. 20 Kentucky Sires Stakes finals and continuing through the remainder of the meet (Oct. 11). Post time is 1 p.m. each day. The full racing schedule is available on the website at redmileky.com.

The following groups may attend: Horse owners and trainers with Kentucky racing licenses, credentialed members of the media, and a limited number of reserved tickets. The clubhouse will be open for dining on a required reservation basis. (Admission tickets and clubhouse reservations can be requested by emailing: Bessie.purvis@redmile.biz.)

Masks, social distancing and screening (temperature checks and questionnaire) will be required for attendance, as per Kentucky regulations for covid-19.

(The Red Mile)

JK First Lady will start for Takter in the 3-year-old filly pace championship, a race that looks to be a barnburner. A daughter of Western Ideal, JK First Lady—riding a two-race win streak—starts from post 6 in a field that includes the eight-for-eight Party Girl Hill, who is likely to be the prohibitive favorite from post 1. Also in the race is Baby Your the Best, who returns to Pennsylvania after a Kentucky Sires Stakes victory, Rocknificent, and Lyons Sentinel, the 2019 Two-Year-Old Filly Pacer of the Year.—By Gordon Waterstone
McConnell Proposes Bill To Regulate Horse Racing

Influential Kentucky Sen. Mitch McConnell was in Lexington on Monday to talk about the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act, a bill he plans to introduce this month. The legislation is said to be similar to that proposed in the House of Representatives by Rep. Paul Tonko (Democrat-N.Y.) and Rep. Andy Barr (Republican-Ky.). Barr said the most recent form of that bill, the Horseracing Integrity Act (HIA) of 2019, will be reshaped to mirror McConnell’s legislation; however, several industry stakeholders, most notably the Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association and the National Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association.

According to a report on bloodhorse.com, one key change in the McConnell bill involves the use of Lasix on race day. The new bill, like the Tonko-Barr bill, would still outlaw the use of race-day Lasix, but states would be allowed to request a three-year waiver for some races in which using the race-day medication would still be permitted. (Both bills allow horses to train on Lasix). The waiver, however, would not apply to races for 2 year olds or stakes races. The bloodhorse.com story said the change in the Lasix policy helped bring Churchill Downs on board to support the McConnell bill.

On Tuesday, Meadowlands president Jeff Gural issued the following statement: “I feel it is vitally important that we get behind this legislation and I believe that the stated concerns of the USTA (U.S. Trotting Association) can be addressed to their satisfaction as the language is shaped. We all know the current system does not work. The is our best chance to have effective regulation of integrity related matters in harness racing.”

Harness racing and Standardbred racing were not mentioned at the press conference or in any subsequent press releases or media reports.

The USTA, which has opposed the Tonko-Barr Horse Racing Integrity Act in part because it put a larger financial burden on the Standardbred industry, had also not seen the McConnell bill.

On Wednesday, the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI) said it was “hopeful” that a new proposal by McConnell would unite the racing industry and better protect horses.

The ARCI has previously opposed the Tonko-Barr proposal as currently drafted partly because it did not address the regulatory gap that exists for young horses yet to come under the jurisdiction of a state racing commission.

“The most important reform needed to protect horses and ultimately the sport is the regulatory monitoring — either by government or an NGO - of the care and treatment given to all horses intended to race from point of birth forward,” ARCI President Ed Martin said, echoing testimony he has previously made before Congressional panels. “Any proposal that does not require the registration of a racehorse with an entity that will do this will fall short in safeguarding our horses, the sport, and the investment of owners.”

Meadowlands Returns To Action On Saturday

The Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs has a scheduled post time of 7:01 p.m. on Saturday, and 15 minutes later the first race at the Meadowlands will be on the track. The Big M returns to action after a short break since the Hambletonian day card on Aug. 8.

Thirteen races are on tap for Saturday’s card, with the feature an $18,500 conditioned pace slated as Race 10. Two horses come into the race with extended winning streaks: Pyro (Simon Allard, post 5) and Angers Bayama (Andy McCarthy, post 6).

Pyro has worked his way up the class ladder in his four-race streak. The Ron Burke-trained 4-year-old son of Sweet Lou won a pair of races at The Meadows and then two more at the Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono. The first of those victories was a 1:49 effort, which equaled his career mark set last year in a Kentucky Sires Stakes leg at The Red Mile. His last outing on Aug. 22 was a 1:50 triumph.

Angers Bayama’s three wins all came at the Meadowlands, beginning on July 18 when he paced a career-best 1:48, leading gate to wire and sealing the 3 ¾-length decision with a last quarter of :25.4. Bumped up in class the next start by trainer Tony Alagna, Angers Bayama won in 1:49, and then back in the same class the following week, he scored in 1:48.3. The 4-year-old son of Big Jim has not raced since that Aug. 8 contest.

Oddsmaaker Dave Brower installed Pyro as an 8-1 longshot, giving the role of 3-1 favorite to Angers Bayama. The 7-2 second choice is the $584,000-winner Highalator, who returns to the Big M after a three-race tour in Pennsylvania.

The Meadowlands will race Friday and Saturday nights through Dec. 26, with the exception of Christmas day, Friday, Dec. 25. Post time nightly is 7:15 p.m.
Harrah’s Hoosier Park Announces Updates for 2020 Breeders Crown

Harrah’s Hoosier Park Racing & Casino announced Thursday that it will host the 2020 Breeders Crown on Friday, Oct. 30 and Saturday, Oct. 31 with limited spectators, in accordance with the approved health and safety plan for the event.

The 2020 Breeders Crown event, presented by The Libfeld-Katz Breeding Partnership, will be a ticketed-only event with three main experiences hosted in a limited-capacity format:

- Breeders Crown Owners & Sponsors Experience – Located in the Homestretch Dining Area, Lower Level Grandstands, and Terrace Showroom Suites
- Breeders Crown Grandstand Experience – Located in the Terrace Showroom Grandstand Seating
- Breeders Crown Simulcast Center Experience – Located in the State-of-the-Art Simulcast Center

The initial availability of Breeders Crown experience packages will be extended for purchase by invitation to members of the Hambletonian Society, Breeders Crown horse owners, event sponsors, and local racing community.

Reservations for the Breeders Crown Owners & Sponsors Experience will be available in tables of four or six, are based on limited availability, and not guaranteed. Owners anticipating Breeders Crown entries may sign up for the Breeders Crown Owners reservation waitlist by emailing BreedersCrown2020@gmail.com, and final reservations will require a Breeders Crown entry.

Ticket availability for all experiences may become available based on demand and in accordance with the approved health and safety plan, and a Breeders Crown fan waitlist will be established. Fans wishing to attend the 2020 Breeders Crown are encouraged to visit HarrahsHoosierPark.com for regular updates.

“Our team at Harrah’s Hoosier Park remains focused on hosting a highly-successful Breeders Crown, in partnership with the Hambletonian Society, the Indiana Standardbred Association, and the Indiana Horse Racing Commission,” said Harrah’s Hoosier Park VP and GM of racing, Rick Moore. “We will once again execute a top-notch, two-night event to decide year-end honors for the best harness racing athletes in North America, all while keeping the safety of our guests, team members, and racing community at the forefront of our event.”

The Breeders Crown is a $6 million championship series designed to decide year-end honors and draws the year’s best Standardbred racehorses from across North America to compete against one another. The event brings together the greatest harness racing equine athletes in the world as they square off in different age divisions based on the horses’ sex and gait (trot or pace). The 2020 events at Harrah’s Hoosier Park will be the 37th edition of the Breeders Crown, with the following lineup:

**Friday, Oct. 30 – First Post 6 p.m.**
- Breeders Crown 2YO Filly Pace
- Breeders Crown 2YO Filly Trot
- Breeders Crown 2YO Colt & Gelding Pace
- Breeders Crown 2YO Colt & Gelding Trot

**Saturday, Oct. 31 – First Post 6 p.m.**
- Breeders Crown 3YO Filly Pace
- Breeders Crown 3YO Filly Trot
- Breeders Crown 3YO Colt & Gelding Pace
- Breeders Crown 3YO Colt & Gelding Trot
- Breeders Crown Open Mare Pace
- Breeders Crown Open Mare Trot
- Open Pace
- Open Trot

As a part of the 2020 Breeders Crown, Harrah’s Hoosier Park – along with Libfeld-Katz and The Hambletonian Society - will host a Breeders Crown Charity Challenge to benefit non-profit organizations. The 2019 charity challenge brought in more than $282,000 in fundraising with Libfeld-Katz at the helm, and the 2020 goal is to exceed that figure.

“In times like today, there’s an even greater need for collaboration with non-profits on fundraising opportunities,” noted Moore. “We are focused on putting together a first-class event in a reduced capacity, and using the 2020 Breeders Crown as a platform to raise what we hope to be hundreds of thousands of dollars for worthy organizations.”

Harrah’s Hoosier Park is currently operating at a reduced capacity, in accordance with the State of Indiana and regulatory guidelines. Both Harrah’s Hoosier Park and the Hambletonian Society remain committed to following all safety protocols outlined by the State of Indiana and set forth in Harrah’s Hoosier Park’s health and safety plan.

More information on the 2020 Breeders Crown, including the Charity Challenge, event FAQ, and Breeders Crown experience availability can be found at www.HarrahsHoosierPark.com, and will be updated regularly. (Hoosier Park)
It was a typical day in a non-typical winter in mid-February in Kentucky as breeder Jim Avritt Sr. relaxed on his couch in his spacious home in Lebanon, about 70 miles southwest of Lexington.

“I’m exactly an hour and five minutes from The Red Mile,” said Avritt, who has made that trip countless times since he first got into harness racing in the early 1960s.

It was a Monday morning and Avritt normally would have been with his handful of horses at the nearby Marion County Fairgrounds, where he also serves as the track superintendent. Instead, a steady rain kept him home and available for a conversation about his life in harness racing.

Retired last year after a long career as an attorney in the small town of less than 6,000 that he’s called home his entire life, Avritt was hoping for a break in the weather so he could make the five-minute trip to the fairgrounds. In years past he would train in the early morning, head to his attorney’s office, and then return to the fairgrounds later in the day.

“Our local track is an excellent half-mile track. It dries out real quick,” said Avritt, anxious to get in some afternoon jog time.

Marion County is also the home of Maker’s Mark Distillery, one of the jewels in the Kentucky Bourbon Trail tour. Avritt and his wife of 57 years, Laverne, live at a crossroads en route to Makers Mark, just five miles from where they make the world-famous bourbon whiskey. Avritt said the local tourism bureau recently approached him to add his Meadow Creek Farm to a tour that includes the distillery.

It won’t be the first time his farm has been a destination for visitors. That’s what happens when your farm is home to broodmares who produce champions. The list of the horses bred by Avritt includes Precocious Beauty, who was recently honored as the 2019 Pacing Broodmare of the Year as a result of the exploits of the newly-crowned 2-Year-Old Colt Pacer of the Year Tall Dark Stranger and the multiple stakes-winning 3-year-old filly Beautyonthebeach.

“There are five tours that have already been set up that will begin here at the farm,” Avritt said with an obvious tone of pride in his voice. “There will be about 50-75 people per tour, and this will give them exposure to harness racing. And I bet not many in those groups will have had much exposure to it.”

Avritt doesn’t hesitate to say that all of his success—including his 125-acre farm and multi-storied home—is because of a 3-year-old filly pacer he bought at the 1995 mixed sale in Harrisburg: Dominique Semalu.

“Dominique Semalu was by Big Towner and her mother was Midi A Semalu, a top filly (who won more than $525,000),” remembered Avritt. “She raced for two years but had a problem with a stifle and wouldn’t stay in training. I went ahead and bred her and sold some high-priced yearlings out of her.

“Her main claim to fame is that every daughter she produced was a top stakes-producing filly. That’s what kept me going and that’s what led to Precious Beauty (the dam of Precocious Beauty, among others).”

Avritt’s path to becoming a horse breeder had begun more than 30 years earlier. His father and uncle owned a few Thoroughbreds that raced in West Virginia, and an uncle worked for the well-respected farm manager Frances MacKenzie at Walnut Hall Farm. He remembers being around horses at an early age.

“I had ponies when I was kid, and we had work horses,” he said. “I remember when I was a kid planting corn and tobacco with a team of horses.”
Avritt attended St. Augustine High School in Lebanon, and that’s where he met his wife, who was two years younger.

“There were 22 or 24 in my graduating class and the same in hers; I was a senior and she was a sophomore,” said Avritt. “We were high school sweethearts and we married in 1963.”

Avritt was attending Xavier University in Cincinnati in 1963, pursuing a law degree, when he purchased his first Standardbred.

“I went to a sale in Delaware, Ohio, and bought a 3-year-old trotting filly named Janice Song, who was by Anthony Hanover,” remembered Avritt. “I gave $600 for her. I took her back to college with me and trained her at the Carthage fairgrounds about three miles from Xavier. That summer I raced her at the Kentucky fairs.”

In addition to training Janice Song, Avritt also drove. Things didn’t go well.

“I’ll never forget the first race I drove,” Avritt said as he leaned back on the couch and went down memory lane to more than 50 years ago. “It was at the Taylor County Fair in Campbellsville (Kentucky). When the starter said ‘Go’ my right line flopped into my lap. I hadn’t buckled the line properly. Dumped me out and the filly ran three or four miles before we finally got her stopped.

“She came back two days later and won both heats. She was well tightened,” he added with a smile.

While Avritt was in law school he was continuing to buy horses, trying to obtain better bloodstock with each purchase. After graduating from law school in 1966, Avritt and Laverne settled back home in Marion County.

“In 1968-69 I bought about 50 acres close to town and built a house and barn there,” he said. “Seven or eight years later I bought 125 acres on the other side of town, which is where I am right now. There was a big, two-story house when I bought it. I had someone move that house across the field to the lower end of the farm. We sold it off and built a new house where the old house was sitting.

“We built the house and barns and fenced it. Look at the fencing. I personally drove every single post you see on this farm now. It’s all been re-fenced now and in tip-top shape.”

Even though Avritt is approaching his 80th birthday, he continues to be a hands-on horseman and farm operator. He’s foaled his own mares, raised and broke their babies and watched them race, and because of Dominique Semalu, achieved distinction as a breeder of champions.

Avritt first bred Dominique Semalu to Die Laughing and that resulted in the filly Hilarious, a foal of 1997 who took a mark of 1:52.3 and won $58,461 for Avritt. Avritt sold Dominique Semalu’s next foal, Best Of Luck, for $65,000. The son of Camluck took a mark of 1:53 and earned $221,017.

After a couple more foals, in 2001 Dominique Semalu produced Precious Beauty. The daughter of Jate Lobell earned $112,842 on the track and a mark of 1:53.3 as a 2 year old.

“I kept (Precious Beauty), we trained and raced her, and she won the Kentucky Standardbred for 2-year-old fillies at Hoosier Park,” Avritt recalled. “We sent her to Canada and she was going to race in the She’s A Great Lady, but she got sick on her way up there. She was the pre-race favorite for her elimination, but she didn’t race well and didn’t make the final.”

Where Precious Beauty has excelled has been the breeding shed. Her second foal...
was Sportswriter, who earned more than $1.5 million. Her fourth foal was Precocious Beauty, who earned $838,004.

“From Precious Beauty came Precocious Beauty, and from Precocious Beauty came Beautyonthbeach and Tall Dark Stranger,” said Avritt. “I never dreamed that when I bought that Anthony Hanover filly when she was a 3 year old that I’d ever see the day that I would have a mare like Precocious Beauty. She was a world champion, won a Dan Patch and O’Brien Award as a 2 year old, and lo and behold, her first two foals have her the Pacing Broodmare of the Year.”

Precocious Beauty was bred to Captaintreacherous last year, but she lost the foal.

“Last fall when I checked her she came up empty,” said Avritt with a sigh. “That’s part of the heartbreak of it all. Something like that costs you somewhere between a quarter of a million and a half a million when one like that comes up empty.”

While Avritt’s broodmare bands expands in both quantity and quality, he continues to race a formidable stable. The Grand Circuit stock are trained by Ontario-based Gregg McNair.

“I met Gregg many, many years ago,” remembered Avritt. “He bought a yearling or two off me and did fairly well with them. I struck up a friendship with him and a relationship with him. He’s a tremendous person; he tells you like it is and won’t lead you on. And his wife Suzie is unbelievable with the horses. They get the best of care.”

While Avritt has horses competing on the Grand Circuit, he hasn’t abandoned his roots. He still races on the fair circuit—he’s been active with the Kentucky Colt Racing Association that currently races at seven county fairs for years—and at The Red Mile. Recent changes in the Bluegrass State, including a mare residency program that has significantly boosted the purses of the Sires Stakes program, and a new track in Oak Grove, on the Tennessee border in the southwest corner, has Avritt dreaming of even bigger things.

“Right now, we start racing at The Red Mile with a level of contributing about $2.5 million a year to the Sires Stakes pro-

**PRECIOUS BEAUTY**

“Precious Beauty is in foal to Captaintreacherous, then she goes back to Sweet Lou.”

**INcredible Beauty** (Art Major, foal of 2006) 3, 1:54f ($134,630)

“The first foal of Precious Beauty. I sold her to Keith Clark out of Western Canada privately for $95,000.”

**SPORTSWRITER** (Artsplace, 2007) 3. 1:48.3 ($1,566,460)

“Casie Coleman bought her at Harrisburg for $50,000. She told me after she would have gone to $100,000. He won the Metro in 2009 and was the 2-Year-Old Colt Pacer of the Year.”

**SILENT PARTNER** (Camluck, 2008) 1:52.2f ($92,142)

“He was a Camluck colt who brought $120,000.”

**PRECOCIOUS BEAUTY** (Art Major, 2011) 1:50.1 ($838,004)

“I kept her and still own her, and you know the story.”

**PASSIONATE BEAUTY** (Rock N Roll Heaven, 2013) 2, 1:55.3 ($13,594)

“Gregg (McNair) trained her and she had a problem as a 2 year old. He sent her back to me and I fooled with her myself at the fairgrounds and raced her a few times at The Red Mile. Gregg took her back to Canada and won with her in 1:55.3 late her 3-year-old year. I ultimately sold her to Joe McLead’s Sugar Valley Farm in Ohio.”

**AMERICAN SPORTSMAN** (Somebeachsomewhere, 2014) 1:52.1f ($130,954)

“I kept him and syndicated him myself for a quarter of a million with Gregg and a couple other people. At the time it was the most I had ever sold one for. Gregg trained him in Florida and he trained super. He called me one day and told me the colt had popped a curb and we’re going to miss a few days with him. He called me back a couple weeks later and said, ‘Bad news on the colt…the vets don’t think it’s a curb at all, but he got bit by a spider’. We had high hopes for him as a 3 year old and staked him to everything, but he just didn’t come back.”

**PLEASANT BEAUTY** (Art Major, 2015) 3. 1:52.1 ($29,948)

“She is now in my broodmare band and she’ll be bred to Always B Miki this year.”

**PRESCIENT BEAUTY** (Art Major, 2016) 2, 1:50.4 ($464,250)

“She raced really well as a 2 year old. She won the Three Diamonds in 2018. We had high hopes for her as a 3 year old but she didn’t come back.”

**PRISTINE BEAUTY** (Art Major, 2017) 2, 1:54.3 ($30,800)

“I trained her myself last year. She was a late foal and I wanted something to train and come along slow with. We raced her at the fairs and she won the fair final at Lexington and raced in the Sires Stakes, where she won an elimination and then tied up her next two starts. I’m going to breed her this year to Rockin Image, then I’m going to flush her and put her back in training.”

**BEACHHEAD** (Somebeachsomewhere, 2018)

“Casie Coleman bought this colt in Lexington for $225,000.
gram,” he said. “Oak Grove, I think will ultimately do two or three times that and, if that’s the case, you’re talking another $5 million or $7.5 million. There will be more legs added and they’ll go for more money.

“If that new track at Oak Grove that Churchill Downs (owns) does anything like they anticipate—and I really think it will—it will add a tremendous amount of money to the Sires Stakes program each year.

“Kentucky has never been at this level before. It’s incredible. We were almost dead a few years back. If they hadn’t made the change in the Sires Stakes to allow for the resident mare program, we’d have no Sires Stakes. I’m primarily a small-market breeder and it really is invaluable to have them dual-eligible.”

Avritt then noted how over the years he has been purchasing shares in some of the biggest stallion names so he could breed his mares to the best pedigrees: “Sweet Lou, Always B Miki, Captaintreacherous, Father Patrick, Walner and Trixton,” he said with a smile. “And over the years I’ve had shares in On The Road Again, Falcon Seelster, Rock N Roll Heaven and Grinfromeartoear.

“To breed to some of those stallions you have to own shares in them.”

With Laverne away from the house running errands that included a stop at the hairdresser, Avritt then started to speak about his family.

“My son Jim Jr. was also an attorney and is retired now,” said Avritt. “He’s training horses full time with five of his own at the local fairgrounds and another in Canada. Jim has a son, Grant, who is a doctor at UK (University of Kentucky). And Jim has two daughters, Morgan and Madison, who are both nurses.

“Our daughter Natalie lives in Louisville and she was a nurse and now a health insurance claims analyst. She has a daughter, Caroline.”

A break in the rain led Avritt to putting on shoes and heading a short distance up a hill to his barn, where his lone full-time worker, Shan “Bear” Lightner, was cleaning stalls.

“To have a mare be Pacing Mare of the Year with only two foals of racing age, that’s a pretty rare feat,” said Avritt, who was once named Kentucky Harness Horseman of the Year. “It means a lot to me. To be able to compete against the bigger farms that have many, many, many more mares than I have.

“It’s not so much something that I’ve done,” he added. “It all goes back to being lucky enough to buy Dominique Semalu and get me started on the right foot. If not for Dominique Semalu, you wouldn’t be sitting here talking to me. I would still be in the industry, but it wouldn’t be at this level, that’s for sure.”
NY governor says casinos can open Sept. 9

The Albany (NY) Times Union has reported that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Thursday morning that casinos in the state can reopen for business Sept. 9. more

Mohawk Park’s first post Saturday set for 7:20 pm

Woodbine Mohawk Park would like to remind all horsepeople, fans and horseplayers of this Saturday’s post time change. Post time for the 12-race Canadian Pacing Derby and Maple Leaf Trot card has been pushed back to 7:20 p.m. The later post time is due to the Kentucky Derby, which is scheduled to be run at 7:01 p.m. more

Meadowlands returns Saturday with new betting menu

It may have only been four weeks since Ramona Hill beat the boys in a thrilling Hambletonian where wagering soared to heights not seen in some time, but for impatient Meadowlands fans, the wait for racing to return to the top track in the game is finally over, as live action at the mile oval resumes Saturday, Sept. 5 at 7:15 p.m. more

Todd McCarthy off to fast start in North America

Over the past several years, driver Todd McCarthy contemplated leaving his native Australia to continue his career in North America. Watching his brother Andy win four Breeders Crown trophies last October at Woodbine Mohawk Park helped convince McCarthy to do it in 2020. more

Scioto extends meet to Sept. 12

In a joint effort between Eldorado Scioto Downs, Hollywood Gaming at Dayton Raceway, and the Ohio Harness Horsemen’s Association, Scioto Downs is extending its race meet one week. Instead of closing the weekend before Labor Day, closing night will now be Saturday, Sept. 12. more

Record $5.6 million handle on NA Cup night

Tall Dark Stranger’s dominant performance in the 37th Pepsi North America Cup highlighted a record-setting evening for Woodbine Entertainment. The 13-race Pepsi North America Cup card on Saturday, Aug. 29 generated a handle of $5,619,396, the highest wagering handle in the 57-year history of racing at Woodbine Mohawk Park. more

KY now requires vet records, exams

The new medication regulations in Kentucky require that all veterinary treatment reports be submitted to the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission (KHRC) and all horses entered to race undergo a pre-race examination. more

Sam Landy rings bell at NY Stock Exchange

UMH Properties President and CEO Sam Landy, also a director on the Standardbred Breeders and Owners Association of New Jersey’s board, ran the New York Stock Exchange’s opening bell on Aug. 25 to celebrate a new Fannie Mae loan product for manufactured housing communities. Representatives from UMH Properties, Wells Fargo and Fannie Mae participated in the ceremony alongside Landy in commemoration of the first-of-its-kind loan. more

Lexington catalog now online

The catalog for the annual Lexington Selected Yearling Sale is now available on the sales company’s website, lexingtonselected.com, and on the Equineline Sales catalog app. more

Buckeye Classic sale catalogs available

Sale catalogs are now available for the 6th annual Buckeye Classic Yearling Sale in Springfield, OH. Conducted by the Hoosier Classic Sale Company of Indiana, the auction will be held Tuesday Oct. 1 at the Champions Expo Center located at the Clark County Fairgrounds. Start time is 10 a.m. more

Gural comments on proposed Horse Racing Integrity & Safety Act

On Monday, Aug. 31, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky announced his intention to introduce and support the Horse Racing Integrity & Safety Act to the U.S. Senate. more

Betsy Brown wins 500th race at Shenandoah

Driver Betsy Brown won her 500th career race Wednesday at the Shenandoah County Fairgrounds as the Virginia Harness Horse Association’s three-day Matinee Meet kicked off. more

Schedule changes for Delaware (OH) Grand Circuit week

The Delaware (Ohio) Grand Circuit week will have a couple of changes to its original race schedule. The Buckeye Stallion Series leg for the 2-year-old trotting fillies will be contested on Tuesday, Sept. 22. The event was originally scheduled for Wednesday. more

An old friend remembers Jack Watson

Jack Watson, 65, a longtime caretaker in the Continental Farm Stable, passed away unexpectedly on Aug. 18 at Oneida Healthcare Center in New York after a brief illness. more
### Standardbred Poll

Hambeltonian Society/Breeders Crown Poll compiled by Harness Racing Communications for the week of August 25, 2020

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### Leading Breeders

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### Leading Money-Winning Sires

USTA statistics through September 1, 2020

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### 3YO Pacers

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### 3YO Trotters

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