

# DOWN THE STRETCH

CANADA'S MOST INFORMATIVE AND ENTERTAINING HORSE RACING NEWSPAPER

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2) *The legend that is Garnet Barnsdale Pages 13 & 15*

3) **Michelle Gibson - Groom of the Year Page 6**

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# Legal peril for Down The Stretch



On January 19, **Down The Stretch** received correspondence from Andrew J. Mollica, a lawyer working out of Garden City, New York. The letter begins:

*This office represents Dave Johnson.*

*Mr. Johnson is a well-known personality in the thoroughbred (and harness) racing industries and has been the voice (announcer) of thoroughbred racing at numerous venues for decades, including but not limited to Santa Anita Park in Arcadia, California, the three New York Racing Association racetracks, Meadowlands Racetrack in New Jersey among many others.*

The letter goes on to say:

*It has come to our attention that you produce a weekly podcast using the “Down The Stretch” as its title which is widely disseminated in the United States platforms including but not limited to Google, Stitcher and Spotify among others.*

*“And Down The Stretch They Come” is a trademarked phrase owned by Mr. Johnson pursuant to a trademark issues by the United States Patent and Trademark Office.*

*Any use of Mr. Johnson’s trademark phrase without the expressed written consent or permission is strictly prohibited by law. The impermissible use (and solicitation for sale) of Mr. Johnson’s trademark devalues and cheapens the trademark, creates obvious confusion in the marketplace and therefore damages Mr. Johnson’s identity and the mark, while unjustly benefitting the above named entities.*

*Accordingly, Mr. Johnson seeks the appropriate compensation and corrections for said infringement upon his trademark rights.*

So, Dave Johnson is claiming that **Down The Stretch** is identical (or much too similar) to *And Down The Stretch They Come* and our podcast is being asked to cough up and/or change our name.

Mr. Mollica invited me to call him and here are excerpts from a conversation with the lawyer:

**Andrew Mollica:** The argument that we make – and we want to work with you – is that there’s confusion. It’s a racing podcast that takes the majority of our phrase. I’ve challenged a number of these matters in the United States against Amazon, Google, and major race tracks. I mean, it’s all public records, and we have to protect our mark. Now, no one wants to shut your podcast, and no one wants to hold anybody up. We would like to license you the phrase for not a lot of money. And all the money goes to charity.

**Down The Stretch:**

Well, I guess at this point, I should ask, What are you asking for the fee? Because we have nothing.

**Andrew Mollica:** I don’t know what nothing means. I mean, I’ve listened to your podcast. No one’s looking to hold anybody up. We’d be willing to take you on a year to year basis for \$2,000 year or three years for \$5,000. It’s not a lot of money. But, we’d like to do that to protect our

mark and donate the money to charity.

**Down The Stretch:** \$2,000 is completely out of the question. We simply don’t have that.

**Andrew Mollica:** Again, we want to work with you. Make us an offer. I’ll bring it to my client. I’m not in a position to turn anything down, but that’s what he normally get.

**Down The Stretch:** First of all, to the best of my knowledge, I’ve determined that the U.S. trademark doesn’t apply in Canada.

**Andrew Mollica:** It does not. Absolutely. I agree with you, but you distribute the podcast throughout the United States on Google and Stitcher and some others and, in turn, we would send cease and desist letters to them because that’s what we do to protect our mark. Now, I don’t want to litigate this, but I agree with you. You can distribute it in Canada all you want.

**Down The Stretch:** I would argue that “And Down The Stretch They Come” is significantly different from Down The Stretch.

**Andrew Mollica:** I understand. And that would be the argument. And maybe Google and Amazon and Stitcher will agree. I don’t know, but I will send those letters because that’s what my client wants me to do. We want to protect our mark. We’ve worked this out with 30 people before and we hope to work it out with you.

**Down The Stretch:** Are you aware that I have owned and operated a newspaper called **Down the Stretch** since 2008?

**Andrew Mollica:** I’m not, but I’m sure it’s a Canadian newspaper that’s not disseminated in the United States.

**Down The Stretch:** We have a website that people do, in fact, find in the United States. And quite frankly, we got way bigger numbers for the paper.

**Andrew Mollica:** Well, then I’ll be happy to license it too (laughs).

**Down The Stretch:** Well, how come in 13 years, this never came to your attention?

**Andrew Mollica:** I just became aware. As soon as my client becomes aware of these things, he puts me to work. We have protected our mark for the last seven years against movie companies. The Weinstein Group, Amazon, Google t-shirt companies. We protect our mark when it comes to our knowledge because that’s the only way he can protect his mark

**Down The Stretch:** But your trademark is *And Down The Stretch They Come* and our podcast is **Down The Stretch**.

**Andrew Mollica:** That I understand, and I’m happy to litigate that point. And it’s a very good legal argument. I’m happy to discuss it with you. It’s very good.

**Down The Stretch:** In 2008, I registered the name **Down The Stretch** with the Canadian government. I’ve got what’s called an article of incorporation. I have the right in Canada to call my paper **Down The Stretch**.

**Andrew Mollica:** No one is challenging that. You’re 100% right.

**Down The Stretch:** You don’t have a trademark on the phrase **Down The Stretch**.

**Andrew Mollica:** We have a trademark on something that we think confuses the market. That would be the point. We’d have to litigate. We don’t have to agree. I just offered this conversation as the fact that my client has authorized me to send letters to Stitcher and Amazon and Google and those platforms and they may agree with you. They may not, but that’s my job. I’m not looking to argue with you. I mean, you’re a good man, and you put out a good product. We’re happy to work with you. We’d like to work with you.

**Down The Stretch:** I have no lawyer. I represent

myself in all actions.

**Andrew Mollica:** Okay, that that is your choice. If you want to make an offer for all your United States rights, all the money goes to charity. This is no shake down. And nobody’s asking for a lot of money, but he has to protect his mark. And this is what we do.

**Down The Stretch:** So the amount doesn’t matter? Is that what you’re saying?

**Andrew Mollica:** No, I didn’t say that. It has to be something. I don’t make the choice. But I know what we normally get, but if you make me an offer, I will bring it to him.

**Down The Stretch:** Here’s the question and I’m sorry to phrase it this way, but from everything I understand, Dave Johnson is a really fine human being.

**Andrew Mollica:** He is.

**Down The Stretch:** And he’s not a prick.

**Andrew Mollica:** No, he’s not.

**Down The Stretch:** But if I don’t agree with your proposals, which I can’t, then you’re going to do some harm and....

**Andrew Mollica:** We’re not going to create any harm. There’s no threat. I’m going to do what my client tells me, and what we normally do is send the letter to the platforms, and they might or might not do anything about it, and then he’ll let me know if he wants to litigate.

**Down The Stretch:** Which brings me to this: If you persuade the platforms not to run the podcast **Down The Stretch** by Peter Gross, we will be forced to change the name of the podcast, and if we do, I can assure you that every single podcast will begin with the phrase, ‘Welcome to My Horse Racing Podcast. It used to be called **Down The Stretch**, but Dave Johnson and his lawyer made me change the name.’

**Andrew Mollica:** I appreciate that Mr. Gross. I’m open to anything you may or may not want to. I’m open to it.

**Down The Stretch:** Well, then here’s my offer. I’m prepared to send you a cheque or e-transfer for \$1, but in American funds, which is significantly more than Canadian and, with respect to that, Dave Johnson will indicate no further legal action and we’ll continue to call the podcast **Down The Stretch**. In return for that kindness and consideration, **Down The Stretch** would invite Dave Johnson to be a guest on the podcast wherein his superb career in horse racing would be discussed along with indentifying his catchphrase and his wonderful contributions to charity, and the fact that we both have a show of the same name. That would be a positive thing. We’ll have a wonderful, uplifting conversation and will identify the fact that he’s got a podcast and I’ve got a podcast. They’re both called **Down The Stretch** and both elevate and celebrate horse racing.

**Andrew Mollica:** Actually, he doesn’t have a podcast. He has a radio show called **Down The Stretch**.

**Down The Stretch:** I’m sorry. I have a podcast. He’s got a radio show. But why don’t you go with that and get back to me and let’s not have a big fight. Let’s have some fun with this.

**Andrew Mollica:** There’s absolutely no fight. I’ll bring it to him. That’s my job.

(Following that conversation, I attempted to sweeten the pot. I offered to Mr. Mollica that in every instance we promoted **Down The Stretch** through social media, we would add that we are not in any way associated with the legendary race announcer, Dave Johnson, and I further offered that we could publish a full page ad in subsequent issues of the **Down The Stretch** newspaper on behalf of Mr. Johnson’s preferred charity, which I understand is the Permanently Disabled Jockeys Fund.)

# THE EDITOR DRIVES HOME HIS POINT



The month of February is not famous for great accomplishments in the world of horse racing, but in this issue of **Down The Stretch**, we are able to deal out props to some remarkable achievements.

Who had a good February? How about Garnet Barnsdale? Barnsdale is a thoroughly committed horseplayer, with a special expertise in harness racing. He started the month off by winning an O'Brien Award in Writing for his emotional farewell to the legendary Bill Galvin, who passed away last September. This award is wholly appropriate. Galvin was the definitive promoter of harness racing and a skilled journalist. Those are two attributes easily applied to Barnsdale and we celebrate his victory by re-publishing his winning

work on page 15 (it appeared first on the Harness Racing Update site). But Garnet had barely stopped thanking the dozens of people congratulating him on Facebook when he pulled off a near impossible feat; in his selections for the February 22nd card at Western Fair, Garnet swept the card, picked all 10 winners. Read about that on page 13.

The O'Briens (page 5) were handed out virtually and you will see the name of Dr. Ian Moore repeatedly in our summary. In fact, Dr. Moore gets a whole page for himself as the Standardbred Owner of the Month (page 17). Our Thoroughbred Owner of the Month, David Clancy, has several reasons to be excited about this year's Queen's Plate. Find out why on page 16.

It's been a very good month for 51 year-old Michelle Gibson (page 6). Thanks to a persuasive letter from trainer Robert Tiller, Gibson has been named the winner of the 2020 Sovereign Award as Outstanding Groom.

Have you ever heard of Jim and Susan Hill? You should have. In the last 15 years, horses owned by the Hills have won 306 times and earned over \$19 million. On February 27, Fountain of Youth day at Gulfstream, the Hills sent out five year-old Phantom Currency in the \$200,000 Mac Diarmida Stakes. He was almost 7-1, but ran like a good thing, carrying Paco Lopez to a stirring win and adding \$110,000 to the Hills' account. You can read about this on page 4.

You probably have heard about Dave Johnson. Johnson is one of the great race callers, famous for the phrase **And Down The Stretch They Come!** Apparently, when he learned there was a podcast called **Down The Stretch**, he alerted his lawyer. On page 2, we have a transcript of a conversation with attorney Andrew J. Mollica over the right to use the words **Down The Stretch**.

For years, Woodbine's CEO Jim Lawson has been pushing for single sports betting and for single sports betting to be on the menu at Woodbine. On page 18, read how this is close to happening. On page 14, we have a piece about award winning writer Jennifer Morrison and her forthcoming book on Mighty Heart and all the players behind the one-eyed wonder.

This year, the Kentucky Derby will be conducted on the first Saturday in May and, in our recap of the Preps (pages 10-11), you can decide which improving thoroughbred has the best chance. And on page 11, you will read how a colt owned by Cheifswood Stable pulled off an incredible upset in New York.

Jonathan Stettin has a website called Past The Wire and we have 'sampled' a terrific article he wrote on jockeys who fix races (page 20).

When we started this paper 13 years ago, we thought it would be a good idea to have a cartoon in each issue. Coming up with something bright and funny each time has proven to be very hard. Check out page 9 and decide for yourself if we did okay this month. We also felt at the very beginning that the second to last page should be for Oddities & Entities, the flotsam and jetsam of wild, weird, and wonderful things that occur in this sport. Unlike the cartoon, this page is easy; there seems to be no shortage of unique, head scratching events in horse racing. Oddities & Entities can be found on page 26.

And as the **Down The Stretch Podcast** continues in its second year, a summary of recent episodes can be found on page 24.

Seabiscuit's hoof. The Saudi Cup. Jimmy Freight's offspring. Jockeys punching jockeys. Punxsutawney Phil winning on Groundhog Day.

C' mon man. Where else can you get this stuff?

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# Special Sovereign Awards

The Jockey Club of Canada is pleased to announce that Sam-Son Farm will be presented with the Special Sovereign Award during the 46th Annual Sovereign Awards Virtual Ceremony. Selected by the Jockey Club of Canada's Stewards, the Special Sovereign Award honours those who have accomplished outstanding achievements and made a significant contribution to the thoroughbred industry in Canada.

Sam-Son Farm is a Canadian thoroughbred breeding and racing operation founded in 1972 by Ernie and Liza Samuel. In 1975, Ernie purchased two racing prospects, No Class and Loudrangle, at the Woodbine Sale. Together they became the foundation of Sam-Son Farm's extraordinary broodmare band. No Class is the dam of four champions including Classy 'n Smart, whose daughter, the brilliant Dance Smartly, won the 1991 Canadian Triple Crown. Celebrating almost 50 years in the thoroughbred breeding and racing business, Sam-Son has been the recipient of an impressive four Eclipse Awards, 13 Hall of Fame Awards, and 84 Sovereign Awards. Since its inception, Sam-Son Farm has enjoyed five Queen's Plate winners, eight Woodbine Oaks winners, and 60 Graded Stakes winners.

The Jockey Club of Canada is proud to present Michelle Gibson with the 2020 Outstanding Groom Award. Michelle has worked on the Woodbine backstretch for more than 20 years. She is currently employed by Robert Tiller and is the groom of Pink Lloyd, a multiple Graded Stakes winner, Sovereign Awards winner, and the 2017 Horse of the Year. Michelle is dedicated and hard-working, making sure the horses in her care are her number one priority.

The Jockey Club of Canada is also pleased to announce the finalists for the 2020 Sovereign Awards Media categories. Judging for the Media Award categories is no longer performed by the Professors of the Journalism Program at Humber Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning. This year's entries were evaluated by media professionals within the industry, selected from across North America. A 4-2-1 points system was used to determine the first, second, and third place finalists in each category.

Listed in alphabetical order, the Media finalists are:

## Digital Audio/visual and Broadcast Category:

- Santino Di Paola – Dear Horse Racing
- Horse Racing Alberta – Canadian Derby Year of the Mask
- Woodbine Entertainment Group – The Queen's Plate

## Photograph Category:

- Rusty Barton – The Race Goes on a Year Without Fans
- Michael Burns – Training Before Dawn
- Lisa M. Thompson - One Rider Two Horses
- Will Wong - Mambointheforest

## Writing Category:

- Muriel Lennox – Northern Dancer: A virile stable genius
- Chris Lomon – The Pep-Talking Groom, Willy, and a Queen's Plate Crown
- Bruce McDougall – Riding for Freedom

The Jockey Club of Canada will announce the winners of all the Sovereign Awards at the 46th Annual Awards Ceremony which will be held virtually in April, 2021.

# A big Canadian score at Gulfstream



Phantom Currency delivered real cash to the Hills

Adam Coglianese Photo

Jim and Susan Hill, who live in Foothills, Alberta have owned thoroughbreds for more than 15 years and their animals have very quietly won over 300 races and almost \$20 million. On Saturday, February 27, their Phantom Currency was entered in the GII \$200,000 Mac Diarmida Stakes at a mile and 3/8ths on the grass. With Paco Lopez aboard, Phantom Currency went straight to the front and was able to carve out comfortable splits of 1:14.62 for 6 furlongs and 1:38.40 for the mile. When the 2-1 favourite, Tide of the Sea (Tyler Gaffalione), came to challenge at the top of the stretch, Phantom Currency had plenty left, repelling that challenge and winning by three quarters of a length in 2:13.84. That was the fifth win in 14 career races for Phantom Currency, who is clearly improving as a five year-old. He has won 3 of his last 4 starts and there was nothing 'phantom' about the American currency he delivered to Jim and Susan Hill. The winning share of the purse was \$120,600. Brian Lynch is the trainer and Phantom Currency paid \$15.60 to win.

# 2020 O'Brien Awards

On the night of February 1, a very different O'Brien Awards was hosted – virtually - by Ken Middleton and Jason Portuondo. As far as **Down The Stretch** was concerned, the first thrill was the Written Work Category and we were all very happy for Garnet Barnsdale who won for his story on the passing of standardbred promoter Bill Galvin. This was Barnsdale's first O'Brien, so he now has a long way to go to catch up with Dr. Ian Moore. Moore was watching from his winter home in Florida and horses he owned or trained got called on a lot.

In the Two Year-Old Pacing Colt Division, Moore felt he couldn't lose. He is the owner and trainer of Lawless Shadow who was a finalist with John Darling's Bulldog Hanover. Both rookies are sons of Shadow Play, owned partly by Dr. Moore, and Moore didn't feel there was any huge distinction between the two finalists.

"I wasn't sure how it was going to go because Jake Darling's Bulldog Hanover finished off the season very strong and that's often fresh in peoples mind," said Moore. "Anyways it worked out okay and we're very pleased and very proud."

It was Lawless Shadow who won and you can see from the vote totals below that the margin of victory was very close.

A few awards later, the Three Year-Old Pacing Colts category was up and the Dr. Moore trained Tattoo Artist was an easy winner over Major Custard, the terror of the west; Major Custard won 15 of 16 races at Century Downs, Fraser Downs, and Century Mile.

"Typically, when there's a regional horse, it seems the O'Briens centre around the central part of Canada where the best racing is," said Moore. "We got the award, so that's a bonus."

Century Farroh, another Moore trainee, won 4 of 16 starts in 2020 and clearly the voters were impressed with his win in the \$500,000 Breeders Crown Final. This win in the Older Pacing Colts category got Dr. Moore up to three O'Briens on the night.

And in a very tight vote, Century Farroh was named the 2020 Horse of the Year. He was named first on 10 ballots, and Tattoo Artist was recognized with 9 first place votes. Just another situation where Moore was going to celebrate either way.

"We had a great year, financially, and a lot of success on the track and a lot of good memories along the way," said Moore. "All of this happened in five months when, typically, we would race six months. It was my best year for me as a trainer. I'm just happy to be nominated and recognized."

Vote totals. First place votes were worth two (2) points and second place votes were worth one (1) point.

## **Two-Year-Old Pacing Fillies**

**Scarlett Hanover – 69**

**Caviart Audrey – 27**

Bet On Becky – 7

Best Head West – 2

Twin B Sunkissed – 2

Voelz Delight – 2

Custard Smoothie – 1

Notorious Pink – 1

## **Two-Year-Old Pacing Colts**

**Lawless Shadow – 39**

**Bulldog Hanover – 35**

Woodmere Stealdeal – 29

Bettor Sun – 4

Abuckabett Hanover – 2

No Vote - 2

## **Three-Year-Old Pacing Fillies**

**Lauras Love – 62**

**Karma Seelster – 24**

Sex Appeal – 7

Probert – 6

Alicorn – 3

Lady Lou – 3

Perfect Storm – 3

Woodmere Skyroller – 3

## **Three-Year-Old Pacing Colts**

**Tattoo Artist – 65**

**Major Custard – 19**

Beaumont Hanover – 15

Warrawee Vital – 10

Captain Barbossa – 2

## **Older Pacing Mares**

**So Much More – 70**

**Lit De Rose – 20**

Kendall Seelster – 13

Warrawee Ubeaut - 8

## **Older Pacing Horses**

**Century Farroh – 65**

**Sintra – 40**

Points North – 3

Nickel Bag – 1

Time To Dance – 1

Wheels On Fire – 1

## **Future Star Award**

**Austin Sorrie – 46**

**Rachel Andrew – 40**

Francis Richard – 22

No Vote - 3

## **O'Brien Award of Horsemanship**

**Kelly Hoerd - 46**

**Gilles Barrieau – 42**

Shawn Steacy - 23

## **Driver of the Year**

**Bob McClure – 52**

**Doug McNair – 36**

Sylvain Filion – 11

No Vote - 3

Trevor Henry – 2

Yannick Gingras – 2

Louis-Philippe Roy – 2

Brandon Campbell – 1

Dave Kelly – 1

James MacDonald – 1

## **Two-Year-Old Trotting Fillies**

**Donna Soprano – 71**

**Imextraspécial – 31**

Dashing Muscle – 8

Mag N Lady - 1

## **Two-Year-Old Trotting Colts**

**On A Streak – 72**

**Macho Martini - 34**

Fashion Frenzie – 4

Kinnder Dangerzone - 1

## **Three-Year-Old Trotting Fillies**

**Sorella – 50**

**Warrawee Vicky – 35**

Magic Cape – 12

Profound Paragon – 6

Royalty Deal – 5

Trina – 2

Kinnder High Class - 1

## **Three-Year-Old Trotting Colts**

**Pemberton – 63**

**Ready For Moni - 37**

Hayek – 6

HP Royal Theo - 4

Play Trix On Me - 1

## **Older Trotting Mares**

**Hey Livvy – 63**

**P L Jill – 46**

Delilah Seelster – 1

Grandma Heidi – 1

## **Older Trotting Horses**

**Perfetto – 49**

**On The Ropes – 28**

Oney Hall – 14

Mister Magic – 11

Mass Fortune K – 7

B Yoyo – 1

Mile Hill Willie – 1

## **Armstrong Breeder of the Year**

**Seelster Farms - 48**

**Warrawee Farm – 43**

Surdale Farms Ltd. and Allan Neurauter - 20

**Trainer of the Year**

**Richard Moreau – 37**

**Ben Baillargeon – 29**

Luc Blais – 26

Dr. Ian Moore – 9

Carmen Auciello - 4

Marc Campbell – 2

Kelly Hoerd - 2

Robert Fellows – 1

Julie Walker – 1

**Horse Of The Year (Only one (1) vote per person; 37 voters)**

**Century Farroh – 10**

Tattoo Artist – 9

So Much More – 4

On A Streak – 3

Pemberton – 3

Donna Soprano – 2

Sorella – 2

Woodmere Stealdeal – 2

Fashion Frenzie - 1

Ready For Moni - 1

# Michelle Gibson – 2020 Groom of the Year



Sovereign Award winning groom with Pink Lloyd

If you work in thoroughbred horse racing, the call from the Jockey Club of Canada's Candice Dixon is probably the one you really want to get. On February 8, 51 year-old Michelle Gibson picked up the phone. It was Dixon telling her she was the winner of the Sovereign Award as Canada's Outstanding Groom for 2020.

"She called me and I was just jumping for joy," says Gibson, whose conversational voice seems always to be on the animated side. "I couldn't believe it because, as grooms, we don't get recognition because, well, we're just grooms. We do this because we love what we do. But to be recognized this way is such an honour."

Since 2009, Gibson has been working for trainer Bob Tiller. It was Tiller who wrote the persuasive letter to the Jockey Club of Canada.

"Yes, he did," she says. "It's on his Instagram - his submission of why he felt that I was a good candidate for the Outstanding Groom award."

Gibson has been in and out of Woodbine for over 30 years.

"I worked previously at Woodbine in the late eighties," she says. "I used to work on the turf course for the Ontario Jockey Club. I was the first female working on the turf. I did that for two years, and then I went off and tried to have a real life. And then I came back to the racetrack in 2001."

Since 2009, she's been in Tiller's barn and, for the past few years, she's had the pleasure of being the one person who spends the most time with the extraordinary sprinter, Pink Lloyd. Even when Pink Lloyd was in the care of another groom, Gibson was getting close to him.

"I was always attached to 'Pink', she says. "I've dealt with so many horses with Mr. Tiller over the years, but Pink has always had a special place in my heart. When the other groom chose to go work with his family, I took over Pink, who was six years old at the time."

Just to bring you up to date, Pink Lloyd, now a nine year-old, won 5 of his 8 races as a six year-

old in 2018. For the second year in a row, he won the Sovereign as Champion Male Sprinter. The next year – on a technicality – he was a perfect 6 for 6. He finished fourth in the Bold Venture Stakes, but it was ruled he had an unfair start. He repeated as Champion Male Sprinter. As an eight year-old in 2020, Pink Lloyd went 4 for 5 and it's safe to say, he will win a fourth Sovereign in the sprint category. And off the track, according to Gibson, he's got a very specific personality.

"Oh, he is a character," she says. "He has his spot in his stall and there's nothing you can ever do to get Pink to move. It's his way all the time. It doesn't matter what we do - if it's a bath, if it's walking out to the track, if it's a race, it's always on Pink's terms. He will give you everything all the time or he'll give you nothing. He gets excited over the simplest things, and the times when you think that he's going to be over-reactive is when he's the quietest and the coolest and the most relaxed. When he is supposed to be good, he's good, and when you think that it's not important, then he's silly."

There's a common theme among grooms, especially the female ones. The horses really matter to them.

"They're my kids," says Gibson frankly. "I have one son that I gave birth to, but I have seven more that are just as important to me. Pink is definitely one of them."

You'd be inclined to think that the tough demanding life of a groom is better suited for a younger person, not one in her sixth decade.

"I'm proud of it," she says of her age. "I mean it. It's hard work and it's tiring and it's exhausting. But I wouldn't change anything. We all sometimes complain about our environment or the weather or the early hours; I mean, I get up at quarter after two in the morning so I can get there for 3:30. But your body adjusts to it and you just deal with it. I never wake up in the morning and go, 'Gosh, I don't want to go to work.'"

Aside from the fact that Gibson's job involves working with animals that she loves, there's the extra benefit of having Bob Tiller as a boss.

"He's a character, that's for sure," she says laughing. "He's very kind and generous to all of us. I've only been there since 2009, but there's five or six people that have been with Mr. Tiller for longer than 35 years, so it says something about working with him and in his barn because they've been there forever with him. Mr. Tiller has always taken great care of us personally or professionally or whatever. He sees the hard work that we all put in as a team, and he appreciates everything that we do. Sometimes you win, and sometimes you don't, but Mr. Tiller's always been great for us, you know, like he never blames or holds us responsible. We joke and we laugh all the time. He's like a second father to most of us there."

Being the groom for Pink Lloyd means pretty well expecting him to win each time he goes out, and during Gibson's three seasons as his groom, 'Pink' is 15 for 20. Apparently winning never gets dull.

"I'm a mess each race," she giggles. "I'm a mess every time Pink races. I'm a basket case. My stomach's just churning, flipping and I can't even watch. Everybody makes fun of me. I have my eyes closed and my fingers over my ears so I can't hear, and I just hum to myself, especially when they're loading. I am still nervous every single race."

She'll get to be nervous again when they call her name during the Sovereign Awards in April. They're a special bunch, these grooms, and people like Michelle Gibson are among the best.

## It behooves us to know...



It was 83 years ago that the legendary Seabiscuit upset Triple Crown winner War Admiral in a match race. There has always existed the question what made that horse so special?

We may find out. There's a thing called the Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation. A woman from that organization named Jacqueline Cooper wanted to genetically analyze a horse named Bronze Sea, a fifth generation descendent of Seabiscuit. But in order to determine how much 'Seabiscuit' was in the genes of Bronze Sea, Cooper needed DNA from the great horse himself.

That seemed an impossible task -- Seabiscuit died in 1947 -- and even if it made sense to dig him up, his burial site at the Ridgewood Ranch in California is unidentified.

However, in her pursuit of information, Cooper talked with Michael Howard, the great-grandson of

Seabiscuit's owner, Charles Howard, and in that conversation, Cooper learned that Seabiscuit's hooves had been removed before he was buried. Apparently, it used to be normal practise to save the hooves of a racehorse as a keepsake.

In a lab, scientists drilled into the hooves to extract a powder from the coffin bone. Seabiscuit's DNA was in there and it was determined that Seabiscuit had gene variants that are often found in horses that are good distance runners. There was also evidence of genetic material associated with horses that are very good sprinters.

That's a rare combination -- a horse that has great stamina, but can also run fast early in a race -- precisely the qualities that made Seabiscuit such a hero in his day. The study continues as scientists try and determine the differences in racehorses from 80 years ago and racehorses today.

# 19-1 shot takes down the Saudi Cup



He's got a terrible name, but the four year-old Mishriff looked fantastic, overhauling the 4-5 favourite, Charlatan, in the final 50 yards to win the second running of the \$20 Million Saudi Cup at the Riyadh Racecourse on February 20.

Ridden by twenty one year-old jockey, David Egan, Mishriff did not attract a lot of money from the bettors as all four of his wins had come on the grass.

Charlatan was bet heavily as he came into the race unbeaten in four tries and each one by multiple lengths. His most recent victory had been in the GI \$300,000 Malibu Stakes at Santa Anita where he crushed the field by 4½ lengths at the end of 7 furlongs. One of Charlatan's owners is Canadian John Fielding. Charlatan was ridden by Mike Smith.

Knicks Go also brought a four-race win streak into the Saudi Cup. Under Joel Rosario, Knicks Go was prominent until mid-stretch when he wilted and faded to fourth.

And for the second year in a row, the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia punished the winning jockeys. Egan was a little too aggressive with his whip in the stretch. He whacked Mishriff eleven times, one more than the rules allow. As well, at least one of his strokes was above the part of the horse's anatomy - "for whip above permitted level" - is the wording. Egan had to forfeit 10% or \$100,000 of his \$Million earnings.

Mike Smith, second on Charlatan, was also reprimanded,

earning a two day suspension. Coming out of the gate, his horse appeared to cut in front of Sleep Eyes Todd who finished fifth. Neither the jockey or trainer of Sleepy Eyes Todd lodged an objection. In the 2020 Cup, Smith was dinged \$200,000 for excessive whipping on the runner-up horse, Midnight Bisou. That fine of \$210,000 is considered the biggest penalty against a jockey in the history of horse racing.

## No Lasix for Woodbine's "Win and You're In" races

By Jamie Dykstra

Woodbine Entertainment has agreed to prohibit the use of race day Lasix for participants in its three scheduled Breeders' Cup "Win And You're In Races" in 2021. This was pretty well determined on February 10 when the Breeders' Cup announced that all of the "Win and You're In" (WAYI) Challenge Series races will be run without Lasix.

The \$1 million Ricoh Woodbine Mile on September 18, and the \$400,000 Natalma Stakes (for two year-old fillies) and \$400,000 Summer Stakes (for two year-olds), both on September 19, comprise Woodbine's three Breeders' Cup WAYI races on the 2021 calendar. The Natalma and the

Summer each received significant purse increases from \$250,000 the previous year.

Currently, in Ontario, the use of Lasix is allowed, information that is denoted in racing programs and shared with the public.

"We are proud to participate in the Breeders' Cup WAYI Challenge Series and respect the request of the Breeders' Cup to make these non-Lasix events," said Jim Lawson, CEO, Woodbine Entertainment. "We worked hard with our regulators at both the federal and provincial level to accommodate this requirement for this year's world-class Challenge Series events at

Woodbine. Commitment to the health and safety of our equine athletes and horsepeople remains a top priority for Woodbine Entertainment. We are proud of the highly respected reputation we have earned in the industry in regard to animal welfare, and our willingness to discuss important matters that affect our sport and its participants. We look forward to continuing discussions with our regulators and horsepeople regarding the use of Lasix in horse racing in Ontario."

Woodbine's 2021 Thoroughbred season is scheduled to open on Saturday, April 17.



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# 2021 EVENTS

## 2-Year-Old Colt Pace

### Gold

Sat, Jul 3 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Jul 16 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Aug 21 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Sep 4 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Oct 3, ..... Flamboro Downs

### Grassroots Series

Fri, Jul 9 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Jul 19 ..... Grand River Raceway  
 Mon, Aug 16 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Sep 5 ..... Clinton Raceway  
 Fri, Sep 17 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Thurs, Sep 30 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

## 2-Year-Old Colt Trot

### Gold

Thur, Jul 8 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Thur, Jul 29 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Thur, Aug 19 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Sep 18 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Oct 3 ..... Flamboro Downs

### Grassroots Series

Thur, Jul 15 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Jul 31 ..... Hiawatha Horse Park  
 Sat, Aug 7 ..... Kawartha Downs  
 Mon, Sep 6 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Sep 13 ..... Grand River Raceway  
 Thurs, Sep 30 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

**Sat. October 9**  
**GRASSROOTS CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
**Woodbine Mohawk Park**

**Sat. October 16**  
**GOLD SUPER FINALS**  
**Woodbine Mohawk Park**

## 2-Year-Old Filly Pace

### Gold

Fri, Jul 2 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Tues, Jul 13 ..... Georgian Downs  
 Tues, Aug 17 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Sep 3 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Oct 2 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park

### Grassroots Series

Tues, Jul 6 ..... Georgian Downs  
 Fri, Jul 23 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Aug 13 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Sep 4 ..... Hanover Raceway  
 Mon, Sep 20 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Thurs, Sep 30 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

## 2-Year-Old Filly Trot

### Gold

Tues, Jul 6 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Wed, Jul 28 ..... Grand River Raceway  
 Fri, Aug 20 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Sep 19 ..... Flamboro Downs  
 Mon, Oct 4 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park

### Grassroots Series

Tues, Jul 13 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Tues, Aug 3 ..... Georgian Downs  
 Sat, Aug 14 ..... Hanover Raceway  
 Sat, Sep 11 ..... Flamboro Downs  
 Mon, Sep 20 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Thurs, Sep 30 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

## 3-Year-Old Colt Pace

### Gold

Sat, May 22 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Jul 4 ..... Georgian Downs  
 Sat, Aug 7 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Aug 28 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sat, Sep 25 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park

### Grassroots Series

Sun, May 23 ..... Flamboro Downs  
 Mon, Jun 28 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Aug 2 ..... Dresden Raceway  
 Tues, Aug 31 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Tues, Sep 14 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Oct 1 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

## 3-Year-Old Colt Trot

### Gold

Fri, May 28 ..... The Raceway at Western Fair  
 Sat, Jun 26 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Jul 11 ..... Rideau Carleton Raceway  
 Mon, Aug 23 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Sep 27 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park

### Grassroots Series

Sat, May 29 ..... Hiawatha Horse Park  
 Tues, Jun 29 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Jul 11 ..... Rideau Carleton Raceway  
 Tues, Aug 24 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Tues, Sep 21 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Oct 1 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

## 3-Year-Old Filly Pace

### Gold

Fri, Jun 4 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Jul 5 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Aug 2 ..... Grand River Raceway  
 Sun, Aug 29 ..... Rideau Carleton Raceway  
 Fri, Sep 24 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park

### Grassroots Series

Mon, May 31 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Jul 12 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Mon, Aug 2 ..... Grand River Raceway  
 Sun, Aug 29 ..... Rideau Carleton Raceway  
 Fri, Sep 17 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Oct 1 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

## 3-Year-Old Filly Trot

### Gold

Tues, Jun 8 ..... Georgian Downs  
 Thur, Jul 1 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Aug 6 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Wed, Aug 25 ..... Grand River Raceway  
 Tues, Sep 28 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park

### Grassroots Series

Thur, Jun 3 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Sun, Jul 4 ..... Clinton Raceway  
 Fri, Jul 16 ..... Grand River Raceway  
 Mon, Aug 30 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Tues, Sep 21 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park  
 Fri, Oct 1 ..... Woodbine Mohawk Park (RE)\*

\*Grassroots Semi-Finals.



The OSS Program is administered by Ontario Racing

Schedule accurate as at February 18, 2021. Please note that all dates are subject to change and it is recommended to confirm dates and post times with the track. For complete OSS information including schedules, stats, leader boards and more, please visit the OSS website. Complete track information may be found at [oss.ontarioracing.com](http://oss.ontarioracing.com)

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# Derby Preps



Greatest Honour in the Holy Bull

Adam Coglianese Photo

## \$200,000 Holy Bull Stakes, Gulfstream, Mile & 16<sup>th</sup>, January 30:

Greatest Honour, ridden by José Ortiz, was the second favourite at 5-2 and for the first half of the race was near the back, as much as 6 lengths from the lead. But as the early leader, Willy Boi (Junior Alvarado), was fading badly, Greatest Honour was passing horses. Into the stretch, he engaged the even-money choice, Prime Factor, ridden by the other Ortiz, Irad. Prime Factor could not stay with Greatest Honour who was strong to the wire, winning by almost 6 lengths in 1:43.19. A late-moving Tarantino (Edgard Zayas) wrote the exactor part of the script by coming second. Greatest Honour is now 2 for 5 in his career. He is owned by Courtland Farms and trained by Shug McGaughey. He paid \$7.60 to win.

## \$100,000 Robert B Lewis Stakes, Santa Anita, Mile & 1/16th, January 30:



Benoit Photo

A compact field of six competed with Medina Spirit (Abel Cedillo), the even-money favourite. Medina Spirit was funky from the start, going to the lead and carrying a small advantage into the stretch. Down the lane, Roman Centurian (Juan Hernandez) and Hot Rod Charlie (Joel Rosario) were both making up ground but, at the wire, it was Medina Spirit by a neck and Roman Centurian second by a nose. That's 2 wins in 3 tries for Medina Spirit who is trained by Bob Baffert for Zedan Racing Stables. The win ticket was worth just \$4.

## \$250,000 Sam F. Davis Stakes, Tampa Bay Downs, Mile & 1/16th, February 6:

Candy Man Rocket, at 3-1, was the second betting choice and he was ready for this one. With Junior Alvarado aboard, this son of Candy Ride was in good shape early, second at the half and, when asked, he surged to the front and was able to repel Nova Rags (Samy Camacho) by a length at the wire in 1:44.30. Both the winner and runner-up are trained by Bill Mott. Candy Man Rocket is owned by Frank Fletcher Racing and he paid \$8.80.



Candy Man Rocket was sweet!

SV Photography

## \$250,000 Withers Stakes, Aqueduct, Mile & 1/8th, February 6:



Adam Coglianese Photo

If you took a risk on Risk Taking, it was a risk worth taking. With Eric Cancel calling the shots, Risk Taking rallied from sixth at the half, came barreling through

the stretch, winning convincingly by almost 4 lengths in 1:51.91. Risk Taking is owned by Klaravich Stables and trained by Eclipse winning trainer Chad Brown. The win ticket was \$5.80.

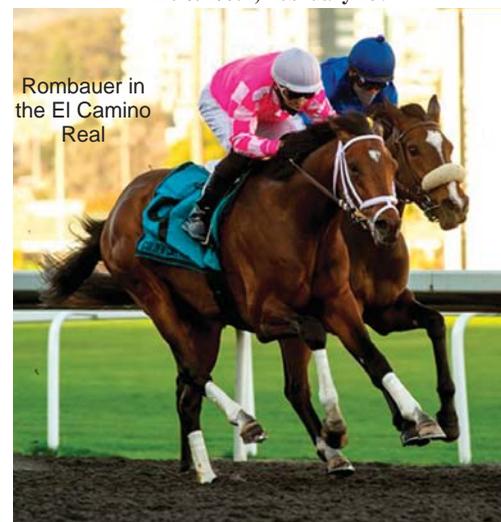
## \$400,000 Risen Star Stakes, The Fair Grounds, Mile & 1/8th, February 13:



Mandaloun in the Risen Star

Mandaloun, ridden by Florent Geroux, went off as the 2-1 choice in a field of eleven and Geroux did some good work with the son of Into Mischief. The pair was third at the half, just about 2 lengths from the lead and, just before the field straightened out for home, Mandaloun made a four-wide winning move. Leading by half a length at the top of the stretch, Mandaloun increased that advantage to 1¼ lengths at the wire, covering the mile and an eighth in 1:50.39. Now a winner of 3 races in 4 tries, Mandaloun is trained by Brad Cox for Juddmonte Farms. The win ticket was \$6.20.

## \$100,000 El Camino Real Derby, Golden Gate Fields, Mile & 1/8th, February 13:



Rombauer in the El Camino Real

Horses running in the Kentucky Derby after prepping on synthetic surfaces do not have a great record. Rombauer and rider Kyle Frey were bet down to 6-5 and found themselves about 12 lengths behind halfway through this race. After about 6 furlongs, Rombauer began to pick up his gallop, passing horses easily, and he was third coming into the stretch. Rombauer's momentum carried him to victory by a neck over Javanica, the second favourite. Time for the distance was an unimpressive 1:51.64. Rombauer is owned by Diane and John Fradkin and trained by Michael McCarthy. The bettors got a \$4.40 payoff.

**\$100,000 John Battaglia Memorial Stakes, Turfway Park, Mile & 1/16th, February 26:**

Hush of a Storm overtook Gretzky the Great



The Canadian-bred Gretzky The Great was bet down to even money in the field of eleven. Under Geraldo Corrales, Gretzky the Great did not get an ideal journey. Corrales put him on the lead, but he was pestered on the outside for the first mile by longshot Notable Exception and, in the stretch, both Hush of a Storm and Like the King were very live. Hush of a Storm won it by 1½ lengths and Gretzky the Great was third, a neck behind Like the King. Hush of a Storm bore inward late in the stretch and inconvenienced Gretzky The Great, but after a stewards inquiry, no changes were made. Gretzky the Great's trainer, Mark Casse, was very happy with the way his horse ran.

"I was very happy with it," said Casse. "We knew going in, we were playing catch-up. He missed a significant amount of time in the Breeders' Cup. We got a little unfortunate – we had a horse hounding us all the way, then finish nowhere. I was proud of him. He kept fighting. He was definitely impeded and that probably cost him a placing. That was a positive race. It makes me feel comfortable for the Queen's Plate. When you can run a mile like he did with the pressed pace and fight on, I think he will be able to get a mile and a quarter."

Hush of a Storm is owned by Joseph Morey and Revocable Trust and trained by William Morey. He paid \$15.40.

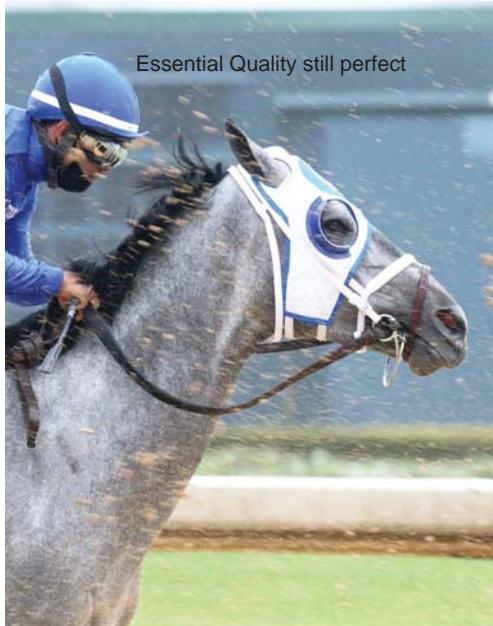
**\$300,000 Fountain of Youth Stakes, Gulfstream, Mile & 1/16th, February 27:**

Greatest Honour in the Fountain of Youth



Based on his impressive win in the Holy Bull four weeks earlier, Greatest Honour went off as the even money choice in the field of ten. Jockey José Ortiz was in no hurry from the start, letting Greatest Honour relax in ninth before starting to move up after half a mile. At the head of the stretch, the pair was fourth and gaining, and once Greatest Honor got the lead in mid-stretch, there was no suspense about the winner. Greatest Honour won by 1½ lengths in 1:44.02, a second slower than his time in the Holy Bull at the same distance. He is trained by Shug McGaughey for Courtland Farms and he paid \$4 to win.

**\$750,000 Southwest Stakes, Oaklawn Park, Mile & 1/16th, February 27:**



Only seven horses ran and it was Essential Quality and Luis Saez who were pounded down to 90 cents on the dollar. Second choice, Jackie's Warrior (Joel Rosario), led for most of the first mile, but was tiring late as Essential Quality was making a powerful three-wide move. In the stretch, Essential Quality was too much, pulling away to win by ¾ lengths in 1:45.48 over a sloppy surface. Essential Quality is perfect through his first four races, each one better than the one before. He is owned by Godolphin and trained by Brad Cox. The win ticket was just \$3.80.

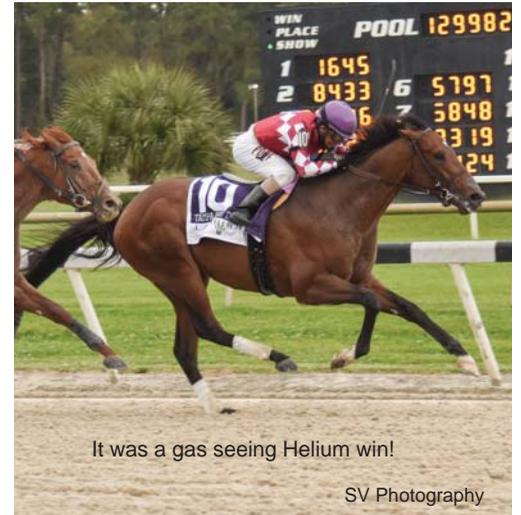
**\$300,000 Gotham Stakes, Aqueduct, One Mile, March 6:**



Oh Canada! Weyburn, owned and bred by Chiefswood Stables, was completely overlooked by the bettors, going off at 46-1 with Trevor McCarthy in the saddle. The favourite at 4-5 was Highly Motivated (Javier Castellano) but if you were highly motivated to bet the invader from north of the border, you were richly rewarded. Weyburn raced near the front from the start and when Crowded Trade (Eric Cancel) came to call in mid-stretch, Weyburn refused to quit; the two horses hit the wire almost simultaneously. In the photo, it was Weyburn by a nose. Weyburn is by Pioneer of the Nile out of the Chiefswood mare, Sunday Affair, and certainly appears to be a horse on the improve. His first race was a fifth-place finish at Belmont in October, followed by a bright second at 14-1 in a maiden special weight in November. On December 5, he scored nicely as the even-money favourite over 7 furlongs and his win in the Gotham makes him 2 for 4.

Trained by James Jerkins, Weyburn produced a \$96.50 win ticket.

**\$400,000 Tampa Bay Derby, Tampa Bay, Mile & 1/16th, March 6:**



Candy Man Rocket went off as the 8-5 favourite, but that rocket fizzled, coming eleventh in the 12-horse field. The first two horses came from far back. Helium and Jose Ferrer were tenth down the backstretch, but started accelerating with a five-wide move around the far turn. In the stretch, Helium found the front and was able to repel the late move of Hidden Stash (Rafael Bejarano) to win by three quarters of a length. Helium is trained by Mark Casse for D.J. Stable and was the second horse with a Canadian back story to win a Derby prep that Saturday. His two previous races were in Canada. Both were wins, including the \$100,000 Display Stakes under Emma-Jayne Wilson. \$32.80 is a wonderful price for a horse that has not lost in 3 starts.

**\$300,000 San Felipe Stakes, Santa Anita, Mile & 1/16th, March 6:**



No one got rich betting this Derby prep. The unbeaten Life is Good, ridden by veteran Mike Smith, was 1-2 on the board and he ran exactly like a 1-2 shot should. Smith put Life is Good on the lead, and carved out intimidating fractions of :45.83, 1:10.55, and 1:35.46 for the mile. Life is Good was ahead by 5 lengths coming into the stretch and he just kept increasing his advantage. It was 8 lengths at the wire and the time of 1:42.18 is the fastest mile and a sixteenth by any Kentucky Derby hopeful so far. The winning trainer is Bob Baffert; the owner is Winstar Stable, and the payoff was just \$3.



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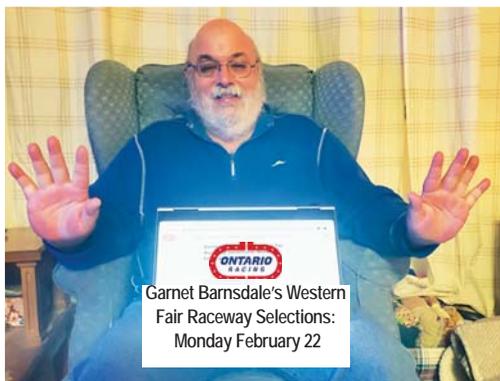
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# Garnet Barnsdale's amazing night



Garnet Barnsdale makes picks every night for several harness tracks. Early Monday, February 22, on the Ontario racing website, he submitted his selections for the 10 race card at the Raceway at Western Fair. Anyone betting his choices needs to get down on their knees and chant,

"We're not worthy. We're not worthy."

You have to wonder if this has ever been done before. Barnsdale's top pick in every race won. He tipped 10 winners in 10 races. He's the Bo Derek of standardbred handicapping.

For Race 1, Barnsdale pointed out that his first choice, Miss Chili Pepper "tried to blast from the widest post here last week, but she couldn't clear and paid the price." Driver Lorne House was more patient this time, bringing

Miss Chili Pepper off-the-pace for a one-length win in 2:03.1. As the second choice, she paid \$6.70.

Barnsdale tipped West River Cindy to win the second and, as the 6-5 favourite, she got up by a head for Tyler Borth in 2:01.4 and paid \$4.60. That horse was Barnsdale's best bet of the night.

The third race went to Ideal Space driven by Borth to produce a \$3.20 win ticket. That gave Barnsdale 3 wins from 3 picks and he certainly didn't stop there.

Veneno, who paid just \$2.10 won the fourth easily for Marc St. Louis after Barnsdale insisted "he should be hard to beat"; and Jessicas Legacy overcame post 8 in the fifth, crushing by 12 lengths for St. Louis. That one was worth \$5.20 and halfway through the card, Barnsdale was still perfect.

For the sixth race, Barnsdale pointed out that "Amazing Quest, with 93 lifetime wins, has 70 more victories than his opponents combined." Garrett Rooney took that fourteen year-old right to the top and won by a length. That \$8.60 win price seems generous.

Now 6 for 6, Barnsdale recommended Quizzer in the seventh, but when that one was scratched, his second pick, Sports Nation was elevated. "Sports Nation faced tougher in the summer" noted Barnsdale and, with Austin Sorrie steering, Sports Nation romped by 7 lengths in 1:57.1, paying \$5 to win.

For Race 8, Barnsdale told his followers that "This is a good spot for Homey Joe." Barnsdale was right.

Homey Joe roared from midpack and won by almost 2 lengths, giving Tyler Borth his hattrick. Just \$3.50 to win, but Garnet Barnsdale was wandering into legendary territory.

He picked Simon Said to win the ninth and Travis Henry encountered no resistance, as Simon Said won by 3/4 lengths in 1:59. That one returned \$3.30 and could Barnsdale complete a perfect night by picking the winner of the tenth?

In his selections, Barnsdale wrote, "Fern Hill Breeze jogged last time he drew inside on a B track and he should be good to go vs these." It should be noted that Barnsdale selected Fern Hill Breeze as his 'spot play,' a horse he felt would give the bettors good value.

Right again. Travis Henry took the seven year-old gelding right to the top in this mile and a sixteenth race and Fern Hill Breeze had plenty left for the stretch, winning by a length in 2:06. As the second choice, Fern Hill Breeze paid \$6.30.

That's as sensational as it gets. Barnsdale gave out 10 winners on a 10 race card. Like Halley's Comet and Donald Trump apologizing, it's something we probably won't see again in our lifetime. Yes, six of his picks were heavy favourites, but four of them weren't. Barnsdale clearly knows how to take what the racetrack gives. And you're probably wondering, did he win on any of them? Well, Barnsdale bet the Pick 5 over the last five races and hit it for \$570.

## Jimmy Freight's first kids



A son for Jimmy Freight: A new foal out of the mare Exhilarated and he loves the snow!

The highly anticipated first foal of the harness racing stallion, Jimmy Freight, arrived safely at Winbak Farms on Friday January 22. The dam of the little colt is Walk On Air, who won 5 of 22 races, earning \$46,385. Like Jimmy Freight, she is owned by Adriano Sorella.

"It is a special feeling knowing that you now get to experience a whole new part of the industry," said Sorella. "I went from being a racehorse owner to taking an active role in stallion ownership and breeding, and now I will be able to watch the offspring grow and hopefully one

day race."

The first crop of Jimmy Freight will be watched closely. Right now, Jimmy Freight stands at stud for \$5,000. That price tag will go up if his offspring emulate their dad's racing accomplishments.

Jimmy Freight, a son of the brilliant Sportswriter, raced 52 times from spring of 2017 into October, 2019. He won 21 times, hit the board 43 times and, incredibly, earned a cheque in all but one of his races. Sorella, a master promoter of the sport, has put up his own money for the Jimmy Freight Stakes, a \$100,000 race for which only the sons and daughters of Jimmy Freight will be eligible. Which means, this first foal already has a leg up on other standardbred babies.

Actually, the first Jimmy Freight foal son already has company. Two days later, another colt was born out of the mare, Exhilarated, who raced 222 times over a seven year career. Exhilarated earned \$632,880 from 38 wins, 28 placings, and 29 third place finishes. Sorella shares ownership of the mare with Carmen Auciello.

"We're really happy with how both of them look," says Winbak Farms manager, Pat Woods. "They're both a good size and have great legs on them and they seem very smart."

Thanks to Sorella's marketing skills, Jimmy Freight was an attractive sire in his first year of stallion duty and it's anticipated he'll have a steady stream of appointments for 2021.

"We're hoping that he's going to get 60, 70, maybe as many as 100," says Woods. "We don't really know. It'll all shake out as the season goes on."

There are, of course, variables that determine just how many mares a harness horse can accommodate.

"It can depend on the stallion's fertility," says Woods. "There's some horses that can breed over 200, and there's other ones that can only breed 50."

The year-long pandemic has obviously affected the breeding business.

"I think this year it's going to be a real tough year with everything that's going on with COVID and travel plans," says Wood. "There's some people that have backed off the industry a little bit because of the shutdowns and racing being stopped. There are people that are waiting to see what happens. I think it'll definitely have an impact."

Thoroughbred race horses, by definition, procreate through live cover. Standardbreds don't actually perform the act with the mare in question.

"It's all artificial insemination," says Woods. "We use an extender which keeps the semen alive for the time necessary to travel to wherever it needs to go, then into the mare, and it stays alive until the mare ovulates the egg."

It's serious business to those in the breeding industry, but for those of us with a certain degree of arrested development, it's interesting to learn the techniques of harness racing reproduction. Woods obliges.

"Someone will book their mare to the stallion," he tells us. "The vet will scan the mare and, when she's ready to be bred, they'll call in and order from the breeding farm. The breeding farm will send them a vial with cooled semen in it, from which they'll inseminate their mare. If the mare ovulates, then the magic happens."

Of course, we want to know, what makes the stallion perform on cue?

"We'll bring mares into the breeding shed that are cycling, that are in heat," continues Woods. "The stallions will get aroused off that mare. Then there's a phantom that the stallion will jump on and the stallion will ejaculate into a sort of hot water bottle at the end of it."

Please excuse the equine pornography. The point is, Jimmy Freight is now a proud dad, and every subsequent horse that can claim his lineage is automatically eligible for the \$100,000 Stakes race bearing his name.

# Morrison and Mighty Heart – the book



horses in the world over the years, but this was one of the biggest races in Canada and he almost set a track record. And I thought, if I'm ever going to do a book, this is the way to go."

Morrison told us she keeps a copy of Laura Hillebrand's brilliant 'Seabiscuit' close by and has read it several times.

"I haven't let it out of my sight during this whole process," she says. "It's guiding me in the art of writing a narrative, nonfiction type of story."

Morrison could not possibly have a better template than the Seabiscuit book. Hillebrand made it a wonderful read by weaving into her story the heartbreak and agonies of the people around the horse – the owner grieving over a lost child, the trainer with unconventional methods, and the jockey who hides the fact he's blind in one eye.

In a similar fashion, Morrison sees clearly the compelling story lines of Mighty Heart's humans. Take for instance, the owner, Larry Cordes.

"He's had a very interesting life," she says. "I was blown away when he told me that he started out in racing as a quarter horse trainer. I found a program from the late 70s that actually showed one of his horses racing back at old Picov Downs. And he has lost a lot of family members to cancer, including his wife. So, yes, he has a lot to say, and it's pretty exciting."

Mighty Heart's win with his stable mate Belichick finishing second in the Plate emphasized what we already knew – that Josie Carroll is a great trainer. Don't worry about Carroll being left out of the narrative.

"I have warned her that she's actually going to be a big part of this," says Morrison. "She's a fascinating

woman; in the Hall of Fame as a trainer, but here's someone whose mother passed away when Josie was very young and she was raised by a neighbour from whom she learned everything about being a very independent woman. And what a great career that Josie's had."

And that groom, Siobhan Brown, weeping from excitement when Mighty Heart won? Brown might be good for several chapters on her own.

"Her story is really something," says Morrison. "She's a girl that lost a lot of dreams as a young lady. She wanted to be an Olympic gymnast. She wanted to work for the RCMP. But then she was stricken by epilepsy. She was living with her mom in Cape Breton and one day just told her mom, 'I'm going to Woodbine to see if I can work with horses.'"

Other sub-plots in the book could include the exercise rider, Des McMahon, whose father, William, had a 19 year career as a jockey that produced 440 wins; and Daisuke Fukumoto, who found the winners circle in both his first Queen's Plate and his first Prince of Wales.

As for the Hillebrand inspiration, Morrison considers her task a little easier.

"Laura Hillebrand had to go through years of research. I'm lucky because everything just happened last year. But Seabiscuit was a hero in a very hard time for society during the Depression, and Mighty Heart was an instantaneous hero in the pandemic. He got a lot of press, not only in Canada, but elsewhere, too. He got fan letters from little girls. The media attention he got before the Breeders' Stakes when he was going for the Triple Crown was amazing, considering that nobody could come to the races. So, I think he was a really exciting symbol for horse racing and an inspiration for people overcoming a lot."

There's a nice little parallel happening here. Mighty Heart was overlooked by the bettors in the Queen's Plate and rewarded those who took a chance on him with a \$28.50 win ticket. Morrison is also taking the odds against route. So far, she doesn't have a publisher and may very well end up publishing this book herself. Morrison is well-connected in the industry and says many people want to offer images to her.

"I definitely want photos in it," she says. "I want it to be a nice read. It doesn't have to be 500 pages or anything, but I want it to be well done."

Every writer knows that procrastination is a huge tool in the creative arsenal. Morrison admits she suffers from that as well.

"Yeah, it's kind of sad because I started this the second and third week of September and got so much done. I have already spent a fortune in long distance calls. So, I said, 'Okay, right after Christmas, I'm going to really crack down.' Or... 'Right after New Year's, I'm going to get on it.' But with the pandemic and the winter season, my inspiration was a bit on the low side. But now that I've actually told people that I'm doing it, it's like, 'Okay, I guess I'd better do it.' I'd love to have it done and available for Queens Plate 2021. That would be my dream."

Long time horse racing journalist Jennifer Morrison has decided to tackle the Mighty Heart story with a book she hopes will be available by this year's Queen's Plate.

Morrison, proud owner of four Sovereign Awards for writing, has certainly chosen a topic that's rich in both human and equine drama. Mighty Heart, who lost an eye in a stable accident less than a month after being born, surprised most racing fans with his front-running victory at 13-1 in the 2020 Queen's Plate, running the mile and a quarter in 2:01.98, the fastest time ever on synthetic for the Plate and the second fastest Queen's Plate ever (Izvestia went 2:01.80 in 1990).

Mighty Heart proceeded to win the Prince of Wales Stakes, and though he didn't finish off the Triple Crown, Morrison already knew he was book worthy.

"I was immediately inspired right after the Queen's Plate," she says. "Just watching the horse's groom, Siobhan Brown, bursting into tears; a long shot horse with one eye winning. We've had good one-eyed



(At the 2020 O'Brien Awards, Garnet Barnsdale won for Outstanding Written Work with the following, first published in Harnessracingupdate)

## A salute to the late Bill Galvin by Garnet Barnsdale

“Bill Galvin died.” That wasn’t a message I was expecting to read when my phone buzzed last Saturday, and I saw that one of my colleagues in the harness writers fraternity was contacting me. It froze me. It can’t be, I thought. I just spoke to him at Grand River Raceway just a couple of weeks ago. That night, as always, Bill was cheerful and in good spirits and happy that his 3-year-old pacing filly Shes A Sassy Beach had finished a game third in an Ontario Sires Stakes Gold race.

It just can’t be, I kept thinking. Bill was healthy. But it was true, and it didn’t take long for social media to start buzzing with tributes to a Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Famer whose energy and passion for promoting harness racing belied his 89 years. Melissa Keith, the colleague that informed me of Bill’s passing, worked closely with him on several projects and remembered his tireless efforts to promote the sport he loved.

Anything that helped advance the sport and animals he loved was fair game for Bill, who said in an e-mail a couple of weeks back how happy he was to see Nathan Bain and Nick Barnsdale competing in a public handicapping contest at Leamington Raceway. He also praised the #MiamiMadness promotion that saw Manitoba Fair track announcer Trey Colbeck and friends get pari-mutuel support rolling for a record-breaking closing day 2020 handle. Bill was proud of his filly, Shes a Sassy Beach, but he found winners everywhere. And why not? He set the bar high, for the rest of us.

Galvin was very close to Woodbine Mohawk Park Announcer Ken Middleton, who bred and co-owned Shes A Sassy Beach with him. Middleton posted this tribute to his friend on Facebook:

“I lost one of my best friends today. Thanks to everyone for the calls, the texts, the emails and the messages. They are greatly appreciated. It’s been a tough day, especially

since I just saw him a few days ago and spoke on the phone with him yesterday. Anyone that had the pleasure of meeting Bill Galvin during their travels generally had the same thing to say about him. He was funny, charming, polite, hard-working, sincere, respectful, dedicated, intelligent, generous and he had an incredible passion for harness racing. Bill was one of my dad’s best friends, and over the course of the last decade or so Bill and I forged an incredible friendship, as well. I’ll be forever grateful for all of the great advice he shared with me, and I’m just as grateful for all the ways he never hesitated to help me. One sage piece of advice he offered me — and I’ll share it with you in case you want to take it to heart — was to never keep score when it comes to what you do for your friends. Help them whenever you can and be happy to do it. Enjoy the great satisfaction that is the by-product of helping someone in need. Bill made it his duty to help whoever he could, whenever he could. I lost a great friend and racing has lost a great friend in Bill Galvin, too. Until we meet again my friend. RIP, Bill.”

The Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame also posted a lengthy tribute to the native of Arnprior, ON on their Facebook page. There were several replies of condolences including this one from JoAnn Kennedy:

“Bill will be missed at the Chaplaincy BBQ’S held at the patio behind the kitchen on the Woodbine backstretch. Bill was always in attendance. He had such a strong love of horses and racing as well as for the well-being of the grooms and hot walkers. He was a staunch supporter of the Racetrack Chaplaincy for both thoroughbred and standardbred.”

Jean Posthuma had similar sentiments to express:

“I had the pleasure of working side by side with Bill Gavin as he helped and worked endless hours to raise funding with The Mohawk Racetrack Chaplaincy. Bill Gavin was a great supporter and helped Grooms in any way he could.”

Galvin was known as a big promoter of youth in the industry and one of his ideas, the Youth Literary Derby, was a huge hit getting young people involved in the sport through prose. Tennille Hobbins, mother of one of the winners of the writing contest, paid tribute to Galvin’s continuous involvement with youth:

“We are very sad to hear this news. Bill came into our lives a few years ago. Our daughter Avery was one of the winners from the Youth Literary Derby in 2018. Bill’s writing contest opened many doors to some really amazing experiences and connections in the horse world. We loved visiting various tracks and seeing a different side of the horse industry than the jumping/dressage world we are used to. Thanks to Bill, Avery also was featured in TROT magazine.”

Bill was very fond and proud of Avery and would check in every few months to see how she was doing (especially her riding, competitions and her writing). He left a giant mark on the horse industry and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

For me, the one shining memory that I will always have about Bill is that he is the nicest person I have ever met in the industry and perhaps in my entire life, period. Anyone who knows me well understands that hyperbole isn’t my thing. There is no exaggeration here. Bill was always smiling, always cheerful and always wanted to know how you were doing. The last time I spoke with him at Grand River the first words out of his mouth were praise for my son Nicholas’ media work. “He’s a real go-getter,” Galvin beamed. “A sure thing!” After I left the track it wasn’t long before I got a message from Bill. “Is your next piece going to be titled: “From the Tarmac”?” he asked, not expecting a response. That was Bill; always encouraging, always promoting and always positive. I and many others will miss him greatly but hold onto the fond memories of the nicest man anyone would ever meet.



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**D**avid Clancy, 62, took an early interest in horse racing because he saw a parallel between what the horses did and what he was doing as an athlete.

"I was the track and field guy in high school and university," he says. "I was a decent runner, good enough to be second in the Ontario University 1,500 finals. It's more of an individual thing – the concept that whoever crosses the line first is the winner. I grew up not too far from Woodbine, and I always liked the betting a little bit. I used to read books on how to make money at the races and watch the big races on TV - The Queen's Plate, the Kentucky Derby."

For many years, the racing bug lay dormant inside Clancy. He had financial success as a chartered accountant and decided to invest in a pub in Burlington. Good name for the place – Clancy's.

"At the time, I got approached by the old Magna Entertainment group who ran the off-track betting things out there," he says. "That kind of got my interest going more because you're trying to figure out ways to promote the business. At the same time, a client of mine introduced me to some horse people. And from there, I met trainer Steve Attard and I bought my first horse."

That was around 2007. Clancy's stable is called Track West Racing. The horse was called Keino West, a shoutout to the great Kenyan Olympic runner, Kip Keino. Keino West was a pretty good horse.

"He actually made it through all three races of the Canadian Triple Crown," says Clancy.

Keino West who won 2 of 13 races and earned \$174,624, was sixth in the 2009 Queen's Plate, fourth in the Prince of Wales, and fifth in the Breeders'.

Clancy's affection for the great international human runners helped him with the name of the second horse he purchased.

"I called him Sebcoe West," says Clancy. "After Sebastian Coe, who was also a famous runner."

Sebastian Coe won a couple of Olympic gold medals in the 1,500. In 1979, he was timed in 3:48.53 for the mile, a world record at the time. Sebcoe West raced 21 times with 3 wins and \$93,410 in the bank.

As his interest in owning racehorses grew, Clancy became more attracted to the breeding side of the sport.

"I wouldn't go so far as to say I'm a control freak, but I kind of like to have a bit more control than, say, racing gives you sometimes," he says. "Plus, as an



David Clancy and his wife Suzanne

accountant, I like the cost predictability better in the breeding game."

That leads us to 2021. Clancy is the breeder of three colts that are eligible for the Queen's Plate, Canada's most prestigious race. He owns Giant Waters and two others, Smiley Sobotka, and Stephen are horses he bred.

Giant Waters is out of Green Waters, a broodmare that trainer Dan Vella claimed on behalf of Clancy for \$25,000 in that filly's first career race, a fourth-place finish at Woodbine in a 6 furlong dash. Green Waters went winless in her 14 races but with a little help from a stallion named Giant Gizmo, it looks as if she has produced a pretty good racehorse.

Giant Waters, in fact, may have been the best two year-old in Canada that did not win a race. He began with a couple of sharp seconds in maiden company, then ran third in the \$250,000 Cup and Saucer Stakes at Woodbine, and followed that up with a third place result in the \$250,000 Coronation Futurity. Clancy draws attention to the colt's second start, which was on the inner turf course at 7½ furlongs.

"That had to be one of the most unbelievable races of all time," he claims. "He got totally wiped out in the first corner."

No question about that. With Emma-Jayne Wilson riding, Giant Waters was pushed way out into the middle of the track by a wayward Lyrical Gangster.

"So now he's about 20 lengths behind the first-place horse," continues Clancy.

Wilson and Giant Waters started passing rivals, but even track announcer Robert Geller thought the task was hopeless.

"And starting to run home, Giant Waters with an impossible task though due to that interference," intoned Geller.

Coming into the stretch, Giant Waters was still no better than sixth, but running strongly out in the middle of the turf.

"We're almost within a few lengths of the leaders now, at the top of the stretch," says Clancy. "And the eventual winner moves out and cuts us off at the top of the stretch. That horse should have come down for sure, in my opinion."

It was an amazing effort for a horse in just his second race. Giant Waters lost by less than a head after probably sacrificing more than 10 lengths from his bad luck. Geller's call at the end was notable.

"This could be the run of the whole meet," proclaimed Geller. "That race was unbelievable. That horse deserves a medal, coming from an impossible position."

Although Clancy is inclined to sell most of the yearlings he might breed, he felt an obligation to retain Giant Waters.

"I'm trying to make the mare," he says. "So, I did the Ontario Sire thing with Giant Waters. I'm a believer that 70% of it comes from the mare. If you have a great mare and maybe an average stallion, you can still produce a very nice foal. My plan was to race the first couple of foals myself."

Naturally, Clancy would reach his maximum thrill level if Giant Waters won the Plate, but the satisfaction quotient is there as well if a horse he bred wins.

Smiley Sobotka is owned by the Albaugh Family Stables and is trained by Dale Romans. He broke his maiden in his second race at a mile and a sixteenth on the Keeneland Turf. After a win in three tries as a two year-old, and a placing in a G II at Churchill Downs, he began his three year-old year with a ninth place finish in the Sam F. Davis Stakes at Tampa Bay. Clancy was attracted to the broodmare, Dancethewayouare.

"I bought her because I liked her from a breeding point of view," he says. "I paid about \$45,000 which I thought was a pretty good price for a young broodmare mare that was a half-sister to a grade one winner."

Stephen is a horse named after Stephen Harper and Clancy points out the similarity to other horses named after track stars.

"The former Prime Minister used to run cross country for Etobicoke's Richview Collegiate," he says.

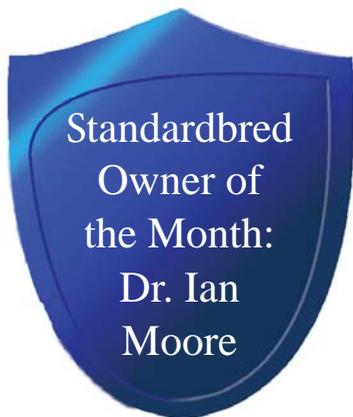
Stephen (the horse) is owned by Al and Bill Ulwelling and finished his three-race rookie year with an emphatic victory under Justin Stein in the Coronation Futurity. He is trained by Kevin Attard.

The 2021 Queen's Plate will be run on August 22. A lot can happen between now and then, but having three good horses, all of them bred by him, in the same race, would be an extraordinary experience for Clancy.

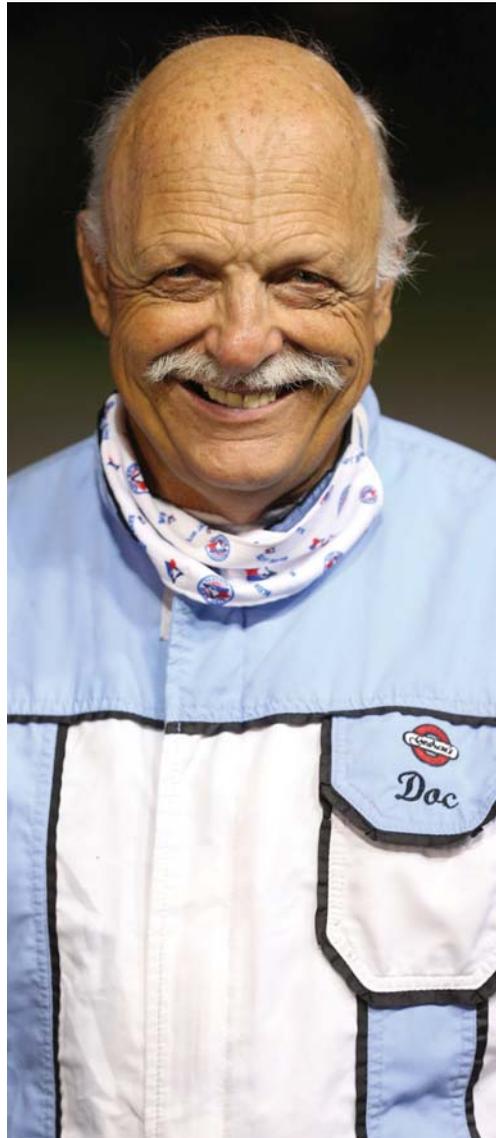
"It's the animal, for sure," he says when asked what he loves about the sport. "It's like I'm the armchair coach. I'm just trying to be part of the competition. I think it's really about the pursuit to try and achieve something significant."

And what's better than an owner of the month giving us a 'tip' to end the story?

"He's called Three Mile Limit," says Clancy. "Just keep an eye on him. Bruce Lunsford bought him. I sold him as a weanling because he was so outstanding. He will be a fantastic horse. He ran once and showed some potential at Woodbine as a two year-old. In his second race for whatever reason, he didn't run so great. I'll be shocked if he doesn't do good as a three year-old."



# Dr. Ian Moore – the whole package



2020 was the best year ever for Dr. Ian Moore, the veterinarian/trainer, and that fabulous year was rewarded on January 31 when horses he trained were honoured four times with O'Brien Awards. Lawless Shadow took down the honours as Outstanding Two Year-Old Pacer; Tattoo Artist was recognized as the top Three Year-Old Pacer; and Century Farroh won as best Older Pacer and Horse of the Year. Of those three horses, Moore owns a share of Lawless Shadow and, until they announced the winner in that category, it was nail-chomping time.

"Jack Darling had that Bulldog Hanover in the same category," says Moore. "He finished off the season very strong and that's often fresh in people's minds."

The voting was actually close. Lawless Shadow won with 39 first place votes and Bulldog Hanover got 34. Lawless Shadow was driven by Bob McClure in each of his nine races last year. He won four times, taking down the Nassagaweya Stakes and an OSS Gold in the process.

"It was gratifying to me as a trainer," notes Moore about the recognition for Lawless Shadow, "because early as a two year-old, I had lots of difficulties with him. He was making breaks for unknown reasons. And I just kept messing with equipment and shoes and, finally, it all seemed to work out for him. He did well in the Metro with post 9 in both the elimination and the final."

Lawless Shadow was second in his Metro Pace elimination and third to longshot Exploit in the final.

As it turned out, Dr. Moore might have been almost as satisfied if Bulldog Hanover had been recognized as the top Two Year-Old Pacer, as both finalists are sons of Shadow Play, Dr. Moore's outstanding stallion.

"That stallion gave to us pretty significantly in 2008, making a million and a half dollars," says Moore. "And he has continued to give to us for the last 12, 13 years as well as a breeding stallion. We had the horse syndicated after he was done racing, so we got money from that. We get breeding fees collected every year, the three of us – Serge Savard, NHL Hall of Famer, and Ron and Gail McLellan. We just got a cheque last week from Blue Chip Farms for the second distribution of breeding fees collected in 2019. So, financially, it's been very good for us. He's the best horse that I've ever had. He was a world champion in many regards. Unfortunately, he was a three year-old in the same year

as Somebeachsomewhere, so that was tough for him. I have supported him as a stallion. I've got at least three Shadow Play babies now and two of the four two year-olds that we kept over this year that are now three year-olds are Shadow Plays including Lawless Shadow. We've put all of our marbles in one basket for many years with Shadow Play and it always seems to work out for us."

Dr. Moore, now 67, has been in harness racing for more than 50 years.

"I was probably about 14 years old around 1969 or 1970 and attending school in Summerside, PEI," he says. "That's where my wife, Nancy, and I are from. The janitor at the school was Lester Chappell and he had some horses at the track, which was only a couple of blocks straight down the road from the school. One day after school, he took me to the track. Back in those days, they didn't want kids around the track. This old guy used to be the maintenance guy there and used to chase me off the track all the time. But I persisted, and, um, I've made a life in a career out of the horses as a veterinarian as well for the last almost 40 years."

It makes profound sense for horse owners to engage Dr. Moore as their trainer. Because when the trainer is in the house, so is the vet.

"I see things from two perspectives all time. I see things as a trainer, and I see things as the veterinarian," he says. "Basically, when I train the horse for somebody, they've got a veterinarian on call 24/7. We had a horse cut itself the other day and I was there two minutes later to treat that horse. It's an advantage that I never have to wait for a veterinarian to come. I'm always there. I used to shoe horses as well for many years. So, I've combined all those things - trainer, veterinary, and then blacksmith, and that gives me a nice package and I think that's helped along the line for us."

Dr. Moore also has the advantage of having a perspective on how governments treat horse racing. Ontario has denied harness racing this winter, but on PEI, Red Shores at the Charlottetown Driving Park conducted its winter meet into February.

"I'll tell you what," he says with emphasis. "If the government in PEI ever decided that horse racing wasn't important, there would be a revolt and they would be out in a hurry. Horse racing is a huge tradition down there. And tourism; the number one contributor to the economy is Old Home Week. And without horse racing, there would be no Old Home Week, so it would be extremely difficult for any government not to support it down there. I think in Ontario, it's a totally different situation. Horse racing is buried in the provincial economy with many other things. The government probably realizes that horse racing could be done safely right now, but it just doesn't look right because there's going to be people say, 'Hey, my business is shut down. How come they're allowed to go there and race horses?' But they probably should do that because they would initiate several parts of the economy again."

As a veterinarian, and maybe more importantly, as an ethical person, Dr. Moore has no tolerance for unscrupulous individuals who would inject illegal drugs into an animal for a quick financial return.

"I despise those people who get positive tests," he says. "Things like that turn me off big time in the industry. There's always a few bad apples. I think we need to do better. We don't need those kinds of people in the industry."

Dr. Moore still gets behind his horses during training and he finds time to play some hockey as well. Talk about a guy with a full life in this sport.

"The young horses have kept me in the game for the last 15 years," he says. "I just find so much satisfaction in taking an unbroken yearling and developing it into a champion racehorse. The first time we have a baby that goes and wins a race, I'm just standing there, all smiles. I love it. I love being outside. I love working with the horses. I love training young horses. I love meeting many people all across North America. I have my own plane now, so there's a pilot community that I have many friends in now, as well as a racehorse community. That's all what makes my life so interesting."

# QROOI's Ontario Stallion Season Auction for 2021 a Success

By Jennifer Morrison



The second year of the Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario's Stallion Season Auction was another success as quarter horse owners, breeders, and stallion owners, experienced and new, are excited to help grow the industry.

Total bids on Ontario stallion seasons for this year increased almost 20% from the 2020 auction.

Proceeds from the on-line auction, which still has several stallion seasons available for bidding, will include a 2024 Stallion Auction Futurity Stakes race at Ajax Downs. All offspring by stallions that donated a breeding through this program will be eligible. Proceeds from the auction will be divided as follows: 30% to the stallion owner whose foals win the race, 30% to the owner who won the race if that owner purchased a breeding to the sire of the winner, and 40% will go to fund the purse. Those purchasing a season will receive a free nomination and sustaining payments into this Stakes race.

The 2020 Stallion Season Auction's proceeds are earmarked for a 2023 Stallion Auction Futurity Stakes race.

"It's a great opportunity for someone just getting into breeding to reach some great stallions at a discounted price," said young horsewoman Brooke Sisson. "It's always nice to have a chance to save some money and



to top it off, you get the opportunity to race your foal in a Stakes race."

Sisson purchased two seasons; one to Fire Finder for \$600 for her own mare, and the other for Look at Magics Form for "a friend of mine and her mare."

A season to one of the newest stallions in Ontario, Peightnt Your Fate, a son of successful North American stallion PYC Paint Your Wagon, topped the auction at \$1,300. Sean Slater purchased the season to the talented horse from owner Richard Wincikaby.

Patricia Ball bought a season from Spy for the

Senate, one of the top older horses at Ajax Downs in recent years, for \$1,000 from owner Milena Kwiecien.

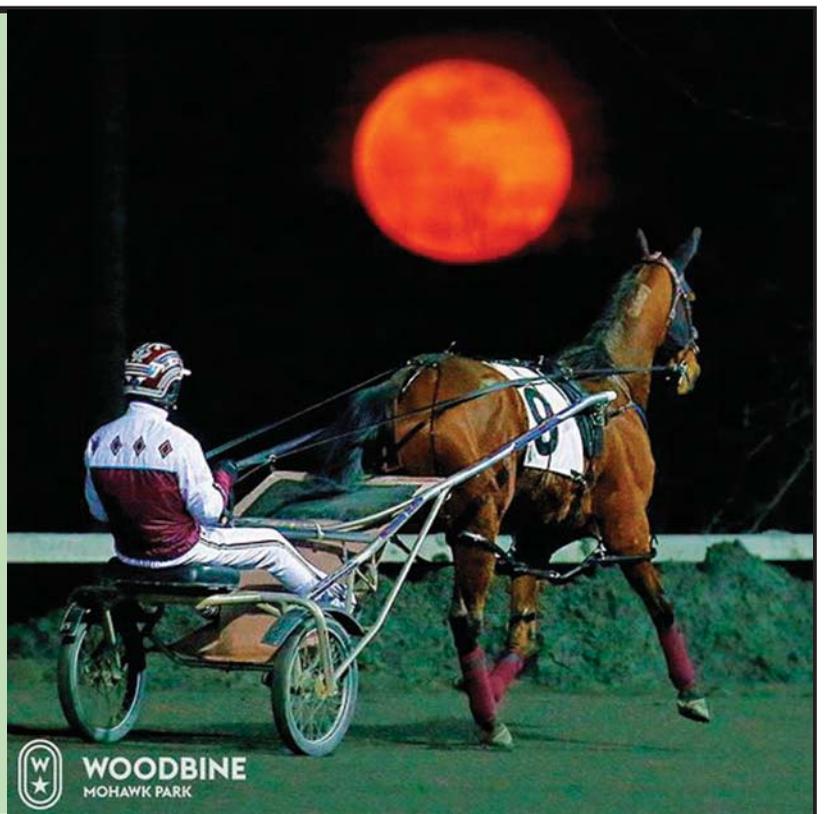
"I bought the season to him for my mare This Cartels Girl and last year bought one to Maryland Magic for my other mare Rose Rage. I am ready to get back into breeding again."

For more information and to see the stallion seasons still available visit: <https://qrooi.com/programs/stallions/>. Contact the QROOI head office in order to place a bid at 905-426-7050 or qrooiheadoffice@gmail.com.

This amazing photograph was taken by Clive Cohen (Newimagemedi):

Trainer Tony O'Sullivan working Whitecookie as the 'Snow Moon' looks down on the Mohawk Racetrack

(Already the one to beat for the 2021 O'Brien as Outstanding Photograph!)



# Jack's Gift

A short story by Peter Gross



He'd spoken about it a few times. Not in despair, or morbidly, or with any level of regret. It was just the kind of anecdote a horse player chats about between races.

Jack was 81. Full of life and full of horse stories. It was the triactor he was meant to cash, but didn't.

"I knew the trainers of two horses," he would say. "They told me each had a chance. Chancey Dibble had this mare named Oats Eater and she was 20-1. And Max Woods sent out this old gelding named Sudsalot. He was probably better than the \$10,000 claimers he was in with, but who's gonna take a nine year-old horse? I wheeled Oats Eater and Sudsalot up and down with half the field in tris. There was a horse called Jacks Whacked. I don't like to bet horses with my name. So, I left him out. And of course, Jacks Whacked was a huge longshot and he gets up in the final stride for third. I had the first two by 10 lengths, but not the third. The tri pays \$39,998.30. I remember it to the dime, because ...I didn't get a dime."

I'd heard the story half a dozen times and, with each telling, I gave the required half laugh, half moan. Actually, the story resonated with me because through 30 years of betting the ponies, I had never won more than \$500 on any day. I loved Jack Milrod. Technically, he wasn't really my uncle, but he'd known my dad since they were kids, so he was always Uncle Jack to me.

It was another gorgeous sunny afternoon at Woodbine and the fact that it would be the last card of races Jack would ever see was an impossible thought. Sometime between the third and fourth race, the usually bombastic Jack went quiet. I started to worry when he began moving his head from side to side, as if he was trying to dislodge water from an ear. I asked him what was wrong, but he couldn't respond.

As the horses came onto the track for the fourth race, Jack Milrod was having a massive stroke.

My heart was pounding. I tried to lift him up under one arm and he pushed me away.

"We have to get you to a hospital!" I cried.

He seemed to understand and got up, trying clumsily to get to the main floor escalator. I tried to hold him, but he kept breaking away. At the top of the escalator, he reached for the handrail but missed and plummeted forward, bouncing horribly down, stopped from a complete downhill catastrophe by the people he smashed into ahead of him.

As the escalator brought him to the ground floor, he was morbidly injured. Blood streamed freely from an ugly

gash on his head. His eyes were glazed and unfocused. A stunned crowd gathered around.

"Get a doctor!" I screamed.

But that would be too late. Jack's right arm grabbed me.

"Take it!" he whispered.

There was a ragged little black book in his hand.

"Take it!"

And with his last breath, he gasped, "1...2...3..."

And he said nothing more. My head was spinning. Medics arrived and put Jack on a stretcher and carried him to a waiting ambulance. The first responders were working furiously; working furiously in vain.

Less than two hours later, the official sign lit up. Jack was gone.

I cried that night and I wept through the funeral two days later. It wasn't until several days later when I put on my favourite jacket and reached into the pocket that I found the tattered black book. I looked at it and wondered. Why did he give it to me? What did he mean 1...2...3...?

The book was clearly a collection of his wagering exploits; wins, losses, and various notes on horses he had watched. Jack was what they call a 'trip' handicapper, a bettor who notes the difficulty a horse has in one race and bets that horse the next time out, assuming the journey can't be as hazardous.

1...2...3...Hmmm.

Pages 1, 2, and 3 revealed nothing to me. There were details about a trip to Finger Lakes Racetrack some 20 years earlier and some positive messages about a stallion named Blushing Groom. But nothing connected to his last message to me. I tried pages 12, 13, and 14. No luck there. I leafed back and forth, hoping pathetically that a page would magically reveal a secret.

Nothing.

I didn't go back to the track for several weeks. When I did, I brought the black book along, kind of like a good luck charm, a small piece of Jack to keep me company. It didn't go well. I couldn't get a sniff. I must have lost over \$200 in the first six races. I was fidgeting with the book in my pocket, flipping it around, riffling the pages, and suddenly I sensed something different.

When I extracted the book, an old tote ticket was sticking out of the middle. It was from back in the days when the number and amount of each bet was printed on a light piece of coloured cardboard with rudimentary computer numbers at the top. It was a triactor ticket, clearly a losing one (because otherwise, he would have cashed it). I saw the date and the wager. It said June 6, 1972. Race 8. \$2 triactor; 2 with 1 with 5.

I clutched the old ticket in my hand. I began to get dizzy. The stands were spinning around and I felt I was about to pass out. I had to sit down and collect myself. I held my head in my hands until my brain caught up with me. When I opened my eyes, there were horses being led onto the track, but the voice announcing the names was from very far in the past.

"Here are the horses for Race 8," bellowed the legendary Darryl Wells.

Darryl Wells? He had died in 2003.

"Number 1 is Sudsalot, trained by Max Woods, ridden by Gary Stahlbaum. Number 2 is Oats Eater, trained by Chancey Dibble and ridden today by Don McBeth. The 3-horse is Jacks Whacked. The trainer is Brian Craig and the rider is Chris Rogers. Number 4 is..."

I kept blinking my eyes, thinking that would jar me back to reality, but it dawned on me....as unbelievable as it felt...I was at Woodbine for the race that had eluded Jack

Milrod.

I shook my head as my inside voice told me I was insane. But as the horses gathered behind the starting gate, I knew I had to make a bet.

1...2...3...

Jack had wheeled the 1-horse and the 2-horse up and down in triactors, but he had not taken Jacks Whacked, the 3-horse. I needed to spend just \$4.

At the window, I could barely whisper my bet.

\$2 triactors. 2 with 1 with 3. 1 with 2 with 3."

Unlike the bland third millennium machines that spit out generically thin slips of paper, the ticket puncher slammed his fingers against some keys and a grumbling contraption ground out two firm pieces of pastel flavoured cardboard.

"The horses have reached the starting gate," intoned Darryl Wells. "They're at the post."

And the bizarre dream continued. *Exactly the way Jack had told the story.* Oats Eater went right to the lead and dared the rest of the field to catch her. Sudsalot was in mid-pack, restrained early. And clearly Jacks Whacked was outclassed as he trailed by about 15 lengths as the field preceded him into the far turn.

As the horses came into the stretch, it was still Oats Eater in front, but Sudsalot was chewing up ground in the middle of the track, and you could see he was going to win. The rest of the field was faltering and third place was up for grabs. At the wire, it was Sudsalot at 30-1 winning by 2 lengths, with Oats Eater at 20-1 all alone in second. It was many lengths back to the rest of the gang, but just before the wire, Jacks Whacked flew by the rest for third. I looked at the tote board.

Jacks Whacked was 60-1. The winning triactor numbers were...1...2...3.

Was this really happening?

When he told the story, Jack said the triactor paid \$39,998.30. But when they posted the payoff, the tri that I had bet paid *only* \$19,998.15.

Of course! When Jack missed it, only one person scored the huge tri. My bet split the pot in two. I staggered to the window, the one from which I had bought the ticket.

"Nice score," said the cashier. "What made you bet those dogs?"

"Uh, I got a tip from an old timer," I replied.

The cashier counted out my winnings and dutifully wrapped each set of 10 \$100 bills in a little paper band. Nineteen of those. Some considerable small change on the side.

I tipped him a \$100 bill.

The money completely filled my pockets and the inside of my jacket. I felt disoriented, dizzy again. I remember clutching the side rail as I rode the escalator down from the main floor. I stumbled and fell at the bottom.

There were several people helping me to my feet.

"Hey guy, you ok?"

I assured them I was.

"Yeah, I'm ok...just embarrassed," I grimaced.

I desperately needed the fresh air outside the track. As I left the main entrance, there was a newspaper box. I looked at the top paper. The date was June 6, 2019.

I had just imagined it all. Jack's famous story had sent me off to the land of hallucination.

Oh well, it was exciting.

I reached into my pockets. Every one was full. Ten \$100 bills per packet. Nine packets with a lot of tip money left over.

I looked up into a cloudless sky.

*Thanks Jack!*

# Cheating, The Fix is in

by Jonathan Stettin

(This written work by Jonathan Stettin first appeared on his *Past The Wire* website)

Cheating in horse racing is as old as the game itself. It is a much more complicated issue than it appears. Let us not think for one minute cheating is restricted to horse racing and does not permeate its way into other sports and businesses. When money is involved, cheating will creep in at some point. It always has, and probably always will.

We've seen point shaving scandals in sports. Just a few years ago a basketball referee pled guilty to engaging in activities that affected final scores. Where there is a will, there is a way, and money creates will.

Horse Racing is an easy target. There is a negative stigma attached to the sport, and to be frank, the industry has largely contributed to that. The stock market is not viewed nearly as skeptical or with a type of stigma even close to *The Sport of Kings*, but they have had their insider trading scandals, junk bond scandals and, of course, the good old pump and dump scandals to rival the game most of us love, horse racing.

Racing is a big money game, and as an athletic competition, it is inherently super competitive. It involves owners, breeders, trainers, jockeys, bettors and, of course, the horses. That is a lot of groups of people trying to win and looking for an edge.

Many people who don't understand the game, but think they do, point to high trainer percentages as "evidence" of cheating. Sure, it can be, but it is far from evidence and definitely not a for sure telltale sign. Winning percentages are generally higher today. A 20% winning percentage today is not the same as it was 10 or 20 years ago. The game has changed. There are more legal and therapeutic drugs available. Horses run less and trainers spot horses accordingly. Higher claiming purses allow for running horses at lower levels than they may be worth. You can win a big pot, and if you get claimed, you still wind up fine. The cheater who is dangerous to the bettor is the low percentage one who strikes sparingly without anyone even noticing. All cheaters are bad for the sport, and more importantly, the horse. There are many ways to cheat, and some have nothing to do with a win percentage.

We constantly hear talk of cleaning up the game. How exactly is that done? What is cheating?

If cheating was as simple as the Jason Servis and Jorge Navarro indictments, it would be a lot easier to clean up. That is not to imply our industry would or could do it. Unfortunately, there are many ways to cheat in horse racing.

Let's look at some history.

***Before we do that let me say I believe the large majority of riders are honest, hard working, competitive, professional athletes. I believe most want to win with every horse they ride, and take a lot of pride in their results, and also how they look achieving them.***

Not really all that long ago there was a race fixing scandal at of all places – Saratoga. The elite meet during the glory days of racing had a race fixing scandal. Who would think world class household name riders would be working together to fix races? If you lived through that, as I did, it makes you look somewhat quizzically at people who say things like these big money riders today would never do that. "Oh really?"

If it has happened before, it can happen again. We, as

students of this great game, should know that better than anyone. History repeats.

Allegedly, in the Saratoga scandal, certain riders were paid to hold or pull their horses from finishing in the money, and other parties were boxing in triactors and most likely exactas the remaining horses who were trying. Favourites and shorter priced horses were being pulled or held, resulting in higher priced horses making up attractive payoffs. There were no superfectas, pick 5's, pick 6's or pick 4's back then. While they did not know the precise order of finish, the crooks were able to capitalize on knowing who would and who would not finish in the money.

Knowing that horse won't win is every bit as valuable as knowing one that will.

Back when all this was supposed to have been happening, racing was a lot more mainstream. This was front page news in the papers. Mike Hole was an English born jockey riding in New York back then. It was reported he told trainer John Cotter he was offered a bribe to pull or hold one of Cotter's horses. Cotter reported it to the NYRA stewards. The matter came up again when the then New York State Racing and Wagering Board conducted hearings into race fixing. At the hearings, Mike Hole was not available to testify. He had been found dead in his car in Jones Beach parking lot. Suicide was suspected, but many at the time doubted it. Some still do. He had breakfast that morning at Liz's Kitchen on the Belmont backside and my friend Ray DeStefano ran into him and they spoke. Nothing seemed unusual or troubling according to Ray. A suicide note was found, however, and a rubber hose stuffed with paper was attached to his car's muffler and placed through a hole drilled in the floor of the car. Before he died, Hole publicly denied that he'd told John Cotter about a bribe to hold back horses. Additional testimony at the State hearings was that Hole was to be interviewed and called it off shortly before he died.

Ultimately 14 races were isolated in 1974 as potentially being "fixed." The betting patterns spoke, but what did they say?

On June 6th in the 9th race at Belmont, \$35,000 was wagered, boxing all horses except those ridden by Angel Cordero Jr., Jose Amy, Jaime Arellano, and Jacinto Vasquez. The bets returned a profit of \$185,000. That was a lot more money in 1974 than it is today.

On July 13th in the 5th race at Aqueduct, \$23,000 was wagered, boxing every horse except one which was ridden by Jorge Velasquez. The bets returned a profit of \$54,000.

On July 16th in the 7th race at Aqueduct, \$30,000 was wagered, showing a profit of \$70,000 boxing all the horses except two, ridden by Jorge Velasquez and Braulio Baeza, whose son is a NYRA steward today.

On July 31st in the 5th race at Saratoga, \$38,000 was wagered for a profit of \$23,000, boxing all horses except two ridden by Jorge Velasquez and Eddie Belmonte.

On August 2nd in the 9th race at Saratoga, \$35,000 was wagered showing a profit of \$137,340, boxing all the horses except the ones ridden by Jose Amy, Eddie Maple, Angel Cordero Jr., and Jaime Arellano.

On August 6th in the 9th race at Saratoga, 60,000 was wagered for a profit of \$109,056, boxing all the horses except those ridden by Jose Amy, Eddie Belmonte, and Jaime Arellano.

On August 30th in the 7th race at Saratoga, \$42,500 was wagered and lost, boxing all the horses except those ridden by Ben Feliciano, Marco Castenada, and Angel Cordero Jr.

On October 30th in the 7th race at Aqueduct, \$48,700 was wagered for a profit of \$130,000, boxing all the horses except two which were ridden by Braulio Baeza and Angel Cordero Jr.

On November 11th in the 5th race at Aqueduct, \$34,350 was wagered for a profit of \$42,300, boxing everyone except one horse ridden by Jean Cruguet.

On November 30th in the 3rd race at Aqueduct, \$18,050 was bet for a profit of \$27,000, again using all the horses but the one ridden by Jean Cruguet.

On December 6th in the 9th race at Aqueduct, \$22,000 was bet for a profit of \$73,570, boxing all the horses except the ones ridden by Jose Amy, Jorge Velasquez, and Jean Cruguet.

On December 9th in the 9th race at Aqueduct, \$34,894 was wagered for a profit of \$129,188, boxing all the horses except the ones ridden by Jean Cruguet, Jose Amy, and Angel Cordero Jr.

On December 12th in the 9th race at Aqueduct, \$30,000 was wagered for a profit of \$40,000, boxing all the horses except those ridden by Jose Amy, Jorge Velasquez, and Jaime Arellano.

On December 31st in the 9th race at Aqueduct, \$84,000 was bet and lost, boxing all the horses except those ridden by Jean Cruguet, Braulio Baeza, Jaime Arellano and Jorge Velasquez.

Assuming the 14 races the investigation focused on were the only ones with these isolated betting patterns (which may or may not be a reasonable conclusion) \$535,944 was wagered boxing horses leaving out favourites, showing a profit of \$1,020,454. A cool mil was also a lot more in the 70's than it is today.

Jose Amy admitted to taking bribes to hold or pull horses and was ruled off for life. He was reinstated many years later and rode a winner or two a few years back with the support of Barry Schwartz and others who felt he had paid whatever dues he owed, and it would be tough to argue he didn't. He was the one who took the fall, and if this was a "scheme", then he obviously wasn't acting alone. Amy had a budding career at the time and that was essentially forfeited.

Amy also testified against former jockey Con Errico in his federal race fixing trial. He testified Errico paid him and "other" jockeys \$5000 or up to \$7,500 to pull or hold their horses.

Jacinto Vasquez was suspended a year for allegedly offering a bribe.

Jorge Velasquez testified he had never been offered or accepted a bribe and had never even heard the expression to hold or pull a horse. His case ended there.

Other than Jose Amy, the riders whose names appeared with regularity in the races with the, shall we say, odd betting patterns were never charged. A reasonable question after reading all the court testimony would be why. If Amy was telling the truth in his plea, and Errico's conviction was just, it seems an odd place for the case to end.

What went wrong on August 30 and December 31 was likely a horse finishing in the money that was not supposed to. I guess we'll never know.

# Jim Lawson and single sports betting



Canada really wants single sports betting. Canada will certainly get single sports betting. The question is *what the hell is taking so long?*

It's called Bill C-218, an act to amend the Criminal Code that would allow provinces and territories the right to conduct wagering on a single sports event. As it stands now, the Pro-Line wager, available in thousands of corner stores, requires the player to select a minimum of three games.

On February 17, the House of Commons voted 303-15 in favour of single sports betting, sending the bill to a second reading.

This has been a major project for Woodbine's CEO Jim Lawson for the better part of the last ten years. He's optimistic, but recognizes the bill still has a few more steps to climb.

"It has to go to the standing committee on justice and there will be another vote in the house," says Lawson. "And I expect that may be as early as the end of March. They are paying attention to it. Then it has to go to the senate. Then it will be passed down to the provincial lottery corps, particularly the OLG, and then it should roll out in a matter of months. I can't tell you exactly when you will be able to bet on the Super Bowl in Canada, but I expect it could be by the end of the year. It's all moving forward and it's moving forward quite quickly."

Single sports betting has the potential to be a double-edged sword for the horse racing industry. If it's

implemented in a fashion that excludes racetracks, that simply means millions of dollars being wagered on games and not on horse racing. Lawson's support of the change to the Criminal Code has everything to do with his argument that horse racing must be protected.

"The government has listened to us," says Lawson. "We have effectively established that there's 60,000 jobs, much of that in rural Canada, connected to racing and you can't have an international gambling company offering legal wagering on sports without horse racing being looked after."

Lawson has long argued, justifiably, that sports betting's best location is at a racetrack.

"We have a broad digital network across the country in HPI," he states. "We have an established entrusted relationship with regulators and fans across the country. We have anti-money laundering policies in place that have also been effective. Cash management is a big party of any wagering business. You can imagine the amount of cash that goes through. We have bricks and mortar in Woodbine, Mohawk, WEGZ, Greenwood, and potentially more than sixty off-track wagering locations. With Woodbine, you have a company that's already heavily regulated. We have responsible gaming policies in place. We have a lot to bring to the table, including innovation and technology like our app Dark Horse, that suits sports



betting. We are ideally situated to play a major role in this sports betting sector as it evolves in the next year in Canada. We are a prime factor for all those reasons and it will be very good for horse racing."

The best reason for those of us who want single sports betting to be optimistic is the reality of a substantial cash flow. Single sports betting in the US has delivered billions in tax dollars to the IRS and that formula will be similar in Canada.

"All estimates from the people that we have spoken to and the potential players in the industry are looking for a share of a \$10- \$14 billion revenue market," says Lawson.

"One of the questions is 'does the grey market continue?'. It's quite healthy today, much to the chagrin of groups like ours who see horse racing dollars go off-shore. I think the major players are coming in and it will be good for sports franchises and for horse racing. It is a big, big market and that is why the government is moving quickly on this, in light of the pandemic, with a need to generate tax revenue for health and educational reasons. It is going to move quickly and it is a big potential revenue share."

For many of us, there's this head scratcher. The OLG seems to introduce a new gambling game every week - Pro Picks, Dice, Poker Lotto, Pick 2, Plinko, Daily Grand, Lightning Lotto, Hit or Miss. It just seems weird that arriving at single sports betting requires so many hoops and barrels to navigate. This is where Lawson is his most diplomatic.

"I think there are a lot of considerations and I am not being patronizing to the OLG," he says. "There are a lot of issues in the political process. One thing that is interesting is responsible gaming and ensuring, when you open up this market, you do it with the right people. That's why I like Woodbine playing the role, because we've shown that we can handle responsible gaming issues. You have to be able to have a track record for a project this huge. This will roll out and it needs to roll out carefully. We want to do this right. There is certainly some momentum now during this pandemic to generate tax revenue, so the timing is very good."

## Mohawk Million slot owners revealed By Mark McKelvie

Woodbine Entertainment has revealed the names of the slot owners for the second edition of the Mohawk Million for two year-old trotters on Saturday, September 25 at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

A total of nine slots were available for purchase at the cost of \$100,000 (CAD) each for entry in the \$1-million (CAD) Mohawk Million. The deadline to purchase a slot passed on February 15 with all slots sold. Three individuals purchased two slots each. The tenth and final slot will be awarded to the winner of the William Wellwood Memorial on September 11.

The slot owners for the 2021 Mohawk Million are:

Brad Grant  
Crawford Farms  
Determination (two slots)  
EquineX (two slots)  
Gino Toscani (two slots)  
Steve Heimbecker

The owners of the slots are not required to declare a two year-old trotter for the race until entry time and the slot is an entity that may be sold, traded, or subject to lease. Each slot owner was required to submit \$50,000 per slot by the February 15 deadline. The remaining \$50,000 is due by June 1.

The Mohawk Million will take place along with the \$850,000 Metro Pace for two year-old pacers on September 25, putting the sport's two richest races for freshmen on the same card.

The \$540,000 Shes A Great Lady for two year-old pacing fillies will also take place on the Mohawk Million card, which will feature total purses of more than \$2.6 million.

Fans can track the march to the Mohawk Million by following @WoodbineSB on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The official hashtag of harness racing's richest race for two year-olds is #MohawkMillion.

# Western Fair Champions

The Raceway at Western Fair District announced their 2020 Award Winners live on March 5. The 2020 Award Winners are as follows:

- Ruth Herbert Horsewoman of the Year Award – Jane Belore
  - Racing Under Saddle Outstanding Achievement Award – Massive Muscles
  - Three-Year-Old Trotting Filly – Muscles Aplenty
  - Three-Year-Old Trotting Colt – Jayport Hi Class
  - Three-Year-Old Pacing Filly – Literally Hanover
  - Three-Year-Old Pacing Colt – Machaholic
  - Claiming Trotter – Debt Collector
  - Claiming Pacer – Oh K Man
  - Older Trotting Mare – Power And Grace
  - Older Trotting Horse – Scene A Magician
  - Older Pacing Mare – Casimir Swamp Girl
  - Older Pacing Horse – Oh K Man
  - Trainer of the Year – Danielle St Louis
  - Driver of the Year – Marc St Louis
  - Owner of the Year – Stewart McQueen
  - Horse of the Year – Oh K Man
- (The Raceway at Western Fair District)

## Quarter Racing Champions Announced:

Rick Crispi wins his first High Point Owner Award by Jennifer Morrison



High Points Owner of the Year Rick Crispi with trainer Greg Watson

The board of directors of the Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario Inc. (QROOI) announced the champions of 2020 on March 5 and is presenting trophies to winners and runners-up on a personal basis as the annual awards ceremony and dinner could not take place this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Points are awarded to horses owned by QROOI members based on top four placings in all categories of races.

Rick Crispi was named the High Point Owner of the year and he can thank his homebred, Jess Carolinas Award for that. Jess Carolinas Award won the Ontario Sired Stakes Derby on the final day of racing at Ajax Downs, clinching the title for Crispi.

On February 26, Fiesty Icon, owned and trained by Rick Kennedy, was named the 2020 Horse of the Year. The Ontario sired and bred gelding, who turned nine years old in 2021, was also the High Point Aged Male with 39 QROOI points.

Ed Walton won his first High Point Jockey title in 2020, collecting 356 points with 35 victories in just 20 Ajax racing dates. Walton has been among the top riders in quarter horse racing for over 30 years, although he was away from riding for 14 years prior to 2009. In 2020, Walton partnered up with Stakes stars such as champion Country Boy 123, Ecs Greys Anatomy, Twixt of Fate, Fiesty Icon, and Hanover Hill Chalsee. He also entered the AQHA record books as the rider of Carneros, who set a world record for 110 yards on June 16 of 6.770.

The horse with the most QROOI points of the 2020 season was the Ontario-bred three year-old filly One Kool

Dynasty. Owned by Belinda Taggart and bred by William Taggart, One Kool Dynasty had a superb season with four wins from 10 races including the Princess Derby and 44 QROOI points.

One Kool Dynasty's trainer Jason Pascoe won his second consecutive High Point Trainer title with 279 points from a meet-leading 23 wins. Pascoe's runners earned \$380,932 and also included the 2020 High Point two year-old filly Streakinlilwagon, whom he also owns and bred with partner Byranne Langford, Sprint Series champion Carneros, and Distance Series winner Spy for the Senate

The 2020 racing season was a big one for Norm Picov's Picov Cattle Company, the High Point Leading Breeder (143 points) which bred Horse of the Year Fiesty Icon and bred and raced Stakes winners Hanover Hill Chalsee and Hanover Hill Theresa. The 58 Picov-bred starters earned \$212,948 and finished in the top three 31 times.

Chantelle Bourgeois won High Point Owner/Trainer with 64 points and her homebred Shake It Twice from the Ontario Sires Stakes Maturity.

Carol and Jaime Robertson's Ontario-bred Had to Be Relentless was the year's High Point two year-old colt or gelding with 27 points, and owner/trainer Craig Spada's Jess a Sweet Surprise led all aged mares with 20 points.

### List of QROOI Award Winners 2020

- Horse of the Year Fiesty Icon
- Bruce Lawrence -Hi Point Trainer Jason Pascoe
- Runner-Up Trainer Tom Dunlap
- High Point Owner/Trainer Chantelle Bourgeois
- Runner-Up Owner/Trainer Ruth Barbour
- High-Point Jockey Ed Walton
- Runner-up Jockey Cory Spataro

- High Point 2 Yr Old Had to Be Relentless Carol and Jaime Robertson
- High Point 2 Yr Old Colt/Gelding (27)

- Had to Be Relentless Carol and Jaime Robertson
- Runner-up 2 yr old Gelding/Colt (18)
- Twixt of Fate Richard Wincikaby
- High Point 2 yr Old Filly (25)
- Streakinlilwagon GFR Equine Services
- Runner-Up 2 yr old Filly (14)
- Jess Raven Raven Racing Syndicate
- Runner-Up 2 yr old Filly (14)
- Ah Candyland Richard Wincikaby

- High Point 3 Yr Old
- One Kool Dynasty
- Belinda Taggart
- High Point 3 Yr Old Gelding/Stallion (30)
- ess Carolinas Award Rick Crispi
- Runner-up 3 yr old Gelding/Stallion (27)
- Eazy Street Carol and Jaime Robertson
- High Point 3 Yr Old Mare (44)
- One Kool Dynasty Belinda Taggart
- Runner-Up 3 yr old Mare (33)
- Hanover Hill Chalsee Picov Cattle Co

- High Point Aged Horse
- Fiesty Icon Richard Kennedy
- Hi Point Aged Gelding/Stallion (39)
- Fiesty Icon Richard Kennedy
- Runner-up Aged Gelding/Stallion (38)
- Spy for the Senate Milena Kwiecien

- High Point Aged Mare (20)
- Jess A Sweet Suprize Craig Spada
- Runner Up Aged Mare (19)
- One of My Favorites Rick Crispi
- High Point Point Owner Rick Crispi
- Runner Up Owner James Bogar

- High Point Ontario Breeder Picov Cattle Company
- Runner Up Breeder Christine Tavares

# Santos coming back to Woodbine



Jockey Ademar Santos with his wife, Rose

hit the ground.”

Santos was thrown violently to the Tapeta.

“I just went to the ground,” he says. “I think he hit me a little bit and then, suddenly, everybody was around me. I broke my collarbone.”

That was it for Santos at Woodbine. He went home to Tampa Bay to recuperate and let his bones heal.

Back in the saddle, Santos returned to riding regularly at Tampa Bay, which is very much in his comfort zone. With his wife, Rose, as his agent, Santos began winning regularly and every time he brought a horse into the winners circle, he would post the race on social media, thanking the trainers and owners who had faith in him.

So far in 2021, he has put up some modest numbers; in early March he had 9 wins from 84 rides. His totals have been compromised by family problems.

“I had to miss two months, because my mother was sick,” he says. “I had to go back to Brazil to take care of her. She’s okay now. She had to have two operations. They thought it was cancer, but it wasn’t.”

On January 16, Santos was riding 13-1 longshot Special Princess in the \$125,000 Gasparilla Stakes at Tampa Bay. He kept the three year-old filly near the back of the 7-horse field early in the 7 furlong race, but rocketed four-wide into the stretch and actually dead-heated for the win with a 4-1 shot named Adios Trippi.

“That horse loves me,” laughs Santos. “She wasn’t



Pram Seebah, jockey agent

Canadian conversion rates, it’s a huge difference.

“I like the place. I like the people,” says Santos. “I have been riding at many different tracks and I think Woodbine’s the best place, Best people, best track, and the best money. That’s why I really want to come back. It’s a beautiful track.”

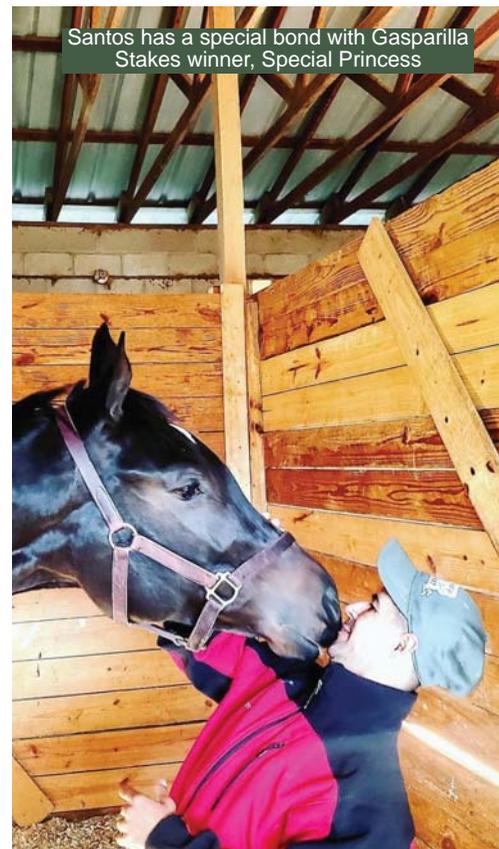
Santos points out several notable Woodbine connections who have expressed interest in the veteran rider handling their horses. On February 10, he rode War Empress to a second place finish in a maiden race at Tampa Bay. That horse is trained by Barb Minshall.

“Martin Drexler wants me to ride for him,” he says. “Jim Ensom has talked to me,” he says. “Shirley Camilleri of Malta Manors just claimed a horse at Gulfstream,” he says. “I really want to get on that one.” The horse that was claimed is Breaking Alone. He’s a three year-old Ontario-bred who has won two of his first three races. His last effort at a mile on the grass was breathtaking – under Junior Alvarado, he made up 2 lengths late in the stretch to win by a neck at almost 7-1.” Haltered for \$35,000 this has the potential to be a great claim. As his agent Seebah struggles with the paper work for Daisuke Fukumoto, getting Santos back to Rexdale is not so challenging.

“He already has the appropriate papers,” says Seebah. “I think he’s a great jockey. He has a very unique riding style. He may not look pretty out there, but the horses run very well for him. It’s similar to the way Eurico used to ride.”

Santos could be back in Canada sooner than later. The COVID restrictions seem to change daily and the jockey wants to avoid quarantine if he can. He does expect to be at Woodbine on Opening Day.

Santos is grateful for the people who have helped make him eligible to ride in Canada. “I just want to thank everyone who worked on my paper work,” he says.



expected to win, but she wanted to make me look good.”

Aside from returning to Woodbine perhaps to eclipse the bad taste of a disastrous tumble, Santos is attracted to the far greater purses. A maiden special weight at Tampa Bay offers \$31,000. Same race at Woodbine can be in excess of \$120,000. Even when you factor in US/

It would appear that one jockey’s misfortune is another’s gift. Veteran Ademar Santos is planning to be riding horses at Woodbine as soon as the sport is permitted to operate later this spring. Santos will be represented by agent Pram Seebah, who also books for Daisuke Fukumoto. As of the publish date of this issue, Fukumoto is not assured of returning soon to Canada as his work permit has not been approved.

“We were applying for his work permit for the new season,” says Seebah about Fukumoto. “And the Ontario government changed the rules. Now there is a new clause that the jockey has to have a mount in a Stakes race and ride that race as his first race in order to be eligible for a work permit.”

That does seem bizarre, considering that Fukumoto rode Mighty Heart to a Queen’s Plate victory last summer. But with that young rider’s status in limbo, Seebah got himself some insurance by hooking up with Santos.

Santos has a few good reasons for coming back to Woodbine. He was here in 2018 and had some success. But on the first Sunday of racing in 2019, Santos was aboard an eight year-old gelding named Hopehard. Even before the race, there was a hint something was not right.

“He was kind of stumbling a bit before the race,” says Santos. “He was going ok, but right at the wire, he went straight down.”

The only positive here is that Hopehard was ahead of just one other horse at the time, otherwise Santos might have been trampled.

“I was told he broke down and had a heart attack at the same time,” says Santos grimly. “He was dead when he

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# DOWN THE STRETCH PODCAST

## On Apple, Google, Spotify, Stitcher, iHeartRADIO and wherever you get your podcasts

### Episode 58, March 1, 2021:

**Garnet Barnsdale**, now the Bo Derek of harness racing, defied the odds by picking all 10 winners on a card at Western Fair. Canadians Jim and Susan Hill sent out the winner of the \$200,000 Mac Diarmida Stakes at Gulfstream. Two heavy favourites won Kentucky Derby Preps in the States and, when **Gretzky The Great** came third at Turfway at even-money, trainer **Mark Casse** was surprisingly pleased. **Scott Zeron** scored a double at the Meadowlands. Jockey **Tony Phillips** raps for us about Quarter Horse of the Year, Feisty Icon, and trainer **Angus Buntain** talks about the expansion of **Malta Manors** thoroughbred stable.

### Episode 57, February 22:

Pari-mutuel harness racing has recommenced in Ontario. Host **Peter Gross** drops in on Mohawk Park, Rideau Carleton, and the Raceway at Western Fair. Woodbine CEO **Jim Lawson** has been fighting for single sports betting at racetracks and he tells us how that project is getting closer to reality. **Greg Gangle** and **Shannon 'Sugar' Doyle** express how happy they are that racing is back in London. There was an upset in the \$20 Million Saudi Cup, and O'Brien Award winning writer **Garnet Barnsdale** made a dumb mistake, – he punched the wrong horse on a Pick5 bet and it turned out to be the smartest dumb thing he ever did.

### Episode 56, February 15:

Harness racing resumes this week at Mohawk. Woodbine's CEO **Jim Lawson** gives us the good news and he also talks about the battle to implement historical horse racing in Ontario. **Mark McKelvie** brings us up to speed on the second Mohawk Million. We talk with **Michelle Gibson** after she found out she's the Sovereign Award winner as Groom of the Year, and the flamboyantly charismatic **Will Wong** tells us how excited he is to be nominated for Outstanding Photograph. This podcast looks back on great race calls by **Marshall Cassidy** who passed last week, and what could possibly go wrong if you bet a horse called **Whacudposblygowrng?**

### Episode 55, February 8:

Trainers **Josie Carroll**, **Kevin Attard**, and **Bob Tiller** talk about their Sovereign Award nominations as does **Nikki Alderson**, up for Outstanding Apprentice Jockey. **Dr. Ian Moore** had a great night at the O'Briens, so he provides an upbeat interview. The only horse racing in Canada took place in Prince Edward Island. Track manager **Lee Drake** explains how their harness racing was conducted safely. **Scott Zeron** is winning at the Meadowlands and we have two of his victories. Find out what happens when a jockey and her horse interfere in a race and it's her brother who gets clobbered, and if there was a horse named **Punxsutawney Phil** running on Groundhog Day, don't you think it makes sense to bet him?

### Episode 54, February 1:

This podcast has all the results from the O'Brien Awards with special props to **Garnet Barnsdale**, winner in the Written Work Category, and **Dr. Ian Moore**, owner-trainer of horses that prevailed in 4 categories, including Horse of the Year. **Jason Portuondo** co-hosted with **Ken Middleton** and Portuondo is also half the equation (with **Chad Rozema**) of the new Horse Racin' Around the World on HPI. We have coverage of the Eclipse Awards in which the best horses in the U.S. got their silverware. Ontario Racing's **Jonathan Zammit** reveals how harness horsemen can get compensation as their horses sit idle. This podcast has stretch calls of the Holy Bull and Robert B. Lewis Stakes, precursors to the Kentucky Derby. Jennifer Morrison tells us she's going to write the book on **Mighty Heart**, the one-eyed colt who won the Queen's Plate and the Prince of Wales last year. And have a listen to what ensues when a developmentally arrested host presses the Winbak Farms manager to explain how harness stallions provide for their mares when denied the actual physical embrace.

### Episode 53, January 25:

Trouble on the high seas for the **Down The Stretch Podcast**. Are we going to be sued by famous race caller **Dave Johnson** who has trademarked his iconic phrase "And Down The Stretch They Come"? Peter's toe-to-toe with Johnson's lawyer, **Andrew Mollica**, is epic! So was **Knicks Go** in the \$3 million Pegasus at Gulfstream. We have wins by horses with Canadian connections in Florida and at the Meadowlands, and **Marvin Katz**, talks about the thrill he got when his **Tall Dark Stranger** won the Dan Patch Award as Horse of the Year. On January 31, the Canadian O'Brien Awards will be given out and our host, Peter Gross, talks with **Jim Marino** whose **Major Custard** went 15 for 16 in 2020, but because he did all his work out west, he's the underdog against **Tattoo Artist** in the Three Year-Old Colt category.

## Malta Manors' terrific claim

The best claim in Canadian horse racing history was Starship Jubilee. She was taken at Gulfstream for \$16,000 by Soli Mehta and Kevin Attard in February of 2017 and all she did after that is win 16 of her next 31 races, including the Diana Stakes at Saratoga and the Ricoh Woodbine Mile at Woodbine, both in 2020. Starship Jubilee retired with earnings of \$2,093,069, setting the bar extremely high for those hoping to halter than next claiming champion.

Malta Manors, owned by Tony and Shirley Camilleri, have taken their best shot. On February 26, through trainer Joseph Orseno, they claimed a three year-old colt named Breaking Alone for \$35,000. This is a terrific acquisition for Malta Manors who give every indication of becoming a big player on the Canadian horse racing field.

Breaking Alone is an Ontario-bred, created by William Graham. He's by Lea, out of the Medaglia D'Oro dam Lunch Hour. And he could not have looked more impressive in his last two races, both come-from-behind wins. At Gulfstream on February 11, going a mile on the turf, Breaking Alone, under Luis Saez, was mid-pack for the first three quarters of a mile, then overhauled Aesthetically who appeared to have the race in the bag with a 3 length lead in the stretch – Breaking Alone powered by to win by 1¼ lengths, paying \$8.80. That was a \$25,000 claim race and Breaking Alone was taken by another trainer, who

put the colt in for \$35,000.

That race was on February 26, again a mile on the turf, and Junior Alvarado got what Saez had – Breaking Alone was 3 lengths out late in the game, but fought brilliantly in the stretch to win by a neck, this time paying \$15.60.

A few days before picking up this improving colt, Malta Manors named Angus Buntain as their trainer.

"A couple of weeks ago, they reached out to me for the training position," he says. "There were a number of other candidates. They set up an interview, and a couple of days after the process, they offered me the job. I was thrilled. I was not aware of the horse last year. This year, he ran once in a maiden \$25,000 claimer and Shirley had mentioned, 'Hey, here's a Canadian bred three year-old running at Gulfstream today.' The horse ran and won. It was a nice race. He was re-entered two weeks later up one class, non-winners of two for \$35,000. It looked as if he had improved in his first race as a three year-old which is often to be expected, but it looked like he would improve again. Even though we were paying a little bit of a premium for him, we all agreed he was probably worth the money. So, we got him. Being a Canadian bred three year-old running a route of ground, he is eligible for the Queen's Plate. It looks as if he should be put on that path. Other than that, he is eligible for some nice Stakes. We're very happy to have him. Joe

Orsino is the trainer for Malta Manors in Florida, so he will keep him in training and probably run him once or twice down there before he comes home. Joe seems to like him, which is encouraging to me."

Shirley and Tony Camilleri and their Malta Manors Stable sure have the look of people who want to be feature players in this sport.

"They are developing a state-of-the-art facility in Caledon," says Buntain. "It's a wonderful facility. What I love about them is their vision both from the racing side and the care and the training of horses off-track. At a time when a lot of trainers and owners are cutting back and some big outfits are shutting down, it's nice to see people investing heavily in horses with a vision to grow and become a force in racing in Canada. It's exciting to be part of that. We're building a real good team at the track. It's a great opportunity for me."

Expect Buntain to be much busier in 2021 than in any previous year he has trained. In 2020, he sent out just 22 horses, producing a single win and just \$38,240 in earnings. Those stats will almost certainly rise dramatically this year.

"They're looking to claim four or five more at Gulfstream," he says. "And one or two two year-olds in training out of the OBS sales in Florida in March. So, there could be as many as ten or twelve this season, I hope. They want to acquire some more stock."

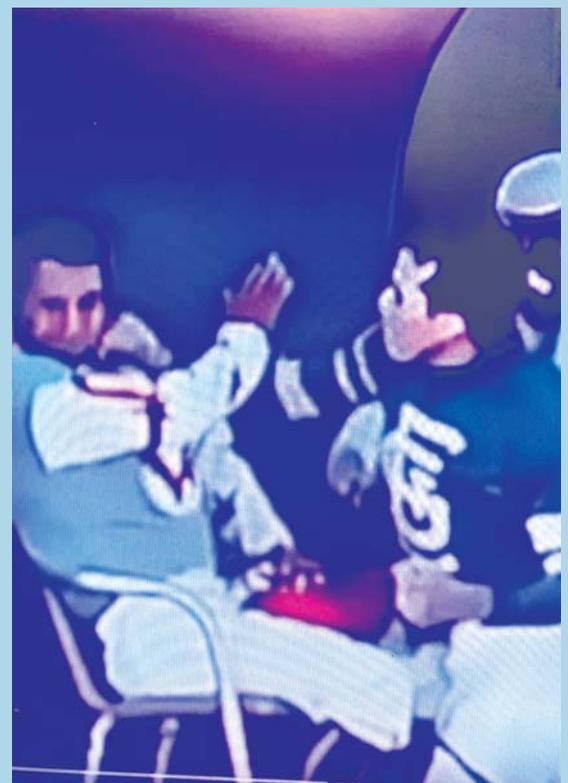
## They really want jockeys at Assiniboia Downs!



### 2021 JOCKEY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

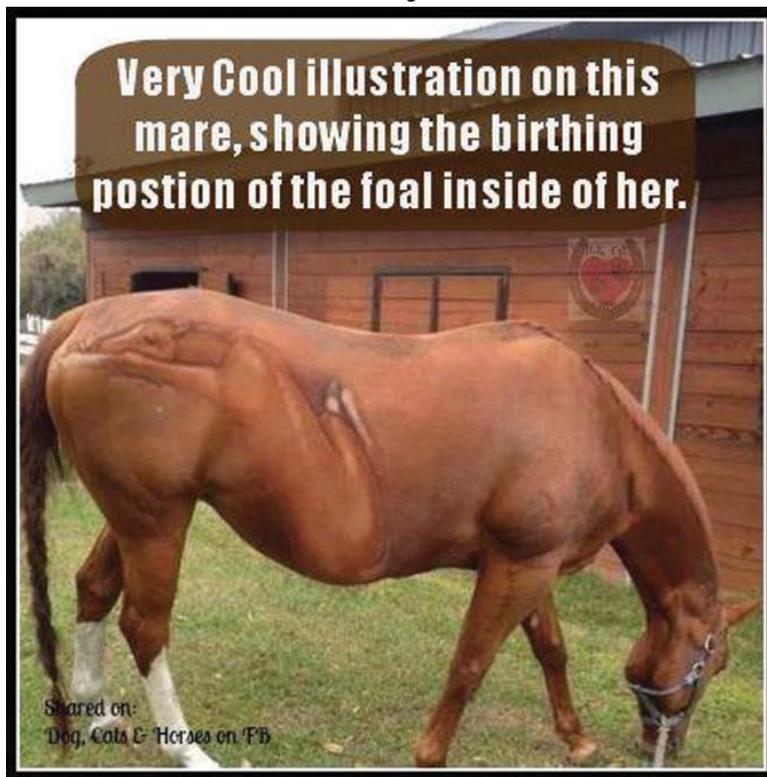
- \$1,500 (CAD) if confirmed "in the room" for opening day May 17, 2021
- \$3,500 (CAD) participation bonus if confirmed as a licensed and active jockey onsite at Assiniboia Downs by no later than June 30, 2021 and available each live race day with the intent to ride. Must remain available to ride up to and including the race meet closing day of Sept. 8.
- \$2,500 (CAD) participation bonus if confirmed as a licensed jockey onsite at Assiniboia Downs from July 5 – September 8, 2021 and available each live race day with the intent to ride. Must remain available to ride up to and including the race meet closing day of Sept. 8.
- \$1,000 (CAD or \$750 U.S.) referral bonus awarded to the individual, confirmed at the discretion of the Manitoba Jockey Club, as responsible for directing a jockey to ride at Assiniboia Downs.

The fists of jockey Irad Ortiz were flying after the 4th race at Gulfstream on February 26. Ortiz had just ridden Known Agenda to victory by about 11 lengths over Top Gun Tommy ridden by Paco Lopez. However at the top of the stretch, Known Agenda definitely cut off Top Gun Tommy, causing Lopez to lodge a claim of foul, which ultimately the stewards rejected. Ortiz was apparently unhappy with Lopez claiming foul. Lopez did not return fire, but both jockeys were placed on probation for the rest of the meet. Ortiz, the leading jockey at Gulfstream was fined \$1,000.



# ODDITIES & ENTITIES

Ever wonder what a foal looks like before it leaves its mother's body?



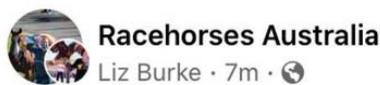
## Sibling rivalry

The second race at Aqueduct on February 5 was a 6 furlong sprint for \$25,000 claimers. The #1 horse, Run Casper Run, ridden by Katie Davis, crossed the wire first; and the #3 horse, Kentucky Cool, ridden by Katie's brother, Dylan, came third. However, as the field came into the stretch, Katie Davis pulled her horse off the rail for running room and she clearly bumped into the horse carrying her brother. Dylan had no choice but to lodge a foul against his sister. After a short delay, the stewards DQ'd Run Casper Run and placed it third, elevating Kentucky Cool to second. There was a purse of \$50,000 for this race, which means the winning jockey – who was not Katie Davis - would have earned \$2,500. It would be interesting to be a fly on the wall at the next Davis family dinner.

## Hunch of the year

The first race on February 2 at Newcastle Racecourse in England was a two kilometre flat event with a field of 14. Bettors familiar with Ground Hog Day festivities were wise to back a first timer named Punxsutawney Phil. The horse with the rodent's name actually went off as the 9-2 favourite and, despite the fact he was competing for the first time, he ran a splendid race. Under jockey Ben Robinson, Punxsutawney Phil was ninth behind a wall of horses as the field turned for home, but Robinson found a seam and Punxsutawney Phil did the rest, firing home to win by a length. Turns out Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow, but his 13 opponents did.

## Race fan insanity



At Trentham today. Miraculously, no-one was hurt.



This happened during the stretch run of a 20-horse race at Trentham, New Zealand on January 30. For reasons best known to the man in the white shirt, he elected to stride into the middle of the course as the horses thundered for home. Incredibly, he must have found a seam because by sheer miracle no jockeys had to attempt evasive action and what would have been a potentially life ending collision (for horse, jockey and lunatic) was averted by luck and not judgement. The guy, probably drunk and/or stoned celebrated his feat by raising his arms in search of praise and then scampered back into the stands. He was subsequently arrested and charged with endangering public safety. Champion jockey Danielle Johnson was quoted after the race as saying: "He was lucky he didn't get run over, most of us didn't see him until late."

## A picture from 36 years ago.

An all-star lineup for the Avelino Gomez Memorial Challenge. One question: Why was Sandy Hawley on the American team?



## Horse names:

For all the degenerate gamblers, the 9-horse in the fourth race at Delta Downs in Louisiana on February 10 had the perfect name. The four year-old gelding, Whatcudposblygowng was looking for his 5th win in 18 tries and he went off at 20-1 with Gerardo Mora as his jockey. What could possibly go wrong? Well, Whatcudposblygowng looked like a winner in deep stretch, but was caught just before the wire by Madelyn's Wild Max. And if you're wondering about the spelling – The Jockey Club, which approves all horses' names allows a maximum of 18 characters in a name: Whatcouldpossiblygowrong would be 24, hence Whatcudposblygowng.

Then on February 15 at Laurel, the first race was a mile on the dirt for three year-olds with a claim price of \$40,000. Nobody really knows who is going to win a horse race, so the 5-horse, Nobody Knew, seemed appropriately named. Except, Nobody Knew, under Angel Cruz, came flying from fifth at the half, circled the field, and won going away by almost 3 lengths. Apparently, everyone knew about this – Nobody Knew went off at 1-9 and paid just \$2.20 to win.

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Met and defeated 16 Grade 1 winners and  
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First foals are yearlings of 2021.

2021 Fee: \$2,500 (Canadian Funds)



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THE SADLER'S WELLS SIRELINE

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NORTHERN DANCER, DANEHILL [G1],  
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